

Since April 2009, tens of thousands of people have successfully completed our Whole30 program, with amazing results. Are you ready to change your life in 30 days? For more in-depth information about the program and our nutritional philosophy, refer to our new book, [It Starts With Food](#).

What Is The Whole30®?

Certain food groups (like sugar, grains, dairy and legumes) could be having a negative impact on your health and fitness *without you even realizing it*. Are your energy levels inconsistent or non-existent? Do you have aches and pains that can't be explained by over-use or injury? Are you having a hard time losing weight no matter how hard you try? Do you have some sort of condition (like skin issues, digestive ailments, seasonal allergies or fertility issues) that medication hasn't helped? These symptoms may be directly related to the foods you eat – *even the "healthy" stuff*. So how do you know if (and how) these foods are affecting you?

Strip them from your diet completely. Cut out all the inflammatory, gut-disrupting, calorie-dense but nutritionally sparse food groups for a full 30 days. Let your body heal and recover from whatever effects those foods may be causing. Push the "reset" button with your metabolism, systemic inflammation, and the downstream effects of the food choices you've been making. Learn once and for all how the foods you've been eating are actually affecting your day to day life, and your long term health. The most important reason to keep reading?

This will change your life.

We cannot possibly put enough emphasis on this simple fact – the next 30 days will change your life. It will change the way you think about food, it will change your tastes, it will change your habits and your cravings. It could, quite possibly, change the emotional relationship you have with food, and with your body. **It has the potential to change the way you eat for the rest of your life.** We know this because we did it, and thousands of people have since done it, and it changed our lives (and their lives) in a very permanent fashion.

Our Whole30® Program, As Outlined.

Eat real food – meat, seafood, eggs, tons of vegetables, some fruit, and plenty of good fats from fruit, oils, nuts and seeds. Eat foods with very few ingredients, all pronounceable ingredients, or better yet, no ingredients listed at all because they're totally natural and unprocessed. Don't worry... these guidelines are outlined in *extensive* detail in our Shopping Guide.

More importantly, here's what NOT to eat during the duration of your Whole30 program. Omitting all of these foods and beverages will help you regain your healthy metabolism, reduce systemic inflammation, and help you discover how these foods are *truly* impacting your health, fitness and quality of life.

1. **Do not consume added sugar of any kind, real or artificial.** No maple syrup, honey, agave nectar, Splenda, Equal, Nutrasweet, xylitol, stevia, etc. Read your labels, because companies sneak sugar into products in ways you might not recognize.
2. **Do not consume alcohol**, in any form, even for cooking. (And it should go without saying, but no **tobacco products** of any sort, either.)
3. **Do not eat grains.** This includes (but is not limited to) wheat, rye, barley, oats, corn, rice, millet, bulgur, sorghum, amaranth, buckwheat, sprouted grains and all of those gluten-free pseudo-grains like quinoa.

Yes, we said corn... for the purposes of this program, corn is a grain! This also includes all the ways we add wheat, corn and rice into our foods in the form of bran, germ, starch and so on. Again, read your labels.

4. **Do not eat legumes.** This includes beans of all kinds (black, red, pinto, navy, white, kidney, lima, fava, etc.), peas, chickpeas, lentils, and peanuts. No peanut butter, either. This also includes all forms of soy - soy sauce, miso, tofu, tempeh, edamame, and all the ways we sneak soy into foods (like lecithin).

Our Whole30® Program, As Outlined (cont.)

5. **Do not eat dairy.** This includes cow, goat or sheep's milk products such as cream, cheese (hard or soft), kefir, yogurt (even Greek), and sour cream... with the exception of clarified butter or ghee. (See below for details.)
6. **Do not consume carrageenan, MSG or sulfites.** If these ingredients appear in any form on the label of your processed food or beverage, it's out for the Whole30. (Refer to [It Starts With Food](#) for details on why we exclude these three in particular.)
7. **Do not eat white potatoes.** This is somewhat arbitrary, but if we are trying to change your habits and improve the hormonal impact of your food choices, it's best to leave white, red, purple, Yukon gold and fingerling potatoes off your plate.

In addition, no Paleo-ifying dessert or junk food choices. Trying to shove your old, unhealthy diet into a shiny new Whole30 mold will ruin your program faster than you can say, "Paleo pizza." This means no desserts or junk food made with "approved" ingredients—no coconut-flour pancakes, almond-flour muffins, flourless brownies, or coconut milk ice cream. Don't try to replicate junk food during your 30 days! That misses the point of the Whole30 entirely.

One last and final rule. You are not allowed to step on the scale or take any body measurements during your Whole30 program. This is about so much more than *just* weight loss, and to focus on your body composition means you'll miss out on the most dramatic and lifelong benefits this plan has to offer. So, no weighing yourself, analyzing body fat or taking comparative measurements *during* your Whole30. (We do encourage you to weigh yourself before and after, however, so you can see one of the more tangible results of your efforts when your program is over.)

The Fine Print

A few concessions, based on our experience, and those of our clients. These foods are exceptions to the rule, and are allowed during your Whole30. Including these foods as part of your varied healthy eating plan should not negatively impact the results of your Whole30 program.

1. **Clarified Butter or Ghee.** Clarified butter or ghee is the only source of dairy allowed during your Whole30. Plain old butter is NOT allowed, as the milk proteins found in non-clarified butter could impact the results of your program. Refer to our [Butter Manifesto](#) for more details on the milk proteins found in butter, purchasing high quality butter, and how to clarify it yourself.
2. **Fruit juice as a sweetener.** Some products will use orange or apple juice as a sweetener. We have to draw the line somewhere, so we're okay with a small amount of fruit juice as an added ingredient during your Whole30... but this doesn't mean a cup of fruit juice is a healthy choice! Refer to your Shopping Guide for clarification.

3. **Certain legumes.** We're fine with green beans, sugar snap peas and snow peas. While they're technically a legume, these are far more "pod" than "bean," and green plant matter is generally good for you.
4. **Vinegar.** Most forms of vinegar (like white, balsamic, apple cider, red wine, and rice), are allowed during your Whole30. The only exceptions are vinegars with added sugar, or **malt vinegar**, which generally contains gluten.
5. **Processed foods.** Minimally processed foods like canned coconut milk, applesauce, tomato sauce, chicken broth or canned olives are all acceptable on the Whole30—but remember, avoid anything with *carrageenan*, *MSG* or *sulfites*. These additives have potentially nasty side effects, and you can easily find all of these foods without them.

Ready To Start?

Now that you have the basic plan, you need to know how to implement it. It's simple, actually. **Start now. Today. This minute.** Count out thirty days on your calendar. Plan out a week's worth of meals, using the Resources we've given you here.

Take our Shopping Guide to your local health food store, farmer's market or grocer and stock up on things you'll be eating. And then... go. Cold turkey. Just start, using our MealSimple™ template to take all the guesswork out of meal planning. But don't put this off, not for one more day. If you give yourself excuses or reasons to delay, you may never begin.

Do it now.

Your only job for the next 30 days is to focus on making good food choices. You don't need to weigh or measure, you don't need to count calories, you don't need to stress about organic, grass-fed, pastured or free range. Just figure out how to stick to the Whole30 in any setting, around every special circumstance, under any amount of stress... for the next 30 days. Your only job? Eat. Good. Food.

The only way this will work is if you give it the full thirty days, no cheats, slips or "special occasions." This isn't Whole9 playing the tough guy. This is a FACT, born of education and experience. You need such a small amount of any of these inflammatory foods to break the healing cycle – one bite of pizza, one splash of milk in your coffee, one lick of the spoon mixing the batter within the 30 day period and you've broken the "reset" button. You must commit to the full program, exactly as written. Anything less and we make no claims as to your results, or the chances of your success. Anything less and you are selling yourself – and your potential results – short.

It's only 30 days.

Here's What You Can Expect

The first week or two will be tough, as your body heals and adjusts to this new way of eating and your brain wraps itself around going without all those sweet tastes and sugar-driven energy spikes. **And while you may start to feel better after a week or two... the healing process takes significantly longer.** In addition, the mental addiction and emotional connections to sugary foods, large amounts of carbohydrates and over-the-top, chemically-altered flavors is going to take a *lot* longer to overcome.

Stick with it, and be patient with yourself. **You cannot reasonably expect to completely reverse decades of poor eating habits in just 30 days.** The good news, however, is that improvements are front-loaded, and you *will* start to see significant benefits within the month.

At some point, we promise you... the magic will happen. You'll go to sleep easier, and sleep more soundly through the night. Your energy levels will increase and stabilize, and you'll feel just as good first thing in the morning as you do at the peak of your day. Your body composition will start to change – your clothes will fit differently, and you'll feel less bloated at the end of your day. Your performance, whether it be in the gym, while playing sports or during a hike, will improve. Your recovery after exercise, a game or a hard day's work will feel easier and more complete. Conditions, ailments, aches and pains will miraculously start to improve. And through all of it, you'll be eating delicious, fresh, natural, real food... food that *tastes* good, and is physically satiating and mentally satisfying.

Refer to [It Starts With Food](#) for more details about what to expect, or visit our free [Whole30 Forum](#) if you find yourself in a rough patch during your Whole30.

It's For Your Own Good

Here comes the tough love. This is for those of you who are considering taking on this life-changing month, but aren't sure you can actually pull it off, cheat free, for a full 30 days. This is for the people who have tried this before, but who "slipped" or "fell off the wagon" or "just HAD to eat (fill in food here) because of this (fill in event here)." This is for you.

It is *not* hard. Don't you *dare* tell us this is hard. Giving up heroin is hard. Beating cancer is hard. Drinking your coffee black. Is. Not. Hard. You won't get any coddling, and you won't get any sympathy for your "struggles". YOU HAVE NO EXCUSE not to complete the program as written. It's only thirty days, and it's for the most important health cause on earth – the only physical body you will ever have in this lifetime.

Don't even consider the possibility of a "slip". Unless you physically tripped and your face landed in a box of doughnuts, there is no "slip". You make a *choice* to eat something unhealthy. It is *always* a choice, so do not phrase it as if you had an accident. Commit to the program 100% for the full 30 days. Don't give yourself an excuse to fail before you've even started.

You never, ever, ever HAVE to eat anything you don't want to eat. You're all big boys and girls. Toughen up. Learn to say no (or make your Mom proud and say, "No, thank you"). Learn to stick up for yourself. Just because it's your sister's birthday, or your best friend's wedding, or your company picnic does not mean you *have* to eat *anything*. It's *always* a choice, and we would hope that you stopped succumbing to peer pressure in 7th grade.

This does require a bit of effort. If you're cutting out grains, legumes and dairy for the first time, you have to replace those calories with something. You have to make sure you're eating enough, that your nutrients are plentiful, that you're getting enough protein, fat and carbohydrates. You'll have to figure out what to eat for lunch, how to order at a restaurant and how often you'll need to grocery shop. We've given you all the tools, guidelines and resources you'll need, but take responsibility for your *own* plan. Improved health and fitness doesn't happen automatically just because you're now taking a pass on bread.

You can do this. You've come too far to back out now. You want to do this. You need to do this. And we believe that you *can* do this. So stop *thinking* about it, and start *doing*. Right now, this very minute, tell someone that you are starting the Whole30. Tell your spouse, tell your best friend, commit on our [Whole30 Forum](#) and prove to us – and yourself – that you are *committed*.

In Conclusion

We want you to participate. We want you to take this seriously, and see amazing results in unexpected areas. Even if you don't believe this will actually change your life, if you're willing to give it 30 short days, do it. It is *that* important. We believe in it *that* much. **It changed our lives, and we want it to change yours too.**

There are plenty of “nutrition challenges” and 30 day plans out there – things that sound a lot like the Whole30, that promise you'll lose weight, have more energy, feel better. They give you more of what you want – arbitrary points for eating junk food, or an exercise penance for cheating, or acceptable alcohol choices “if you must drink”.

But here at Whole9, we've built our entire business around telling you what you *need*, not what you *want*. We will not pander to you here. We will tell you what we know to be true, based on literally *thousands* of testimonials and consulting clients' real results. Programs that offer built-in cheats or rationalizations for less than healthy food choices simply do not work long-term. They don't teach you anything about how the foods you are eating are affecting you, and they don't do anything to help you change your habits, patterns and behaviors. The Whole30 program has been in motion for almost two years, with participants all across the world – and has measurable, real-life, sustainable results to back up our claims.

Welcome aboard.