



Autoimmune Protocol

HOW TO GET STARTED

A step by step introduction

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1. Introduction

Okay, you have taken the leap of faith, you have read the information and have decided that the Autoimmune Protocol Paleo Elimination is the right fit for you, but where the heck do you start!?

That's exactly the question I kept asking myself for weeks when I started on the AIP. There were no start up guides available at the time and I felt very overwhelmed by taking on such a departure from how I previously ate. I was confused, and I kept thinking "how am I going to do this?"

I suggest you don't start on AIP until you have a complete understanding of the protocol, foods and beverages that you can/cannot have. I know AIP can be a little daunting, especially if you have a busy schedule with a family to take care of, or are busy at work. It can be quite confusing, but it doesn't have to be! I didn't have a preparation guide like this to help me, so I have written this guide as a tool to help you ease into this new lifestyle, and when you begin you will be fully equipped to embark on this journey.

I am not going to cover the science and everything about AIP here and now, however, I can tell you the Autoimmune Protocol and "The Paleo Approach" was designed by Dr Sarah Ballantyne Phd. (The Paleo Mom), if you are searching for more scientific information you cannot go past Sarah's book "The Paleo Approach".

In my simple practical guide you will learn how to plan your AIP Paleo commencement covering everything you will need for success; I will take all the guess work out of it for you.

So without further ado here we go!



2. What is AIP?

Firstly, I would like to explain what autoimmune disease is, as I know many people with autoimmune diseases aren't really sure themselves what they are and how they affect your body. Autoimmune disease is caused when your immune system can no longer differentiate between proteins belonging to your body and that of a foreign entity, and starts attacking your body. Instead of your immune system fighting off and protecting your body from foreign pathogens such as bacterial or viral infections, it also starts attacking itself. Your symptoms develop over time as damage is done to cells, tissues and organs within the body and what areas of the body are under attack is what defines the different autoimmune disease. For example in Hashimoto's disease the thyroid is attacked, in rheumatoid arthritis it is the joints that are attacked. In all autoimmune diseases tested to date, gut dysbiosis or leaky gut has been found as the root cause of autoimmunity.

Our bodies have been designed in an incredible way that allows the foods we eat to be digested and converted into usable proteins, enzymes, micro-nutrients etc; in a healthy gut these proteins are then passed through the gut wall into your body to nourish us. When we have leaky gut the microscopic 'holes' that allow nutrients to pass in to the body become enlarged, and undigested proteins from foods pass through the gut lining and lodge in various places in the body. Our immune system then starts attacking these areas to protect it from these 'foreign pathogens'. Leaky gut is caused by continually eating foods over a long period of time, in some cases decades, that cause an inflammatory immune response.

In a nut free shell, the Autoimmune Protocol is a lifestyle that eliminates all possible inflammatory foods for deep gut healing of gut dysbiosis or leaky gut, while providing a highly nutrient dense array of foods to also address deficiencies in micro-nutrient, hormonal imbalances and restoring the balance of healthy gut flora. The Autoimmune Protocol will reduce inflammation within

the body, so that your body can heal. All autoimmune and chronic diseases are caused by a leaky gut, and the resulting immune response triggers that cause your symptoms. By removing these foods you are taking away the triggers that are causing your disease and symptoms, and finally allowing your immune system, gut, body and mind, the time to calm and gently heal itself.

Restoring your body's microbiome, or the friendly bacteria that keeps our bodies healthy, is also an integral part of the AIP. Years of damage created by eating a diet poor in nutrients, and inflammatory foods, causes an imbalance in our gut flora which can have a multitude of effects on our health. These can include a leaky gut, poor nutrient absorption, over growth of fungus and yeast within the gut, bouts of prolonged infection and or slower recovery time, just to name a few. It's essential to include high quality probiotics in your diet ideally from fermented foods, as these are not only cost effective versus store bought probiotics, they are much higher in the friendly bacteria we need, but also high in highly bio-available vitamins and minerals, and they taste amazing too!

One of the biggest stumbling blocks to overall healing or your ability to put your condition into remission, is not addressing any underlying co-infections such as helicobacter pylori, Epstein Barr syndrome, gut Candida overgrowth. While eating a clean AIP lifestyle will definitely set you on the road to recovery, not finding out and eliminating any co-infections will hinder your recovery process.

In addition to the regular paleo exclusions which include all grains, dairy, legumes, all processed and pre-packaged foods, modern processed vegetable oils, refined sugars, all artificial foods and additives, you will also be eliminating all nuts, seeds and seed spices including coffee and cacao, eggs, and the nightshade family of vegetables and spices. These foods can be possible allergens or cause an inflammatory impact on the gut and immune system. It is really important for you to focus on the foods you can have and not the foods you can't; you are giving yourself an incredible gift by embarking on this lifestyle of healing.

3. How long do I stay on AIP?

AIP is designed as an elimination protocol diet that is recommended to be followed for a minimum of 90 days. It is critical to stress the importance of following the protocol strictly as any cheating will cause setbacks in your overall healing. If you even occasionally cheat it can have a huge impact on your progress as you will trigger inflammatory immune responses within the body that can cause your symptoms to flare. When you have a flare like this it can take some time for your body to calm back down and thus you are prolonging the overall time you need to be in the elimination phase of the protocol.

After the initial 90 days you can start a very slow staged reintroduction process. By slowly reintroducing foods one at a time you are able to accurately gauge how your body is responding to those foods. Sometimes you will reintroduce a food and still react to it. This is your body saying it isn't ready and needs more healing time before trying that food again. This is not a process that can be rushed.

A little rule of thumb is that if there is significant damage done to the body over long periods of time it will generally take longer for the body to heal itself. You also need to take into consideration that you may not be able to successfully reintroduce some foods or you may only be able to have a small quantity of certain foods occasionally, rather than being able to have them back on your plate on a regular basis.

I was on AIP for 16 months before I found out I was in remission, and I have

only successfully reintroduced some foods while others are an occasional treat. However, some other foods are permanently off my menu, and that's ok because I have regained my health. I would rather enjoy the range of flavours I can eat rather than eat foods that are constantly causing immune triggers, that in turn bring my symptoms back with a vengeance. You truly get no greater understanding of how these foods effect your body, until you completely eliminate them from your diet, and then reintroduce them.

I highly recommend starting a food/symptom journal to track your progress and any reactions you have. Below is a guide of symptoms you may experience when reintroducing foods that will alert you to whether you are reacting to them;

- Any symptoms of your disease returning or worsening
- Any gastrointestinal symptoms: tummy ache, changes in bowel habits, heartburn, nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, gas, bloating, undigested/partially digested food particles in stool
- Reduced energy or fatigue
- Strong food cravings: sugar cravings, fat cravings, pica (mineral cravings)
- Trouble sleeping: either falling asleep or staying asleep or just not feeling as rested in the morning
- Headaches or dizziness
- Aches and pains: muscle, joint, or tendon/ligament
- Changes in your skin: rashes, acne, dry skin, little pink bumps or spots; dry hair or nails
- Mood issues: feeling low or depressed, having a lower ability to handle stressful situations, increased anxiety.

4. What are the foods I can and can't have?

It is of upmost importance when embarking on this healing journey you keep in mind the foods you can have. It's very easy to get caught up thinking of everything you are 'giving up' instead.

Following is 2 lists including all the AIP approved foods and the banned foods on AIP:





Vegetables

artichoke

rocket

asparagus

bok choy

broccoli

brussel sprout

cabbage

cauliflower

celery

silver beet

collard green

cucumber

fennel

green bean

kale

leek

lettuce

mushroom

rhubarb

snap pea

spinach

squash

watercress

pumpkin

Root Vegetables

beetroot

carrot

celery

onion

parsnip

turnip

radish

rutabaga

shallot

sweet potato

yam

Spring onions





Fruit

apple

apricot

avocado

banana

blackberry

blueberry

rockmelon

cherry

clementine

coconut

date

fig

grape

grapefruit

guava

huckleberry

honeydew

kiwi

lemon

lime

mango

marionberry

nectarine

orange

papaya

peach

pear

persimmon

plum

pineapple

pomegranate

raspberry

strawberry

tangerine

watermelon



Fats

Fats

animal fat

avocado oil

coconut oil

duck fat

lard

olive oil

sustainably sourced palm oil



Meats

beef

lamb

fish

shellfish

chicken

turkey

duck

pork





Offal's

bone broth

liver

kidney

heart

brains

Herbs

basil
bay leaves
chamomile
chives
coriander
dill
lavender
lemongrass
marjoram
mint
parsley
peppermint
rosemary
sage
spearmint
tarragon
thyme





Spices

cinnamon
cloves
garlic
ginger
saffron
pink salt
shallots
turmeric
rapudura

Ferments

fermented vegetables
kombucha
water kefir
sauerkraut
carrot
beetroot
other veggies
coconut sugar





Standard Pantry Items

apple-cider
vinegar
anchovies
arrowroot powder
coconut flour
coconut flakes

coconut vinegar
coconut aminos
dates
dried fruit
olives
salmon

sardines
tuna
umeplum vinegar
banana flour
raw honey
pure maple syrup

AIP Banned Foods

Seeds

anise
cacao
caraway
chia
coriander
cumin
fennel seed
fenugreek
mustard
nutmeg
poppy
pumpkin
sesame
sunflower
hemp
coffee

Eggs

chicken
duck
goose

Dairy

butter
cheese
cream
cream cheese
ghee
milk
yogurt

Nightshades

cayenne
chilli pepper
eggplant
goji berry
ground cherry
habañero
jalapeño
paprika
poblano
potato
sweet pepper
tobacco
tomato
tomatillo
wolf berries

Nuts

almond
brazil
hazelnut
pecan
macadamia
walnut

Grains

amaranth
barley
buckwheat
bulgur
corn
farro
kamut
millet
oats
quinoa
rice
rye
sorghum
spelt
teff
wheat

Beans & Legumes

adzuki beans
black beans
black-eyed peas
chickpeas
fava beans
lentils
lima beans
peanuts
kidney beans
soybeans

5. Food Quality

Sadly, we now live in a world where our food supply has been heavily industrialized over decades. This is reflected in the nutrient quality of our food and how many toxins it has been exposed to, and in turn how many toxins we are consuming. We would all ideally love to eat a diet of solely organic produce but for many this is simply too expensive; there are ways of incorporating as much toxin free food into your menu as you can.

Before you even start AIP, work out where you are going to source your food. Is it going to be from local farmers' markets, a local co-op, local green grocers, local butchers, or the supermarket? Notice I used the word local a lot? This is because it is not only great to support and get to know your local producers, but it will ensure you are getting the freshest produce available, as in most cases the food has been grown or raised within your local area. Supermarkets, as you may know, tend to store fresh food including eggs, for in some cases many months!!! This sadly means that a lot of the nutrient quality has been lost or not even properly developed because produce is harvested green and unripened, to help prevent loss to pests in the field or increase the time the produce can be stored. Another great

reason to shop from local producers is you will save money!!

Produce from markets etc will be, in the majority of cases, cheaper than buying from big supermarket chains. If for a variety of reasons you are unable to shop from local producers this is totally fine, don't fret!! Eating the AIP paleo way is a far more nutrient dense way to eat than eating a heavily processed diet, devoid of nutrition and healing. Eating a heavily processed diet is the biggest contributor to chronic disease in our society today and we are exponentially getting sicker as a community every year because of this.

Go organic or not organic? Yes, it far better to buy organic for many reasons - no chemical sprays and fertilisers, less chemicals for your body to contend with, less impact to the environment, better soil quality; thus increasing nutrient density, and in many cases improved shelf life. The animals are raised in a much more respected and high quality environment and are not exposed to hormones, antibiotics and steroids. This will mean less of these nasties make their way into your body causing inflammation and chronic diseases.

Another big factor to consider is the exposure to GMOs. There is overwhelming evidence on the negative health impacts of consuming these Frankenfoods. You may have noticed an increasing number of imported fresh produce on the shelves of supermarkets in the last decade or so. Many of these foods come from countries that heavily cultivate GMO crops and there are still no labelling laws to disclose whether or not GMO practices have been used. Another thing to consider is many of the countries we import food from don't have the stringent quality practices we have in place in Australia, or the types and levels of chemical, fertilisers and pesticides used far exceed the considered 'safe' levels. Also, many of the brands of processed foods that we have often grown up with, or have known and trusted, are actually owned and produced by global biotech, or big food companies. These companies extensively use GMO ingredients and other chemical additives in their products to ensure high profits for their shareholders. This also means cheap prices for the consumer and "food" devoid of any nutrition that causes people to become addicted to their products, and contributes to chronic diseases.

6. Stocking your Pantry

There is no cooking without ingredients! Your kitchen should have a number of dry and wet spices plus ingredients that you will likely use on a daily basis. I strongly suggest that before you start you cleanse your kitchen of non AIP/Paleo ingredients. It will make it a lot easier to avoid temptation from eliminated foods, if they are not on hand. If the thought of wasting good food bothers you, perhaps you could donate any unwanted food to your local food bank or relevant charities. Even though these foods may no longer be desirable to you, there are many people that would greatly appreciate them in a time of need.

Base the purchases you make on a weekly meal plan and buy only what is needed. By doing this you will be able to spread the cost of restocking your pantry over several weeks, eliminating the need to go out and spend up buying everything at once.

A good way to source high quality ingredients at a fraction of the retail cost is buying non-perishables in bulk, online. For example ingredients that are used regularly in AIP cooking such as coconut oil, flour, aminos and condiments like apple cider vinegar can be sourced cheaply in bulk online, and another option is to see if any family or friends, or perhaps, even another autoimmune sufferer may want to help split the cost. This will allow you to stay within your budget whilst still being able to consume high quality ingredients and fostering a sense of community when creating a co-op with friends.



7. Find a good functional medical practitioner

One of the biggest keys to your successful healing is having the right team of health care practitioners managing your condition. Finding a good functional/integrated medicine doctor is an integral part of this. So 'what is a functional/integrated doctor?' I hear you ask, the simplest explanation of this is a doctor whom has taken on extra study on nutrition, environmental, hormonal and metabolic medicine. These doctors have a far greater understanding in these vital areas of medicine that are in fact the root causes of autoimmune and other chronic diseases.

To highlight the stark difference between functional/integrated doctors versus your regular GP, a functional medical doctor has undertaken approximately another 4-6 plus years of further study in the areas mentioned above where as a regular GP only spends one unit of study on nutrition in their whole 6 years in medical school. So you can see how these types of doctors have a far superior understanding of the intricacies of autoimmune disease and other chronic conditions.

If you haven't got one I would certainly suggest finding the right doctor is first and foremost for your health and recovery. The Australasian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine is a good place to help find a suitable Practitioner and also The

Mindd Foundation is another place to find one. If you are having trouble locating a suitable practitioner another way can be to see a good naturopath. They often know of, or work with, doctors in those fields.

When I first was diagnosed with my autoimmune disease in 1998 we did not have the internet, and computers were not so common where I lived, they just were not a necessity so I did not have the ability to research more about my disease. Nowadays of course you wouldn't be caught without a technical device of one type or another. This has changed the way people live, and research is now a search engine information click away.

More and more people are realising that their health is really in their own hands, and they have to take the bull by the horns and do what needs to be done to find healing and harmony for their bodies and minds. We are certainly living in the age of information where we have huge resources for research to make quality decisions about our own health. Most doctors do not address illness with food and lifestyle, they simply prescribe drugs or medicines that often will only provide a 'band aid' to symptoms, whilst ignoring the root cause, and in a lot of cases exacerbating the disease they are trying to 'treat'. You have diabetes, so here you need take

this much of this drug for the rest of your life and come in every 3 months to have regular blood tests! Not many doctors will say 'hey you can reverse your diabetes if you follow this eating protocol and lifestyle'; because they have not been trained in nutrition.

So finding an alternative holistic functional medical practitioner, that is up to date, and keeps up to date with all of the latest in nutrition will be very helpful. You will be able to monitor your progress much easier as they will know what tests need to be done and know where to look for signs of remission and healing.

If you don't or can't find the right practitioner then that is okay as well. You can still start AIP and learn to listen to your body. A great tool if you are in this position is to create your own symptom journal and track how your body reacts to the foods you are consuming and the medications or supplements you may be taking as these can have an impact as well. So by having a journal you will be able to pinpoint anything that isn't working for you, this is still a great idea to do, even if you have an integrated medicine doctor.



8. Cleansing your body and home of toxic chemicals

Another important task is to clear out all the bad chemicals you use in your home, from dishwashing liquid to body soap, shampoo, conditioner, to having pure, clean drinking water without fluoride and chlorine. AIP is all about detoxing and cleansing your body from chemicals and healing your gut, it is a complete overhaul and tune up for your body. I think of our bodies as a machine like a car, you wouldn't put inferior fuel or additives in your car so why would you put them in, or on your body? After years of abusing our bodies with chemicals like medication, antibiotics, poison in our foods and water we need to do a complete overhaul, reconditioning and tune-up of our bodies, and that is exactly what AIP is for your body.

Removing these products from your life will take a huge load off your body and help you heal. There is an amazing selection of natural personal care and household products now available, at very affordable prices. These are not only healthier for you and environmentally safe, but they are far more effective than their toxic chemical counterparts.



Personal care items that contain toxic chemicals;

- Toothpaste, mouthwashes and dental flosses
- Shampoos, conditioners, styling products, hair dyes
- Body washes, soaps, body scrubs
- Deodorants, perfumes and body sprays
- Facial cleansers, scrubs, moisturisers, masks
- Make up, make up removers, nail polish and removers
- Sunscreen, self tanners and bronzers
- Personal insect repellents

Household products that contain toxic chemicals

- Dish washing liquids, dish washer powders and tablets, rinse aids
- Surface cleaning sprays, window cleaning sprays, stainless steel cleaners, oven cleaners, floor washes
- Bathroom cleaners, cream cleansers, mould killer sprays, bleach, toilet cleaners, drain cleaners
- Air freshener sprays and diffusers, fragrance candles, fragranced oils
- Laundry detergents, stain removers, laundry soakers, fabric softeners, ironing sprays
- Insect killing sprays, surface sprays and powders, insect baits and bombs
- Garden pest sprays and fertilisers, weed control products.



9. Lifestyle factors to include in the AIP lifestyle

Lifestyle factors are hugely underestimated when it comes to autoimmune and chronic disease management. How much or how little we move our bodies, the quality of our sleep and stress management all play a vital role in our bodies ability to heal. As a society we have become so busy that taking time out for self care has become an afterthought at best. For some it is a case of knowing your body and mind needs rejuvenation but constantly prioritising other tasks ahead of nurturing your body and mind.

You will already be aware if you suffer from stress that it will surely have an effect on your health. There are many techniques to reduce stress in your life, however, choose a technique that works well with you and fits in to your schedule. I find time for myself to de-stress and listen to a downloadable app called 'Headspace' and I can fit it in whenever I have spare time. The mornings are a good time for me, I sit on the patio with my cup of tea and do my mindfulness. If you struggle with stress don't be shy to seek some help or ask friends for some advice, they just might have a technique or strategy that fits in well with you.

- There are many strategies to reduce stress, find one that works well for you and go for it.
- Being negative will also affect your life and wellbeing; focus on all the good things in your life, be grateful for all that you have.

Huge changes may not happen overnight, when readjusting your routines to this new lifestyle. The idea is to make subtle changes over some time, so you don't overwhelm yourself trying to incorporate too many things at once. There are many lifestyle factors to consider that can be potentially holding you back from achieving the health goals you may have.

Just as you are changing the foods you consume and that will take time, constant dedication, patience and practice, so will incorporating new strategies to bring your self care to the forefront.

Physical Activity

- I know some people struggle to find the time to exercise, and some hate it, but we all need to keep moving. Do what you enjoy and love doing: going for a walk, getting out in the garden, playing with the children, bike riding, taking the dog for a walk, golf, tennis, Yoga & stretching or washing the car. As long as you are keeping active, this is the key. Nothing is worse than doing some sort of physical exercise that you hate, just do what you enjoy and as much of it as you can.
- If moderate physical exercise is already a fixture in your life perhaps try bush walking, cycling, joining in a fitness class at your local gym or even a jogging club.
- For many suffering with autoimmune conditions limited mobility can be an issue. Work with your healthcare provider and develop a regular routine including activities such as water aerobics, tai chi or chair exercises.
- It is important not to overdo it and risk injuring yourself thus setting your recovery back.





Sleep Quality

- It is very important to our circadian rhythms to keep regular times going to bed and then again in waking. This can be difficult when dealing with insomnia for example, but having a regular waking time tends to help stop that 'hung over' feeling you can get from having broken sleep.
- Expose yourself to natural light outside during the day. Vitamin D is essential for good health, there are numerous scientific researches completed highlighting the importance of vitamin D for your health and wellbeing. Sunshine is the best way to get vitamin D, and I don't mean walking in the sun clothed and with a hat on, I am talking about getting your body drenched in sunshine

If your skin has not seen daylight for a while and you are as white as a ghost, then ensure

- that you start with small doses like 15 minutes a day but, if your lifestyle restricts you from getting a lot of sunshine then a high quality supplement will just have to do. It is best to get sun exposure on your skin early in the morning or late afternoon before the sun gets too hot, the winter sun is much less intense so your skin can take a lot more; whatever you do avoid getting sunburn. Either way you need vitamin D so do what you need to get it.
- Limit exposure to artificial lights in the evening. Install soft low wattage bulbs in your home or even candles for some relaxing ambience. There are also many blue light filter apps available to download to use on devices such as mobile phones, tablets, PC's and even smart TV's. Studies have proven exposure from the blue lights emitted from these devices cause disruptions to circadian rhythms.
- Create your own calming relaxing ritual to unwind of an evening. For example take a relaxing bath instead of a shower, with magnesium, your favourite essential oils and light some candles and truly allow your body to relax. Perhaps turning off the TV and reading a good book, preferably a genre that won't over stimulate your mind!
- Sleep in a very dark comfortable environment. Make your bedroom a sanctuary of calm and rejuvenation. Leave electronic devices out of the bedroom as well.
- Work out your optimal time to go to bed to get the most restful sleep, then you can try to stick to it and create a regular sleeping and waking routine.
- Avoid eating your evening meals at odd times as this can also impact your sleep cycles. Try and maintain regular meal times throughout the day.

Managing Meal Times



- Make eating nourishing meals a priority in your life. Take the time to sit and enjoy the food you have prepared, chew slowly and mindfully. This is also great for digestion.
- Change your perspective of cooking. Sadly, today, enjoying the art of cooking has become an afterthought, with so many convenience foods now available many of us have found cooking to be a chore. Look at eating AIP as a new culinary adventure, experimenting with new flavor profiles and techniques.
- Make sure to be having at least 2-3 large 'proper' meals a day.
- Set aside the time for food preparation every week. If you can have a day where you can involve the whole family in preparing food, not only will it help you but it will be a lot of fun for the whole family. You are also teaching your family to eat wholesome nutritious food that will benefit them for their whole lives.
- Batch cooking is another valuable time and energy saver. Many of us with chronic health issues battle with fatigue, pain etc but if you can manage to handle a few solid hours a week you can relax knowing you have beautiful healing nourishing meals at the ready! Preparing a weeks' worth of meals in a day may sound daunting however once you get the hang of it you will wonder how you managed meal preparation before. With all the meals or the components

of your dishes prepped and ready in the fridge/freezer it simply becomes a matter of reheating or putting a salad together, for example.

- Taking your own food with you when you're away from home is important to stay on track with your commitment to AIP, and also avoid eating potentially contaminated foods eating out at restaurants etc. Until you become very familiar with the foods you can and can't have and the types of questions you need to ask when ordering food; like the type of oils they use, what kinds of spices are used etc, it is best to stick to bringing along your own food when out.

Batch cooking your weekly meals will take all the stress out of this. It then becomes a matter of deciding how to transport your food and keep it either hot or cold. There are an amazing array of insulated coolers/bags, thermos', bento boxes etc to choose from. I personally love the Fridge-To-Go insulated lunch bags for keeping food and drinks cold for a whole day, even in a hot Australian Summer. The magic lies within the removable slim cooling panels that literally surround your food and keep it cold for hours. Also the large wide mouth thermos' not only have a small opening for drinking liquids, but also the large outer lid is removable to make eating soups and stews easy on the go, without having to microwave your food which is very bad for your health.



Stress Management Techniques

- Sit down and have a think over the things that cause stress in your life and work out ways you can decrease these. Try making a list of these stressors and then prioritise them from 1-5 (1 being top priority through to 5 the least priority). Just simply writing them down and getting those out of your head can give you a lot more perspective and peace of mind.
- Be kind to yourself! It sounds simple but, many who suffer with chronic health conditions tend to be very hard on themselves and, place a lot of unrealistic pressure on themselves as well. It's totally OK to not be able to do it all!
- Mindfulness is a brilliant way to bring some calm into your daily life. Studies around the world have proven our brains have an incredible neuroplasticity, or ability to re-wire itself. We live such busy stressful lives today and the vast majority of us tend to live in our heads a lot, by adopting mindful practices in your life you will see positive impacts right away. There are also great apps available that will easily guide and teach you how to bring mindful practices to your life. Two great apps I love are Headspace (a paid app) and Smiling Mind (a free app that requires an internet connection).
- Try and leave work stressors at work. Create calming, grounding rituals before and after work to minimise the effect of work stress on you.
- Take time to connect with your loved ones throughout your day. Simple acts of kindness have wonderful cascading effects on your mind, body and spirit.

Including Family and Friends

- If you have a family to consider it is a good idea to bring them on board with what you are going to do. Have a family meeting and explain to them why you need to change what you eat and how it is going to help you. Let your family know that you are going to need their help so you can get better. Have a look through my cookbook with your significant others and involve them in the process, ask them what recipes appeal to them and would like to try as well.
- Also, it is a good idea to let your friends know exactly what you are doing, be careful that your friends do not give you any negative feedback, you should only tell those friends that are sincerely concerned about you, you don't want anyone placing any negatives on your decision. This way when you place your friends on notice they will understand when you bring your own food when you are invited to BBQ's and the like. Your true friends will support you and understand your decisions.
- You will need to accept that you just can't eat out anywhere anymore; once you accept this you can plan your outings. Initially there is a lot of work to be done especially with food preparation. It takes time, but once you have your head around what you need to do every week, it becomes routine and becomes much easier. If you can bring your husband/wife and children on board on your journey it can be a whole lot of fun and very rewarding for everyone. It is just wonderful for the whole family to get together in the kitchen when food is being prepared. You will probably find that the family want to help.

“Every time you eat or drink you are either feeding disease or fighting it!”
- Heather Morgan.



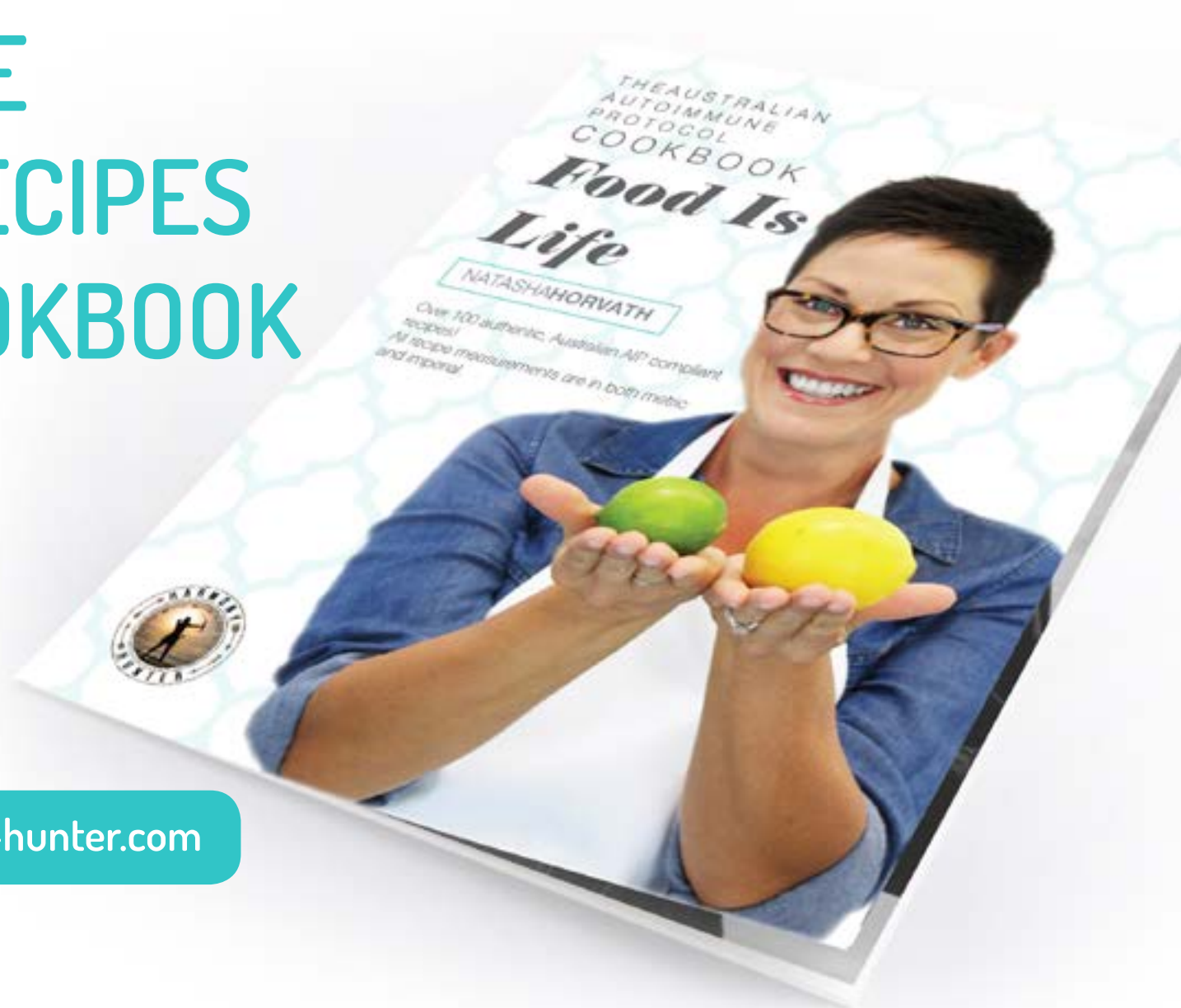
11. Kitchen Equipment

Of course you don't have to have any special equipment to commence AIP however, I do recommend you have a few items that will certainly make things a little faster for you, especially if you are already very busy. Don't worry if you haven't got these items, you can easily purchase them as needed if required:

1. Slow Cooker/ Pressure Cooker/ Instant Pot
2. Food Processor
3. High Powered Blender
4. Plenty of containers for food storage, try using glass and stainless steel or if using plastic make sure it is BPA free and never heat or put hot liquids or foods in plastic of any kind.
5. Micro Plane Grater, very finely grates citrus zest, ginger, turmeric, garlic etc
6. Spiraliser
7. Mandolin Slicer
8. High quality sharp knives



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