

The Eczema Cure

Heal from the Inside Out with Real Food



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Dear reader,

I see patients each week in my practice that suffer from eczema – itching, scratching, discomfort that ranges from mild annoyance to a major disruption of life. While western doctors don't have much to offer when it comes to this condition, alternative medicine does. Through diet and lifestyle changes and possibly a few herbs and supplements, most cases of eczema can completely resolve.

This book contains the 'secrets' that I share with patients (or their parents, in the case of kids). These methods really work. I've seen it happen time and time again. The trick is actually following them.

I've tested these methods on my children and myself too and cured all three of us from varying degrees of red, itchy, irritated skin.

Emily Bartlett

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About the Author

Hi there! I'm Emily Bartlett.

I practice **Chinese and holistic medicine in Los Angeles**, CA and consult with patients around the world. After treating kids and adults with health issues (from eczema to autism, anxiety to infertility) either caused or exacerbated by poor diet, I began emphasizing the importance of true nutrition with patients and writing about food on my blog, www.HolisticSquid.com.

I haven't always been into Real food and holistic living...

I grew up eating Pop Tarts and Cocoa Pebbles in Pennsylvania. I discovered vegetables in college, and gave up vegetarianism for a buffalo burger on a cross-country pilgrimage to California. When I was newly pregnant with my first child, I developed an aversion to all things processed and made my first bone broth. Now I can happily say that I know nearly all the farmers who grow my food.

I've been told that I come from a long line of health care practitioners starting at least with my Filipino great-great-grandmother, a village shaman-healer. I was raised by my father, a Western family doctor, and my mom, an oncology nurse. In line with my heritage both old and new, I try my best to honor western knowledge and ancient wisdom when it comes to health and wellness. I love helping other families find their passion for Real, nutrient-dense eating and believe that Real food and a good attitude are the best medicine.



What is Eczema?

If you have invested your time and money in this e-book, you most likely are very familiar with what eczema is - an itchy, dry, possibly oozing and/or flaking, red skin rash that can range from mildly annoying to completely disrupting your life.

Known formally as contact dermatitis or atopic dermatitis, eczema is an allergic skin inflammation that occurs in men, women, boys, girls, and babies.

Eczema often happens in tandem to allergies and asthma, and is often the precursor to those conditions. Eczema is also related to skin conditions such as psoriasis, impetigo and even MRSA infections (Medical News Today 2010). While eczema commonly occurs in certain areas of the body like the creases of the elbows and knees, the telltale itchy rash can appear anywhere on the skin.



Why Dermatologists Can't Cure Eczema

The common western treatments for eczema include: steroid creams, non-steroid petroleum based lotions, antihistamines, and anti-itch medicines. These medications work with varying degrees of success, but typically after a variable period of time, the eczema flares again - sometimes while the medications are still being used.

These treatments fail because stopping the rash does not resolve the reason why the rash is happening in the first place. Eczema (and in fact, most skin conditions) is a reflection of a deeper, internal imbalance typically originating from poor digestion. When a dermatologist gives you creams and medicines to make the skin clear, the internal issues are not addressed.

Using cortisone cream to fix eczema is a bit like painting a rickety house that's about to fall down. It makes it look better, and you may feel better for a short period of time - but ultimately the underlying issues must be addressed.

Why Does Eczema Happen?



Eczema occurs when allergens enter the blood stream and create an inflammation reaction that appears on the skin. But why do some people get eczema when others do not?

Some of the factors that contribute to a person's susceptibility to eczema include genetic predisposition, immune system weakness and/or overload, and stress. But the root issue involved with eczema is almost always underlying digestive

weakness. Even if you don't experience tummy upset, your digestive system may be impaired due to poor diet, stress, or other factors.

"Leaky Gut" and Eczema

Leaky Gut Syndrome is a condition where the lining of the small intestine is damaged. This allows incompletely digested nutrients, toxins, bacteria, and wastes to "leak" through the intestines and flood the blood stream. The foreign substances entering the blood then cause an autoimmune response in the body, which leads to inflammatory and allergic reactions such as headaches, joint pain, psycho-emotional imbalance, respiratory issues and digestive problems, and skin conditions - like eczema.

Leaky Gut Syndrome usually goes undiagnosed, misdiagnosed, or is ignored by conventional doctors. Perhaps this is because pharmaceutical companies have little to gain by the treatment of this condition.

Or, perhaps it is because western medicine tends to see the body as a machine whose individual parts must function on their own rather than a complex being with interdependent components.

Diagnosed or not, Leaky Gut Syndrome is likely the root cause of your eczema.



What causes Leaky Gut Syndrome?

- Inherent weak digestion (All children fall into this category)
- Excessive and/or prolonged stress
- Eating the wrong foods and/or not eating the right foods
- Food sensitivities or allergies
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS)
- Radiation and cytotoxic drugs
- Parasitic infections
- Antibiotics
- Candida (an imbalance of intestinal flora)

Antibiotics and the Vicious Cycle

You may have heard of eczema being blamed on Candida Albicans, yeast that is harmful when overgrown. In fact, the cycle usually involves the destructive forces of antibiotics - here's how it usually works.

Antibiotics are a common cause of Leaky Gut Syndrome as they destroy beneficial bacteria that naturally thrive in the small intestine. Without sufficient beneficial bacteria, Candida is able to thrive.

Candida contributes to Leaky Gut Syndrome by causing the cells in the lining of the small intestine to shrink. Enlarged spaces are formed in the lining of the small intestine as a result of the shrinking cells, thereby allowing toxins to easily pass through to the blood. With this increased inflow of toxins, the important immune agents in the mucus of the small intestine that normally neutralize toxins are overwhelmed. This sequence of events causes the overall immune system to be compromised.

The weakened immune system paves the way for an infection or condition that is typically treated with antibiotics. Thus the cycle perpetuates, and your eczema does not resolve.

Now that you understand how and why eczema happens, let's get right down to curing it!

4 Actions to Cure Your Eczema From the Inside Out

I'm here to tell you, there are no quick fixes that have lasting results. Eczema can be challenging to live with, and it takes hard work to completely cure. But when you commit to the four actions below, you'll be on the road to living eczema-free.

Action 1: Identify and avoid triggers

Action 2: Put out the fire

Action 3: Strengthen your defenses

Action 4: Heal your eczema with Real food



Action 1: Identify and Avoid Triggers

Each individual case of eczema is triggered by different factors. To add to the confusion, these triggers may change over time. Red wine and stress for one person may be just as reactive as dry weather and cow's milk to another. In order to cure your eczema, it's important to identify what triggers create a flare for you.

This section covers the three types of eczema triggers: environment, stress, and diet.

Eliminating Environmental Triggers

Environmental triggers can be anything that aggravates your skin from the outside in. Your goal is to eliminate all possible triggers.

Experiment with Laundry Soap

At the very least, use detergents that are biodegradable and free of dyes and perfumes. Some people find that even 'all-natural' biodegradable detergents irritate their eczema. [Soap Nuts](#) (an actual seed that grows in Asia) can be a good alternative.

Avoid Perfumes

It may smell nice, but the chemicals in synthetic scents give your body one more thing to process. Avoid them in all forms – spray-on, lotions, deodorants, air fresheners, etc. Let your family and/or roommates know that abstinence from perfumes is essential to your health.

Avoid Petroleum Products

Many of the "eczema-friendly" lotions that are available at drugstores and by prescription are made with a base of petroleum. Petroleum can help temporarily relieve symptoms by providing a non-breathable barrier, which keeps the skin moist. In the long term, however, this impermeable membrane *prevents* the skin from breathing. Over time, this actually causes more dryness and more susceptibility to inflammation. Petroleum has also been linked to cancerous tumors (Langan 2009). Mineral oil 'works' in the same way, except (even worse), a certain amount of it also sinks into the bloodstream.



Read Labels

Just like with packaged food, always read labels on soaps, lotions, and all other types of body products. Don't assume that something is safe or healthy because it says so on the label. When in doubt, visit the [Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep database](#), which catalogs most body products and the potential hazard of their ingredients (many of which are banned ingredients in Canada and Europe). Here are a few potential toxins in your body products with their labeled risks compiled by the EWG and based on accumulated research:

- PETROLATUM - Organ system toxicity
- MINERAL OIL - Allergies/immunotoxicity, Organ system toxicity
- SODIUM LAURYL SULFATE - Organ system toxicity, Irritation (skin, eyes, or lungs)
- BENZALKONIUM CHLORIDE - Allergies/immunotoxicity, Irritation (skin, eyes, or lungs)
- DIMETHICONE - Organ system toxicity
- STEARETH-20 - Organ system toxicity
- METHYLPARABEN - Endocrine disruption, Allergies/immunotoxicity, Organ system toxicity, Biochemical or cellular level changes
- PROPYLPARABEN - Developmental/reproductive toxicity, Endocrine disruption, Allergies/immunotoxicity, Organ system toxicity
- DIAZOLIDINYL UREA - Allergies/immunotoxicity
- PHENOXYETHANOL - Allergies/immunotoxicity, Irritation (skin, eyes, or lungs)
- METHYLISOTHIAZOLINONE - Neurotoxicity, Allergies/immunotoxicity
- COCAMIDOPROPYL BETAINE - Allergies/immunotoxicity
- FRAGRANCE - Neurotoxicity, Allergies/immunotoxicity

Choose Breathable Clothing and Bed Linens

Choose 100% cotton (or other all-natural fiber) clothing, sheets and blankets. Synthetic products (like nylon) are produced with petroleum chemicals. Like petroleum-based lotions, these fabrics do not allow your skin to breathe freely, and have been shown in studies (and real life) to aggravate eczema.

Don't Over-Bathe

In addition to using gentle and natural skin products, avoid long hot showers or soaks. The hot water will dry your skin and exacerbate your eczema. Chlorine swimming pools may irritate eczema as well. If you do swim, be sure to rinse well with cool water after leaving the pool. If you bath daily, consider only using soap in essential areas, and otherwise simply rinse with warm water and pat dry.

Filter Your Water

ALL of the water that comes in contact with your body (both internal and external) should be filtered to remove chlorine, fluoride, and other toxic chemicals. There are many different and often confusing water filtration options out there. Here's the Cliff-notes version:

BEST - Whole house filter for bathing + reverse osmosis filter (and a method to add minerals back into the water either via a specialized filter or mineral drops that you can buy online or at a health food store).

GOOD – A filter attached to the tap of your shower and/or bath + reverse osmosis filter and minerals as above.

NOT GOOD ENOUGH – Brita filters, bathing in municipal tap water, reverse osmosis water without added minerals.



Avoid Drugs as Much as Possible

Steroid creams can temporarily suppress the expression of eczema and other skin inflammation, but this powerful medicine is also absorbed into the skin creating systemic immune system weakness. Steroids also suppress the adrenal glands' ability to make natural anti-inflammatory compounds. The skin can also become dependent on steroids and grow thin where creams have been applied.

Anti-histamines can provide temporary relief of symptoms, but are not without negative side effects, including extreme drowsiness.

Used exclusively, steroid creams and anti-histamines are examples of treating eczema symptoms and ignoring the root cause. Anti-bacterial salve may be necessary on severely broken skin that is at risk of infection, but should be used sparingly.

Bottom line: Avoid drugs as much as possible in treating your eczema. In severe cases or to avoid a more serious infection, occasional pharmaceuticals may be necessary while you treat the underlying cause. This may be the case for example with young children who cannot understand that they should not scratch.



ESPECIALLY FOR BABIES AND KIDS: Use Caution with Vaccinations

Studies show that there are more incidences of eczema, allergies, and asthma in children who are vaccinated versus those who are not (World Allergy Organization 2011). It is my opinion that vaccinations themselves are not the *cause* of disease, but can certainly be the catalyst that pushes a child's health into a state of imbalance leading to eczema, allergies, and even autism spectrum disorders.

The following risk factors may increase your child's likelihood to react negatively to vaccinations:

- Family history of eczema, allergies, asthma or autoimmune conditions
- Complications of pregnancy, especially when treated with medication
- Cesarean section birth
- Formula fed – even if only supplementary
- Poor or allergenic diet of the breastfeeding mom

You can read more about when newborns have eczema on page 75.

Reducing Stress Triggers

Stress can be a major trigger for eczema flares, particularly in adults. Stress cannot be overlooked if you are serious about healing. Admittedly, stress reduction is often easier said than done. By making the effort to manage your stress, you will help heal your eczema, which will further reduce your stress!

Here are some suggestions for making life a little easier:

- Determine the major source(s) of your stress.
- Can you change the stressful situation or circumstances?
- If yes, are you able and/or willing to implement change?
- If not, is there a way for you to perceive the situation differently? More often than not, living a stressful life is a choice.



- Begin to take time for yourself - at least 10 minutes per day sit quietly with your eyes closed, and focus only on your breathing in and out. When your mind wanders to other things, gently draw your attention back to the task.
- Seek out healthy ways to cope with stress – adding some exercise, trying yoga or meditation, taking a walk in nature, or getting acupuncture.
- Be patient with and kind to yourself. Stress is often generated by self-judgment and unrealistic, self-imposed expectations.

Do not underestimate the effects of stress on your body and your quality of life. In order to reduce stress, you must be proactive in either changing your circumstances or altering your attitude.



Dealing with Dietary Triggers

For most folks who suffer from eczema, certain foods trigger or exacerbate a flare. There are two ways to identify and address dietary triggers for eczema – allergy testing and/or elimination diets.

Allergy Testing for Eczema

Allergy testing can either be done as a skin test or blood test. Both measure antibodies (a.k.a. immunoglobulins) that the immune system puts out in response to invaders (in this case allergens).

There are two main types of immunoglobulins these tests measure: IgE and IgG. While elevated IgE is an indication of immediate anaphylaxis-type reactions, the presence of IgG markers indicates delayed responses to allergens – sensitivities rather than full blown allergies.

Most allergists use the common skin test as the default for determining IgE allergies. The RAST blood test is used as an alternative for IgE, and the ELISA tests for IgG (food sensitivities).

The skin test (also called a prick test) is done on the back and upper arm. It's the most common and widely accepted method for testing a variety of allergy triggers at one time. This test measures for IgE markers only. Small amounts of liquid containing allergens are placed on the skin; the skin is then pricked with a needle. After 15-20 minutes, the skin's reaction to the allergen is measured by observing the flare (a.k.a. wheal) at the site indicating the degree of a potential allergy.



The challenges with the skin test are:

- Administering many pinpricks may be impossible for most children and adults with an aversion to needles.
- Since eczema is a skin condition, such a test may be inappropriate in severe cases where eczema is already present on the potential test sites.
- The skin test does not test for food sensitivities, only full-blown allergies.

The RAST test (radioallergosorbent test) is a blood test that detects elevated IgE. This test is less frequently used, but may serve as an alternative when medications, health conditions, or patient preferences deter a skin test.

The ELISA test (Enzyme Linked Immunosorbent Assay) is a blood test that measures IgG – the immunoglobulin that indicates a delayed response to allergens. This test can be particularly useful since in many eczema cases, the inflammation is linked to ‘delayed’ sensitivities to food rather than ‘immediate’ allergies. BUT, there is quite a bit of controversy over the accuracy of IgG testing and the theories behind it. To further complicate matters, the ELISA tests for sensitivities that are subject to change based on what the individual eats, unlike the skin test and RAST test which look for full-blown allergies.

The bottom line: The IgE tests really don't yield enough information. The IgG test sounds good, but may not be reliable. This is why elimination diets may be the best way to determine what food sensitivities are contributing to your eczema.

Using Elimination Diets

The most effective way to determine what foods trigger your eczema is to undertake an elimination diet. There are several ways to do this.

Pick-and-Choose Elimination Diet

The least challenging way to do an elimination diet is appropriate for those with mild eczema, less urgency to resolve the condition, and/or difficulty moderating food intake.

If you suspect a certain food triggers your eczema, completely eliminate this single food for a period of one week to one month to see if your eczema resolves. This simpler approach may be more convenient than a full elimination diet, but it may also be less effective in terms of results.

Basic Elimination Diet

A basic elimination diet is the best way to get a fairly accurate idea of what foods trigger your eczema.

To start, journal everything you eat for about a



week before altering your diet. Note the degree of your eczema for the day (on a scale of 1-10) and any other symptoms, even if you think they're not relevant.

Next, on the first day of your elimination diet, remove some or all potential food allergens from your diet for a minimum of 7 days to a month. Potential allergens include:

- **Wheat, and any food containing gluten** – Wheat is a likely culprit and should always be tested.
- **Dairy products, including cheese** – Keep in mind; it is possible that different types of dairy (goat vs. cow, raw vs. pasteurized) may affect an eczema reaction differently. (Read “The Dairy Secret” on page 30 for more information).
- **Eggs** - Try reintroducing eggs early on, as good quality eggs provide significant nutrition and are affordable.
- **Acidic fruits** such as citrus.
- **Corn** and corn-containing products. See note below*
- **Nightshades** - Potatoes, eggplant, peppers and tomatoes.
- **Shellfish**
- **Nuts** -Test for individual nuts separately and be sure to properly prepare your nuts as explained on page 43.
- **Sulfite containing foods** found in dried fruit, wines, and chocolate.
- **Caffeine** - After the elimination period, only consume caffeinated beverages in moderation.
- **All processed foods** - Eliminate these foods completely and do NOT reintroduce.

*Corn is found in more foods than you might think. If you find you are extremely sensitive to corn, you may also react to corn-fed meat and poultry, as well as most processed foods that contain ingredients such as cornstarch, citric acid, dextrin, maltodextrin or dextrose (Vishniac 2009). See the film [King Corn](#) for more information.

After the ‘elimination’ period, reintroduce one food group to your diet roughly every 5 days. This allows sufficient time to determine any intolerances starting with the foods that you *least* suspect to be triggers for your eczema. If you find that a particular food flares your symptoms, do not add a new food until your symptoms recede.

So what *can* I eat on an elimination diet?

- Vegetables and most fruit (preferably organic)
- Rice, quinoa, oats, barley, millet (look for gluten free label). See page 43 for instructions on how to properly prepare grains.
- Chicken, turkey, beef, pork, lamb, bison (nitrate and preservative free, preferably from animals that have NOT been raised in confinement).
- Fish (preferably wild-caught from cold, clean water)
- Elimination approved items, as you are able to eat them without reaction – with the exception of processed foods.



Beyond Elimination: Healing the Gut

Sometimes determining food triggers and eliminating them is enough to control and prevent skin inflammations. But for some folks, food sensitivities seem to morph with the wind, making it nearly impossible to use a basic elimination diet as a tool to ward off eczema or other allergic responses.

Luckily, there are methods that, though rigorous, can be extremely useful in curing food allergies from the inside out. GAPS, which stands for Gut and Psychology Syndrome, is a diet based on the concept that leaky gut syndrome affects overall health and often leads to psychological imbalances such as depression, hyperactivity, attention issues, and more. The GAPS program is based on using a nutrient dense, extreme elimination diet to reverse food allergies over a period of up to 2 years.

I highly recommend taking this online class - [Reversing Food Allergies](#), which will make the task of healing your gut both easy and fun.

Action 2: Put Out the Fire

In Chinese medicine, nearly all eczema is seen as a manifestation of '**Damp Heat**' trapped in the skin. There can be other factors that support or complicate the skin condition as we previously discussed, but Damp Heat creates the itch, red, and oozing rash.

To treat Damp Heat, you must take measures to clear heat and drain dampness while simultaneously addressing underlying conditions.

To do this, it is helpful to add **cooling, bitter foods** to the diet - especially dark leafy greens.

Dandelion is a wild weed that can be eaten, taken as a supplement, or brewed into an herbal infusion, or strong tea. Dandelion clears heat and toxicity. A detoxifying soup is an excellent way to incorporate dark leafy greens including dandelion into your diet. (See the recipe section for ideas.)



Berries of all kinds are full of anti-inflammatory bioflavonoids. Choose organic produce to minimize chemical ingestion from pesticides and maximize nutritional benefits.

DHA, the omega-3 fatty acid found in **fish oil**, can be particularly helpful as it reduces inflammation in all cells of the body.

The omega-6 fatty acid called GLA (gamma-linolenic acid) found

in **borage oil** or evening primrose oil, has proven effective in the treatment eczema and preventing inflammatory reactions in the body (Dugoua 2012, Horrobin 2000). Some studies have shown that the metabolism of essential fatty acids is abnormal in people with eczema, resulting in low levels of GLA. The dosage in clinical studies was up to 300mg per day for severe cases of eczema (Andreassi 1997; VanGool 2003).



Finally, **acupuncture and Chinese herbs** can be extremely useful in putting out the fire as well as strengthening the digestion to resolve the underlying cause of your eczema. Consult with your Chinese medicine practitioner or find one near you at Acufinder.com.



Action 3: Strengthen Your Defenses

While some days it may seem like you need the Navy and Marines to defeat your eczema, it's not the armed forces that we are talking about here. The soldiers you need to battle eczema are the beneficial microorganisms in your body (probiotics) and important nutrients like Vitamin D.

Two Probiotics Sources

You've heard about acidophilus in yogurt being good for you, right? You may even take a probiotic supplement or eat probiotic-rich foods for health benefits. But did you know there are over 400 strains of beneficial bacteria that all play different roles in the body? In the past, humans ate food that came more directly from the earth - not transported across continents, sprayed with bug and weed repellents, and genetically engineered to resist decay. The former food was naturally rich in beneficial micro-flora, while the latter most certainly is not.

To get the daily dose of probiotics your body needs to defeat eczema and protect against future outbreaks, it is wise to *both* eat cultured foods and take supplements. These beneficial bacteria are essential to healing the gut, which we have seen plays a key role in reversing eczema.

Probiotic Supplements

A quality supplement is the easiest way to ensure your body is populated with the bacteria it needs to avoid the inflammation reactions that lead to eczema. The two strains that seem to have the biggest effect on eczema (based on research studies) are *L. reuteri* and *L. rhamnosus* GG (Ritz 2011). Look for a supplement that includes both.

When choosing a probiotic supplement, note that some must be refrigerated. This is to keep the probiotics' cells more stable. Probiotics don't spoil, and they don't lose potency rapidly, but try to follow the manufacturer's instructions about refrigeration.





Probiotics supplements may have an enteric coating designed to delay release and ensure stomach acids don't destroy beneficial bacteria before they reach the gut. However, not all bacteria are destroyed by stomach acids.

Keep in mind; people have ingested probiotics in food for ages without the benefit of enteric coatings. Pay attention to additional ingredients in whatever supplement you choose. Avoid all supplements with highly processed

ingredients, and watch out for probiotics that contain dairy if you're sensitive to dairy products.

Probiotic Foods

Yogurt is the probiotics food source most people recognize and consume, but there's a whole world of cultured and fermented foods available to you. This includes a variety of cultured dairy products, fermented fruits and vegetables, condiments and drinks. We will discuss probiotic foods more in the next section.

Vitamin D to Fortify the Immune System

Until recently, Vitamin D has been an under-appreciated nutrient. But in the last several years, research and empirical evidence have shown Vitamin D is essential for immune health, hormone function, healthy bones and teeth, and even cancer prevention.

Because of the pivotal role Vitamin D plays in health, adequate levels are essential in prevention and treatment of eczema.

While it is believed that the human body synthesizes Vitamin D best through regular sun exposure, even with your best efforts, it is difficult to get enough D-generating sunshine during winter months unless you live near the equator. Fortunately there are ways to get supplemental vitamin D through diet and supplements.



6 ways to get your daily dose of vitamin D...

1 - Sun Exposure

Catching some rays is the best way to get your sunshine vitamin, but lifestyles, climate and environmental factors can make this a challenge. Keep the following in mind if you want to raise your Vitamin D levels with sun exposure:

- At least 40% of the body's skin should be exposed to the sun.
- Light-skinned people need approximately 10 to 20 minutes of sun exposure daily, while very dark-skinned people may need up to 90-120 minutes daily. Aim for exposure at the rate of about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time it would normally take to burn.
- Washing exposed areas with soap or swimming in chlorine removes natural skin oils necessary for Vitamin D generation. Instead, rinse with water and wash only "essential" areas with soap.
- Avoid using sunscreens during therapeutic exposure.
- During winter months, additional D3 supplementation is necessary.

2 - Fermented Cod Liver Oil (FCLO)

Unlike regular fish oil, cod liver oil is naturally rich in Vitamin D. When you choose *fermented* cod liver oil, you get the additional benefit of a cultured food that makes its nutrients much more bio-available (easier for your body to absorb and use). Consequently, the daily dosage of FCLO is much lower than if you supplement with synthetic vitamin D.

According to the Weston A. Price Foundation, "The high-vitamin fermented cod liver oil is sold as a food so does not contain vitamin levels on the label.

However, after numerous tests, the approximate values of A and D have been ascertained at 1900 IU vitamin A per ml and 390 IU vitamin D per ml. **Thus 1 teaspoon of high-vitamin fermented cod liver oil contains 9500 IU vitamin A and 1950 IU vitamin D, a ratio of about 5:1.**" (Fallon 2009)



The WAPF recommends the following dosages per day:

- Adults - 1 teaspoon
- Children - 1/2 teaspoon
- Pregnant and nursing moms - 2 teaspoons

Note: Most commercial cod liver oil (including well-respected brands like Nordic Naturals and Carlson's) has been over-processed and contain synthetic vitamins D and A added in improper proportions. In light of this, I recommend Green Pasture Fermented Cod Liver Oil. Unfortunately, this supplement is not currently available in health food stores, but you can [buy it online](#).



3 - Lard from Healthy Foraging Pigs

This may come as a surprise: After cod liver oil, lard is the second best source of vitamin D. The key is getting lard from pigs that haven't been factory raised, have spent time outdoors in sunshine, and have eaten a healthy diet. Good quality bacon and bacon grease is a great gateway into the wonderful world of lard. I have included recipes for rendering your own lard and making Mexican Carnitas in this e-book.



4 - Oysters

6 oysters contain an estimated 270IU of vitamin D, but keep in mind, your body utilizes nutrients from food far more easily than from supplements. And oysters are oh-so-good!

5 - Fish Roe

You know those tiny orange things you get with sushi? The ones with a salty flavor that bursts in your mouth? It's called fish roe - and it's packed with D. One recent study (Allbritton 2010) showed a single tablespoon of roe contained 17,000IU of Vitamin D!

6 - Vitamin D3 Supplement

While it is optimal to get vitamin D through sunshine and food-based sources, using a vitamin D3 supplement may be essential if your blood levels are significantly low. The [Vitamin D Council](#) and other experts recommend a normal range of D3 blood levels is 50-90ng/ml. The only way to accurately determine your level is by blood test (Eckman 2012).

The recommended dosage to maintain normal D3 levels is 35IU/pound of body weight. Work with a qualified health practitioner to determine the correct dosage for you.

How NOT to Get Vitamin D

It's important to note that many 'trusted' sources of vitamins and minerals fall short in both quality and dosages. Some commonly relied-upon sources of Vitamin D include:

- **Multi-vitamins** – Most don't have the right type of Vitamin D (D3 as opposed to D2), the nutrient isn't bio-available, or it's present in inadequate levels.
- **Breakfast cereal** – There are many reasons to skip cereal, but when it comes to vitamin D, similar to multi-vitamins, it's a waste of time, money, and a dirty bowl.
- **Fortified milk (or orange juice)** – The milk and juice industries have most of us believing our drinks have Vitamin D covered. They don't, for the same reasons stated above.
- **Cod liver oil that does not have vitamins A and D in the correct proportion** – Spend the extra effort on sourcing fermented cod liver oil. Or alternatively, choose a high quality fish oil and supplement with foods rich in vitamin A and D.
- **Tanning Beds** - Individuals with poor gut absorption or Seasonal Affective Disorder can benefit from making Vitamin D during winter months with the aid of tanning beds' UVB rays. HOWEVER, nature did not intend for humans to sit in an electrically charged box. The risks of x-ray and EMF (electro-magnetic fields) in tanning beds outweigh the benefits (FDA 2012).

Action 4: Healing Eczema with Real Food

First Things First: Lose the Junk

It would be a disservice to tell you all about the healthy foods that can help heal your eczema without first urging you to removed processed, junky foods from your diet. This includes white sugar, high fructose corn syrup and other artificial sweeteners; processed flours (even gluten-free varieties); artificial colors, and flavors; factory-raised meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products; cereals, frozen foods, and nearly everything that comes in a box or doesn't spoil in a 'normal' amount of time.

Yes, this may seem like a big task, and I don't suggest trying to fully incorporate these changes over-night. But, little by little, you can morph your diet from one that is full of empty calories to one that is full of nutrient-dense goodness. Once you begin to acclimate to a diet of Real food, your junk food choices will gradually fall away.



Ahead, we'll look at some of the pillars of a traditional foods diet that can help to heal your eczema, followed by a section of recipes to guide you in new, healthier ways to prepare food.

"Good" Fats

While most people know that monounsaturated fats are good and trans-fats are bad, I've got some breaking news for you: saturated fat and cholesterol are essential to human health. Furthermore, including them liberally in your diet will help resolve eczema.

For more than half a century, saturated fat has been deemed a deadly substance that clogs our arteries and causes heart disease. However, when we consider that humans have been thriving on diets rich in saturated fat for millions of years, it just doesn't make sense that it could be so unhealthy.



Despite the bad reputation saturated fat has undeservedly earned, it supports many of the body's critical functions. This includes a healthy brain and nervous system, strong bones and teeth, and optimal lung capacity. Because of its stable chemical structure, saturated fat is far safer for cooking than new-fangled cooking oils, such as soy, grape seed and canola oils.

Saturated fat is essential in preventing and curing eczema because it:

- **Makes skin cells more resilient** to damage from both internal and external offenders.
- **Provides fat-soluble vitamins** (A, D, and K2), which are essential for health and deficient in most modern diets. These vitamins are important to immunity, gene expression, bone production, and many other critical functions.
- **Strengthens cell membranes**, making skin more resilient against inflammation.
- **Protects against toxins** - Because saturated fats produce fewer free radicals, they're also less likely to cause liver damage and impair its detoxification capabilities. When the body is over-loaded with toxins, inflammation (eczema) abounds.
- **Fortifies the Immune system** – Short and medium-chain saturated fatty acids, particularly the lauric acid found in coconut oil and palm kernel oil, have natural antimicrobial properties that provide protection against undesirable microorganisms in the intestines. This promotes a healthy balance of intestinal bacteria (Natural Bias 2009).



Rather than blaming our health problems on saturated fats like butter, lard or coconut oil, we should look to the supposedly 'heart healthy' vegetable fats such as margarine, canola, corn, and soy oils as well as the grocery stores' aisles of other processed foods.

Begin to introduce saturated fats as part of a nutrient dense, junk-free diet. Include:

- **Red meat** including beef, lamb, and bison that were raised outdoors on pasture (NOTE: Factory-raised meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy –the kind most commonly available at grocery stores and restaurants - is NOT healthy, as the saturated fat contain the toxins and hormones that result from poor practices in conventional meat production (Sustainable Table 2012). Visit Meatrix.com for more information).
- **Pork** from pigs that are raised outdoors. Look for organic and forage fed. Yes, this includes bacon – but be sure to buy bacon that is nitrate-free. Save bacon fat to use as a healthy fat for cooking.
- **Whole eggs** (not just the whites) from hens that have been raised outdoors on pastures. The next best choice would be “free-range organic”, not “cage free” eggs.
- **Coconut oil and palm kernel oil** are great for cooking and baking. Coconut butter, milk, and cream are excellent alternatives for those who cannot tolerate dairy products. (See the recipes section for a coconut based ice cream).
- **Butter** if you are not sensitive to casein, the protein in milk. Alternatively you can try ghee – clarified butter that does not contain the casein. Look for butter from cows that have been raised on pasture (such as the Kerrygold brand). This butter will naturally be a deeper yellow color than conventional butter and rich in important fat-soluble vitamins.



The shift away from the wrong fats will help give your body the correct balance of macronutrients. This will soon begin to reflect outwardly as improvements in your skin's condition.

Bone Broth

The name "bone broth" sounds medieval, like something modern folks simply don't eat. But more and more, people are turning to stock made with the bones of chicken, beef, fish, etc., for both superior culinary flavors and old-fashioned healing properties.

Every chef and foodie knows the key to a good soup or sauce is the stock. Bone broth tastes far superior to any canned or carton varieties, but beyond flavor, it's also far more nutritious. Homemade broth is loaded with minerals, gelatin, and glycosaminoglycans (which include substances like chondroitin and glucosamine, keratin and hyaluronic

acid, and more.) These nutrients benefit skin, teeth, bones, hair, nails, and joints. Bone broth is also a digestive elixir that helps heal the gut lining - a big benefit for those who suffer from digestive problems, food allergies, and nervous system conditions including anxiety and depression (Daniel 2003).

So how does bone broth help with eczema?

The gelatin in bone broth helps with eczema by healing the gut and strengthening the digestive system; internal inflammation is quelled, so the external (skin) inflammation is able to heal. Various components of bone broth directly benefit the skin, including keratin (which protects the skin from harmful substances and infections) and hyaluronic acid (which helps the skin stay moist). The various minerals in bone broth are well assimilated further contributing to radiant health.

Drink a minimum of 1-3 cups of bone broth per day, either by the mugful or used in soup, stew or other recipes.

Cultured Foods

Discussed briefly in the last section, cultured (a.k.a. fermented) foods are deliberately allowed to sour or ferment naturally at room temperature or slightly warmer. Historically, culturing foods was a way to preserve them without refrigeration. Milk was cultured into yogurt and aged into cheese. Cabbage fermented into sauerkraut and cucumbers became pickles. Salmon was aged with lemon and salt to become lox. Today many of these foods are produced with short cuts and preservation methods that allow for longer shelf life but lack probiotic content.



Beyond the benefit of a naturally long shelf life, cultured foods are rich in probiotics. Probiotics are the beneficial bacteria necessary for good digestive health and immune function, which is why they are so important in your eczema-healing diet. While our ancestors were probably unaware of the presence of these friendly microorganisms, it is

evident that our modern diet is mostly replete of probiotics (with the exception of yogurt and kefir).

Luckily, the traditional food and slow food movements have revived some of the practices that bring probiotics back into our diet in delicious cultured foods. At health food stores, it's not uncommon to find Bubbies sauerkraut and pickles, kombucha, several brands of traditionally fermented kimchi, and of course, an entire shelf of yogurt and kefir.

I've included several recipes for cultured foods in the Recipes section, and you can find a limitless number of ideas online. Sandor Katz's book [Wild Fermentation](#) is a great resource, too. Have fun exploring the world of cultured foods – an affordable and delicious adventure that will benefit your entire body.

The Dairy Secret

While 'milk' is often found to be a trigger for eczema, research on the benefits of raw milk for reducing food allergies is encouraging. An Austrian research study identified a significant *reduction* in asthma, hay fever, and allergy-related skin problems among children who consumed raw milk versus those who did not. According to the study, the biggest allergy reductions occurred among children who consumed raw milk in the first year of life and continued to be exposed to it through age five (Loss 2011).

Raw milk from grass-fed cows is a traditional food that has been consumed by humans for over 10,000 years (Plank 49). It offers many health benefits, as it is a complete food and a natural source of all the essential nutrients your body needs to function properly. Raw milk contains

protein, the eight essential amino acids, healthy fats including conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), minerals, vitamins A, D, and most B's, enzymes and cholesterol.

Raw dairy is even richer in nutrients and beneficial bacteria when consumed in the form of fermented or "soured" dairy products such as yogurt, kefir and raw cheeses.



Here are three interesting points you may not know about dairy sensitivities:

1 - Raw dairy contains lactase-producing bacteria that create lactase when they colonize the gut. (Lactase is the enzyme required to digest lactose – the milk sugar that can make milk cause gas, bloating, and cramping). Pasteurization destroys these beneficial bacteria, rendering milk much more difficult to digest among a significant portion of the population. Therefore, many people who consider themselves lactose intolerant may find raw dairy benevolent to their digestion.

2 - Digestibility of dairy products may depend on your ancestry. All human babies naturally produce lactase to support digestion of mother's milk. This production wanes as a child approaches weaning age, though the body continues to produce some lactase through adult life.



People who have historically lived farther from the equator (and therefore could store fresh milk longer in the cooler climate) produce more lactase and can digest unfermented dairy products with more ease than warm climate dwellers. In warmer climates, where fresh milk sours faster, people traditionally produced and ate cultured dairy products such as yogurts, kefir, and cheeses. The cultured dairy requires less lactase to digest, since the lactose is partially broken down by the culturing process. As a result, people who descend from warmer climates often have more difficulty digesting fresh milk and cream as adults.

3 - Dairy allergies and lactose intolerance can often be reversed. The trick is to first remove all dairy from your diet, then gently reintroduce little-by-little starting with ghee (clarified butter). Then slowly and patiently introduce in this order: butter, cultured dairy products such as yogurt and kefir, raw cheeses in small amounts, and finally raw cream and raw milk. Every person will have their own pace with which they begin to tolerate dairy again. Some may require the support of additional herbs or supplements if their allergies/sensitivities are severe or complicated by other health issues. Speak to a health practitioner experienced in healing digestive allergies for additional guidance.

What does this mean for my eczema?

If you have an extreme allergy to dairy products, it may be necessary to eliminate them permanently or until you have healed from your digestive allergies with the GAPS diet or a similar method. However, if you only notice mild to no sensitivity, you can experiment with substituting *raw* dairy products as described above. Then over time, the naturally occurring healthy microbes in raw milk can help to *reverse* eczema, allergies, and asthma rather than exacerbating these symptoms.

To learn more about raw milk sources and safety, visit RealMilk.com.

Cleansing foods

While they're all the rage in modern health circles, generally speaking, cleanses are not as healthy as they're cracked up to be. Most cleansing regimens are either too extreme (lemon water and cayenne pepper for days on end) or a fancy way to get you to spend a fortune on cleansing supplements. At the end of a cleanse, most people go back to life as usual – a yo-yo extreme in diet that does not typically yield lasting beneficial results.



It *is* wise for nearly everyone (and especially adults) to incorporate *some* cleansing into their diets, both by regularly consuming greens and vegetables, and occasionally having an extended period of eating relatively lighter than your day-to-day. For the average person, an appropriate time to switch to a more cleansing diet is in the spring – according to Chinese medicine, the season of growth. Decreasing heavy meat and starch consumption is also seasonally appropriate. You may even find you crave these foods less with the change of season toward warmer weather and longer days, so instead of beef barley stew, you may choose to have a mixed green salad with seared fish.

For those who suffer from eczema, cleansing foods should be part of a weekly or even daily focus. The amount of cleansing foods you eat should be based on how they feel in

your body. Does your eczema clear after several days with a focus on lighter, cleansing foods? Do you feel more energetic and experience more mental clarity when you eat this way? These are signs that the cleansing foods are appropriate. While detox reactions and ‘healing crises’ are not unheard of, stimulating one should not be your goal.

By adding green veggies, light vegetable soups and other foods and drinks that have a cleansing effect, you lighten the load for the digestive system, which allows the nervous system to operate more smoothly, as well. This type of harmony between the two systems will reflect outwardly to your skin.

Go Green

Start your body’s cleansing process by including more greens – especially dark leafy greens, including bok choy, kale, chard, spinach and collards. Young, leafy greens like baby lettuces or dandelion leaves and seasonal veggies such as asparagus and peas are ideal for cleansing, too. Add some cleansing, cooling, and refreshing herbs and spices to your favorite light meals, including green onions, dill, cilantro, oregano, green garlic, and fennel.



Raw-some

While you will benefit from the enzyme content of raw veggies, aim to eat no more than 20% of your veggies raw, as raw, cold foods can further damage weakened digestion. Instead, lightly steam the greens and toss with a bit of coconut oil, butter, ghee, or olive oil. Fat helps your body assimilate minerals from vegetables, while cooking makes them more digestible.

Drink Yourself Clean

Refreshing teas are another great way to aid your body’s cleansing process. Green tea, fresh mint, chrysanthemum, and dandelion teas help to clear excess heat and toxicity. You can also find natural “detox” or “cleansing” teas at most health food stores. You can sip these cool or hot.



Try adding a pinch of sea salt and some sliced lemon and orange to your drinking water for extra refreshing, extra hydrating mineral water. Later in this e-book, you will also learn how to make hibiscus tea and kombucha – two refreshing and cleansing beverages.

Get Juiced

A cup of carrot juice is made from a pound of carrots. I don't know about you, but if I had to choose, I'd go for the cup of juice. Juicing is a wonderful way to reap the benefits of a large quantity of vitamins, minerals, and enzymes without actually having to chew and digest all the fibrous material. Bitter cleansing veggies can be disguised by blending them with more palatable ones for picky kids and adults alike.

Natasha Campbell-McBride, founder of the [GAPS Diet](#), recommends the following:



Pineapple, carrot, and beet juice – At the start of the day to stimulate the digestive system

Carrot, green apple, celery and beet juice – As a liver cleanser

Cabbage, apple, and celery juice – To stimulate digestive enzyme production and cleanse the kidneys

Green leafy veggies with tomato and lemon – as a good source of magnesium and iron as well as a chelator of heavy metals.

Real Food Basics for Curing Eczema

Chicken Bone Broth

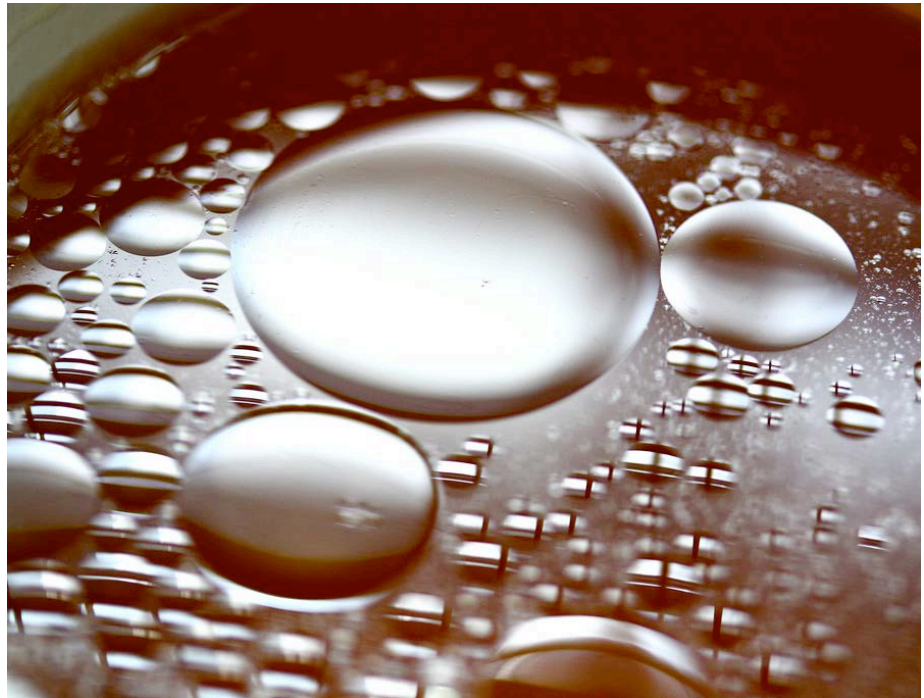
Option 1: Beginner's Chicken Bone Broth (for Squeamish Beginners and Folks Who "Don't Cook")

So you want the health benefits of bone broth to heal your eczema, but haven't cooked much beyond boiling water for spaghetti and heating up sauce or grilling a chicken breast in a pan? No problem. Even the most remedial beginners can master a basic chicken bone broth.

You know those rotisserie chickens they sell at grocery stores?

Perfectly cooked whole chicken, ready for you to take home for dinner = Real food for no effort = brilliant.

If you are a true beginner, you probably buy the roasted chicken, pick off the meat and toss the bones in the... WAIT! Don't throw the bones away. This is where the fun begins.



You will need:

- 1 rotisserie chicken (preferably organic and free range)
- 1 T. apple cider vinegar
- Filtered water
- A crock pot or pot with a well-fitted lid
- A fine metal sieve
- Optional – onion and/or onion peels, carrots, celery

Beginner's Bone Broth Method

1. Eat your store bought rotisserie chicken.
2. Place the remaining 'frame' of the chicken (the bones, skin, and cartilaginous bits) into a crock pot or pot.
3. Cover the bones with water, adding a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar per chicken frame.
4. Cover and cook on low for a minimum of 6 hours up to 24 hours or until the bones crumble when pinched.
5. Carefully strain the broth through a fine metal sieve and discard the bones.

Use the broth immediately, store in the fridge for about a week, or freeze for future use in ice cube trays for quick defrosting. If saving for later, consider concentrating the broth by simmering it until it is half of its volume to save on space in your fridge or freezer.

Ok, I've got bone broth – What do I do with it now?

Bone broth can be very simply consumed by sipping from a mug like tea. Drink 1-3 times per day for its therapeutic benefits. Beyond that, use your beautiful broth as the base for soups and sauces to cook rice or quinoa, or in any recipe that calls for stock.

Option 2: Classic Chicken Bone Broth in a Slow Cooker

If you regularly roast your own chickens at home, you can follow the instructions above. If you have a whole chicken to work with, poaching it in a crock-pot yields more consistently tender meat than roasting. Poaching also makes it easier to completely remove meat from the bones to eat in sandwiches, salads, and stir-fries for a number of meals.

Classic Chicken Bone Broth Ingredients and Supplies:

- 1 whole chicken, including giblets
- 1 T. apple cider vinegar
- Filtered water
- A crock pot
- A fine metal sieve
- Optional – onion and/or onion peels, carrots, celery
- Optional – rubber kitchen gloves

Classic Chicken Bone Broth – Method

1. Remove the (defrosted or fresh) chicken from its packaging, taking care to remove any giblet bag inside the cavity. Rinse and place the chicken and giblets in the crock pot.
2. Add filtered water to just cover the chicken.
3. Turn the crock-pot to low and cook for 3-4 hours (depending on the size of the chicken and the heat of your pot) until the chicken is just cooked (no longer pink).
4. Gently remove the chicken to a bowl and allow to cool slightly. Wearing optional gloves to protect your hands...
5. Remove the perfectly cooked chicken and place in a separate bowl. Put the bones, skin, and other 'bits' back into the crock pot with the broth, cover, and continue simmering on low for 6-12 hours or until the bones break easily.
6. Carefully strain the broth through a fine metal sieve and discard the bones.

Use the broth immediately, store in the fridge for about a week, or freeze for future use in ice cube trays for quick defrosting. If saving for later, consider concentrating the broth by simmering it until it is half of its volume to save on space in your fridge or freezer.

Option 3: Why in the world would you want to add feet and heads to your bone broth?

Once you've mastered the classic chicken bone broth, you may start to find yourself curious about the strange chicken parts that your farmer or butcher may sell. Today, in a boneless-skinless-chicken-breast culture, we are trained to think that lean muscle meat is the best source of animal protein. Oh contraire! It is indeed the offal, the bones, and the fat of properly raised animals that provide us with the important fat-soluble vitamins and micro-minerals that are completely lacking in 'white meat'.

Throughout human history, the traditional cultures worldwide that enjoyed vibrant health intuitively knew that the practice of eating the whole animal (be it bison, fowl, or fish) would provide the most profound nutritional benefit. They prized the organ meats, cooked with rendered animal fats, and made soup broth from the bones (WAPF 2009).

Chicken stock made with the *unusual* parts is a wonderful way to incorporate the nutritional benefits of the 'whole animal' without having to sit down with a knife and fork to these parts on a plate. When you



receive the heads and feet from your farmer, they most likely have already been cleaned, so there is nothing more to do other than gingerly or exuberantly dump them in your stockpot.

Prepare the stock using the classic method above, adding as few or as many heads, feet, necks, and giblets as you may desire or have on hand.

Beef Bone Broth

Beef Bone Broth Ingredients:

- 5-8 lbs bones from pastured beef, bison, pork, or lamb
- A scoop of fat - coconut oil, lard, or tallow for roasting
- Filtered water
- 2 Tablespoons cider vinegar – Essential to leach mineral out of the bones and maximize the mineral content in your broth.
- 2-3 bay leaves (optional)
- 1 head of garlic (optional)



Beef Bone Broth Method:

1. Rinse and clean the bones with water; pat dry, and rub with fat.
2. Roast the bones with the garlic at 400F for 45 minutes to an hour, turning once, until they are well-browned. This ensures a good flavor in your resulting stock.
3. Add the bones and the pan scrapings to a big pot, cover with filtered water and bring to a boil.
4. Once boiling, add the vinegar, bay leaves, and garlic.
5. Turn down the heat and simmer covered for several hours and ideally up to 24 hours.
6. Throughout the simmering process, skim off any scum and add water as needed to keep bones covered.
7. When the stock has finished simmering, allow to cool and then filter through a fine mesh strainer. Refrigerate until chilled. Once chilled, the stock should set like gelatin, and the fat should rise to the top.
8. Pick off the fat and reserve it for cooking.
9. Scoop out the gelled stock and reheat to serve straight or to use for a recipe. Store extras in the fridge for a week or so, or freeze in PVC/BPA-free plastic freezer bags, mason jars, or ice cube trays.

Beef Bone Broth Options:

- **Big Batches** – Make a big pot of bone broth at one time and freeze by the quart or in ice cube trays. You can use it for quick soups and savory stews, pour it over meals in gravy, drink it warm or cold, or use it instead of water to cook your properly prepared grains or beans.
- **No Roast** – If you're pressed for time, skip the roasting. The flavor won't be as rich, but

the health benefits will still be plentiful.

- **Add veg** - Some folks like to add veggie scraps, and this is certainly an option. Keep in mind that anything you add to the stock will influence the flavor of the food it goes into.
- **Slow Cooker** – Don't feel like watchin' the pot boil? Simmer your stock in a crock-pot for the same results.
- **Shrink it** – If you're short on freezer space reduce your stock down to half or less by simmering. When ready to use, add water to reached desired concentration.

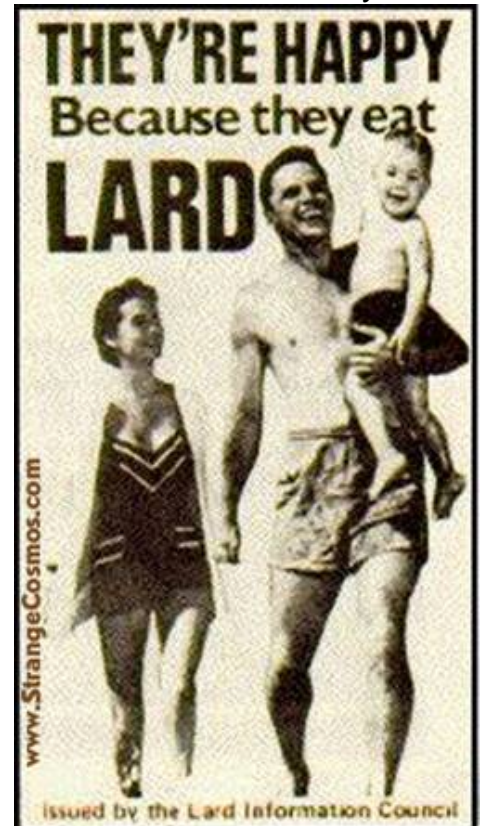
How to Render Lard

Once you get over the concept, rendering lard is actually quite easy. The hardest part may be sourcing a local farmer or a butcher that can guarantee your purchase comes from humanely-raised pork. This means animals that have been forage fed and spent time outdoors in sunshine (essential for the vitamin D). Pigs are omnivores, so they will eat farm scraps, table scraps, sour milk – just about anything. Their diets should not consist solely of GMO corn.

If you plan to use the lard for baking, you will want ‘leaf lard’ which is made from the pig’s belly fat. You can render your lard from back or other fat for any other cooking applications.

You will need about 3 pounds of fat (from pasture-raised pork) to yield one quart of lard.

1. Cut the fat into small 1-2 inch chunks.
2. In small batches, pulse in a food processor until ground. (Alternatively, you can ask your butcher or farmer to grind the fat before you buy it.) The grinding step is optional and creates a bit more mess, but it can really speed up the rendering time.
3. Place ground fat into a large saucepan, add about a half cup of water per pound, and cook on high with no lid until you are left with a pan of liquid fat and some grizzly bits of protein. This usually takes about 30-45 minutes. You can snack on the leftover bits or feed to a pet.
4. Strain the fat into wide mouth jars until ready to use (if they are narrow at the top it will be difficult to get hardened lard out later).



You can also drain and save your bacon grease to use as rendered lard, too. Just don't use this fat for baking unless you want a bacon-flavored pie. Lard will last several weeks in the fridge and can also be frozen for future use.

You can use your lard in the delicious Mexican Carnitas recipe in this e-book. Other ways to include this wonderful fat are endless – for sautéing or frying just about anything, or as oil for making homemade popcorn. Feel free to eat generous amounts of this stuff – traditional lard is both delicious and nutritious.

How to Properly Prepare Grains, Beans, and Nuts

For many people who suffer from eczema, wheat is a common trigger and must be avoided. But beyond wheat (and for everyone else), it is essential to learn the how and why of properly preparing grains, beans, and nuts.

Whether you're eating brown rice and quinoa or cookies and white pasta, most modern grains (as well as nuts and legumes) are not properly prepared. Nearly all of the modern preparations of grains that we consume today (whole or refined) contain phytic acid and other anti-nutrients that prevent your body from properly absorbing and assimilating the nutrients in your food.

Back in the olden days, traditional cultures throughout the world prepared grains with great care by **soaking, sprouting or souring**. Our ancestors were unknowingly neutralizing the phytic acid in the grains, thereby optimizing their nutritional value.

Improperly prepared grains are likely to contribute to inflammation, exacerbating your eczema. Reduce these effects by only consuming grains, beans, and nuts that have first been soaked, sprouted, or soured.

Soaking Grains and Beans

Soaking grains and beans before cooking releases phytase, which allows the phytic acid to be neutralized. Soaking can also make grains easier to digest, as the process neutralizes enzyme inhibitors that prevent the grain (seed) from germinating under poor growing conditions. When soaked, grains are prepared for growth into a new plant. During this process, beneficial enzymes are produced and vitamin content is boosted.

Soak grains for 12 to 24 hours in water with 1-2 Tbsp of whey, vinegar, lemon juice, yogurt, buttermilk or kefir. Rinse well to remove any acidic taste and cook as usual in fresh water.

Soaking grains is the easiest way to reduce their phytic acid – it just takes a bit of discipline. Every night after dinner or before bed, scoop your grains in a bowl and top with filtered water. In the morning, you will have oats, rice, or grain of your choosing ready to go.

Sprouting Grains and Beans

Sprouting grains transforms them into food of superior nutritious value. In addition to neutralizing phytic acid, sprouting activates food enzymes and increases vitamin content. Sprouted grain has more protein and less starch compared to non-sprouted grain, and has a lower glycemic index value.



To sprout grains, choose high quality, organic grains and rinse them thoroughly. Place in a ceramic pot or glass jar and add enough filtered warm water to cover all grains by several inches. Soak the grains overnight; then drain and rinse well. Rinse them several times

the first day, and continue rinsing them until they have sprouted. Rinse and drain before using, refrigerating, or dehydrating to make sprouted flour.

While homemade is usually best because you know where your grains came from and how they were prepared, most well-stocked health food stores sell delicious sprouted breads and crackers. You can find wonderful sprouted flour for baking, including gluten-free options such as sprouted rice, quinoa, and buckwheat flours on my [resource page](#).

Souring Grains

The most classic example of this is sourdough bread, which is delicious and digestible food if you are eating wheat, but can also be made with gluten-free ingredients if you are feeling ambitious. Souring neutralizes phytic acid.

Souring or lactic acid fermentation enhances the body's ability to take advantage of the nutrients in grains (as well as other foods). Typically, grains are soaked and allowed to sour for between 12 hours and several days. Most "sourdough" bread is not prepared with traditional souring time, and therefore does not have the same health benefits.



Read the label: It should NOT list yeast

as one of the ingredients, which is an indicator that the bread was not made with a proper sourdough starter. Whole Foods Market carries several traditional (wheat) sourdough options, so if you're eating wheat, this is an easy place to start.

Soaking and Drying Nuts

Nuts contain plenty of good nutrition, but they also contain anti-nutrition in the forms of phytic acid AND enzyme inhibitors which make the nuts difficult to digest and block the absorption of minerals. Phytic acid and enzyme inhibitors can be neutralized by first soaking and then drying nuts before eating them or using them to make butters or flours. Unfortunately, even organic nut butters – regardless of whether they are roasted or raw – are typically not soaked and dried before they are made into butter.

If you want to save time, you can buy properly prepared nuts from [my resource page](#) (and even buy the nut butters there, too!), or you can easily do this all yourself. Luckily, the process is simple. It just takes a bit of planning ahead and requires only a little hands-on time.

How to Properly Prepare Nuts

1. Pour raw nuts into a glass or ceramic bowl.
2. Cover the nuts with filtered water.
3. Allow nuts to soak overnight – with the exception of cashews, which should only soak for 2-3 hours, and macadamia nuts which cannot be soaked, lest they disintegrate into mush.
4. After soaking, drain and rinse nuts well.
5. Spread onto parchment paper lined cookie sheets and dry in the oven on the lowest setting overnight or until dried and crunchy. Alternatively, spread onto dehydrator sheets and dry. The setting recommended for nuts is the same amount of time as soaking.

Now your nuts are ready to be made into butter, ground into flour, or eaten by the handful.



Breakfast and Snacks

Cashew Butter

If you have determined that nuts are not contributing to your eczema, nut butters are a yummy and filling treat. Measurements are not included intentionally here, because so much depends on the type of nuts you use, how dry the nuts are, and your preference for texture. The only ways you can mess this up is to add the oil, honey, or salt too quickly, so simply go slowly.

Ingredients and Supplies for Making Cashew Butter

- Properly prepared cashews (or other nuts of your choosing) – see recipe above
- *Refined* coconut oil – which will have no coconut flavor – in the proportion of *approximately* 1 tablespoon for 2 cups of nuts
- Raw honey (preferably local)
- Unrefined sea salt
- Food Processor
- Spatula

Easy Steps for Making Cashew Butter

1. If solid, melt coconut oil to liquid in a saucepan on the stove. You will need about 1 tablespoon of oil for every two cups of nuts.
2. Add a handful or two of cashews to your food processor, turn on, and slowly add melted coconut oil until you have a very smooth and liquid nut butter.
3. Add more nuts to thicken the butter, and then alternately add oil and nuts to achieve a uniform, desired consistency.
4. Add a drizzle of honey and pinch of sea salt to taste.
5. When your butter is the perfect thickness and balance of salt and sweet, scoop into glass jars.
6. If refrigerated, the coconut oil will cause the butter to harden, so I usually keep one jar in the cupboard, and back up jars wait in the fridge. Enjoy!



Perfect Hard Boiled Eggs

Did you know eggs contain all 8 essential protein-building amino acids? A whole egg contains about 5 grams of fat which will aid you in absorbing the eggs' fat soluble vitamins A, K, E, D, B-complex and minerals like iron, phosphorus, potassium and calcium? Did you know that eggs contain choline which is an important component found in every living cell? These are just a few of the reasons eggs are a perfect part of your nutrient-dense diet (that is, if you aren't allergic to them!)



Perfect Hard Boiled Egg Ingredients:

- Eggs from hens raised on pasture
- Water – preferably filtered

Perfect Hard Boiled Egg Method

1. Boil enough water to cover as many eggs as you plan to boil.
2. Once your water is boiling, use a spoon to gently drop in eggs so that they do not crack.
3. Allow them to boil for exactly 10 minutes for slightly soft or 12 minutes for completely cooked through. (I use a timer as exact time keeping is not one of my super powers).
4. Drain the hot water from your pot.
5. Bounce the eggs in the pot so that the shells crack*
6. Place the pot of eggs in the sink and run cold water over them for 1:30 minutes.
7. Peel your eggs easily and perfectly. Boom! You're a hero!

***Note:** If you do not wish to eat your eggs right away, do not crack the shell. Hard-boiled eggs keep nicely in the fridge when their shells are intact. Instead, drain the hot water from the pot and run COLD water over the eggs until they are cool; then store for later use.

Soups

Green Soup

This green soup is the perfect way to incorporate a cleansing element to your diet. It also tastes good and is surprisingly filling and hearty. Though delicious at any time of the day, this soup makes a great breakfast food. Try it topped with grilled salmon or a small spoonful of leftover quinoa or rice for a more substantial meal.

Green Soup Ingredients (Per person)

- 1/4 onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup peas (frozen are fine)
- 1 cup of homemade chicken or fish stock (optional) or use filtered water
- 1-2 large handfuls of dark leafy green, washed and chopped (I prefer black kale, but collards, dandelion, chard or other kales are fine too)
- 1 small handful of dried seaweed (wakame works best)
- 1 tablespoon unpasteurized miso
- Juice of 1/4 lemon
- 1 tablespoon tahini paste (optional)
- Unpasteurized soy sauce to taste (optional)



Green Soup Steps

1. Place onions and peas in a medium saucepan, cover with stock or filtered water, and bring to a boil.
2. Add the dark leafy greens and dried seaweed. Steam/blanch briefly until greens are emerald in color.
3. Add miso and lemon.
4. Use an immersion blender or countertop blender to puree the contents of the pot (including liquid).
5. Spoon into bowl(s), top with optional tahini and soy sauce – serve immediately.

Bieler's Broth

Bieler's Broth is a great cleansing recipe to include in your weekly menu. Taken from [Nourishing Traditions](#), this recipe was originally created by Henry Bieler, MD, "for fasting, for energy, and for overall health."

Try eating it for breakfast (or before breakfast) for a cleansing start to the day.

Bieler's Broth Ingredients

- 4 medium zucchini, sliced
- 1 pound string beans, ends removed
- 2 sticks celery, chopped
- 1-2 bunches parsley, stems removed
- Fresh herbs such as thyme or tarragon tied together with string (optional)
- 1 Quart filtered water (see note below for chicken broth substitution with added tomato paste and paprika)
- Sea salt
- Fresh whey (optional)



Bieler's Broth Method

- Add zucchini, string beans, celery, herbs and filtered water to a large saucepan.
- Turn heat to high, cook until veggies are bright green.
- Remove from heat and add parsley.
- Using an immersion blender, blend into a soup, stopping at your preferred consistency. Add a tablespoon of whey to each cup of soup before serving, and season with sea salt as desired.

Note:

For a soup that is more nourishing (tonifying to the digestion and adrenals) and slightly less cleansing, use chicken broth instead of water and add 4 tablespoons of tomato paste and ½ teaspoon of paprika. The latter version is preferred for those with a weak constitution or those recovering from illness or childbirth as homemade chicken stock will provide additional minerals, gelatin, and glycosaminoglycans (which include substances like chondroitin and glucosamine, keratin and hyaluronic acid and more). While still great for adrenal fatigue, back pain, and ligament issues, the additional flavors make the soup a bit more satisfying to the taste buds, as well.

Easy Herbed Chicken Soup

Everyone should have a classic chicken soup in their repertoire. Rich with bone broth, good fats, and seasonal veggies, this soup is an eczema-away elixir. Feel free to experiment with any variations and substitutions you can dream of.

Easy Herbed Chicken Soup Ingredients

- 1 whole pasture-raised chicken
- 2 bay leaves
- Sprig of dried or fresh thyme (optional)
- Good quality sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1-2 organic onions
- 1/2-1 heads of garlic
- 3-6 carrots
- 3-6 celery stalks
- A few tablespoons of butter, ghee, coconut oil, or lard
- An assortment of veggies – I love using cherry tomatoes, squash, kale, zucchini, sweet potatoes or whatever is fresh and in season.
- Fresh seasonal herbs chopped finely (you can use cilantro, parsley, or anything you have on hand. You can even substitute with dried if fresh herbs aren't handy)
- Creme fraiche, sour cream, or yogurt (optional for finishing)



Easy Herbed Chicken Soup Method

1. Rinse the chicken, making sure to remove the giblet bag. No need to pat dry; just plop it into the slow cooker and season generously with sea salt and black pepper. Add the giblets right into the pot for added flavor and nutrients (you can pull them out once they're cooked.)
2. Add the bay leaves and optional thyme springs, and cover the chicken with filtered water. Cook on low for 4-6 hours or until the meat easily falls off the bones.
3. In the meantime, chop onions, carrots, celery, and any root vegetables into bite-sized chunks. Roast in the oven with the head of garlic and fat at 350 for about 45 minutes, or until they start to soften. Add softer vegetables (tomatoes, zucchini, etc) to the same baking dish and roast for about 30 minutes more. Reserve any leafy green veggies to add later.
4. When the chicken is done, allow to cool to a workable temperature. Wearing gloves if you prefer, remove the bones, knobby bits, and skin. Shred the chicken into the broth.
5. Mash the roasted garlic and mix with some of the chicken broth to make a thin paste. Add the garlic paste and roasted veggies into the soup and cook on low for 30 minutes to 1 hour.
6. Add chopped herbs and any leafy greens and allow them to brighten for a minute or two, ladle into bowls, top with crème fraiche, and serve. Enjoy!

Main Dishes

Perfectly Seared Flank Steak

When your diet is limited, 'fast' food becomes essential. The flank steak is usually a tough cut of beef which requires time consuming marinating or braising, but seared, it becomes a tender entree which takes only 15 minutes to prepare. When serving, slice it up at the dinner table for a little show-stopping, mouth-watering display of your hosting talents.



Seared Flank Steak Ingredients

- 1.5-2 lb. flank steak
- Coarse ground black pepper (enough to coat steak)
- Unrefined sea salt (enough to coat steak)
- 2 tablespoons lard from forage fed pigs
- 1 tablespoon butter from cows raised on pasture

Seared Flank Steak Method

1. Allow the flank steak to come to room temperature.
2. Pat flank steak dry with paper towels.
3. Coat both sides of the steak liberally with unrefined sea salt and coarse ground black pepper. Be generous. You are creating a crust.
4. Add lard and butter to a cast iron skillet and get the skillet searing hot. The tallow will keep the butter from burning. You'll likely need to turn on your vent hood for this.
5. Just as the oil seems it will begin to smoke, lay the steak in the pan. Allow the meat

to sear on either side undisturbed for 3-7 minutes depending on the level of doneness you desire. Use a meat thermometer to measure the center temp:

Rare = 120F

Medium Rare = 125F

Medium = 130F

NOTE: Do not take the steak past medium as it will continue to cook when taken off the heat source.

6. Place the steak on a wooden board or serving platter and leave undisturbed for 10 minutes. This is the hardest part for me but, allows the juices to run back through the meat instead of escaping.
7. Slice in thin strips across the grain when serving.

Active Time: 10 minutes

Yields: A gorgeous dinner.

Cauliflower Crusted Pizza (dairy, no wheat)

YES! You can skip the wheat and still enjoy pizza!



Cauliflower Crusted Pizza Ingredients

- 1 head of cauliflower (you will need 1 cup of riced cauliflower for this recipe)
- 1 ½ cups of full-fat mozzarella cheese, shredded and divided – preferably from grass fed cows
- ½ cup parmesan cheese, shredded and divided
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt
- 1/8 cup olive oil
- 3/4 cup pizza sauce
- Additional topping of your choosing



Cauliflower Crusted Pizza Method

1. Remove florets from the head of cauliflower.
2. Using the chopping blade with your food processor, pulse the florets until the cauliflower is the consistency of rice.
3. Steam the cauliflower in a covered saucepan until cooked but not mushy (no need to add water).
4. Measure out 1 cup of cooked, rice cauliflower for this recipe, allow to cool, then save the rest for another batch or dish that calls for steamed rice.
5. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit. Combine cooled cauliflower, egg, 1 cup of the mozzarella, 1/4 cup of the Parmesan, oregano, garlic, onion, and salt in a small bowl. Using your hands, spread the raw 'dough' into a thin round layer on a cookie sheet covered with parchment paper and cover with a thin layer of olive oil.
6. Bake for 20 minutes or until the crust is uniformly browned – more brown than the image below.
7. Remove from the oven, transfer on the parchment to a wire rack, and allow to cool completely for a more sturdy crust. If you don't mind eating with a fork, you can add your sauce and topping immediately.
8. Otherwise, when your crust has cooled, top with about 3/4 cup of pizza sauce (more or less based on your preference), 1/2 cup of the shredded mozzarella, 1/4 cup of the Parmesan cheese, and any additional toppings you desire.
9. Return to the oven under the broiler set to high for 3 minutes, or until cheese is bubbling.



Salmon and Avocado Rolls

When bread's not on the menu, sometimes you still just want some food that you can pick up and eat. Enter the salmon roll. Perfectly grilled salmon with satisfying slices of avocado and shredded carrot and perhaps a sprinkling of brown rice, and/or goat cheese all wrapped up in crispy, salty seaweed sheets. These puppies will make you forget about any sandwich you may have been craving and reach for another sheet of nori.

Salmon and Avocado Roll Ingredients

- 4 sheets of roasted nori
- 1 boneless salmon fillet
- 1 avocado, sliced
- Apx. 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1/2 cup brown rice (optional)
- 4 Tablespoons crumbled goat cheese (optional)
- Sea Salt and pepper to taste



Salmon and Avocado Roll Method

1. Season the salmon with sea salt and pepper. Cook the salmon by pan searing for 3-4 minutes each side or until cooked to your desired temperature.
2. Flake salmon apart into pieces.
3. Assemble your roll by placing the nori sheet on your plate, adding salmon flakes and topping of your choosing.
4. Roll and enjoy!

Thai Curry Goulash

Sometimes you need to make a meal out of nothing. In moments like these, this Thai Curry Goulash is a wonderful solution.



Keep the following ingredients on hand to add to the random veggie and meat that is hanging out in your fridge:

- 1 can of coconut milk (PBA-free)
- Thai Kitchen red curry paste (1T)
- Arrowroot powder (1T) – as thickener
- Fish Sauce (to taste)
- Coconut oil

An example of what you may find in your fridge:

- A red onion
- Garlic
- 2 barely decent red bell peppers
- 3 boxes of button mushrooms
- 1 very ripe heirloom tomato
- 1/2 pint of sweet cherry tomatoes
- Cabbage (used half a small head)
- Defrosted roasted spaghetti squash (used about a cup)
- The remains of a pasture-raised roast chicken

Thai Curry Goulash Method

1. If you have one, use your [food processor](#) to save time and slice your veggies in a jiffy. Otherwise slice by hand.
2. Sauté sliced veggies in a big scoop of coconut oil starting with the onion and working down the list.
3. When all the veggies are cooked, pour in the coconut milk and dissolved about a tablespoon of red curry paste into the developing sauce.
4. Add any leftover cooked meat to the pan.
5. Mix a tablespoon of arrowroot with about a 1/4 cup of cool water then gently pour the white liquid into the pan to thicken the sauce.
6. Finish the dish with savory fish sauce and serve.

Mexican Carnitas

Though a traditional Mexican dish, carnitas is often made today in a massive vat of over-processed, hydrogenated lard or vegetable oil that are both absolutely horrible for your health. Conversely, carnitas made the old-fashioned way is a wonderful, nutrient-dense food. If you've just flipped to this page without reading the previous chapters, it may sound shocking that lard will do anything but lead to heart disease. Lard from pasture-raised pork is actually a super food that can play an important role in healing eczema.

Perfect carnitas is moist in the center and slightly crisp on the outside – it takes a bit of a science to perfect (it took me four tries resulting in dry, disappointing pork before I mastered the technique below). Many restaurants achieve this with a deep-fryer of rancid, hydrogenated fat. Made at home, the trick is to cook at a very low temperature until the muscle meat is broken down so it practically melts in your mouth – no more than 285 degrees Fahrenheit.



You can make this in your crock-pot if it has a temperature control, otherwise the oven will yield more consistent results. To achieve the crispy outside, finish the meat by pan-frying on a high heat.

Slow-Cook Carnitas Ingredients and Equipment

- A small to medium [dutch oven](#) or a crock pot that can hold a temperature of about 285 degree Fahrenheit.
- 2-3 quarts of rendered pork fat (lard) - depending on the size of your pork shoulder and crockpot (you want the pork completely covered). You can render your own lard with the instructions found on page 41 of this e-book. You will need about 6 pounds of fat to yield 2 quarts of lard for this recipe.
- 4-5 pounds pork shoulder/butt (with or without bone in)
- 2 limes
- Sea salt
- 1 Bunch of cilantro, washed
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 whole cloves
- A few cloves of garlic sliced in half
- 2-3 small oranges, cut into eighths

Slow-Cook Carnitas Method:

1. Season the pork shoulder with juice of one lime, a generous sprinkling of sea salt, half the cilantro, bay leaves, garlic and whole cloves. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.
2. Preheat your oven to 285 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Warm your rendered lard (if previously chilled to solid) until it is liquid.
4. Place your whole seasoned pork shoulder in a small dutch oven (the smallest you have to fit the meat, but still cover with liquid). Shove your orange slices around the sides of the pork.
5. Pour the liquid lard over the pork and oranges until the meat is completely covered.
6. Place the meat in the preheated oven with the lid on. Consider setting your Dutch oven on a lipped tray to catch any overflow of fat.
7. Cook for 4-6 hours or until meat pulls apart easily with a fork.
8. Remove from the oven and lift the meat out onto a dish, taking care not to burn yourself with the fat.
9. Pull the meat apart into medium sized chunks, then fry in a large frying pan with the cooked oranges until desired crispiness is reached.
10. Serve with a squeeze of lime, pinch of cilantro, and sprinkle of sea salt to taste. The fried oranges can be eaten rind and all.
11. Save the used lard in the fridge (for a few weeks) or freezer (for much longer) for your next few batches of carnitas. The flavor of the seasoning stays in the fat, so each batch gets progressively more delicious!

Serving suggestions:

1. As part of a Mexican breakfast – carnitas, scrambled eggs, cultured salsa, avocado, and sour cream
2. As tacos on sprouted corn tortillas with green salsa and avocado.
3. Topping a simple salad dressed with lime and olive oil.
4. Mixed into a stir-fry of seasonal veggies.
5. By the forkful as a snack straight out of the fridge!

Sides

Traditional Sauerkraut

Sauerkraut is the perfect starter fermented veggie. It's easy to make, delicious, and rich in probiotics. As part of your eczema-healing diet, include at least a few tablespoons of cultured veggies with 1-3 meals per day.



Traditional Sauerkraut Ingredients:

- 1 head cabbage, preferably organic
- 1 Tablespoon unrefined sea salt
- 1 quart-sized mason jar (If you used a large head of cabbage, you may be able to fill an additional small jar as well)

Traditional Sauerkraut Method

You can use the following technique to ferment any combination of veggies you like.

And this “no-knead” method will save you on the muscle power.

1. Remove core from head of cabbage.
2. Shred cabbage into thin ribbons with a knife or food processor.
3. Place shredded cabbage in bowl.
4. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon sea salt over the cabbage.
5. Knead/Squeeze the shredded cabbage for 1-3 minutes. Get into it! You are breaking the cabbage down and helping it to release its juices.
6. Flatten the kraut into the bottom of your bowl and lay a clean tea towel over the bowl.
7. Now, walk away and go about your day.
8. At the end of your day (6-8 hours), at your convenience, knead your shredded cabbage for 1 more minute, mixing it all together.
9. Add this soupy cabbage mixture to your fermentation vessel and press the cabbage down firmly. Really pack it in there. It should be at least 1 inch from the lid of your jar and should be covered at the top with the beautiful brine you have made.
10. Screw the lid on tight. Plastic lids will allow for expansion with greater ease than metal lids.
11. Place your jar of culturing cabbage on a plate (to catch any brine that may be pushed out) and leave in a room temperature (70-85F) place for around four weeks for optimal probiotic content. When your kraut reaches desired fermentation (tart and crunchy), wipe up your jar and put it in the refrigerator.

Cauliflower Mash

If you're a mashed potato lover, but nightshades make your eczema flare, you are going to love this recipe. Even if you can eat potatoes, cauliflower mash may become your new favorite thing.

Ingredients and Equipment for Cauliflower Mash

- 2 heads organic cauliflower, rinsed and broken into florets
- Plenty of grass-fed butter (or Ghee)
- Sea Salt
- Food Processor

Steps for Making Cauliflower Mash

1. Add cauliflower florets to a large saucepan and fill halfway with filtered water.
2. Cover and steam until florets are soft; strain and discard water.
3. Add cauliflower to your food processor and process in small batches until very smooth.
4. Add plenty of butter and salt to taste.



Notes: The secret to awesome cauli' mash is using a food processor to make it creamy. If you don't have a food processor, you could try processing small batches in a blender. But in my experience, a hand potato masher or an electric mixer won't do the trick, because you want the florets to be completely pureed. You could also roast the cauliflower instead of steaming for a richer flavor, but don't add any extra liquid until the florets are completely pureed – otherwise you may end up with cauliflower soup.

Wilted Dandelion Greens with Lemon and Feta

This is a simple side dish that can add a cleansing element to any meal from a breakfast of scrambled eggs to a side dish for a roast. You can typically find dandelion greens at major health food stores year round, but in many areas this common weed grows wild and you can forage for it yourself (just don't pick from polluted areas on the side of the road).

On their own, dandelion greens are a very bitter green (great for addressing the Damp Heat component of eczema). When sour lemon and salty feta cheese are added, the bitterness of the green is tempered. You can also add small handfuls of chopped dandelion to salad, stir-fries and soups to incorporate the cleansing benefits into other meals.



Wilted Dandelion Greens Ingredients:

- 1 bunch dandelion greens
- ¼ of a juicy lemon
- 4 tablespoons feta cheese
- Olive oil or butter

Wilted Dandelion Greens Method:

1. Wash and finely chop the dandelion greens.
2. Place directly in a pan (no need to add extra water). Cover and steam for a quick minute or two until the greens are bright green.
3. Remove from heat.
4. Rinse briefly under cool water to slow the cooking process.
5. Toss to remove water.
6. Douse with lemon juice and olive oil. Top with crumbled feta, and serve.

Desserts and Snacks

Finger Jello

Made with gelatin from grass-fed cows, jello is a magical food that helps to heal the gut and resolve skin inflammation. Plus, kids of all ages can't resist its wiggly, giggly goodness.

Finger Jello Ingredients

- 4 cups fresh, organic juice or tea sweetened with honey
- 4 Tbsp. gelatin ([Great Lakes gelatin](#) is from grass-fed cows. Don't use Knox or other mainstream gelatin brands because it is made from animals kept in confinement.)



Finger Jello Method

To make jello of this consistency, the proportion is 1 cup liquid to 1 Tablespoon gelatin. If you prefer a more spoonable, jelly-like jello (especially good topped with raw whipped cream or creme fraiche if you are eating dairy), use less gelatin.

1. Divide juice approximately in half.
2. Add gelatin to cold juice and stir; set aside.
3. Bring other half of juice to a boil, then add to the gelatin/juice mixture.
4. Stir to dissolve the gelatin and pour into a shallow pan.
5. Place in the fridge to cool. When completely gelled, cut in cubes (or use a fun shaped cookie cutter). Enjoy!



The jello will taste less sweet than your original juice, so if you prefer a sweeter jello, stir in a touch of raw honey before cooling to set. Experiment with stirring in some fresh berries or a swirl of raw cream before chilling. Super easy, fun, yummy, and good for you too!

Lemon Coconut Fudge

Coconut butter and coconut oil take this recipe from candy to a skin-healing wonder-food. Raw honey (though high in sugar) contains healthy micro-flora and enzymes. Guilt-free joy.

Meyer Lemon Coconut Fudge Ingredients

- 2 cups coconut butter, melted
- 1/4-1/2 cup coconut oil, melted
- 1/2 cup raw honey, melted
- Zest of 2 lemons, preferably Meyer lemons
- 4 – 6 drops lemon oil
- 3 1/2 – 4 cups dehydrated coconut meat, fine shred



Meyer Lemon Coconut Fudge Method

1. Melt coconut butter, coconut oil, raw honey and combine with spatula or hands.
2. Add lemon zest and lemon oil. Mix until combined.
3. Add dehydrated, finely shredded coconut meat and mix until there is no standing liquid coconut oil. Add more coconut meat if the mixture is too liquid. If the mixture becomes so dry that it will not hold together, add more coconut oil. The mixture should feel and look like a thick lumpy paste.
4. Press into shaped molds (silicon molds are great) and put in freezer for approximately 20 minutes or until hard. Pop out of molds and repeat – OR - You can also press a 1/8-1/4 inch thick layer of fudge onto a cookie sheet, freeze until hard and cut into squares with a pizza cutter – OR – just break apart for a rustic presentation.

Active time: 15 minutes

Mixed Berry Swirl Ice Cream – Dairy Free

Just because you're committed to healing your eczema, that doesn't mean you can't enjoy delicious treats every now and again. The coconut cream and pastured egg yolks make this recipe safe for those avoiding dairy – without compromising on taste or texture.

Berries contain anti-oxidants and detoxifying bioflavonoids. Feel free to experiment with flavors – fresh mint or coconut-on-coconut would be fun too!

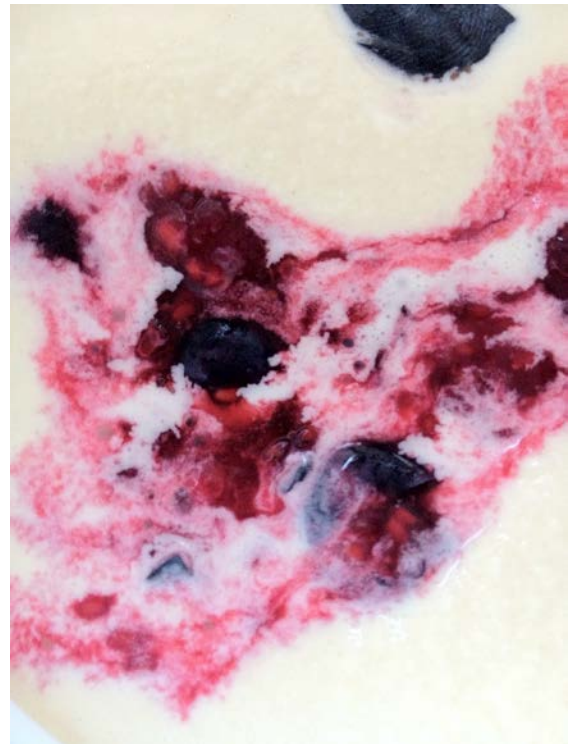
Ingredients

- 3 cups coconut cream
- 4 egg yolks – preferably from hens raised on pasture, or at minimum, free-range organic
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon raw honey
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon almond extract
- A generous pinch of salt (about 1/4 teaspoon)
- 2-3 cups fresh blueberries, raspberries or other berries of your choice

Vanilla Ice Cream Method

1. In a large bowl, beat egg yolks.
2. Whisk in all other ingredients except for the berries. Combine well.
3. Pour the batter into an ice cream maker and process according to the machine's instructions.
4. While the ice cream is 'cooking,' mash the berries to release the juices in a bowl using the bottom of a clean glass.
5. When the ice cream is done, gently fold in the mashed berries. Serve immediately for soft serve, or spoon into a shallow container, lay plastic wrap directly onto ice cream (to avoid freezer burn), and freeze until firm.

Prep time: 10 minutes



Drinks

Hibiscus Tea

If you've ever had Jamaica (pronounced 'ham-eye-ku') at a Mexican restaurant, you most likely were served the syrupy, fast-food version of this tea – yummy, but loaded with sugar and probably a bunch of artificial stuff that will send sensitive skin into a tail-spin flare.



Luckily, you can make this hibiscus tea at home for very little time, money, or effort – and it tastes even better than the fast-food version. Oh, and as a bonus, hibiscus tea is high in Vitamin C. It's also said to be beneficial for circulation (it *does* look a bit like blood) and healthy digestion. The enzymes in the raw honey can help heal allergies.

A snip of mint and a squeeze of lime can go in if you have it, but either way this gorgeous flower tea tastes perfect when poured over a glass of ice.

Hibiscus Tea Ingredients and supplies

- 4 cups filtered water, divided
- 1/4 cup (or a small handful) dried hibiscus flowers – [You can buy hibiscus flowers here](#)
- 1-2 T. raw honey to taste
- Lime wedges, optional
- Fresh mint leaves, optional

Hibiscus Tea Method

1. Bring half of the filtered water to a boil in a saucepan.
2. Add dried hibiscus flowers and turn off heat.
3. Allow flowers to steep until liquid is a dark inky red.
4. Add remaining two cups of cool water to concentrated tea before adding raw honey.
(This will prevent destroying the good enzymes and probiotics in the raw honey.)
5. Add honey to achieve desired sweetness while tea is still warm, but not hot.
6. Pour sweetened hibiscus tea into your serving pitcher.
7. Fill glasses with ice, pour tea, and garnish with optional lime and mint.

I love using this tea to make my homemade healthy finger jello, and it also makes great grown-up wine coolers mixed with a white wine over ice. Just be forewarned – hibiscus tea *is* dark red and will stain if spilled by kids and grown-ups alike!

Kombucha

Kombucha is a delicious probiotic-rich drink that's thrifty, fun and easy to make. Rumored to have originated in China around 200BC, societies throughout the world have been brewing kombucha for centuries. It is made by placing a strange mushroom-like life form called a scoby into a gallon of sweetened tea. SCOBY is actually an acronym for Symbiotic Culture of Bacteria and Yeast, and the kombucha gets its unique flavor and probiotic power because the scoby 'eats' the sugar and components of the tea, leaving delicious, nutritious kombucha behind.

A great alternative to juice or sodas, most kids and adults are quick to acquire a taste for kombucha when they don't have the alternative of sugary, junky drinks.

Aim to drink at least 1 cup per day (to start) as part of your eczema healing regimen. As you acquire a taste for kombucha, drink as much as you crave.



Ingredients for Making Kombucha:

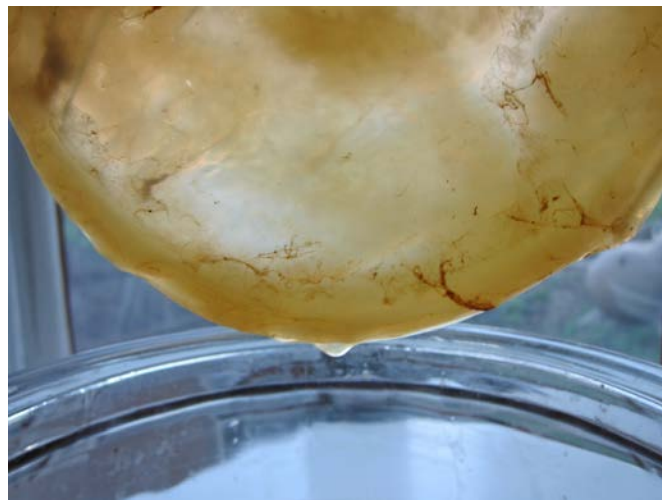
- 1 kombucha scoby – Get this from a friend, or find a kombucha scoby [here](#).
- 1 cup per gallon of reserved kombucha from a previous batch (or liquid that came with your scoby)
- 1 cup organic white sugar
- 5-10 organic black tea
- Filtered water (don't use tap water)

Supplies for Making Kombucha:

- 1 gallon glass or ceramic container, or larger. No lid necessary (do not use metal or plastic).
- 1 clean tea towel
- 1 large rubber band
- A funnel
- A pitcher or a spouted bowl
- Glass storage jars or bottles with tight fitting lids

How to Make Kombucha...

1. Make your tea in the ratio of 1 cup of organic white sugar for each gallon of black tea. You may need to adjust the amount of tea depending on the brand or variety you choose.
2. If you want to decrease the caffeine in your kombucha, first 'shock' the tea bags by pouring hot water over them, allowing them to seep for a few seconds, and then discarding that first tea.
3. Add boiling filtered water to fill your container half way. Allow the tea to steep for at least 5-10 minutes until brewed darkly.
4. Add cool filtered water so that your container is about 85% full.
5. When the sweetened tea is cooled to body temperature, add the scoby. Don't forget to add accompanying reserve liquid.
6. Cover with a tea towel, and mark your jar with today's date. Store your brewing kombucha in a warm dark place away from other fermenting foods or potential mold. Starting around 14 days, begin tasting your kombucha. It should be tart and zingy, slightly sweet, but not cloying. In the winter you may need to brew your kombucha for much longer than 2 weeks. Try placing it near your (working) slow cooker, or near a warm appliance. You can also use [Seedling Heat Mats](#) to keep your kombucha comfortably warm and reduce brewing time.
7. When your kombucha is ready, with clean hands, remove the scoby gently from the newly brewed kombucha and place in a separate bowl.
8. Reserve approximately 1 cup of kombucha per gallon and add it to the scoby in its bowl.
9. Your next task is pouring the kombucha into bottles for storage. You may want to transfer your liquid goodness into a spouted bowl to make the pouring easier.
10. Find a good combination of spouts and funnels to pour the kombucha as neatly as possible.
11. Store your kombucha in glass bottles with tight fitting lids. For extra fizz, allow the sealed bottles to sit at room temperature for 24 hours until refrigerating.
12. When your bottles are filled, it's time to begin the process again so you will never be without your 'bucha.



When Newborns Have Eczema

Some babies are born with eczema or develop it shortly after birth. Officially, the cause is “unknown,” but one theory really seems to stand out: the parents’ poor gut flora is passed along to baby, leaving the child susceptible to gut dysbiosis and systemic inflammation.

How does this happen?

In the womb, a child is essentially in a sterile environment. During birth, baby passes through the mother’s birth canal, which is populated with the same colonies of microflora as her digestive tract. This is made possible by the proximity of the anus (end of the digestive tract) to the vagina. Since mother and father share their gut flora with each other during sexual intercourse, a baby who passes through the birth canal is inoculated with both the mother *and* father’s gut flora.

In the case of a healthy mother and father, this initiation at birth offers the first defenses against the outside world. If a baby is born via cesarean section (as 32.8% of babies born in the U.S. currently are), she will not receive the micro-flora and essentially enters the world unarmed (Moore 2012).

When born vaginally, various factors before and during pregnancy can lead to a baby inheriting poor gut flora, including:

- Antibiotics or systemic antibacterial drugs
- Birth control pill
- Steroids
- NSAIDs
- Poor diet
- Stress
- Infections
- Poor immune health



When Vaginally Born and Breastfed Babies Get Eczema

Breastfeeding provides the baby with the second line of immune defense and can even help to counteract negative gut flora inherited from the parents. But some babies, even when born vaginally and exclusively breast fed, still develop eczema and/or asthma. This typically occurs because the baby had to cope with an excessively toxic condition while in utero. Often times this has to do with the mother's diet, *extreme* stress, drugs, or an infection during the pregnancy.

If possible, expectant mothers should prepare at least three months leading up to conception and certainly during pregnancy with a clean, nutrient-dense diet and a low-stress lifestyle.

If a newborn already has eczema, extreme dietary measures must be taken by the breastfeeding mother to eliminate dietary triggers in her diet that will be passed along through the milk. The [GAPS diet](#) can help to heal both the mother and the baby's damaged digestive systems. A newborn with severe gut flora imbalance may actually have an allergy to the mild protein in her mother's milk, and special care will need to be taken to make sure baby is both nourished and thriving. Both mother and baby need to receive therapeutic supplementation with probiotics, fish oil, and vitamin D. I highly recommend that you find an experienced holistic health practitioner to support you through these challenges.

On the left, my daughter, age 10 months, sensitive to wheat, dairy, and strawberries.

On the right, age 2, with strong digestion and clear skin after implementing The Eczema Cure.



Healing Chronic Eczema

There's a saying in Chinese medicine that for every year you've had a condition, it takes about one month to treat.

Curing eczema from the inside out can take time, and as you have seen, dedication to a new and potentially drastically different lifestyle.



In my experience as a practitioner of Chinese medicine, physical symptoms – especially the chronic ones – are rarely just physical symptoms. Often we humans can have patterns of behavior and thinking that we repeat over and over again, even though these patterns are not serving us well.

If you are suffering from chronic eczema, I strongly recommend finding a good holistic practitioner who will support you along your healing journey with dietary and lifestyle changes, and a few supplements (as discussed in this book). The right match will be someone that can be present not only for your physical healing, but your emotional transformation, as well.

Have patience and compassion with yourself on the healing journey – you may just be surprised by your success in ways you never imagined.

FAQS

Question: I understand that I need to heal my eczema from the inside out, but what can I put on my skin in the meantime to help with the dryness and itchiness?

Answer: Various types of topical applications can be soothing and prevent some of the dryness, cracking, and itching of eczema, but success will vary from individual to individual. To combat dryness, rather than buying products with complex and potentially toxic ingredients, experiment with plain, food-quality oils such as olive oil, coconut oil, cocoa butter, or shea butter. You can also experiment with natural itch relieve herbs such as goldenseal, calendula, comfrey, etc – and steep these into a bath or make into a strong tea, cool, and dab onto skin using a wash cloth soaked in the herbal infusion. As mentioned prior, do your best to avoid steroid and other topical medicines.

Question: My baby scratches in her sleep and in her car seat – we need to be monitoring at ALL times. Any advice?

Answer: While you are working on healing your little one's immune system, it's important to reduce scratching to prevent secondary infection. My patients love these stylish and functional tops from ScratchMeNot.com which can reduce the amount of damage a baby can do to her skin with sharp baby fingernails or rough fabrics of hand 'socks'.

Question: How long should it be before I start to see results?

Answer: Assuming you follow the four actions outlined in this e-book, you should begin to see some results within the first week or so. The rate at which you will recover completely will depend on how long you have had the condition, the strength of your constitution, what other conditions may be contributing, and how diligent you are with sticking with the action plan.

Food Glossary

Arrowroot powder – A white starch made from the root of the arrowroot plant in place of flour or cornstarch for thickening.

Coconut – Used often in hypoallergenic diets in the form of oil, milk, cream, water, or flakes.

FCLO – Acronym for Fermented Cod Liver Oil, a super food rich in fatty acids, vitamin A and D.

Fish sauce – A savory sauce similar to soy sauce, but more complex. Made with fish, sugar, and salt.

Gelatin – A nutrient-dense component of bone broth as well as an ingredient that can be used to make jello and other desserts.

Ghee – Clarified butter, in which the milk protein has been removed. Often safe for those with dairy allergies.

Grass fed – A term referring to animals that have been raised on pasture and the resulting products. i.e. – grass fed cheese.

Kombucha – A cultured drink made with black tea, sugar, and a mother culture that is rich in probiotics.

Miso – Fermented soy paste used in Japanese cooking.

Nori – A type of seaweed, most commonly used as the wrapper for sushi rolls.

Pasture-raised – A term referring to animals that have been raised outdoor on pasture. Can refer to meat, poultry, dairy, and eggs.

Raw honey - Honey that has not been pasteurized and therefore retains the enzymes and micro flora naturally occurring.

Raw milk – Real milk, unpasteurized and non-homogenized, straight from the cow or goat.

Sea salt – Look for *unrefined* sea salt, which will be more mineral dense than processed salts; often grey or pink.

Tahini – Sesame seed paste used in hummus and Mediterranean fare.

Unpasteurized soy sauce – When unpasteurized, soy sauce is a probiotic-rich fermented food.

Wakame – A mild seaweed, usually found at health food stores in the Asian food section.

Whey – The liquid component to milk and yogurt, and the bi-product to cheese making. Whey can be used as a starter culture for fermented foods or when soaking grains or beans.

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