



# How *To* HEAL YOUR ADRENALS *Naturally*

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WE OFFER A SHORT AND SWEET FIX OF KNOWLEDGE  
FOR THE WOMAN WHO TAKES A HEALTHY INTEREST  
IN HER WELLBEING INSIDE AND OUT

# INTRO



*My name is Emma Sutherland and I have been a naturopath and nutritionist for 14 years, seeing clients in our busy clinic. I am an author, presenter, speaker and one of my key passions is helping women get their Mojo back. You know, that spring in your step, radiant smile and glowing skin! I am a certified health nut and mum to Sophia, 4 years old.*



*My name is Lauren McDonald and I have been in the health and fitness industry since 2005. I am a practicing Clinical Nutritionist, Personal Trainer and most importantly, I am mum to two beautiful girls, Charlie and Matilda. Currently undertaking my BHSc Naturopathy, I am a true believer that to reach your optimal health you must have balance in all areas of life and remember when it comes to food it's all about keeping it real.*

**Why Studio You**—we are passionate about empowering women to take control of their health. Studio You allows us to share our clinical knowledge as well as evidenced based information in a user-friendly format.

Emma—to start off, I want to talk about my experience with adrenal health because it's been long, complicated and challenging. It's now an area of specialty to me in clinic and for the last five years I have been focusing on this area of functional medicine. Going through adrenal depletion myself, is why I attract so many clients in this space!

For me, my adrenal issues were triggered by the birth of my daughter, Sophia. I was a single mum and really struggling with that, and the adrenal fatigue really kicked in at that time and it was extremely debilitating. I am now working through the other side of it and its important to know that many people are affected by adrenal issues.

I want to talk about the difference between adrenal depletion and burnout, as they are two different things. Burnout is when your cortisol levels are consistently elevated, whereas adrenal fatigue is when your cortisol levels are consistently low. You need to be aware that many people suffer burnout, not so many people suffer true adrenal fatigue.

# STATS

*One in four Australians reported moderate to severe levels of distress in 2014. Almost one in five (17%) Australians reported that current stress was having a strong to very strong impact on physical health.*

<http://www.psychology.org.au/npw/survey/>



Research has found elevated long-term cortisol levels are associated with an increased risk for both cardiovascular events and diabetes. This is equivalent to the effect of traditional cardiovascular risk factors such as smoking or being overweight.

<http://jcem.endojournals.org/content/early/2013/04/17/jc.2012-3663.abstract?rss=1>

Research has even confirmed stress can turn your hair gray! Cortisol levels directly impact the cells that give hair its colour. This is also involved in pigment changes to your skin.

<http://www.nature.com/nm/journal/v19/n7/full/nm.3194.html>



# ADRENAL 101

*The adrenals are walnut-sized glands located just above the kidneys and are responsible for producing adrenaline, cortisol, progesterone, DHEA, oestrogen, and testosterone.*

The most important hormone to help the body deal with stress is cortisol, which the glands release in high levels during stressful times.

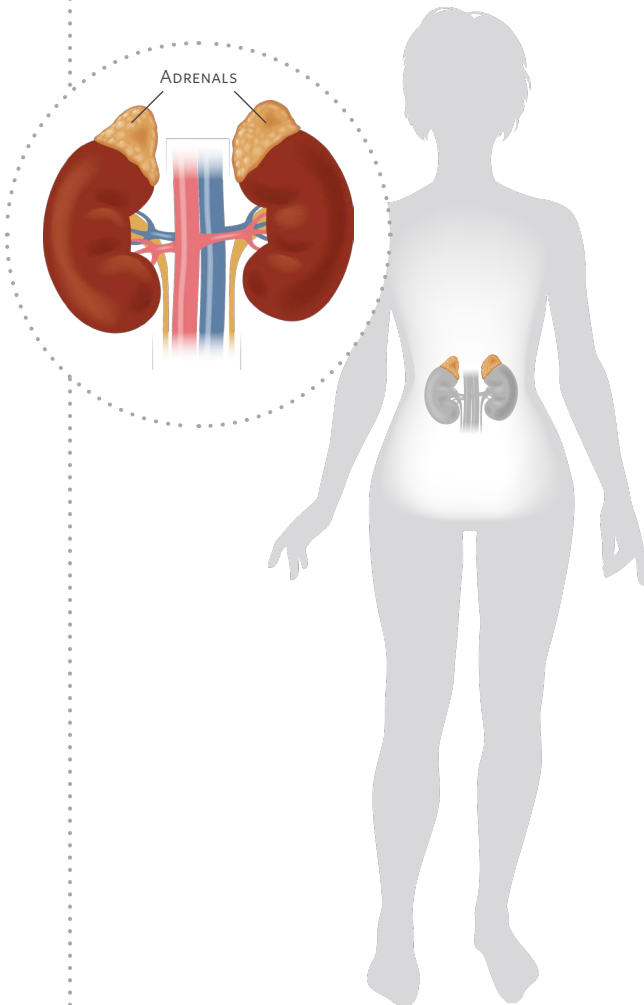
Cortisol, in the right quantities, is necessary for good health.

It:

- Maintains normal blood sugar levels
- Mobilises fat and protein stores for energy
- Controls and modifies most blood cells that participate in immune and inflammatory reactions
- Effects blood vessels and therefore blood pressure and electrolyte levels in the heart
- Influences the central nervous system, controlling mood and behaviour

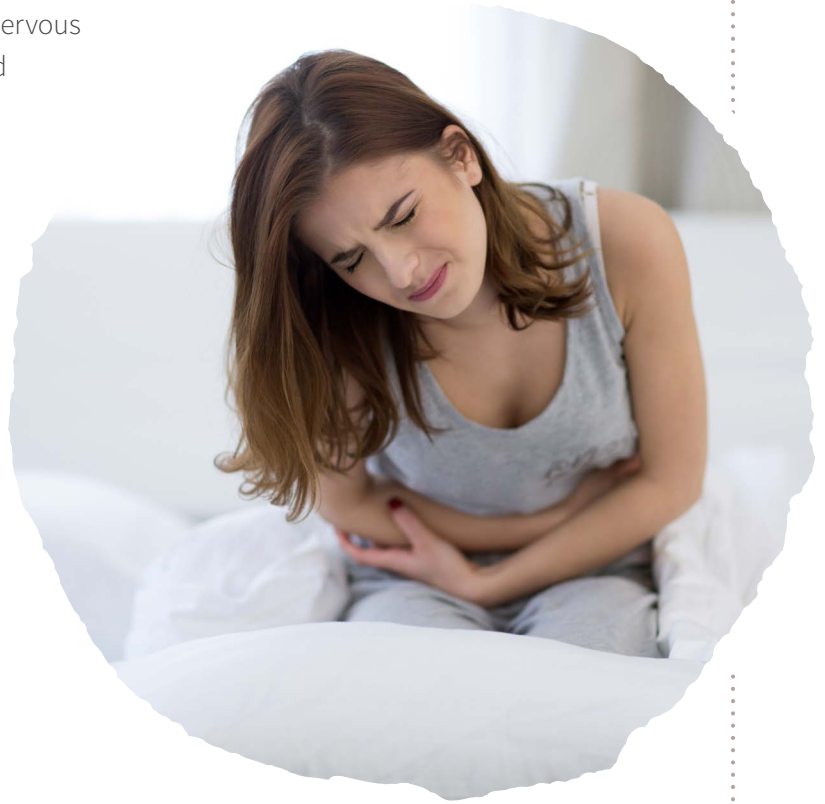
It is during acute high stress or prolonged periods of stress that problems can arise as the adrenal glands become overworked and are unable to keep up with demand.

During the early stages of stress your nervous system and adrenals are under constant stimulation, activating your sympathetic nervous system, and elevating cortisol levels. This is known as the fight-or-flight response. At this stage anxiety gets worse, insomnia, inability



to relax, nervousness and a racy mind may also occur and in more severe cases breathlessness, palpitations and even tremors may manifest.

An over stimulated sympathetic nervous system also results in a decreased production of digestive enzymes, which causes digestive and gut problems. Over time the prolonged stress causes your adrenals to become depleted as they cant keep up with demand. Therein lies the biggest problem—adrenal fatigue. Research shows that hypocortisolism is linked to fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue and autoimmune disease.



# SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

*The signs and symptoms can be wide and varied, so it's easy to feel you are affected by adrenal depletion. We all, to some degree, have tired adrenals but true adrenal fatigue is less common. Clinically it is called hypocortisolism, which means not enough cortisol. The most severe form is called Addison's disease, which is quite rare.*



Let me share with you my symptoms of adrenal fatigue. On blood and saliva testing my cortisol was minimal, I had zero testosterone, and very little DHEA. I was having hot flushes at nighttime, lost 40% of my hair, I lost a lot of weight without trying and I went down to 49kg but I lost a lot of muscle.

I was highly anxious and incredibly fatigued but I put all my symptoms down to being a new mum. Sophia was 10 months old, she was a severe reflux baby, breastfeeding was a nightmare and I hadn't slept more than 4 hours in a block in ten months. That's how I thought you felt as a new mum. Little did I know!

Then something told me that how I felt was not ok. Your adrenals produce testosterone and DHEA but mine were on strike. Once your adrenals are depleted, they struggle to produce other essential hormones and testosterone and DHEA are literally sacrificed so you can keep making cortisol, the biggest stress hormone. For me, it's been a long road back and taken over two years of constant work.





In clinic, we see so many women who are so very tired and exhausted and they put it down to being a first time mum. They come to see us for a few “tweaks”, not realizing they are on the edge of adrenal fatigue, they are well beyond burnout!

It is critical to address depleted or tired adrenals before it turns into full blown adrenal fatigue. The road back from adrenal fatigue is long and hard so prevention is key.

### **Let's go through some typical signs and symptoms of adrenal depletion:**

- Extremely tired, especially in the morning. Fatigue that is not relieved by sleep
- Find it difficult to get good quality sleep—trouble falling asleep or early morning waking
- Crave sweet and salty foods
- Feel stressed out and overwhelmed most of the time
- Decreased sex drive
- Hypoglycemia—erratic or abnormal blood sugar levels
- General sense of unwellness, flat or “gray” feelings
- Crave stimulants to get going in the morning and to prop themselves up during the day
- Muscle weakness
- Depression and/or anxiety
- Weight gain and inability to lose weight
- Chronic pain
- Allergies, immune dysfunction





# How to Diagnose Adrenal Depletion

*Adrenal fatigue is one of the most under diagnosed illnesses in western society. It has been estimated that 80% of adults suffer some level of adrenal fatigue.*

Luckily, a simple at-home saliva test can be used to help you discover whether stress is the true underlying source of your persistent fatigue. This can be ordered by your naturopath, and proves very useful to identify exactly where your cortisol levels lie and what stage of adrenal exhaustion you are experiencing.

It is critical to work with a specialised naturopath or doctor to help you on your adrenal journey.





# CAUSES OF ADRENAL DEPLETION

*Adrenal depletion is caused by stress whether it is emotional, mental or physical stress including injury. Physical stress can include food allergies/intolerances, heavy metals, acute or chronic infections, pathogens (parasites, viruses, bacterial infections, candida), and biochemical imbalances.*

Nutritional deficiencies are also a common cause. When under stress, the need for nutrients is much greater as their excretion is increased, and absorption compromised.

Remember if any of these symptoms are coming up for you, then please take action, contact Lauren or myself to organize a test. You absolutely want to stop at burnout, and avoid adrenal fatigue.





# HOW TO TREAT ADRENAL DEPLETION

*It doesn't happen overnight, you need to support yourself with many techniques!*

*A combination of lifestyle, diet, rest and body-mind techniques with specific recommendations for dietary supplementation will provide the best results for adrenal fatigue.*

## Foods

- Nourish your adrenals with a clean, whole foods diet, with an emphasis on organic produce
- Eliminate refined sugar and processed carbs. These put unnecessary pressure on your adrenals, at the same time as disrupting blood sugar levels, creates an acidic internal environment, and provide little to no nutritional benefits
- Kick the coffee habit. Caffeine containing beverages and chocolate are energy robbers, putting more stress on your adrenals, not to mention their negative effects on your sleep and blood sugar levels
- Regulate your blood sugar levels. Adrenal fatigue taxes your body's ability to regulate blood sugar, so, make sure you always include fiber, protein, and healthy fats in your meals and snacks
- Eating five to six servings of vegetables each day through juicing or adding them to meals
- Replace your table salt with sea salt for its additional mineral content
- Use quality cold-pressed oils e.g. olive, walnut, almond, flaxseed & avoid acidic oils such as hydrogenated or trans fats
- Drink filtered water—at least 8 to 10 glasses per day. 33ml/1kg body weight

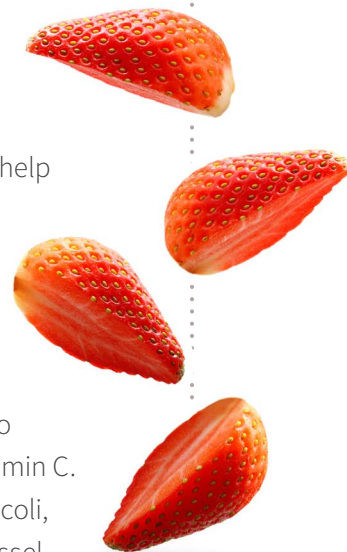


# Nutrients

*Supporting your physiology through the use of certain nutrients is essential for hormone production, and healthy adrenals.*

These include

- **Magnesium**—this mineral gets utilised the most out of all nutrients during times of stress and is essential for a healthy nervous system. It is particularly useful for reducing anxiety and the “startle reflex”. Increase your green leafy vegetables, raw cacao, pumpkin seeds, avocado, and almonds. I still don’t think you can get enough magnesium through your diet if you are adrenally driven.
- **Vitamin C**—Found in the highest concentrations in the adrenal glands, vit C will help improve your capacity to adapt to stress. It is required for making your steroid hormones, and which helps normalise cortisol levels. Stress will also increase the excretion of vitamin C. top up with red pepper, broccoli, strawberries, pineapple, Brussel sprouts, oranges and kale.
- **B5 & B6**—In animal studies, adrenal fatigue is often seen as a consequence of B5 & B6 deficiency. Increase chicken, turkey, tuna, sunflower seeds, banana and mushrooms.





**Herbal medicine**—Research highlights many adaptogenic herbs such as Withania, Rhodiola, Siberian ginseng and Licorice.

Adaptogenic herbs means they increase the ability of your body to withstand stress. They have a balancing effect and support your immune system, which is suppressed with chronic stress.

Research shows that adaptogens work by helping to regulate the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis as well as on a cellular level, priming cells to respond appropriately to stress.

We treat so many clients for adrenal dysfunction and feel that the role of adaptogenic herbs has never been more critical.

## RHODIOLA

Used by the Vikings to improve mental and physical endurance, Rhodiola is a potent adaptogenic herb, which is also anti inflammatory, antioxidant, anti anxiety and anti fatigue. A Swedish study gave Rhodiola to 30 people diagnosed with fatigue syndrome and a placebo to a control group of 30 healthy people. After 4 weeks both groups were assessed via saliva cortisol and the results were compelling, the fatigued people taking Rhodiola had a better cortisol response to stress and were more able to concentrate effectively. We use Rhodiola for both mild and severe adrenal fatigue.





### SIBERIAN GINSENG

A large study reviewed the results of a number of clinical trials involving 2,100 healthy men and women ages 19 to 72. Subjects were given doses of ginseng ranging from 2 to 16 ml of fluid extract, 33 percent ethanol, from one to three times daily for up to 60 days. Subjects had increased mental alertness and work output, enhanced athletic performance and improved work quality. They also exhibited an improved ability to withstand adverse conditions such as heat, noise, increases in workload and physical exertion. We think of Siberian ginseng as an effective all rounder.

### WITHANIA

A traditional Ayurvedic herb, withania was used to treat debility, nervous exhaustion and chronic inflammation. Studies show that withania has a direct effect on the hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal axis and balances cortisol levels. A recent clinical trial found that treatment with Withania resulted in a decrease in stress and significant decrease in the stress hormone cortisol in a group of men with stress induced infertility. The test group of men took 5g of Withania daily for three months and not only did their stress levels decrease but their sperm quality improved. 14% of the partners in the test group were pregnant at the end! As a side note, withania also supports thyroid health, which we often see affected by tired adrenals.





## ASTRAGALUS

Astragalus is traditionally used for chronic weakness, fatigue and low immunity. When we think of Astragalus, we think of a long term inability to fight infections.

When someone gets an infection, and then relapses a couple of times. They are burning the candle and possible have an autoimmune condition in their family history. A study showed that Astragalus increased natural killer cell activity, a type of immune cell critical for optimal health.



## LICORICE

One of our other favorites due to its warming, sweet tones and its incredibly powerful adaptogenic action. One study showed that it has an anti inflammatory action similar to the drug hydrocortisone. We prescribe licorice for our clients who are at the end stage of adrenal burnout and their adrenals are not producing enough cortisol. A compound in licorice called glycyrrhizin can extend the half-life of cortisol. Interestingly, research has shown that in people with normal adrenal function, licorice doesn't increase cortisol. Instead it has a balancing effect on cortisol for people that have low levels. How incredibly clever is that!





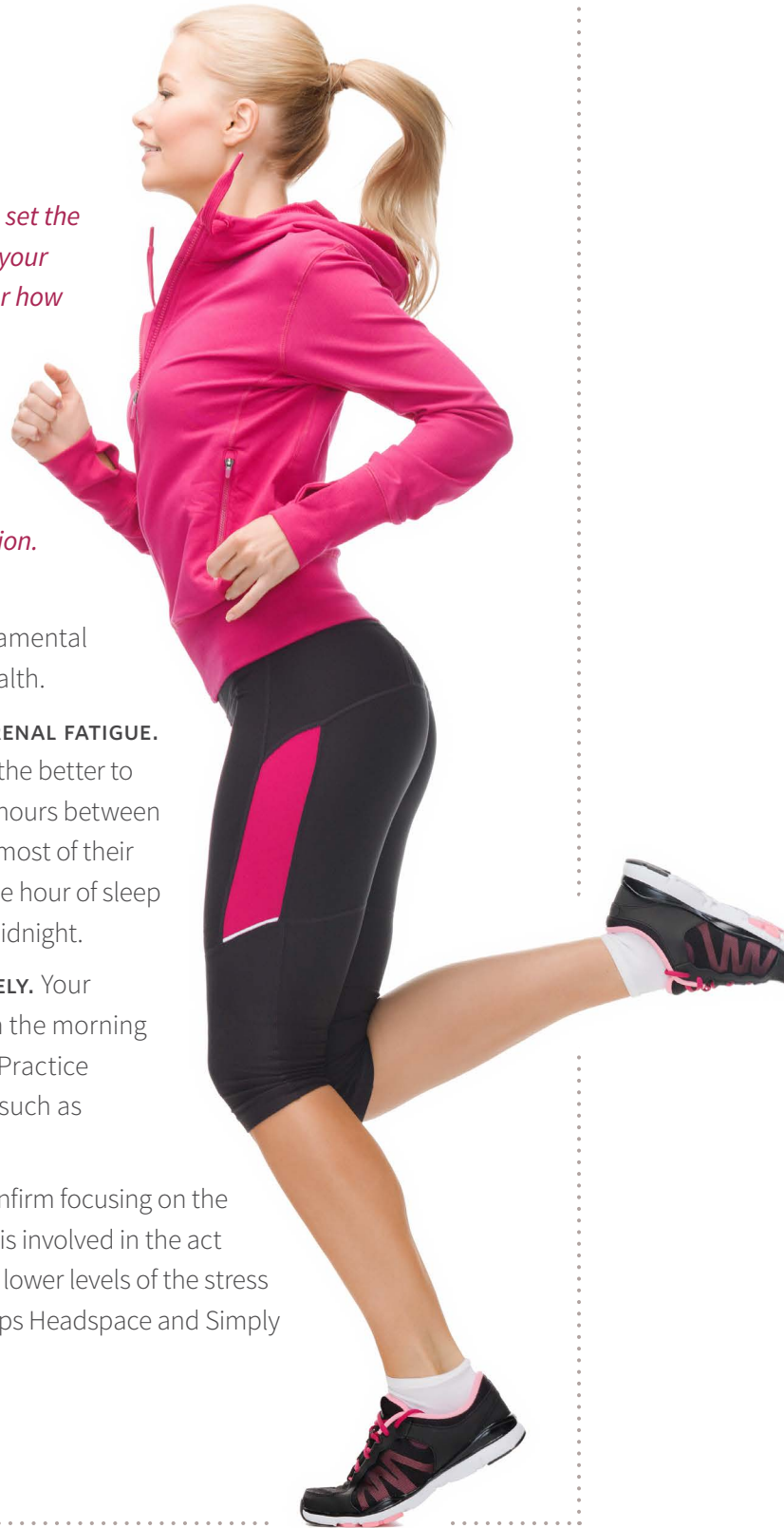


# LIFESTYLE

*It's hard to imagine these walnut size glands set the foundation for many hormonal pathways in your body. Your Adrenal glands are responsible for how your body reacts in times of stress. Not just obvious stress (emotional and mental ) but also physical stress, for example exercise and environmental drivers such as chemicals in your household cleaning products, personal care products and pollution.*

For this reason it is essential you make fundamental changes towards having optimal Adrenal health.

- **SLEEP IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE IN ADRENAL FATIGUE.** 7–8 hours a night is ideal, and the earlier the better to make the most of the most rejuvenating hours between 10<sup>PM</sup> and 3<sup>AM</sup>. This is when our bodies do most of their healing. It has been said that for every one hour of sleep before midnight its worth 2 hours after midnight.
- **EXERCISE REGULARLY, BUT NOT EXCESSIVELY.** Your cardio workout is best done first thing in the morning to be in line with normal cortisol levels. Practice regular relaxation & breathing exercises such as meditation and yoga.
- **PRACTICE MINDFULNESS.** Researchers confirm focusing on the present rather than letting the mind drift is involved in the act of “mindfulness”, and has been shown to lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol. We love the iPhone apps Headspace and Simply Being for their easy guided meditations.





- **RELAX IN A THERAPEUTIC BATH.** Have an Epsom salt bath weekly, aiming for 1–2 cups per bath. Epsom salts contain magnesium which helps your body relax
- **KICK THE CAFFEINE.** This includes coffee, black tea, chai, chocolate and energy drinks. Caffeine exhausts and depletes the adrenals
- **OPTIMISE YOUR MELATONIN.** Download Flux <https://justgetflux.com/> for your computer as this program minimises blue light on your computer screen. This supports your pineal gland to make melatonin, your key sleep hormone
- **UNPLUG BEFORE BEDTIME.** Switch off all technology 1 hour before bed—this includes television, iPads, iPhones, Kindles



# ACTION PLAN

*With all the information we have shared, you may be wondering what to do next. All you need to do is follow our Action Plan!*

**HERE ARE SEVEN KEY ACTION STEPS TO HELP HEAL YOUR ADRENALS NATURALLY:**

1. Book in to see us via <http://www.studio-you.com.au/>
2. Complete the adrenal quiz <http://www.adrenalfatigue.org/take-the-adrenal-fatigue-quiz>
3. Implement one lifestyle factor immediately
4. Make one of our adrenal boosting meals daily
5. Kick the caffeine
6. Download Flux for your computer <https://justgetflux.com/>
7. Switch off all technology 1 hour before bed



# TOP TEN RECIPES

## To Heal Your Adrenals Naturally

*Here are our 10 favorite recipes to help restore your adrenal health. They are rich in relaxing magnesium, energy giving B vitamins and essential anti-inflammatory fats as well as blood sugar stabilizing protein!*

### GREEN SMOOTHIE

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups fresh spinach
- 1 cup coconut water, unsweetened
- ½ cup pineapple, frozen
- ¼ avocado

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to blender and blend well.



### BREAKY SMOOTHIE

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fresh kale
- 1 cup almond milk, unsweetened
- ½ cup berries
- ½ frozen banana
- 1 tbsp almond butter + ¼ cup GF rolled oats
- Filtered water for desired thickness

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to a blender and blend well.





## GUT NOURISHING BREAKY BOWL

### INGREDIENTS

- *½ cup of quinoa, washed*
- *1 cup bone broth (may require more)*
- *Broccolini, cut into florets*
- *Baby spinach*
- *Mushrooms*
- *1 dessert spoon pesto*
- *Salt & pepper, to taste*
- *1 egg*

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat a little bit of olive oil in a pan over medium high. Add broccoli, mushrooms, and baby spinach, stir-fry until cooked. Remove from heat and set aside.
2. Combine bone broth and quinoa in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring regularly until cooked.
3. Add vegetables, pesto, and salt & pepper to the pot of quinoa and stir to combine. Cover and set aside.
4. Poach an egg and place on top of quinoa bowl.



## RAINBOW PROTEIN SALAD

### FOR THE SALAD MIX

- *¾ cup dried chickpeas, soaked then cooked until tender with ½ teaspoon turmeric (or replace with 2 cups canned chickpeas)*
- *1 medium beetroot, grated*
- *1 large carrot, grated*
- *2 sticks celery, diced*
- *1cm fresh ginger, very thinly sliced*
- *½ cup coarsely chopped parsley*
- *1 cup coriander leaves*

1. Toss together all the ingredients, setting aside half the coriander leaves for garnish.

### FOR THE PROTEIN MIX

- *1 cup of cashews, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, sesame seeds*
  - *½ tsp each cumin and coriander powder*
  - *¼ tsp chilli powder*
  - *25g coconut oil*
1. Bake the protein mix for 5 minutes at 180°C then sprinkle with a mixture of spices. Mix through the coconut oil. Bake for 10 minutes more, stirring often. Set aside to cool.

### DRESSING

- *30ml apple cider vinegar*
  - *20ml EVOO*
1. Mix all the ingredients together well and finish off with remaining coriander leaves.

## PUMPKIN SALAD

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 baby beets, roasted
- 80g pumpkin, diced
- 1 cup baby spinach
- ½ cucumber
- ¼ punnet cherry tomato, halved
- 1 carrot, sliced into fingers
- 50g goats feta
- EVOO
- ¼ lemon to squeeze
- Himalayan salt to taste

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven 180°C.
2. Place beets and pumpkin on baking tray, sprinkle with EVOO and salt, and bake until cooked. Remove from oven and allow to cool.
3. Place all ingredients in mixing bowl and toss until combine, add a little more EVOO and lemon juice. Place in serving bowl.



## VIETNAMESE CHICKEN SALAD

### INGREDIENTS

- ½ head wombok, finely shredded
- ½ red onion, peeled and very finely sliced
- 1 cup mint, roughly torn
- 1 carrot, peeled and cut into very thin matchsticks
- 2 cups shredded chicken
- ¼ cup green shallots
- ¼ cup walnuts

### DRESSING

- 100ml lemon juice
- 1 tbsp tamari sauce
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 small chilli, seeds removed and finely sliced
- 1 garlic clove, minced

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make salad dressing, simply combine all ingredients in a jar and shake well.
2. Combine all salad ingredients in a large bowl (except chopped walnuts), toss thoroughly. Pour over the dressing and toss again. Transfer to a serving plate or bowl and scatter with the shallots and peanuts.

## FENNEL AND AVOCADO SALAD

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ripe avocado, diced
- 1 fennel bulb, finely sliced with a mandolin
- 2 cups mixed leaves (rocket & spinach)
- 2 tbsp chia seeds, ground
- ¼ cup cashews
- 1 carrot, finely diced
- ¼ tsp lemon zest
- 1 juice of lemon
- Handful of fresh herbs (basil, parsley, coriander, mint)
- 2 tbsp EVOO (extra virgin olive oil)

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a salad bowl combine, salad leaves, avocado, fresh herbs, carrot and fennel. Combine the lemon juice, zest, oil, salt & pepper and drizzle over salad mix, Top with ground chia seeds and cashews.



## COCONUT POACHED SALMON WITH ASIAN GREENS

### INGREDIENTS

- 400ml can coconut cream
- 1 lemongrass stem (inner core only), finely grated
- 5cm piece of ginger, sliced
- Finely grated zest and juice of 2 limes
- 1 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tbsp mirin
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 4 × 180g skinless salmon fillets
- 2 tbsp sesame seeds, toasted
- Steamed Asian greens, to serve

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Place coconut cream, lemongrass, ginger, lime zest and juice, fish sauce and spring onion in a saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer.
3. Meanwhile, place fish in a baking dish and pour over the hot coconut mixture. Cover with a piece of foil and bake for 10–12 minutes until fish is just cooked but still a little rare in the centre. Sprinkle over sesame seeds and serve with steamed greens.





## BAKED MUSHROOMS

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 field mushrooms
- 1 large zucchini, diced
- 1 small red capsicum, diced
- Goats feta
- 4 garlic, crushed
- 30ml EVOO

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Mix EVOO with garlic and brush outside and inside of mushroom. Add zucchini, capsicum and crumbled feta to inside and bake in preheated oven for about 15–20 minutes. Serve with side salad





# REFERENCES

<http://www.psychology.org.au/npw/survey/>

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