

The logo for Forest Creek Wellness is located in the top right corner. It features the words "forest creek" in a white, elegant cursive font, with "WELLNESS" in a smaller, white, all-caps sans-serif font directly below it. The text is enclosed within a thin white rectangular border.

forest creek  
WELLNESS

The top half of the image shows a misty forest scene with tall evergreen trees. The mist is thick and white, partially obscuring the trees and creating a serene, ethereal atmosphere. The lighting is soft and diffused, typical of a foggy day.

# Healthy Living Made Simple!

10 PRINCIPLES FOR A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER YOU

The bottom half of the image shows a dark, dense forest of evergreen trees. The lighting is much lower than the top half, creating a deep, shadowy environment. The trees are more clearly visible against the dark background.

CARLY STAGG, RN, FNTF + KRISTEN FILES, FNTF, BCHN, MRWP

# Introduction

## THE FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH

### Welcome to Forest Creek Wellness!

We are so excited that you are reading this passion project of ours, and to finally have completed it! This e-book outlines the most basic factors to begin your journey on the road to improving your health. Each section has a few tips + tricks to make things easier for you. We suggest a slow, incremental approach to adopting a healthier diet, for truly lasting change. Master one area of this eBook and then move on to the next. Changing our diets made a revolutionary impact on our health that has stood the test of time. This is possible for you too! Check out the Forest Creek Wellness blog for a more in-depth exploration of lifestyle habits and dietary change.

Yours In Health,  
Kristen & Carly

“Health is a large word. It embraces not the body only, but the mind and spirit as well;...and not today’s pain or pleasure alone, but the whole being and outlook of a man.” - James H. West

“Health is a state of complete mental, social and physical well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” - WHO, 1948



# 1. NUTRIENT-DENSE, PROPERLY PREPARED, WHOLE FOODS DIET

Your diet is absolutely key! You cannot out supplement or medicate yourself out of a poor diet. We know that's not the news you're dying to hear but for impactful changes that will stick, you need to dial in your diet. This is the true foundation on which all other foundations are built. Here are some key points when approaching your diet:

- Switch out the fats you are using for healthier alternatives. See page 5.
- Emphasize local and sustainable sources for maximum nutrition.
- Check local farmers' markets and organic markets and stick to produce that's in-season whenever you are able.
- Avoid the center aisles of the grocery store to get the most nutritious foods, at the lowest cost.
- Be a label reader.
- In packaged goods look for 5 or less ingredients that are easily deciphered.
- Add high-quality sea salt to your diet.
- We like Redmond's Real Salt, Celtic salt, or Himalayan pink salt.

## *Balance Your Plate*

Aim for a balanced plate, with a focus on food quality.

### 40% CARBOHYDRATES

Organic whole fruits & vegetables, starchy tubers, sprouted/soaked whole grains

### 30% PROTEIN

Grass-fed meats, wild-caught fish, organic grass-fed dairy, pastured eggs

### 30% FATS

Grass-fed butter, extra-virgin olive oil, avocado, soaked nuts & seeds



**“He who takes medicine and neglects the diet wastes the skill of his doctors.”**

**– Chinese Proverb**

## 2. DIGESTIVE HEALTH

### Cathy Eason's ABC Slaw



Combine equal parts shredded organic apple, carrot and beets. Add extra virgin olive oil, raw apple cider vinegar, sea salt and pepper to taste. Voila!

*Benefits of this recipe include improved fat digestion and production of healthy bile. It also contains vitamins A, C, D & K for boosting overall health*



*Love your liver*  
with this recipe

### Lifestyle tip for better digestion:

Don't rush your meals! Try to slow down your breathing, chew thoroughly, and put down your fork between bites. This sends the signal to the body that it is time to eat, which encourages proper HCl and bile production.

**DIGESTION BEGINS IN THE BRAIN!**

### *Why is this so important?*

Digestion is a north-to-south process, and it is often the first thing to go wrong in the cascade of disease processes. Digestive imbalances can include insufficient hydrochloric acid (HCl) production, malfunctioning lower esophageal sphincter (leading to "acid reflux"), and insufficient or poor-quality bile production. Because of this, foods are not properly digested. This can lead to increased intestinal permeability "leaky gut", among other health issues.

### *How to improve digestion*

#### Support for HCl production:

Supplement with raw apple cider vinegar or HCl supplements during your meals.

#### Support for Liver/Gallbladder + Bile:

Consume supportive foods such as raw beets. Try our NTA instructor Cathy Eason's recipe for ABC slaw, at left.

#### Support for "Leaky Gut":

Add some homemade meat stock or bone broth, marshmallow root tea, and a quality probiotic to help "heal and seal" the gut.





# 3. BLOOD SUGAR REGULATION + ADRENAL HEALTH

## *Why is blood sugar so important?*

Our blood sugar should provide smooth, even energy all day rather than drastic spikes + drops. The spikes + drops will cause inflammation + zap your energy.

*(See the blood sugar roller coaster, next page)*

## *How to improve blood sugar*

- **Always eat a balance of fat, protein + carbohydrates** with every meal. *(see digestion)*
- **Emphasize high-quality carbohydrates:**
- Choose unrefined, whole, organic sources which have vitamins and minerals that help with healthy sugar metabolism.
- **Avoid frequent snacking**, give your digestive system time to rest + digest. Gradually begin to space out meals and snacks slowly if you have a known sugar handling issue or experience "hanger".

## Feeling Hungry?

Remember Fats and Proteins are your long burning fuel. Make these your go to snacks. A high fat snack will satiate you longer and keep you off the roller coaster. [Click here](#) for some handy snack ideas!

## *Connection between blood sugar and the adrenal glands:*

The "Big three" organs for blood sugar regulation are the pancreas, adrenals, and liver. After a high-carbohydrate meal, the pancreas secretes a lot of insulin to decrease blood glucose. The body senses an extreme drop in blood sugar, leaving you shaky, hungry + irritable. The adrenals then secrete stimulating hormones to raise blood sugar by signaling the liver to secrete stored glycogen. This constant up-and-down process depletes glycogen reserves + taxes the adrenals. Luckily, there's a better way!

No disease that can be treated by diet should be treated with any other means." — Maimonides

# AVOID THE BLOOD SUGAR ROLLER COASTER!

*Are you on the sugar roller coaster?*



The blood sugar rollercoaster makes you feel tired and rotten. You will CRAVE more sugar!



Cinnamon helps to support healthy blood sugar handling. Sprinkle a bit on your morning coffee, yogurt or other snacks.

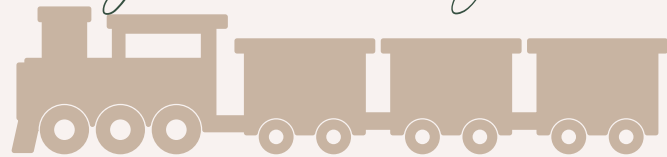
**7 AM BREAKFAST**  
bagel with low fat cream cheese

**12 PM LUNCH:**  
Turkey sandwich on whole grain bread + apples + carrots

**9 AM STARVING!**  
Granola bar + double shot espresso

**3 PM SLUMP!**  
Diet soda + vending machine cookie

## *Healthy blood sugar train*



Sodas, sports drinks, and fruit juices are major blood sugar offenders! Try to swap out a healthy smoothie, kombucha, or green juice to help you transition away from these harmful drinks.

**7 AM BREAKFAST:**  
2 egg omelet, apple with 2 tbsps almond butter

**12 PM LUNCH:** feeling great!  
Salad with grilled chicken + balsamic vinaigrette, handful of almonds

### **STEADY, LASTING ENERGY**

**8 PM SNACK:**  
Organic berries + full fat whipped cream

**6 PM DINNER:** Chill with grass-fed beef + sour cream, side of baked potatoes

# 4. FATTY ACID BALANCE

One of the most important changes you can make to your diet is the switch to healthy fats. Here's why:

## *Roles of fat in the body:*

- Cell membrane structure
- Nourishes the brain
- Healthy skin
- Shiny hair and nails
- Hormone synthesis
- Inflammatory process  
(Prostaglandin production)

Every single cell in your entire body is made from FAT! The quality of your dietary fats determines the quality of your cells.

## *Fat-soluble vitamins*

Vitamins A, D, E, & K require a fat to be consumed with the vitamin to increase bioavailability.

## *Essential fatty acids*

These are fats that cannot be made by the body. You must get these from an outside source.

- Omega-3 (wild caught fish, seafood, etc.)
- Omega-6 (healthy vegetable oils)



# A QUICK GUIDE TO FATS AND OILS

## Fats for cooking

- Virgin coconut oil
- Virgin palm oil
- Avocado oil
- Grass-fed butter/ghee
- Grass-fed meat and fats
- Full fat dairy
- Pastured eggs and poultry

Only have energy  
to make one  
change?

Start with your  
**FATS!**

## Fats for cold use:

- Extra virgin olive oil
- Macadamia nut oil
- Sesame oil
- Flax oil
- Nuts and seeds

## Fats to limit:

A lack of omega-3 and an abundance of omega-6 in the diet is very common and pro-inflammatory.

- **Sunflower oil**
- **Grapeseed oil**
- **Flaxseed oil**



## Fats to avoid:

- Canola oil
- Soybean oil
- Margarine/shortening
- Hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils

The most common  
source of these fats is  
fried foods!





# 5. HYDRATION



## Daily Water Goals:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{CURRENT BODY WEIGHT IN POUNDS} \div 2 \\ &+ \\ &\text{OZ OF DIURETICS CONSUMED} \times 1.5 \\ &= \\ &\text{\# OZ OF PURE H}_2\text{O TO DRINK DAILY} \end{aligned}$$

Sip slowly throughout your day, don't guzzle!  
Avoid plastic as much as possible

## ELECTROLYTES FOR BETTER HYDRATION:

- Sodium (Na)
- Potassium (K)
- Magnesium (Mg)
- Calcium (Ca)
- Chromium (Cr)
- Manganese (Mn)

## ROLES OF ELECTROLYTES:

- Cellular hydration
- Promote Na/K balance
- Na/K/ATPase pump = more energy

## SOURCES:

- Unrefined Sea Salt
- Fresh Fruits
- Fresh Veggies

Dehydration is probably the #1 deficiency among Americans today. It can be the root cause of many disease processes. In fact hydration is the best way to "detox" your body!

## *Roles of water:*

- Enabling cellular hydration
- Removing wastes
- Flushing toxins
- Cell to cell communication
- Proper blood viscosity

Drink enough pure water based on your body weight + add more if you're active, feeling thirsty or drink diuretics.

## *Diuretics & hydration:*

Diuretics include coffee, tea, and sweetened beverages like sodas. They actually further dehydrate the body, and don't "count" towards your water goal. If you consume any of these drinks add more water.

Electrolytes are critical for absorption of water and use in intracellular processes. Consider adding a pinch of sea salt to a glass or two of water daily to boost electrolytes.

## Have Trouble Hydrating?

Set a timer! Or, associate it with a daily activity like driving. Invest in a fun glass water bottle, Start your day with a glass of water.

# 6. SLEEP



## Why is sleep important?

Sleep is the time of the day when our bodies can fully relax, repair, and recover. The body's "house-cleaning" mechanisms are working hard when we sleep, especially in the brain. When sleep deprived, hormones can get out of whack, so you will be hungry and irritable the next day. Lack of sleep is the #1 way to quickly undermine new health goals.

## Maximizing sleep

- Magnesium, Natural Calm
- Eat whole-food starchy carbohydrates at dinner, like sweet potatoes
- Work on your circadian rhythm by going to sleep and waking up at the same time each night/day
- Use blue-light-blocking glasses to combat the effects of using technology before bed
- Aim for 7-10 hours of quality sleep each night
- Sleep in a pitch-black room
- Blood sugar regulation greatly improves sleep quality
- Diffuse calming essential oils, like lavender and/ or cedarwood

“A good laugh and a long sleep are the best cures in the doctor’s book.” – Irish Proverb

ZZZ

### The Glymphatic System

This is a detoxification system dedicated to detoxing the brain. It is at peak activation during sleep.

### Creating new habits:

It takes at least 21 days to create a new habit, and 90 days for that habit to truly stick. Challenge yourself to 3 months of quality sleep!

**1st FORM GOOD HABITS, THEN,  
LET YOUR HABITS FORM YOU**

# 7. STRESS MANAGEMENT

## *Why is it important?*

There are two branches of the autonomic nervous system, which controls the automatic functions of our organs and glands.

The sympathetic branch is activated when we are under stress, like when a tiger is chasing us.

The parasympathetic branch allows us to recover from stress, digest our foods, eliminate toxins, and more.

In today's "stressed out" culture, we are sympathetic dominant most of the time, and therefore, have impaired health and healing.

## Stress Management Techniques:

- Practice yoga or meditation, breathe deeply
- Include gentle exercise daily
- Get in nature, feel the sunshine
- Practice self-care: read, take a bath, eat healthy meals, watch the sunset
- Optimize digestion and blood sugar
- Address the root cause of stress with counseling or therapy, if necessary
- Connect with loved ones on a regular basis
- Incorporate essential oils
- Show gratitude

## Digestion

### Starts in the Brain

To properly digest your food you should be in a parasympathetic mode. Before each meal take a few moments to breathe deeply and appreciate your food. Do not eat in front of the TV or with other electronic devices, while driving, reading or in a state of anger. This impairs digestion!



**SYMPATHETIC "GO-GO-GO" (STRESS)**

**PARASYMPATHETIC (REST + DIGEST)**



*You want this one!*

# 8. MOVEMENT

## *Why movement matters:*

Movement improves lymph flow (important for immunity and detoxification), boosts blood circulation to the brain, and gives us energy, among numerous other benefits. **Our bodies were meant to move, throughout the day, not just for an hour of exercise.**

## *Which types are best?*

Gentle movement is the first thing to incorporate. Think leisurely walks and stretching breaks from desk work. A comprehensive fitness routine should include gentle movement, cardiovascular exercise (running, biking), weight training, and flexibility (yoga, stretching). Don't stick with one modality, mix it up!

## 5 MINUTES

Running for as little as this much each day, even at a leisurely (10+ min per mile) pace, is enough to lower your risk of death from cardiovascular disease by 45%

## Movement is Foundational

"Every single thing our bodies do requires movement - initiated by our musculo skeletal system - to be performed with ease. Digestion, immunity, reproduction - all of these functions require us to move. You can eat the perfect diet, sleep 8 hours a night, and use only baking soda and vinegar to clean your house, but without the loads created by natural movement all of these worthy efforts are thwarted on a cellular level, and your optimal wellness levels remain elusive."

- Katy Bowman, Move your DNA: Restore Health Through Natural Movement

# 9. MINDSET

## *The way you think is important*

A healthy lifestyle doesn't just happen, it takes planning and dedication. The way you think will either undermine or support the entire process for you. So make sure that your head space is on point before tackling each previous step.

## *How to up your mental game:*

- **Think positively**, frame your choices as just that, choices. Think of what you are gaining or adding in, not what you are taking out or losing.
- **Be intentional**, so much of what we do each day is done without thinking. Take time to set your intentions and then write them down. Intentions set you up for success, expectations set you up for disappointment.
- **Set some goals** for yourself. Goals can be big or small but make sure they are specific and put them in a visible spot, so you have a reminder of what you are working toward.
- **Establish a strong WHY**. Don't just decide to get healthy, think about WHY you want to be healthy. This will help you stick to it when times get tough, and they will get tough!
- **Know your tendency**. Planning for your tendency will help you to form realistic goals that stick.
- **Find some accountability**. People are almost always more successful when they put others in their corner.



## Preparation is Key

Making a plan is the key to healthy eating, healthy living and ultimately success. Set aside a day a week for meal planning. Plan for sleep and exercise. Set an alarm for hydration. Even plan for times when you might be tempted to fail. When you feel good plan for the times you don't!



# 10. DETOX

## *Should you detox?*

When people first begin their health journey they often opt to begin with a major detox. But this can be really hard on the system. In fact, if your digestive system isn't functioning well, especially your organs of elimination, you can even release, mobilize and recycle sequestered toxins making you feel WORSE! It is far better to implement the previous 9 foundational health steps for a minimum of 3 months before progressing to a full-blown detox. Many times, you will begin to feel so much better you may find you may not even need to do a detox!

### Incorporate Gentle Detox

- Address any 'leaky gut' issues
- Exercise, especially outdoors
- Green veggies or an occasional green juice
- Meditation and deep breathing
- Body Brushing
- Epsom salt and/or clay baths
- Infrared sauna and/or sunshine
- Rebounding
- Drink detox teas like milk thistle, dandelion, or pau d'arco
- Eat Fermented foods
- Eat chelating foods like cilantro

### *Digital Detox*

Detox isn't just a physical thing; it can be mental too. Consider a digital detox. Wait 30 mins before looking at your phone upon waking, turn the phone in airplane mode while sleeping, restrict your phone hours, or be really ambitious and cut that screen time out for a longer period, like a week, to refocus.

### Remove Allergens

In order to truly detox you MUST remove personal allergens from your diet. Consider working with a functional medicine practitioner, FNTP or RWP to discover what your food and environmental allergens may be.



# RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

## Nutrition Basics:

- Eat the Yolks, by Liz Wolfe
- Nourishing Traditions, by Sally Fallon Morell
- Practical Paleo, by Dianne Sanfilippo

## Digestion:

- Why Stomach Acid is Good for You, by Jonathan Wright
- Digestion Basics Blog Post, Joey Anderson, NTP

## Blood Sugar Regulation:

- Wired to Eat, by Robb Wolf
- Adrenal Fatigue: the 21st Century Stress Syndrome, by Dr. James L. Wilson

## Fatty Acids:

- Get Your Fats Straight, by Sarah Pope
- The Big Fat Surprise, by Nina Teicholz

## Hydration:

- Your Body's Many Cries for Water, by Dr. F. Batmanghelidj

“A vigorous five-mile walk will do more good for an unhappy but otherwise healthy adult than all the medicine and psychology in the world.”

- Paul Dudley White, 1886

