

A photograph of a person's midsection, showing a white t-shirt and white underwear. The person's skin is light and the background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

the great 1-month slim down

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nutritious life™
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The Great 1-Month Slim Down

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Introduction:

The Rules of Weight Loss Have Changed

"The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking." – Albert Einstein

Despite everything you might believe by looking at the cover of this book, what you're about to read is not just another misleading "lose weight quick" short term fix. Yes, you'll drop a bunch of pounds, but there's nothing about this plan that is short term or extreme.

Just the opposite. This is a shift in mindset towards your body and about what you can actually accomplish with a focused approach that puts you in control. I want you to think about that. Go on, stop reading and think for a minute. Are you in control of your body or does it control you?

Ok, keep reading.

The next 30 days is all about YOU. You want to lose weight, jumpstart a healthy living plan, and just feel better about yourself. That's why you're reading this, right? And that's the sole purpose of the next month. While the benefits are meant to be experienced in a very short period of time, this program is bigger than 30 days. You'll learn tips and tricks that work in both the short and long term, but most importantly you'll shift your whole attitude towards healthy living and your body. Why? Because that's what living a Nutritious Life is all about. Sometimes in order for you to *believe* you must see what you're capable of achieving. That's why I created the Great 1-Month Slim Down.

With this plan you are going to turn your attention away from work and deadlines and focus on yourself. No, I'm not asking you to quit your job or blow off responsibility (although, that would be kind of fun!). This plan will help you find a healthy balance between the outside world and your personal needs. You will learn how to listen and

respond to your body. You will learn how to stay energized and nourished with a balanced, healthy diet. You will learn how to control cravings and how to indulge in a healthy way. Because indulgences *are* good for your body and soul. And you are going to LOSE WEIGHT! In 30 days you will not only look slimmer but you will feel more energized, be less stressed and simply feel better about yourself. To boot, you will *know* that your body can change. You will *believe* that you can lose weight. And you will *live* the life you want in a body you love.



Chapter 1:

The Nutritious Life Approach to Slimming Down

Before you begin, it's important that you understand some of the approaches I use to help you lose weight in a healthy, effective way. Much of this will make sense if you've read *Why Can't I Drop The Weight?* But if you haven't—or if you need a refresher, here's how I want to help you manage your food and enjoy the weight loss process. Yes, I just said, “enjoy.”

Determine Your Hunger Quotient (HQ)

Question to Ask: *How truly hungry am I?*

You need to become aware of how hungry you are when you eat. This seems like something that should be a given, but think about it. Are you aware of your hunger level when you begin to eat or are you eating because, well, it's lunch time or the food just looks so good? Learning to recognize your hunger at the beginning and end of your meals is what I call mastering your hunger quotient or HQ. I won't lie! This isn't easy. But once you conquer it, no matter what you are indulging in, you will never over consume calories to a large extent. Your HQ will help you determine how much to eat and how frequently you should eat.

On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 is stuffed and 10 is famished. Your goal is to stay between a 6 (slightly hungry) and a 4 (slightly satisfied) at all times. Your HQ will help you control portions and keep your metabolism revved. Listen to that body of yours! It has plenty to tell you.

Understand Nutrient Density

Question to Ask: *How powerful are the foods I'm using to fuel?*

The term nutrient density refers to how much meaningful value a food has. In other words (and I am bored by this analogy but it works), it's all about how much bang for a caloric buck your food gives you. The most nutrient dense foods are the ones you want

to eat the most of. These foods contain a good amount of protein, healthy fat, fiber, vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients. If you are ever confused by nutrient density think of this: 100 calories worth of apple slices and natural peanut butter versus 100 calories of jelly beans. The apple and peanut butter provide you with fiber, protein, healthy fat and many other nutrients. The jelly beans provide you with sugar. That's it. Not only are the jelly beans missing all that nutrition goodness but they also won't keep you full and satisfied. I share the most nutrient dense foods in the meals included in this book.

Embrace Each Meal as a Monday Morning

Question to Ask: *Will I let one bad meal "ruin" my slim down?*

Let's just get one thing straight: you're human! And sometimes that means that you're going to indulge either because you're in a situation that is out of your control or because you simply choose to. But, it will happen. You will slip up. I'm not being a Debbie Downer, I'm just being realistic, and I want you to be prepped on how to handle this. If you can adopt a new attitude in conjunction with mastering your HQ, then you won't need much more advice. Yes, it's that simple.

I want you to think of every meal as a Monday morning. Don't we all begin the week with a healthy breakfast ready to conquer the world in front of us? How come then if you eat a big steak dinner on Thursday it's often so hard to get back on track the next morning? Too many of us suffer from the throw-in-the-towel syndrome. If you can think of each meal as an individual opportunity to eat well you will never let a bite of your kid's chocolate chip cookie or a decadent French toast brunch derail your entire day or week!

Make Conscious Indulgences

Question to Ask: *What foods are worth the splurge?*

Never allowing yourself occasional indulgences won't help you stick to a healthy way of life for the long haul. Most likely, you'll end up overindulging at some point. People who don't ever indulge in their favorite splurge foods often build up a gradual sense of deprivation that many times culminates in a major binge. I am by no means suggesting going out and downing a banana split just because you have a slight and sudden craving. I am suggesting that you become aware of the foods that are truly worth the indulgence to you and then go for it in a conscious manner. When you flip the switch in your mind from "I can't eat the chocolate cake because I'm on a diet" to "I can eat the chocolate cake if I truly want it" you'll be surprised at how often you actually don't end up eating the cake!

The simple act of telling yourself you *can* have something puts you in control and makes you feel empowered. Hence, *eating empowered*. When you think you *can't* eat something your brain ends up in a tug-of-war with itself. You know what I'm talking about. It sounds a little like this: "Don't eat it. Don't eat it. Don't eat it. Fine! Just eat! And then overeat it and never eat it again!" It's time to let go of the rope and embrace your power.

Dine Out Smart

Question to Ask: *How do I stay on track, be social and enjoy my life?*

Dining out can be intimidating for many people making diet changes, but avoiding restaurants doesn't have to be the solution. One of the most fun ways to try new and healthy foods is by dining out. There are, however, some simple guidelines to follow to help you say "cheers" with a friend and still have your waistline thank you in the morning. Some do's and don'ts:

- **Do** have a snack beforehand to "cut" your hunger. A few options are 2 slices of fresh turkey, ½ cup of Greek yogurt, or 15 raw almonds.
- **Don't** skip meals beforehand that day to bank calories. You'll end up with your HQ all out of whack and overeat!
- **Do** drink lots of water before the meal and during the meal.
- **Don't** consume alcohol before you've ordered your meal. You'll make a less wise menu choice!
- **Do** order a salad or all veggie soup to fill you with water volume and fiber before the main course.
- **Don't** think about dining out as a "special" occasion (to indulge) if you dine out often.
- **Do** split an entree with your dining partner or order two apps.
- **Do** enjoy your company!

Food Journal Consistently

Question to Ask: *Do I have to write down what I eat in order to succeed?*

Many people won't find tracking their food fun, but almost everyone finds it effective. Not only does it help you stay accountable, but it makes it much more clear what you may need to work on to have the body you want. And this isn't just about food. Keep track of your sleep, your fluid intake, your exercise, and how you pamper yourself in a

food journal. Consistency is key to maximizing weight loss. Food journaling helps you be consistent. Just do it. I promise, it works.

Stress Less

Question to Ask: *How can I take control of my life?*

Yup, I'm going to talk about the big bad "S" word now. We all know it. We all try to avoid it. Simply put, it's just not our friend.

Stress.

No matter what kind of stress we're dealing with, from traffic to relationship drama to finances—even to a bad haircut—our bodies are programmed to handle it in the same way. Our breath gets shallow. Our muscles tense. Our digestive system shuts down, and our glands fire up, cranking out stress hormones like cortisol, adrenaline and norepinephrine. When the stress passes, our bodies are supposed to break down these hormones, making the process very efficient. The problem is that many of us are in a constant state of stress and this hormonal upheaval is wreaking havoc in our bodies and taking a toll on our health and waistline. This chemical cascade is known to cause heart disease, high blood pressure, and stroke and is linked to cancer, diabetes, and depression. It even zaps our sex drive! Yup, stress causes you to gain weight and not want to have sex. That is exactly why I want you to conquer (or at least subdue) it.

Stress depletes our body's energy and strength to function normally. To make matters worse we get hungrier when we're stressed and usually crave the worst kinds of food. Simply put, stress makes it easy for people to gain weight and makes it difficult to take it off.

I want you to incorporate something that you can do every single day to reduce stress. Yes, every day. This doesn't need to be an hour long massage. It can be something as short as an 8-minute meditation. If you don't have a form of stress management in your life right now, start with the 8-count breath. Breathe in for a count of 8 and then breathe out for a count of 8. Do this for 8 minutes daily. This little tool has the incredible power to help you sleep better, eat better, improve your overall health and lose weight.

Another way to reduce stress is to control your environment. Studies show that people who live closer to airports have significantly higher levels of cortisol (the stress hormone) than people who live in quieter areas. You're pretty powerless when it comes to controlling the outside environment, but you can take steps to improve your home environment. One easy way to eliminate inside stressors is to clean the clutter, which

causes stress. Make your desk, bedroom, and car a clutter free zone. Cut down on noise by closing windows and turning off the TV when you aren't watching it.

Control Portions

Question to Ask: *How do I say 'enough is enough' to the foods I love?*

First of all, you can overdo it with any food or diet. Yes, it's much more difficult to overeat spinach than fries, but you'd be surprised at how many creamed spinach overdoses I've seen. When it comes to controlling portions without carrying around a measuring cup and scale, which I definitely do not suggest, there are a few things to consider. First and foremost, refer back to what you learned about your HQ. When you're listening to your body and stopping when you're slightly satisfied - even when you're dining on decadent foods - you'll never go hog wild due to not hearing what your body is telling you.

Next, go crazy with veggies. Veggies fill you up with water and fiber volume. Just remember though, if these veggies have added fat (think sautéed in oil or topped with a buttery sauce), aim to stick to about one cup or a big fist full. Lean protein should look something like your iPhone. If you're slightly hungry go for another couple of bites. If you're slightly satisfied before downing the entire phone's worth, well then, stop! To help with portion control and maintain the right proportion of nutrients, aim to choose one healthy fat at each meal, such as a ¼ avocado, tablespoon of oil based salad dressing or tablespoon of nuts or seeds. Healthy fats will keep you satiated to avoid overeating. The meal examples later on in this book will give you clear ideas of what proper portions and proportions look like.

Respect the Process

Question to Ask: *Can I just get this weight loss thing over with?*

This is no one night stand with weight loss; it's a long term committed relationship. It's typical to lose weight fast at the start of a new eating plan and then hit a weight loss plateau. This can be extremely frustrating, I get it! I urge people to remember that weight loss is a process. *You will lose*. Then you may gain a pound. By the way, this "gain" may not be real but just water weight. Or, you may go on a vacation and gain real weight. Regardless, stay the course.

Your biggest job is to embrace the big picture changes you're making. Take each meal individually and know that your body is doing its job to get you to your healthiest self. You most likely didn't gain the weight that you want to lose in a few days (probably

more like a lifetime of habits) so it's not realistic to expect to lose it in a few days or weeks either. Be *patient* and be *consistent* and you will have incredible results!



Chapter 2:

Why We Often Fail on Diets

(And How to Make Sure It Doesn't Happen Again)

Even though I like to focus on what you *should* be eating and doing, sometimes I have to discuss what you *shouldn't* be eating. People still come to my office for the first time thinking that “fat free” must be the healthier option. You may already be aware of some of the foods I’m going to discuss in this section, but I think they are worth a quick refresher. So before I begin listing off all of the wonderful, delicious foods I want you to eat, make sure you steer clear of these Nutritious Life saboteurs.

Diet Soda

Though diet soda may save you liquid calories in the short term, in the long term not so much! One study showed that with each can of diet soda consumed, an individual's risk for being overweight increased by 41 percent.

Diet soda is not only bad for your waistline, it may also be damaging to your health. No surprise here. Have you read the ingredient list on a can of soda? Hello chemicals! A study presented at the *American Stroke Association*, which followed 2,500 New Yorkers who drank diet soda every day, found that these individuals had a 61 percent higher risk of vascular events, including stroke and heart attack, than those who did not consume diet drinks.

Instead try seltzer with sliced fruit (such as orange, lemon or lime) for zero calories and loads of flavor. The seltzer provides the fizz that most people like in sodas without all the artificial sweeteners and other chemical ingredients.

Artificial Sweeteners

Sugar substitutes may seem like a good choice for people looking to watch their weight because they cut down on the number of calories in sweetened beverages and foods. However, these artificial sweeteners may actually make people more prone to overindulge and crave sweet foods. Artificial sweeteners are 200 to 700 times sweeter than sugar. When you consume them your body expects calories to follow the sweetness. When those calories don't come, it goes looking for them later (aka "I just have to have something sweet after dinner!").

Research done in the study published by *Journal of Toxicology and Environmental Health* in 2008 showed that artificial sweeteners may not only lead to weight gain, but also cause damage to beneficial microflora in your gut. A healthy gut is critical to overall health and weight management. A healthier alternative to artificial sweeteners is using a *small* portion of the real thing such as raw honey or better yet sweet spices like cinnamon or nutmeg or vanilla.

High Fiber Cereal (loaded with sugar)

Most people want to get a little more fiber in their diet. That's a good thing. And, most people think of breakfast cereal as being one of the easiest ways to do so. It seems easy enough to read the nutrition facts panel for the grams of fiber, right? Not so fast. Many of these high fiber breakfast staples come with the surprise of your not-so-friendly friend: sugar. In a cereal like Raisin Bran there are 6.5 grams of fiber per cup along with 17.6 grams of sugar.

Make sure to check the ingredient list first before making any assumptions about your favorite fiber friend. Remember, added sugar comes from ingredients like corn syrup, white or brown sugar, honey and evaporated cane syrup, as well as dried fruit. A high fiber diet has been shown to protect against heart disease and the risk of type 2 diabetes (yay!). A high sugar diet can increase your risk of obesity, heart disease and diabetes (boo!). All that sugar negates the goodness of the fiber.

A cereal high in fiber usually contains 3 or more grams of fiber per serving. I like a cereal to have at least 6 grams. Ideally, if you're going to eat cereal choose one that has 6 grams of fiber *and* less than 6 grams of sugar. Remember, the best sources of fiber are going to come from the least processed foods. In other words, they won't come in a box at all. Think about swapping in brown rice or quinoa for a breakfast starch instead of grabbing the pretty box.

Veggie Chips

Veggie chips must be healthy because they are made from veggies, right? Wrong! Often, veggie chips aren't much healthier than regular potato chips. Most varieties of veggie chips contain mostly corn flour or potato, with small amounts of veggie powder or puree mixed in. Vitamins such as A and C that are found in vegetables are lost in the processing of these chips, so they don't offer much in the way of nutrition. Remember, just because the chips look green doesn't mean the main ingredient isn't potatoes.

Most of these chips are also high in fat, calories and sodium. One ounce of veggie chips usually has 150 calories, the same as potato chips. That would be ok if you were reaping the nutrient benefits, but as just mentioned, usually you're not.

Still want chips? I get it because I love them too! Here's what you can do instead: Make your own veggie "chips" at home. Try chopping kale or slicing sweet potatoes or beets and tossing with a small amount of olive oil and sea salt, then popping in the oven and baking until crispy. YUM and healthy.

Turkey Burgers

Many people assume that because a burger is made with turkey rather than ground beef that it contains less calories and fat. But this is often not the case. Usually, turkey burgers ordered in restaurants are made from dark meat and turkey skin – and can be higher in calories and fat than a lean beef burger.

Your better option is to make your own turkey burger using ground turkey that is at least 95 percent lean and instead of seasoning with the skin, use herbs and spices for an antioxidant, flavorful kick. I also love grass fed beef burgers. When purchasing poultry or beef go for lean and organic. It's worth the extra dollars.

Fat Free Anything

When you see "fat free" stamped on that bottle of salad dressing, you're probably thinking, "Oh, look! Fat free! This *must* be the healthier option." That may be the case with naturally fat free foods like veggies and fruit, but not with foods like salad dressing, cookies, or even yogurt. When food manufacturers take the fat out, they replace it with sugar to give the product taste. The calories are usually about the same and the satisfaction value of the food goes way down.

Fat provides satiety, meaning it helps keep you satisfied. Also, don't forget that about one-third of our diet is supposed to come from fat. A high sugar salad dressing will not keep you satisfied, will not allow your body to keep burning fat and also won't provide the fat to help absorb all those good fat soluble vitamins and minerals found in the salad itself. As I always say, eating fat free peanut butter is like eating vitamin and mineral free vegetables! In other words, eat it the way nature intended it!

Organic Packaged Foods

The word "organic" refers to the way farmers grow and process fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and meat. To be certified "organic," all produce must be grown without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers. Meat, poultry, eggs, or dairy products labeled "organic" are free of antibiotics or growth hormones. Regulations require that all organic foods be processed without irradiation (when food is treated with a small amount of radiation to eliminate germs and parasites) or chemical food additives, and they can't be grown from genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The term "organic" is regulated by the USDA, so true organic food has the green USDA label. Before a product earns the label, a certifier must inspect the farm where the food is grown and make sure it meets all standards.

First and foremost I want you to eat real food. When possible go for organic. Read what I just said again. Eat real food. Packaged foods are generally not real. An organic cookie is still a cookie. In an organic nutshell: eat an apple, try to make it organic and skip the cookie regardless of whether or not it's organic. Of course, if you're going to indulge or keep a box around organic is the better option, but don't be fooled into thinking these packaged crackers or cookies are "good" for you.

Gluten Free Foods

Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye and their derivatives. The list of foods where you'll find this protein is vast. From bread to crackers to soy sauce to vitamin and mineral supplements to medications and toothpaste, gluten is lurking. When people adopt a gluten free diet they turn to fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, legumes, meats, poultry, fish, and gluten free grains. In other words, a healthy diet.

People go gluten free for several reasons: disease, sensitivity and more recently for weight loss. It's traditionally followed by those with celiac disease, an autoimmune disease in which the body attacks itself in response to gluten. But now even celebs like

Miley Cyrus, Kim Kardashian, and Lady Gaga have followed this diet, touting its health and weight loss benefits.

Many people do report losing weight on a gluten free diet. But is it the gluten, or just the fact that people are removing calorie-loaded gluten foods, such as cakes, muffins, and pizza? By ridding yourself of gluten loaded foods you are naturally taking out a whole lot of junk from your diet. Regardless of why you may be going gluten free, if you are, remember that (similar to organic packaged foods) a gluten free chocolate chip cookie is still a chocolate chip cookie.



Chapter 3:

Curb Your Cravings and Stay Satisfied

If you read “Why Can’t I Drop The Weight,” you have a good understanding of why you still crave peanut M&Ms when you wish your body wanted celery. But, that doesn’t make it any easier to avoid those late night trips into the kitchen. As I already mentioned, part of your 1-month slim down is about embracing indulgences and learning how to listen to your body (including cravings) and feed it the right way. Here are a few helpful reminders that will assist you when it seems like you’re under a cheesecake trance.

Craving Fix #1: Pinpoint your craving.

If it’s not a specific food or treat that you’re craving, take a few deep breaths and sit down to really think about what it is you want. Try to put your finger on exactly what you’re yearning for and find the healthiest option to satisfy just that. For example, if you’re craving chocolate, you don’t have to down a pound size bag of Hershey’s Kisses. Take a deep breath, make yourself a cup of green tea and perhaps couple that with a ½ ounce portion of 70% dark chocolate. Embrace the craving and honor it with a *conscious indulgence*. Don’t eat around a craving. For example, you’re craving chocolate and you go for sliced cucumbers because they are low calorie. Then, not being satisfied, you grab an apple. Then, a scoop of peanut butter. Finally, you break out a whole bag of kisses. You get the point - you’ve now eaten the chocolate plus 3 things you didn’t really need or want in the first place. Yes, sometimes cucumbers and celery can do the trick but often it is better to take a deep breath and pinpoint the craving. How’s that green tea and chocolate looking now?

Craving Fix #2: Identify your triggers and find controls.

Whether it’s a looming work deadline or your phone call with your mother-in-law, determine what *triggers* you to reach for an unhealthy food. Next, find *controls* for those *triggers*. You should have *food controls* and *non-food controls*. For example, it’s 3 p.m. and you hang up the phone with your cranky boss and immediately want to make

a beeline for the vending machine. A *food control* would be having sliced cucumbers and carrots and individual portions of peanut butter in the work fridge and making a beeline there instead. A *non-food control* is for those situations when there is no real hunger and/or it's not snack or meal time. A few options there are writing in a journal, perusing your favorite online store or doing a set of 10 push-ups. Write down your *food* and *non-food controls* so you have them handy for when your *triggers* strike.

Craving Fix #3: Don't mistake thirst for hunger.

Stay hydrated. All day. If you're not properly hydrated, you may be mistaking thirst for hunger and thus, overconsuming calories from food. Before you reach for something to sink your teeth into go for something to sip instead. The best way to combat this mistake from happening at all is to always be hydrated. Keep a BPA-free 32 ounce water bottle on your desk or with you in the car and fill it often.

Craving Fix #4: Calm down.

Stress depletes your body's energy, strength and ability to function as it should. Often when we are stressed we crave foods that we should be steering clear of -- foods like cake, cookies, pasta. We already discussed how this is a double whammy since stress hormones alone make you gain weight and crave the worst foods for you, causing you to gain even more weight! So, what's a rattle nerved person to do? Incorporate a *daily* calming ritual. This can be a full on intensive yoga class, 5 minute journaling session or simply sitting quietly with a lavender candle lit for a few minutes. The most important thing is that you just do something every *single day* and recognize how stress affects your cravings, weight and health.

Examples of Ways to Satisfy Your Cravings

Salty snacks

- 2 ounces fresh, sliced turkey wrapped in lettuce
- 1 ounce parmesan cheese and 2 high fiber crackers
- 3 cups air popped popcorn with sprinkle of sea salt and cayenne pepper

Sweet snacks

- Small banana with 2 teaspoons natural peanut butter
- 15 pecans or cashews ("sweet" nuts)
- 2 dried figs with 1 ounce goat cheese and sprinkle of cinnamon

Crunchy snacks

- Sliced carrots with 2 tablespoons hummus

- 15 raw almonds or walnuts
- 1 cup crunchy salad of jicama, celery, cucumbers, and string beans with 2 teaspoons olive oil and drizzle of lemon

Creamy snacks

- ½ cup Greek yogurt with 1 cup raspberries
- ¼ cup black bean dip with endive
- Smoothie: 1 cup ice, 1 cup almond milk, ¼ avocado, 2 teaspoons almond butter, sprinkle of cinnamon



Chapter 4:

Keep it Simple: The 4-Day Cleanse

Before you freak out and say, “But Keri, I thought you said you don’t like cleanses!” I want you to understand that this is not your traditional cleanse. This is the Nutritious Life version of a cleanse and it’s all about eating real food for the next 4 days. It’s designed to achieve 4 very important goals to jumpstart your 1-month slim down and, more importantly, tee you up for a healthier path to the mind and body you want:

- 1) Jumpstart weight loss by reducing calories, sodium, sugar and chemicals lurking in your food
- 2) Help establish good behaviors
- 3) Act as a framework for your day to day eating after the cleansing period
- 4) Change your sense of well-being and give you a little motivating boost

Let me explain a little more so you can understand exactly how real foods can cleanse your body and set you up for success.

My idea of a “cleanse” might be a little different than what most people think. I am not a fan of the traditional liquid cleanses you always hear about, but rather I am a true believer in cleansing with *real food*. Not only is it safer and more delicious, but real, clean foods will offer a whole mix of nutrients that will work together in the body to keep you nourished. A real food cleanse is a great way to jumpstart weight loss *and* good behaviors. You’ll establish healthy habits by eating the right foods consistently throughout the day and you’ll be able to build on that foundation.

True cleansing foods are full of fiber, antioxidants, and other nutrients that will help to free your body of impurities and maintain liver health (your liver is your main detoxifying organ, so it pays to keep it healthy). Cleansing foods also tend to be lower in calories and free of sugar, added sodium, alcohol, chemicals and all other unwanted ingredients. Weight loss is another result of a cleanse, which is always good to give you a little mental boost to keep you plugging away with that new Nutritious Life. Here are

some of my favorite cleansing foods that will make your body feel fresh, healthy, and pure:

Artichokes are my go-to cleansing food. First of all, they contain plant compounds known as caffeoylquinic acids, which increase flow of bile, a fluid that helps digest fats. Artichokes can also be used to treat indigestion. One study showed that patients with indigestion who received artichoke leaf extract had improvement in symptoms and overall quality of life. In addition, they're full of fiber and take a long time to eat, so they help reinforce the practice of slow, mindful eating.

Avocados are a source of glutathione, a compound that blocks the absorption of certain fats in the intestines that can cause oxidative damage. Glutathione is also essential for liver cleansing. Plus, avocados contain magnesium, which has also been shown to inhibit fat absorption and can treat hyperlipidemia (high levels of fat in the blood).

Beets contain betaine, a substance that promotes regeneration of liver cells and the flow of bile. Beets also have beneficial effects on fat metabolism. Betaine is a lipotrope—something that prevents or reduces accumulation of fat in the liver. It works by inhibiting an enzyme involved in lipogenesis (fat production). Research shows a highly significant negative association between markers of obesity (BMI, percent body fat and waist circumference) and betaine concentrations in the blood, meaning the higher the betaine, the lower the BMI. Betaine can also relieve oxidative stress and is essential for detoxification.

Broccoli supports detoxification enzymes in the liver (**cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and kale** do as well). This unique group of vegetables (called crucifers) have glucosinolates, which are kinds of amino acids that contain sulfur. Sulforaphane is one type of glucosinolate in broccoli that plays a role in cancer prevention - it helps specific detoxification enzymes that rid the body of chemical carcinogens and free radicals. This is especially helpful for minimizing free radical damage in the lungs - you can breathe easy about that!

Celery is a vegetable that is mostly comprised of water and therefore will help keep your body hydrated and your hunger levels at rest. Additionally, celery is an antioxidant that will help eliminate those “bad boys” (free radicals) roaming around inside your body causing damage. Celery also contains a flavanoid called luteolin. Researchers believe that this particular flavonoid may possess anti-cancer properties.

Dandelion root increases flow of bile, making digestion a speedier and more efficient process. It's also known to have diuretic properties that help you rid excess fluid in your

body, which helps to flush you out and decrease bloat. Dandelion root is also chock full of vitamins A and C (powerful antioxidants), and is thought to help detoxify the liver. It has been used in different cultures to treat all sorts of problems including kidney disease, swelling, skin problems, heartburn, upset stomach, fever, boils, eye problems, diabetes, and diarrhea.

Dill, fennel, and anise all help with digestion by speeding up the digestive system and increasing the secretion of gastric acids, which are chemicals that break down food.

Greens (such as **kale, collards, spinach, and romaine**) can increase binding of bile acids, a process that makes it easier for the body to get rid of them, because of the phytonutrients found in them. Bile acids are made from cholesterol in the liver and can increase the risk of colorectal cancer. The binding, and thus increased elimination, of bile acids is also thought to be the way that dietary fiber lowers cholesterol.

Green tea is rich in antioxidants - even richer than white, black, and oolong teas even though they all come from the same plant. That's because green tea leaves are prepared differently; they aren't fermented before they're dried which keeps them rich in antioxidants called catechins. Catechins may trigger weight loss by stimulating the body to burn more calories and by decreasing body fat. Also, hot tea is sipped slowly, which reinforces mindful eating habits.

Lemon helps the liver detoxify, and lemon juice can also aid in digestion. Both the smell and flavor can increase saliva production - one study showed this can happen just by looking at lemons - which is essential to the digestion process. Lemon juice also directly affects the GI tract. Just 100 microliters of lemon juice (that's REALLY tiny) has been shown to be a very potent stimulant of pancreatic juices, also essential for proper digestion.

Milk thistle is a flowering herb that assists in liver cell regeneration. It works by increasing amounts of ribosomal RNA (genetic material) in the liver which increases protein synthesis to make liver cells. Because of this, milk thistle is often used to treat patients with liver disease.

Onion and garlic are both rich in sulfur containing compounds, which are involved in sulfation, the main route for toxins to be cleared from the body. Garlic and onions are both part of the *Allium* genus and can help protect us against certain cancers including stomach and colorectal cancer. In lab studies, the antioxidants (including allicin, allixin, allyl sulfides, quercetin, and a large group of organosulfur compounds) in garlic and onions have been shown to slow or stop the growth of tumors in prostate, bladder, colon, and stomach tissue.

Oregano is the most antioxidant-dense spice on the market. In fact, on a per-gram basis, it has four times more antioxidant activity than blueberries do. One of the antioxidants in oregano includes beta-caryophyllene, a substance that reduces inflammation.

Organic and pasture-raised chicken is a lean protein source grown without synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, antibiotics or hormones. Recent studies have concluded that organic and pasture-raised chicken may act as an anti-inflammatory agent by increasing the omega-3 content of the triglycerides circulating in your blood. Chicken is a great source of B vitamins as well, aiding in a broad list of bodily functions including the production of serotonin (the “feel good” hormone) and cell metabolism.

Wheat grass purifies the liver. It’s rich in choline, a mineral that has been shown to prevent fat buildup in the liver. Once choline enters the cells, it’s converted into a different compound that can enhance the breakdown of fatty acids and formation of phospholipids. This ultimately helps transport fatty acids in the blood and remove fats from the liver. Wheatgrass juice also contains bioflavonoids like apigenin, quercetin and luteolin, which all act as antioxidants in the body, and indole compounds, which play a role in cancer prevention.

The 4-Day Slim Down Cleanse

For the next 4 days, I want you to follow this menu as closely as possible. I know eating the same thing every day may seem a little boring, but it’s only for 4 days and it will make a dramatic difference. As you’ll see, there’s nothing too extreme or restrictive here. You will be eating real food -- enough of it -- consistently throughout the day. Most importantly, you’re taking a big first step towards your slim down.

BREAKFAST

- Scrambled eggs (1 whole egg plus 3 egg whites) with 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1 cup water with 1 ounce lemon juice and ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

MORNING SNACK

- 1 Granny Smith apple with ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup green tea

LUNCH

- Spinach salad with ½ cup beans (black, kidney, or chickpeas) or 4 ounces white fish or chicken breast, grilled or baked

- ¼ avocado, sliced
- 1 ounce lemon juice and/or vinegar
- 1 cup water with 1 ounce lemon juice and ¼ teaspoon cayenne

AFTERNOON SNACK

- Steamed artichoke or 1 cup artichoke hearts
- 1 cup green tea

DINNER

- Romaine salad with ½ cup red peppers, ½ cup cucumbers, ¼ cup celery
- 1 fennel bulb, roasted (can substitute 1 cup asparagus)
- 4 ounces salmon, grilled or baked (or alternative lean protein)
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup dandelion root tea

The Slim Down Grocery List

I don't want you to guess what you need to buy. Instead, I'm going to share with you the exact quantity you need to stock your fridge and cupboards, and eat your way to a better body!

- 16 eggs (or 4 eggs and 12 egg whites)
- 4 Granny Smith apples
- 4 cups blueberries
- 8 lemons
- 1 16 ounce can beans*
- 16 ounces white fish or chicken*
- 16 ounces salmon
- 4 artichokes or 2 16 ounce cans artichoke hearts
- 1 avocado
- Spinach
- Romaine lettuce
- 2 red bell peppers
- 2 cucumbers
- 6 stalks celery
- 4 bulbs fennel or 2 pounds asparagus
- Oregano, dried
- Cayenne, dried
- Cinnamon, ground

- Green tea
- Dandelion root tea

*You do not need beans and chicken and white fish. Decide your protein ahead of time, and buy 16 total ounces.



Chapter 5:

The 1-Month Slim Down Plan

After your 4-day cleanse, you're going to be following a plan where you ideally eat 5 times per day. You can adjust this, but the 5 meal per day approach is the template that I'd like you to follow. To further your success, I created some guidelines that will make the process even easier. Rather than stressing about every meal, think about accomplishing these goals each day, almost like a little checklist. Within a week, these will all feel like realistic goals--as will your belief that you can have the body you want.

- ✓ **Eat breakfast:** this jumpstarts your metabolism for the day and prevents overeating later.
- ✓ **Snack twice a day:** this keeps your blood sugar stable and prevents overeating.
- ✓ **Eat balanced meals:** you need carbs, fat, and protein, so eating a combination of foods that contain all is essential. Fill up on veggies, small portions of lean protein, and small servings of healthy fats.
- ✓ **Know your HQ:** listen to your body. Eat when you feel slightly hungry and stop eating when you feel slightly satisfied.
- ✓ **Enjoy real, nutrient dense foods:** limit the amount of packaged, processed foods as much as possible.
- ✓ **Use herbs and spices at every meal:** this will help up the taste and satisfaction of your meals without added calories, fat and sodium. Plus, they add fiber and antioxidant value.
- ✓ **Have a salad of at least 1 cup greens with dinner every night:** greens are loaded with nutrients but also help fill you up. In addition to this salad, have a side veggie too!

- ✓ **Keep a food journal to track progress:** yes, some people find it tedious. But, it works. Be accountable and learn from you!

The You Diet Plan: Create Your Own Slim Down Menu

I told you in the beginning that this was about you and changing the way you view weight loss. And I wasn't kidding. I want to put you in control of what you're eating each and every day. Instead of creating "fixed" rules once you finish the 4-day cleanse, I want you to create daily menus by selecting three meals from breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and two snacks. This way, you'll know that you're eating the right foods, and you'll have the flexibility to choose what you feel like each day, making the process easier and even enjoyable.

SLIM DOWN BREAKFAST OPTIONS

Choose one of the following meals each day.

Cinnamon Powered Oatmeal

½ cup cooked plain oatmeal
1 cup low fat milk or almond milk
8 pecan halves
½ teaspoon cinnamon

Peach Yogurt Crunch

1 peach
¾ cup plain Greek yogurt
8 walnut halves
¼ teaspoon nutmeg

Quinoa Parfait

½ cup cooked quinoa
1 cup mixed berries
¾ cup plain Greek yogurt
1 tablespoon chia seeds

Mediterranean Scramble

1 slice Ezekiel bread, toasted
1 cup baby spinach
1 teaspoon sundried tomatoes, chopped
1 ounce feta cheese
1 teaspoon black olives, chopped

1 egg plus 2 egg whites

Nutritious Life Super Smoothie

1 small banana
1 cup almond milk
2 teaspoons almond butter or peanut butter
¼ avocado
Dash of cinnamon
1 cup ice

Cheesy Eggwich

1 slice Ezekiel bread, toasted
½ cup low fat cottage cheese
1 egg, hard boiled
Dash of cayenne

SLIM DOWN LUNCH OPTIONS

Choose one of the following meals each day.

Antipasto Platter

½ cup red bell peppers, roasted
1 cup cucumber and tomato salad, chopped and dressed with red wine vinegar, lemon, salt and pepper to taste
4 tablespoons hummus
1 ounce feta cheese or 12 large olives
4 high fiber or gluten free crackers

Endive Turkey Salad

2 cups endive, chopped
½ cup string beans, chopped
½ cup cherry tomatoes, sliced into halves
4 ounces fresh, roasted turkey, sliced into ½ inch cubes
2 teaspoons olive oil
Balsamic vinegar to taste

Roasted Chicken Lettuce Wrap

2 large romaine lettuce leaves
4 ounces chicken breast, roasted and skin removed
1 ounce fresh mozzarella cheese, shredded
1 cup chopped red and yellow bell pepper

2 teaspoons Dijon mustard

Upgraded Tuna Salad

1 cup chopped celery and carrots
2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped
1 (6-ounce) can chunk light tuna packed in water
1 ounce feta cheese, crumbled
1 teaspoon capers
2 lemon wedges (squeezed on top of salad)
Balsamic vinegar to taste

Soup & Salad

2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped
1 cup chopped red and yellow bell peppers
¼ cup chopped carrots
¼ cup chopped broccoli
1 cup black bean soup
2 teaspoons olive oil
Balsamic vinegar to taste
1 teaspoon cilantro (on soup)

Turkey Burger

2 cups broccoli, roasted
4 ounce cooked white meat turkey burger
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic powder

Chicken Caprese

1 beefsteak tomato, sliced
4 ounce roasted chicken breast, sliced into strips
2 ounces fresh mozzarella
1 teaspoon fresh basil
Balsamic vinegar to taste

Salmon Salad

2 cups baby spinach
¼ red onion, sliced
¼ cup chopped tomato
4 ounces canned salmon
2 teaspoons olive oil
Lemon juice to taste

Salt and pepper to taste

SLIM DOWN DINNERS

Choose one of the following meals each day.

Pork Tenderloin with Bok Choy

2 cups Bok Choy, roasted
4 ounces roasted pork tenderloin
2 teaspoons olive oil

Steak with Sautéed Spinach

2 cups spinach, sautéed
4 ounces grilled lean steak
2 teaspoons olive oil

Cod Cleanse

2 cups broccoli, roasted
4 ounces broiled cod
2 teaspoons olive oil

Lemon Chicken & Artichoke

1 artichoke, steamed (topped with 2 tablespoons Greek yogurt mixed with 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard)
4 ounces chicken marinated in 1 teaspoon minced garlic, 2 teaspoons olive oil, ½ cup lemon juice, grilled

Shrimp and Broccoli Stir Fry

2 cups broccoli, steamed
4 ounces grilled shrimp
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon garlic, chopped
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

Scallops & Spinach

2 cups spinach, steamed
4 ounces grilled scallops
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon chili powder

Roasted Chicken Parmesan

2 cups asparagus, steamed
4 ounces roasted chicken, skinless
½ cup marinara sauce
2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese

Tempeh and Sesame Kale

2 cups kale, roasted
4 ounces grilled tempeh
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 teaspoon sesame seeds
1 teaspoon chopped garlic

SLIM DOWN SNACKS

Choose two options from below each day.

- Celery with 2 tablespoons hummus and ¼ teaspoon paprika
- Celery with 2 teaspoons almond butter and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- Celery with 10-15 cashews
- Celery with 1 ounce goat cheese
- Carrots with 10-15 almonds
- Carrots with 2 teaspoons peanut butter and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- Green beans with 18 pistachios
- Green beans with 1 ounce Parmesan cheese
- Sliced red bell peppers with 10-15 pecans
- Endive with 2 tablespoons guacamole
- 1 cup blueberries with 10-15 almonds
- ¾ cup cherries with 10-15 pecans
- Sliced pear with 1 tablespoon chopped walnuts and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- Sliced apple with 1 ounce ricotta and ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 6 ounces Greek yogurt with 1 tablespoon pumpkin seeds
- 6 ounces Greek yogurt with 2 teaspoons peanut butter and ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 6 ounces Greek yogurt with 18 pistachios and 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 cup cubed watermelon with 15 peanuts
- ½ grapefruit with 1 tablespoon chopped pecans and ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 high fiber crackers or gluten free crackers with ¼ avocado and squeeze lemon
- 2 high fiber crackers or gluten free crackers with 2 teaspoons almond butter and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon

FOOD SWAPS

Don't like or can't get certain foods? Here are some simple swaps to customize your diet plan.

Swap Out	Swap In
Nuts	Avocado
Meat or fish	Any lean protein or vegetarian substitute like legumes or firm tofu
Eggs	Firm tofu, turkey
Dairy (milk and yogurt)	Unsweetened almond milk, hemp milk, rice milk
Fresh vegetables	Frozen vegetables

Lean Protein

- Skinless chicken breast
- Lean turkey breast or ground turkey
- Shellfish: shrimp, scallops, mussels, lobster
- Tuna
- Cod
- Sole
- Salmon
- Flounder
- Ground beef, 95% lean
- Lamb, pork or beef tenderloin
- Game meats: ostrich, venison, bison

Vegetarian Protein

- Beans (black, kidney, pinto, chickpeas, white)
- Lentils
- Hummus
- Egg whites
- Firm tofu
- Tempeh
- Veggie burger
- Low fat cottage cheese

- Low fat feta cheese

Your Slim Down Hydration Plan

An underrated aspect of health is hydration. Fluids play a role in everything from your energy levels to your weight loss. As I already mentioned, thirst and hunger are oftentimes confused, so that alone should be reason enough to drink up! You never want to end up eating when all you really need is a little water. Not to mention, when you drink adequately your skin looks better, you become more “regular”, and you may even improve your mental focus and cognition.

You don't have to follow these guidelines to perfection, but here's what a great day of hydration looks like:

- Start each day with a glass of lemon water and aim to have at least 7 more
- Consume 2 cups of green tea at some point during the day
- For variation, enjoy:
 - Flavored water (add any sliced fruit such as lemon or lime, or herbs like mint)
 - Tea
 - Black coffee
 - Herbal tea
 - Seltzer

Drinks to enjoy:

- Iced green tea with lemon
- Water with cucumber and ginger
- Blueberry iced tea with lime
- Raspberry iced tea with club seltzer
- Iced coffee with ground cinnamon and vanilla

Drinks to avoid:

- Diet soda (avoid for the long haul!)
- Alcohol
- Sugar sweetened beverages
- Fruit juice

Your Slim Down Exercise Plan

A big question most people have is, "Do I need to exercise on this plan?" The answer is yes and no. At Nutritious Life, my goal is to create a style of living that allows you to eat and be in control. That means fueling your body with foods that will help you be in the body you want and love. So just following this plan alone will help you drop pounds, be energized, and look better.

That said, exercise is an important part of life and *living*. In fact, people who sit for more than 23 hours a week are 64 percent more likely to die from heart disease than those who sit for 11 hours or less. And if you're like me, you definitely sit more than 23 hours in a week. That's where exercise comes in. Staying fit protects muscles from aging, burns calories, and aids in digestion.

So what should you do? My approach to exercise starts and ends with one word: Fun! You should be enjoying your workouts and not dreading those trips to the gym. Here are a few simple tricks to make exercise more enjoyable than ever.

Exercise Tip #1: Use variety and alternate your workouts.

Exercise Tip #2: Try new types of exercise, such as classes at the gym, kayaking, hiking, or playing a sport.

Exercise Tip #3: Do something that *isn't* your favorite once a week to become more balanced. A strong body is built by identifying weaknesses.

Exercise Tip #4: Add interval training to your cardio routine 1 to 3 times per week. A simple way to do this: Pick the machine of your choice and after a 5-10 minute warmup, set a timer for 20 minutes. For 30 seconds go as fast as you can, and follow that with 60 seconds at a relaxed pace. This style of mixed intensity will fire up your metabolism and boost your fat burning power.

Exercise Tip #5: Pick a time that works for exercise and schedule it in your calendar. No more excuses!

Exercise Tip #6: If you're struggling with #5, be sure to work out in the morning to "get it done" early, especially if exercise is not enjoyable to you.

Exercise Tip #7: Hire a personal trainer. If you can't stay accountable, the person you hire will do it for you.

Exercise Tip #8: Get a workout buddy.

Exercise Tip #9 (and most important): Do activities you love! This can be anything from dancing to playing with your dog.

Exercise Tip #10: Be consistent.

The New (Slimmer) You

This guide might seem simple—almost too simple—to actually work. But that's the beauty of it. It works *incredibly well*! These are the same approaches I use with my clients who visit me at my Nutritious Life office in New York City, and after years of reviewing what works best to jumpstart weight loss and look and feel better, these are the most effective slim body secrets.

The best part? Not only will you be rocking a new body in just 1 month, but these tips and this way of eating go beyond just the first month. Unlike other cleanses or 4-week plans, this follows the Nutritious Life style of eating where you fill up, feel great, and have some flexibility to indulge and enjoy life. After the first month, you will most likely enjoy a few nights out with your friends or order dessert every now and then, but now you have the structure and understanding of how to make food work for you.

In 30 days, I expect you to say hello to your new body. And even better, you'll be welcoming a new, more comfortable way of life.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tai'.