

How to Build and Sustain Healthy Habits to Feed Your Gut at Home and Work

The key is to start slowly, recognise which habits align with your values and fit with your lifestyle. You can choose one change at a time and gradually build on it when you're comfortable.

Transform your Weekday Meal and Snack Choices:

Breakfast

Swap your ham and cheese croissant with a large coffee for:

- Wholemeal or multigrain breads for your morning toast
- Regular sized coffee with skim milk
- Thick yoghurt and berries with a sprinkle of untoasted muesli
- Grab-and-go breakfasts made in advance such as overnight oats or zucchini slice

Lunch

A trap we may fall into is thinking a leafy salad with grilled chicken is the ideal choice. However, missing out on some good fats and fibre can leave you hungry before 3pm. Since you're already on the right track, try:

- Adding chickpeas or lentils for extra fibre and protein
- Make your own salad dressing using a combination of extra virgin olive oil, honey and balsamic vinegar
- Aim for three different colours of vegetables on your plate
- Throw in satiating carbohydrates such as sweet potato, brown rice or wholemeal bread
- Swap butter on your side bread for flavourful hummus, pesto or avocado

Dinner

After a long working week, complicated meals are the last thing you want to make. Here are some ways to prepare dinner in no time:

- Bake or roast instead of frying your foods. Just pop it in the oven, set your timer and relax. (Tip: roast/bake an extra serving at dinner for tomorrow's lunch)
- Swap creamy or cheesy sauces for a tomato-based one. If you prefer cream-based, try substituting the cream for unsweetened Greek yoghurt
- Pasta and carbohydrates are not the enemy, but a giant bowl may leave you feeling heavy – instead, swap for a half salad and pasta combo
- If you're in no mood for cooking: try a rotisserie chicken, frozen vegetables with pre-cooked quinoa or rice for an easy and affordable way to create a nutritionally balanced meal

Snacks

To prevent yourself from feeling famished before reaching home, keep some easy-to-store snacks at your desk:

- Fruit or vegetables with nut butter
- Keep a drawer- friendly trail mix with nuts, dried fruit, dark chocolate (>70%) and wholegrain cereal
- Air-popped popcorn
- Edamame as a filling protein rich snack
- Veggie packed muffins (recipe below)

Your wellbeing is not only about nourishing the body with food, it is also influenced by the way you engage with your external environment.

Five ways to Transform your Work Time:

1. A cluttered desk produces a cluttered mind. Clearing out your workspace encourages you to sort out your paperwork and provides you an excuse for new stationary
2. Remember, you are deserving of a break- step away from your desk to eat your meals mindfully
3. Swap eating inside for outside. De-stress away from the office environment and prevent yourself from being on guard for that next phone call or email
4. Set yourself a timer to walk away from the computer every 2 hours
5. Mindfulness mobile apps such as Headspace or Smiling Mind are free or cheap, with quick 5-minute activities to squeeze between meetings

Savoury Veggie-Packed Muffins



Dry ingredients

1 ¼ cups sweet potato, peeled and grated

½ cup carrots, grated

½ cup quinoa flour

1 ¼ cup buckwheat flour

¾ cup oat flour (simply place oats in a blender until you have ¾ cup full)

¾ cup shredded cheese (optional)

2 tsp baking powder

1 tsp salt

Wet ingredients

3 eggs

2 handfuls of spinach

3 tbsp honey or maple syrup

¾ cup plain, unsweetened yoghurt

½ cup olive oil
1 zest of lemon
1 tsp grated ginger
1 tsp salt

Topping

Sunflower or pepita seeds
Sea salt

1. Preheat oven to 185 °C. Prepare 12 large muffin tins by lightly greasing and lining it with paper muffin cases.
2. In a large bowl, place all dry ingredients and combine.
3. Place wet ingredients in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
4. Pour wet mixture into the dry ingredients, gently fold together and take extra care to not overmix.
5. Spoon batter into the muffin tins, filling $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way in each tin and sprinkle with toppings.
6. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until top is golden, and skewer comes out clean when inserted in the middle.
7. When ready, let the muffins sit in the tin for 10 minutes. Then, transfer to a wire rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days.