7 STEPS TO ELIMINATING THE HARMFUL 7

STEP 1 - EVALUATE

Before tossing your chips and cookies, take time to fully evaluate you and your family’s current eating habits. Using our Harmful 7 Cheat Sheet make a list of the foods you and your family eat frequently, so you can easily identify your unhealthy habits that contain the Harmful 7. Do your weeknight meals include frozen pizza or regular fast food runs? Does your after school snack drawer look like a candy aisle? It’s okay! Just start by making positive changes each day. Be honest with yourself and start jotting down your everyday habits, so you can easily identify the sources of the Harmful 7.

STEP 2 - A FRESH START

Start fresh. Eliminate temptation by removing the Harmful 7 from your home. Using your list from step one and your Harmful 7 Cheat Sheet, hunt down these culprits and toss them out. If you have kids, make this a game! Dress like superheroes as you rid the house of the Harmful 7.

STEP 3 - MAKE A PLAN

Don’t worry if your list of Harmful 7 containing foods is long! Start with a plan. Once you’ve identified the foods you eat that contain the Harmful 7, begin to plan the swaps you can make to replace them with healthier options.

For example, if breakfast has you reaching for an on-the-go granola bar that you now realize is loaded with the Harmful 7, you can swap it for oatmeal, plain yogurt with fruit, whole grain toast or a veggie omelet. If you’re kids reach for fruit snacks after school, swap them for the real deal with nut butter on the side or dried fruit with nuts.

If your weeknight dinners come in a flat box, swap that for fresh, quick dinners by grilling up some protein with a side of roasted or sautéed veggies, or some batch-cooked, flavorful soups.

Don’t worry about changing everything at once. Choose one meal or snack to work on each day and commit to making simple swaps adding more in as you go. Making small changes every day have a cumulative effect, and with our helpful tips, tricks and recipes, you’ll find your pantry and plates cleaned up before you know it.
Here some swaps to get you started:

If you usually eat this…

• Sugary Cereal or granola
• Drive-thru breakfast sandwich
• Pastries, pancakes or waffles
• Burger and fries
• Chinese take-out
• Fried chicken with mashed potatoes and gravy
• Chips or crackers
• Trail mix
• Pre-bottled sauces
• Sour cream
• Candy
• Ice cream

Try this instead…

• Rolled oats with fresh fruit
• Homemade veggie omelet
• Whole grain toast with nut butter and fresh fruit
• Fresh fruit smoothie
• Spaghetti squash with fresh tomatoes, basil and ground turkey
• Lettuce wrapped grilled chicken with baked sweet potato fries
• Homemade chicken and veggie stir-fry with low sodium soy sauce, fresh ginger, and garlic
• Grilled chicken with steamed vegetables and mashed cauliflower
• Veggies and hummus
• Mixed nuts
• Water infused with fresh fruit
• Mashed avocado
• Fresh herbs or dijon mustard
• Olive oil and balsamic vinegar
• Plain Greek yogurt
• Frozen grapes or dried fruit
• Blended frozen bananas with peanut butter

STEP 4 - STOCK YOUR PANTRY

Now that you’ve removed the Harmful 7 from your kitchen, your cupboards and refrigerator may look like a barren wasteland. Take a deep breath and smile at a job well-done. Enjoy this opportunity to start fresh by stocking your pantry with nonperishable necessities such as brown rice, quinoa, rolled oats, beans, lentils, nuts and nut butter, dried fruits, spices, and whole grain bread products.

Note: whole grain bread products like bagels, bread, and English muffins often contain some of the Harmful 7, so double check the label before purchasing.

STEP 5 - SHOP THE OUTSIDE AISLES

Once your pantry is stocked, most of your remaining necessities can be found along the outside aisles of your grocery store (and no, we do not mean the bakery!), including fresh fruits, veggies, dairy and lean proteins. Stock up on a variety of your favorites to keep yourself from getting bored, and don’t be afraid to try new, seasonal options. We suggest making a trip on a weekly basis to keep produce fresh.

Note: for budget-friendly, healthy-eating frozen fruits, vegetables and protein are a great money saving alternative.

STEP 6 - STAY HYDRATED

If you normally reach for soda or other sugar-sweetened beverages loaded with artificial ingredients, you may find yourself dehydrated. Don’t forget to stay hydrated throughout the day. Try carrying your water bottle with you everywhere. You may wish to infuse your water with fresh fruit for added flavor, natural sweetness, and nutrients. Drink a glass of water with each meal, or set reminders on your phone to drink water periodically throughout the day until you make it a habit.

STEP 7 - FIND A SUPPORT SYSTEM

Surrounding yourself with a supportive community will keep you on track and help you stick to your commitment. Share the Good Food Fight with the people you care about and create your own supportive community! Follow us on social media, and don’t forget to use our hashtags to find a virtual community.