

March 2016 | [mindbodygreen.com](http://mindbodygreen.com) | Dawna Stone | Nutrition

*[NOTE: Some sentiments contained within "What We're Reading" articles may not strictly conform with Simple Again's nutritional outlook. We read articles containing opposing information all the time and derive our nutritional philosophies from the latest science, the opinions of experts worldwide and our anecdotal experiences in the field. We keep an open mind and a strong affinity for fact-based evidence to help make the world of nutrition "Simple Again" for you.]*

## 8 Small Ways You Can Start Eating Clean Today



Eating clean is about fueling your body so you can become the best version of you possible. It's the way to a healthier, more energetic, and happier you!

Jump right in by following all eight tips below, or ease in by incorporating the tips over time. Either way, you'll be on track to eating a healthier, cleaner diet.

### **1. Eat "real" food.**

Choose food that is in or close to its natural state, and steer clear of highly processed or refined foods. If the food comes in a package or box and contains more than one ingredient on the label, it's a good sign that it's processed and no longer in its natural state.

### **2. Buy organic.**

Buying organic limits your exposure to hormones, antibiotics, chemicals, and pesticides. Organic foods typically have more vitamins, minerals and nutrients, and many say that organic foods have more flavor.

So how do you increase the amount of organic foods in your diet? Start with replacing the foods that tend to have the highest levels of hormones, chemicals, or pesticides, like fruits, vegetables, meats, and dairy.

Remember to look for foods that are certified organic, not foods that say "made with" or "contains organic ingredients," as these foods may only have a small number of organic ingredients.

### **3. Read labels.**

Choose foods with minimal ingredients. The more ingredients on the label, typically the more processed the food is. Yogurt, for example, can be a great addition to your morning smoothie bowl or homemade granola, but the wrong brand can have as much sugar as a candy bar.

Check the label for plain yogurt that doesn't contain added sugar, color, or stabilizers on the label. Still want your yogurt to have a sweet taste? Sweeten it yourself using more natural sweeteners like honey or maple syrup or— even better—add some sliced fruit such as raspberries, blackberries, or blueberries.

### **4. Increase your consumption of greens.**

The simplest way I found to launch into a clean-eating program is to increase my consumption of leafy greens. Not only are kale, spinach, collards, arugula, and other greens loaded with vitamins A, C, E, and K, but they are also packed with fiber, which aids in digestion and helps keep you satisfied longer.

Find creative ways to include more greens by adding them to omelets, smoothies, soups, and stews.

#### **5. Eliminate excess sugar.**

When you eliminate sugary, non-nutritious foods like soda, baked goods, and candy, you'll notice immediate benefits. Your energy levels will stabilize throughout the day, you may experience fewer headaches, and overall you'll feel more in balance, with fewer mood swings.

Enjoy a sweet treat on occasion, but don't overdo it. Try making your own sweet treats with healthier, less refined ingredients.

#### **6. Eliminate or reduce wheat.**

Substitute wheat with wholesome wheat-free alternatives. Most of the wheat we consume in America is highly refined and processed. Eliminating processed wheat in your diet can help eliminate many gastrointestinal issues such as bloating, diarrhea, constipation, and gas, etc.

#### **7. Eliminate artificial sweeteners.**

If you're using artificial sweeteners STOP! Many people believe that drinking diet soda and eating foods with artificial sweeteners helps them lose weight, but the opposite may be true. In fact, the frequent use of artificial sweeteners can change the way we taste our food, making healthier choices less appealing.

#### **8. Clean your pantry.**

Take the first step and clean your pantry. Even before you start on your clean-eating journey, I urge you to give your pantry and refrigerator a top-to-bottom review, discarding the items that you know are highly processed and unhealthy.

You'll be amazed how great it feels just knowing you've removed unhealthy food from your home and replaced it with clean, healthy, and nutritious foods.

*Learn more at [simpleagain.com](http://simpleagain.com)*