



Riordan  
Clinic

# Health Hunters

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## Mental Health and Diet – The Road to the Brain Begins with the Belly!

Did you know that 75% of your brain chemistry (neurotransmitters) is produced in your gut?! Did you know that 90% of your serotonin, happy brain chemical hormone, is produced in your gut? Yes! The intestinal tract is home to so much of our nervous system that it is often referred to as our “second brain”. We make our neurotransmitters from amino acids, vitamins, and minerals; and because of this, what we eat and what we don’t eat can directly impact our mood, behavior, sleep, anxiety, depression and mental health. The healthier and less inflamed we can keep our digestive tract, the healthier and better balanced our mental faculties can be.



### AUTHOR

*Dr. Nia Stephanopoulos-Chichura, MD*

### How do I know if my gut is healthy? There are several ways.

1. One of the simplest is to look at your bowel movements daily. I encourage you all to do this. It is free and takes little time. Think of it as a biopsy of your intestines and brain health. We should be having at least two soft formed bowel movements, 8-12 inches long, brown in color, sinking not floating, with no undigested food or blood seen – EVERY DAY! Yes, every day. Often this is one of the first steps I work on getting into balance with patients.
2. Do you have or take medications for acid reflux? Our bodies are miraculous. They always want to heal and will work hard to maintain balance. If we are having trouble digesting our food, especially proteins, we may be experiencing a lack of stomach acid or bile production or too much production in an attempt to help us break down the food. This is another area we immediately address to help heal a raw digestive system.
3. How do you feel after eating certain foods? Sleepy? Have a headache? Phlegm in your throat? Rashes? Tummy pain? Gas? Bloating? Fatigue? Acid reflux?
4. Lab testing: comprehensive stool testing, indican level, test for yeast, food sensitivity testing, urinary neurotransmitter profile (yes, these can actually be measured!), Ubiome bacterial population assessment, vitamin and mineral levels, inflammatory markers (hs-CRP and lipoprotein a), and amino acid and fatty acid levels.



Riordan Clinic is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3), nutrition-based health facility in Wichita, Kansas cofounded in 1975 by Olive W. Garvey and Hugh D. Riordan. We have integrated lifestyle and nutrition to help you find the underlying causes of your illness. Since our inception in 1975, the mission has been clear and unwavering to “...stimulate an epidemic of health.”

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# TAHINI Salad Dressing

Adapted from  
[YummyMummy Kitchen.com](http://YummyMummyKitchen.com)

## INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup tahini
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon pure maple syrup
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup water to thin

## INSTRUCTIONS

Pour all ingredients into a small bowl or jar. Whisk together until smooth. If the tahini flavor is too strong for your taste, add a bit more apple cider vinegar and syrup to taste. Store in refrigerator or use on salads, veggies, fish, chicken.



[jessicainthekitchen.com/mason-jar-salads-meal-prep-lunch/](http://jessicainthekitchen.com/mason-jar-salads-meal-prep-lunch/)

## Question: How can I begin to change my gut and brain? Food!

1. Food is information to the body, as are thoughts, feelings, expressions, and conversations. You can put in good information or harmful information. The more good information we have coming in, the healthier the state of our whole being. Avoid harmful inflammatory foods: refined sugar, gluten, grains, dairy (cow, sheep, and goat's milk), soy, soda, processed foods, and fast food.
2. Increase fruits and vegetables and try to get organic whenever possible. 4-5 cups of veggies a day and 1 cup of fruit is a good starting point.
3. Eat nutrient-dense foods (See examples on the next page).
4. Before you eat, take some time to calm your nervous system - prayer, meditation, silence, and being thankful for what is being given to you.
5. Incorporate some fermented foods into diet – these can contain helpful bacteria to rebalance the intelligence inside of our intestines called the microbiome. You can also make it hospitable for these little guys to stick around by eating prebiotic foods like Jerusalem artichokes (a.k.a. sunchokes), chicory, hydrated flaxseeds or flaxseed meal, onions, and banana.
6. Improvement of digestion and absorption can prevent toxins from accumulating in our bodies. Toxins can drive inflammation.
7. Fasting – medically supervised. Intermittent fasting for 13 hours a day, cycles of fasting, fasting mimicking diet, or the ketogenic diet as a fasting type of diet.

## How do I put it into practice? Tips, tricks and info for cooking on a full schedule.

1. Stock up on nutrient-dense foods so that you have a wide variety of foods to add to whatever you have in the fridge.
2. Make a big batch and keep some in the fridge for a few days or freeze extra if time is short.
3. Invest in a high speed blender for quick smoothies and soups on the go, easy nutrient-dense nut milks, or to grind your own gluten free flours for baking and cooking.
4. When you buy your veggies, wash and chop/prepare them when you get them home so that you can cook easily with them throughout the week.
5. Have a bowl of fruit and veggies out on the counter so that you see them when you walk by, which will make you more likely to eat them and use them in dishes.
6. Plan your meals and keep the recipes your family loves organized for easy reference.
7. Shop the periphery of the grocery store first and choose organic produce and pasture-raised animal proteins whenever you are able.
8. Start a garden! From tomatoes in a pot on your back porch to fresh herbs on your windowsill to a raised bed with lettuce and okra to a full-fledged garden – growing your own produce can cut down on costs, bring some peace and harmony with nature, and be packed full of flavor and nutrients.
9. If you are gardening on a large scale, consider collecting a soil sample and sending it in for analysis of macronutrients and micronutrients. If your garden needs more carbon source, humic and fulvic acids may be needed to promote beneficial bacteria and prevent pests and diseases from infesting the crop. By testing the health of your soil, you can help ensure that your body is getting more of the nutrients it needs when you are eating the food you grow.





10. Take an hour one day to chop veggies and make your own fermented veggies, which can keep for months in your fridge or a cool cellar. (See recipe)
11. Add greens to your diet: arugula, bok choy, celery, parsley, purslane, dandelion, fennel, endive, kale, green leafy romaine, spinach, spring onion, radish leaves, mustard greens, and collard greens.
12. Try to incorporate some plant-based complete proteins into diet. A complete protein contains all of the essential amino acids our bodies need.
13. Try a Mason jar salad (see recipe below).
14. Challenge yourself to try one vegetable and fruit per week that you have never tried before! If you need help knowing what to do with it there, is a free online resource called the World's Healthiest Foods [www.whfoods.org](http://www.whfoods.org).

## Nutrient-dense foods:



**Raw organic nuts and seeds:** almonds, walnuts, cashews, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, macadamia nuts, sacha inchi, sunflower seeds, hemp seeds, chia seeds, flaxseeds



**Organic nut butters:** almond, cashew, walnut, etc.



**Tahini:** sesame seed butter high in minerals and omega-3 fatty acids



**Beans:** high in fiber, antioxidants, minerals – need to be soaked and cooked to help us digest them properly (especially if we have a leaky gut)



**Lentils:** great source of folate and magnesium – Need to be soaked and cooked to help us digest them properly (especially if we have a leaky gut)



**Himalayan salt or sea salt:** note that you still would need to consider other sources of iodine in diet such as seaweed



**Teas:** cleansing tea like nettle and dandelion



**Spirulina:** a nutritional powerhouse and algae superfood containing roughly 60-70% protein and is a complete source of protein. Also contains major minerals, trace minerals, essential fatty acids, vitamins, a wide array of antioxidants. Believed to be a complete food.



**Wild caught salmon:** high in omega -3 fatty acids and antioxidants as well as protein



**Cherries:** organic frozen or fresh - high in zinc, helps to lower uric acid along with celery seed and celery



**Cacao nibs:** high in chromium which helps regulate blood sugar from being too high or too low. Also high in minerals



**Quinoa:** a seed (not a grain) that is a complete protein, quick-cooking, can be made savory or sweet

Have fun with cooking, and remember to take time before you eat to be at peace and calm so that the nervous system is ready to receive the food.

Warm regards,  
Dr.Nia

## Contact the Editor

Please send any comments or suggestions to  
[newseditor@riordanclinic.org](mailto:newseditor@riordanclinic.org).  
Thank you for reading.



**Dr. Anne Zauderer**  
Editor

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[riordanclinic.org](http://riordanclinic.org)



## Health Hunters Newsletter

Join our mailing list to receive this monthly newsletter FREE.

To sign up, go to [riordanclinic.org](http://riordanclinic.org) or email us at [information@riordanclinic.org](mailto:information@riordanclinic.org)

## Supplements for Brain Health



**Omega 820 (Fish Oil)**  
\$37.95



**ProEPA**  
\$45.95



**ProOmega**  
\$64.95

Get these supplements and more at [store.riordanclinic.org](http://store.riordanclinic.org)

# How To Make Lacto-Fermented Vegetables Without Whey

1 glass quart jar with a plastic lid  
1 to 1 1/2 Tbsp sea salt  
2 cups filtered water

### Any Combination of Herbs/Spices:

dried chili peppers  
black peppercorns  
bay leaf  
fresh dill  
fresh basil  
fresh tarragon  
fresh mint  
sea vegetables (arame or hijiki) - use less salt if using these

### Any Combination of Raw Organic Vegetables:

chopped cauliflower  
chopped beets  
chopped carrots  
chopped green beans  
chopped bell peppers  
sliced radishes  
sliced daikon  
sliced cucumbers  
chopped turnips  
chopped broccoli  
chopped kale  
chopped onions  
chopped green onions  
chopped garlic  
cabbage leaves (for the top)



First dissolve your sea salt in water in a glass jar or 2-cup glass measure. Then place you favorite combination of vegetables into

a quart jar (you can use a larger cylindrical jar, ceramic crock, or latch-lid jar instead; just add more veggies and double or triple the salt brine, keeping the same ratio of salt and water, for a larger container). Add a few layers of herbs and spices too. I prefer to keep the peppercorns in the first layer (on the bottom of the jar) so they don't float to the top. Make sure you leave about an inch from the top of the jar.

Then cover with your salt brine, leaving about an inch to a half inch from the top. Fold a small cabbage leaf and press it into the brine so the water floats above it and the vegetables are completely submerged. Cover with a plastic lid (it is best not to use metal as the salt and acids can corrode it, though I have used them occasionally if that is all I have). Screw the lids on tightly. After day 2 or 3 begin to "burp" your jars once or twice daily to let excess gasses escape. You can do this by unscrewing the lid just enough to hear the gasses release and then quickly tightening it back up. You should see a bit of bubbling and some liquid possibly dripping out after about day three, depending on the heat level in your home. I like to place my jars into some sort of container, like a rectangular Pyrex dish, to catch any drips. Set your jars in an undisturbed place in your kitchen out of direct sunlight. I like to store mine on top of my refrigerator.

You can taste the veggies after about five days to see how soured they are. I prefer to let mine ferment for about 7 to 8 days in the winter and 5 to 6 days in late summer. I have also let them ferment for 10 or more days. Just experiment, there is no exact science with fermentation. After your veggies are soured to your liking, place the jar (or jars) into your refrigerator where they will store for months.

Use your vegetables to top cooked quinoa, beans, chopped leafy greens, grilled fish or chicken. Serve them with scrambled eggs for breakfast. I like to add them to salmon or chicken salads made with mayonnaise. And try to restrain yourself from eating the whole jar in one sitting....it may be a little too much salt all at once! You can also whisk some of the leftover brine with olive oil, a squirt of Dijon mustard, and a dash of honey for a probiotic salad dressing!

# Bulletproof Coffee

Have you heard about the recent trend of putting butter in your coffee? Does that sound crazy, or just a little bit delicious? Bulletproof Coffee is a recipe that combines grass-fed butter with medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil in your coffee to make a delicious, latte-like drink that is good for your body and brain.

## THE BENEFITS OF THIS DRINK ARE:



Improves  
brain function



Boosts energy



Promotes  
weight loss



Increases focus  
and attention



## How to avoid coffee that is a delivery system for mold

Mycotoxins are in almost all low quality brands of coffee, so choose your coffee carefully. It is especially important to avoid “blends” of coffee as they mix cheap beans from multiple areas, almost guaranteeing that it will contain mold.

Decaf coffee is even worse, as caffeine is a natural anti-insect and antifungal defense mechanism for the plant. It deters mold and other organisms from growing while the beans are in storage. When you strip the caffeine from the bean, you are making it a more susceptible host.

It is also important to avoid beans prepared by the “natural process method” and the “wet process” as this involves the beans sitting outside for an extended period of time exposing them to bird feces, or in vats of water resulting in unpredictable bacteria growth.

## Why grass-fed butter

Cows evolved to eat grass, not factory farm lot feed. You may notice grass-fed/grass-finished butter is a bright yellow color in comparison to an almost white appearance in butter obtained from grain-fed/factory-farmed butter. Grass-fed/grass-finished butter contains higher concentrations of omega-3 fatty acids, CLA, beta-carotene, vitamin A, vitamin K, vitamin D, vitamin E and anti-oxidants. It also contains high amounts of butyrate that has been shown to both prevent and decrease inflammation, protect against mental illness, improve body composition, increase metabolism and improve gut health.

## What is Brain Octane?

Brain Octane Oil is a medium-chain triglyceride (MCT) oil. The carbon tail of MCTs varies in length from C-6 to C-12. The smaller the carbon tail the more easily it is absorbed by your body and converted into ketones, molecules that can fuel your brain in place of glucose. Brain Octane is pure C-8. It is tasteless and odorless unlike C-6 MCTs. It contains 18 times the amount of C-8 in coconut oil and can still be quickly converted to energy.

Brain Octane is converted to ATP (fuel for your body and brain) in just 3 short steps, whereas sugar is converted in 25! It completely bypasses liver processing, making energy rapidly available to the brain, unlike long-chain fatty acids. It is a key part of Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting, helping to boost your metabolism, burn fat, improve cognition, build muscle and prevent the reduction in fat-digesting enzymes caused by low-fat diets.

## Upgraded Coffee

The wrong coffee can sap your energy and cause sugar cravings, leaving you feeling lethargic and irritable. Bulletproof coffee is “upgraded coffee” containing unsalted grass-fed butter, and Brain Octane. It not only keeps you energized and focused, but it keeps you full for hours, supporting ketosis. It is from high-elevation, Rainforest Alliance certified, single-origin coffee estates in Guatemala and Columbia.

## In conclusion

Most of our bodies are so starved for healthy fats that it will take a week or two to fully turn on the fat digestion system when you switch to a breakfast high in healthy fat such as Bulletproof Coffee. If your coffee is too rich, try decreasing the amount of butter you use initially and gradually increase it to the amount you like. Taking a digestive enzyme supplement may also help. If you must add sweetener try using xylitol, erythritol, or stevia.

Starting your day with Bulletproof Coffee will give your body the healthy fats you need to make cell walls and hormones while optimizing your cholesterol levels. Experience the boundless energy and focus obtained by intermittent fasting and ketosis for yourself, finding your way to well!



# How to Make Bulletproof Coffee

[riordanclinic.org/2017/03/bulletproof-coffee](http://riordanclinic.org/2017/03/bulletproof-coffee)

1

Brew **1 CUP** of organic, mold-free coffee using filtered water



The Mentalist Dark Roast  
Ground Coffee 12oz

**\$18.95**

2

Add in **1-2 TEASPOONS** of Brain Octane Oil **OR 1-2 TABLESPOONS** of coconut oil



Brain Octane Oil 16oz

**\$23.95**

3

Add **1-2 TABLESPOONS** of grass-fed, unsalted butter



4

Mix (preferably in a blender) for 20 seconds to make a frothy, latte-like drink. **ENJOY YOUR UPGRADED MORNING COFFEE!**

+

## BONUS:

Enhance your Bulletproof Coffee even more! Add a **SCOOP OF COLLAGEN PROTEIN POWDER** before blending to boost metabolism, improve energy and speed up healing.



Collagen Protein  
Powder 16oz

**\$39.95**

Get all the ingredients you need to make your own Bulletproof Coffee at the Riordan Clinic Nutrient Store!

**STORE.RIORDANCLINIC.ORG**

## Upcoming Events

For more information or to register for any of these events, please visit [RiordanClinic.org/events](http://RiordanClinic.org/events) or call 316.682.3100

### Food 101: Nutrition Basics

Wednesday, June 5th

11:30am – 1:00 pm @ Wichita Campus

Anne Zauderer, DC

Cost: **FREE**

This class will explore the basics of diet and nutrition from a functional medicine perspective. This is an essential piece to understand how your body uses a variety of foods, differently. Some of the topics we will look at are: the differences between a fat, carbohydrate, and protein and how each fit into our dietary needs; why we need fiber (from plants) in our diet; what *exactly* is metabolism and what can we do to support it; and much more!

### Lunchtime Lecture: Essential Oils for Summertime

Wednesday, June 19th

12:00am – 1:00 pm @ Wichita Campus

Shawndra Hartman & Jocelyn Pickard

Cost: **FREE**

Come learn about ways that you can incorporate essential oils into a healthier lifestyle. They can be used for stress relief, skin care, cleaning products and so much more!

Previously recorded and available on YouTube

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RIORDANCLINIC.ORG/REAL-HEALTH

ERIN MANNING

After reading the “What Real Health Means to Me” column for the past year and a half it’s apparent - the meaning of Real Health is different for each person. I’ve also learned that meaning will change as we progress through different stages of life – and health! For me, I’m in a season of life that I am focusing on empowering myself through knowledge and intentional choices to ensure continued health as I move into my forties and beyond.

Last July I turned 40 and I vowed to make this decade healthier than my last. For me, this really is happening in three parts, and all aided by the resources and providers at the Riordan Clinic.

- Resolving nutrient deficiencies, which led to chronic anxiety, depression and even a bi-polar disorder.
- Management of auto-immune diseases and symptoms, specifically rheumatoid arthritis.
- Weight loss for preventative health.

**ANXIETY:** When I was in college in my early twenties I was struggling to adjust to moving away from home and a doctor put me on medication for depression. Shortly thereafter I was diagnosed with an anxiety disorder. A few years later I was diagnosed as bi-polar. I spent years taking prescription medications to help manage the

symptoms of these and it truly helped. I have nothing bad to say about any of those medications because they helped the best they could. But they weren’t designed to actually FIX the problem, just lessen the symptoms. And so I continued to struggle. I had days where I was fairly consistent and even tempered. Then I had days where I fought to just go to work or get out of bed. I had many nights where I would scratch at my skin, clawing at my arms and face thinking that if I could just break open enough the anxiety that was coursing through me could escape and I could get a little relief. It was a hard time and I was unable to control these irrational and aggressive mood swings. My family never knew what mom or wife they were going to get that day. I persisted and kept working with doctors to adjust meds and get counseling.

In 2013 I started working at the Riordan Clinic and was able to participate in my first lab panel through the Bio-Center Laboratory. It showed several significant deficiencies. So, because data doesn’t lie, I started supplementing these vitamins and minerals based on one of the provider’s recommendations. Very quickly I felt different. Calmer, more even-tempered. That was in October. I filled my prescriptions for Zoloft and Xanax in November as well as continued with the vitamin regimen Dr. Jennifer had given me. By the end of that month I saw such a remarkable difference that I dared to not refill my script

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For more information or to register for any of these events, please visit [RiordanClinic.org/events](http://RiordanClinic.org/events) or call 316.682.3100

## Upcoming Events

### Food Additives to Avoid

Wednesday, July 10th\*

11:30am – 1:00 pm @ Wichita Campus

Anne Zauderer, DC

Cost: FREE

Have you ever looked at the ingredients list on a packaged food and not recognized half of them? Are all of those ingredients harmful? As food has become more of a science, new ingredients are invented and used every year. In addition, herbicides and pesticides are being sprayed on our food at an ever-increasing rate. This class will delve into the additives that the food industry has developed in an effort to market and sell more processed food to us.

\* **NOTE:** The July Food as Medicine class will be the second Wednesday due to the 4th of July holiday.

### Lunchtime Lecture: MSM: The Mineral Essential for Health

Wednesday, July 31st

Noon – 1:00 pm @ Wichita Campus

Dr. Ron Hunninghake & Dr. Anne Zauderer

Cost: FREE

MSM, or methylsulfonylmethane, is an abundant source of organic sulfur, a critically important mineral in the body. Half of the body’s sulfur is found in skin, muscles and bones, making it essential for healing of these tissues in conditions such as arthritis, muscle recovery, skin wound healing, anti-aging, and much more! Supplemental MSM can help with all of these conditions and is therefore known as the “miracle supplement”! Come hear Dr. Ron and Dr. Anne talk about how to properly use MSM as part your health journey.

# #ichooserealhealth

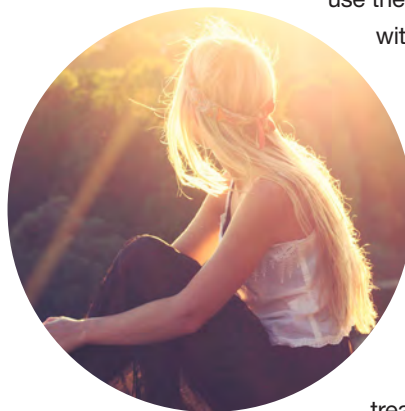
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Continued

but continue with the nutrients and eating changes. I have not refilled those medications since then. *For five years I haven't taken an anti-depressant or any prescription medication like it!*

It is overwhelming, even to me, the difference in my life. I've discovered that the key nutrient that was causing so much trouble and heartache was vitamin D. As I've worked to bring my levels into the normal range I have eliminated my disorders. **We found the root cause and by fixing it, we got rid of the disease.** I am so incredibly thankful because I know so many people who are struggling to find hope and help with anxiety and depression. If that is you, please listen to me when I say that you don't have to live this way. It might not be a vitamin D deficiency that is the solution for you but there is something that's causing it. Find a doctor who will listen and fight alongside of you. You are worth it! Life without mental health instability is worth it. I'm proof!

**RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS:** Unfortunately, two years ago I learned that I have RA. That's a whole story in and of itself. But I wanted to share some things that I am doing, in conjunction with traditional medicine (and medication that is helping). What I eat is directly correlated to how I feel. Eliminating sugar (including those through carbs) has made a significant change. Sugar causes inflammation. Plain and simple. Once you are willing to commit to giving it up, you'll see the difference through blood work, and for me, through decreased pain, stiffness and swelling in my joints (most noticeably my hands, wrists, and toes). Turmeric and Fish Oil have also been



very important. I take a daily turmeric supplement that is dosed based on my blood work and Mike Shaw's (PA-C) recommendations. I also use the turmeric gummies that we sell in the store to help with acute pain and before I'll take an over-the-counter medication like Tylenol. Fish Oil is also helping balance out my blood tests for CRP (c-reactive protein, which is an indicator of inflammation) among other things. When I use these products, I hurt less. Plain and simple. Again, find a doctor who is open to more than just prescriptions and pain meds. Arthritis can be a cruel disease. Living in pain day-to-day is hard both physically as well as mentally. Being an active participant in my own health and treatment plan has allowed me to take less medications and live with less symptoms than I would have otherwise. I am fortunate to have found a great rheumatologist who supports me, as well as doctors here at the Riordan Clinic, who do the same.

**WEIGHT LOSS:** with the help and guidance of our Lifestyle Rx program I have lost 60 lbs. in the last year. This is still a work in progress for me but I honestly never thought I would be able to do this. As my weight improves, so does my health. Both my arthritis and my mental health. A major change is that I am no longer angry at myself for letting myself get so overweight and for not being able to fix it. Just by starting the program and actively working on fixing it, I've let myself stop feeling guilty or frustrated. That change alone is worth every effort and every dollar. The improved health aspects, blood work, and day-to-day life changes are nice, too! If you feel like you just can't do it on your own, I've been there. And you don't have to. We can help!



## Food as Medicine

This in-depth class series will connect the dots and address some fundamental questions behind how our diet impacts our health and well-being and how it contributes to the progression of chronic disease.

Food 101: Nutrition Basics | **June 5th**  
Food Additives to Avoid | **July 10th**

Vitamins and Nutrients in Food | **August 7th**  
Food as Medicine | **September 4th**