

What is the Whole30?

Certain food groups (like grains, legumes and dairy) are probably 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 problems, 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, insulin-spiking, 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 provoking. 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, fish, eggs, tons of vegetables, some fruit, and plenty of good fats. Eat foods with very few ingredients, all pronounceable ingredients, or better yet, no ingredients listed at all because they're natural and unprocessed.

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 all kinds of ways.
2. **Do not eat processed foods.** This includes protein shakes, pre-packaged snacks/meals, protein bars, milk substitutes, etc.
3. **Do not drink alcohol,** in any form.
4. **Do not eat grains.** This includes (but is not limited to) wheat, rye, barley, millet, oats, corn, rice, sprouted grains and all of those gluten-free pseudo-grains like quinoa. (Yes, we said corn!) 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.
5. **Do not eat legumes.** This includes beans (black, kidney, lima, etc.), peas, lentils, and peanuts or peanut butter. This also includes all forms of soy - soy sauce, miso, tofu, tempeh, edamame, and all the ways we sneak soy into foods (like lecithin).
6. **Do not eat dairy.** This includes *all* cow, goat or sheep's milk, cream, butter, cheese, yogurt, whey, ice cream, etc.
7. **Do not eat white potatoes.** It's arbitrary, but they are carbohydrate-dense and nutrient poor, and also a nightshade.
8. Most importantly... **do not try to shove your old, unhealthy diet into a shiny new Whole30 mold.** This means no "Paleo-fying" less-than-healthy recipes – no "Paleo" pancakes, "Paleo" pizza, "Paleo" fudge or "Paleo" ice cream. Don't mimic poor food choices during your Whole30 program!

One last and final rule. You are not allowed to step on the scale for the duration of your Whole30 program. This is about so much more than *just* weight loss, and to focus only on your body composition means you'll miss out on the most dramatic (and lifelong) benefits this plan has to offer. Give yourself a well-deserved, long overdue break from fixating on that number on the scale! **Absolutely NO weighing yourself or taking comparative measurements during your Whole30.**

The Fine Print

A few concessions, based on our experience, and those of our clients. These are less than optimal foods that we are okay with you including during your Whole30. Including these foods in moderation should not negatively impact the results of your Whole30 program.

1. **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 okay! Refer to your Shopping Guide for clarification.
2. **Processed Meat.** On occasion, we are okay with organic chicken sausage (those that are nitrate, dairy, gluten and dairy-free), and high quality deli meat, packaged fish (like tuna or smoked salmon) or jerky. Read your labels carefully, because Whole30-approved processed meats, especially jerky, are hard to find.
3. **Certain legumes.** We're fine with green beans, sugar snap peas and snow peas. While they're technically a legume, they're far more "pod" than "bean", and we want you to eat your greens.
4. **Processed goods.** We're okay with cans or jars of olives, coconut milk, sauces and spice mixtures like tomato sauce or curry, or vegetables like sweet potato or butternut squash, but *only* if the labels prove they're "clean". (Refer to your Shopping Guide and FAQ for details.)

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, go 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. 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, 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 a friend's pizza, one splash of milk in your coffee, one lick of the spoon mixing the cake 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.

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 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 donuts, there is no "slip". You make a *choice* to eat something of poor quality. 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, and don't give yourself an excuse to fail before you've even started.

More tough love...

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 vitamins and 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 in this Success Guide, but take responsibility for your *own* plan. Improved health, fitness and performance doesn't happen just because you're now taking a pass on bread.

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" out there – programs that promise you'll see quick weight loss, more energy and improved performance without missing out on the foods you really like. These plans 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 *hundreds* of testimonials and 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 18 months now, with participants all across the world – and has measurable, real-life, sustainable results to back up our claims.

Welcome aboard.

Questions?

While most folks can follow the program exactly as outlined here with spectacular results, you've got two options if you need a little more help with your Whole30, or simply want to maximize your results.

1. Purchase our new 28 page **Whole30 Success Guide** (<http://whole9life.com/success-guide/>) which includes a detailed Shopping Guide, our new MealSimple™ meal planning template, an *extensive* FAQ and list of additional resources.
2. Read old Whole30 comments on the site (<http://whole9life.com/category/whole-30/>) where we practically guarantee we've answered all your questions ten times over. "How much should I eat?" "How much fruit is too much?" "Are headaches in the first few days normal?" All this and then some can be found in the almost 2,000 comments on the Whole30 Version 2.0 and original Whole30 post.

We apologize that we are unable to respond to individual questions about your experience with the Whole30 on our web site or via email. The overwhelming volume of questions we received during the last Whole30 is *exactly* why we created our Success Guide! However, if you prefer to utilize the resources we have available for free on our site, the comments found on the Whole30 Versions 1.0 and 2.0 posts will give you all the information you should need.

