

*a lifestyle resource from Food Equality Initiative*

# Free-From MAGAZINE

## ELIJAH'S LAW

Coming to  
a state  
near you

## NOT EVERYONE CAN GO MEATLESS

How to be a conscious  
consumer



Savory dishes  
to share with  
the family

## FREE- FROM FLOURS

A guide for baking

## VEGETARIAN IN SPRING

Misconceptions around being  
vegetarian



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

Thank you so much for subscribing to Free-From Magazine. We are so pleased to have you take part in this award-winning publication from Food Equality Initiative. Our new subscription service will help ensure the continuation of high-quality materials to educate you about living with dietary restrictions.

### Call for Writers

Got a great idea for an article? Have some food policy news? Want to share your personal story with a diet-related disease? We want to hear it! We are looking for writers from all experience levels and backgrounds to contribute to this publication.

Send your pitches to: [sofia@foodequalityinitiative.org](mailto:sofia@foodequalityinitiative.org).

### Feedback Opportunity

We hope you like what you read here and that it is informative in multiple aspects of your life, we also hope that it reflects your experience as an individual or family with a diet-treated illness. If you find that it does not, then we would like to change that. This magazine is for you, so we want to make sure we live up to our promise to bring you the best.

We welcome your ideas and feedback: [free-from@foodequalityinitiative.org](mailto:free-from@foodequalityinitiative.org).

Thank you again for joining us on this diet-treated journey. Let's inspire and empower each other to get the most out of our food.

Sofia Gillespie  
Editor in Chief,  
Free-From Magazine

@FOODEQUALITY  
#FOODEQUALITY



# Free-From MAGAZINE

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Savory dishes to share with the family

\*Disclaimer: The recipes included in the Free-From Magazine are suggestions. Please read carefully and make any substitutions that are necessary for your diet. Consult your doctor if you have questions or concerns. NOTE: Cooking is a science experiment and some ingredient substitutions may not produce the same results.

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# BRAND SPOTLIGHT

eat G.A.N.G.S.T.E.R.

Heather McDonough & Kerry Brown

**Our baking mixes are  
G.A.N.G.S.T.E.R.**

- G**.rain FREE
- A**.mond & Peanut FREE
- N**.ightshade FREE
- G**.luten FREE
- S**.oy & Seed FREE
- T**.aste FUL
- E**.gg & Dairy FREE
- R**.eal FOOD



**O**ur company's mission comes straight from our struggle. Fifteen years ago, we were both diagnosed with life-changing autoimmune disorders. Our bodies were out of balance. Oftentimes, the food we consumed amplifies that imbalance creating illness, allergies, or food sensitivities.

We know it is difficult and isolating to remove certain foods from your diet. With our eat G.A.N.G.S.T.E.R. baking mixes, you can feel the freedom and taste the joy as you boldly stand for a happier, healthier, more balanced you!

## About the Co-Founders:

**Heather McDonough**  
Co-Founder

Heather is a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner, recipe developer, and chef who has worked in the health and wellness industry since 2011. After getting a Psoriatic Arthritis diagnosis in 2005, Heather became determined to avoid pharmaceutical therapies and looked to holistic alternatives to heal her body and reverse her symptoms. Diet therapy has been significant in sending her autoimmune disease into remission.

Heather's passion for helping people on restricted diets began when she started a small café in Wichita, KS. She developed a menu that catered to everyone and dazzled patrons who found it difficult to dine out on restricted diets. Heather enjoys creating G.A.N.G.S.T.E.R. recipes for those who are following an autoimmune protocol diet (AIP) or those who want to eat wholesome, gut-friendly, delicious food.

**Kerry Brown**  
Co-Founder

Kerry has been in the field of consumer branding for 20 years. Most recently she owned and operated New York City's most luxurious hotel for dogs. She also worked for eight years with athletic apparel powerhouse lululemon athletica, ultimately overseeing the company's U.S. Community Marketing during a period of tremendous growth, including the company's IPO.

Kerry has struggled with a number of autoimmune issues. She is a Type 1 diabetic, and is thus dependent upon insulin to survive. She also underwent a partial thyroidectomy. Through food elimination, she has discovered her body's struggles with allergies and food sensitivities to gluten, dairy, eggs, nuts, and FODMAPs. She is proud to have co-created a brand that offers delicious products that can truly bring freedom and joy to those who eat on a limited diet.



**“When a customer shares that their child enjoyed their first birthday cake in years or got to make and devour cut-out cookies for a certain holiday, it warms our hearts. That is our ‘why!’” -Kerry Brown**

**Katina T.** 7/27/2021   
★★★★★  
These were absolutely amazing! So easy for the kiddos to make! Thank you so much for this awesome delicious-ness!

**DeNisha M.** 2/14/2022  
★★★★★  
I saw the great reviews and knew they would be good, but wow! I have a lot of food allergies, but don't feel like I'm missing out on a single thing as long as I have these.



## VEGETARIAN IN SPRING

Zoë Slaughter | [Invisibly Allergic](#)

# I'm a vegetarian and always have been.

**P**eople become vegetarian for many reasons, and I love learning more about other people's vegetarian lifestyles and journeys to becoming meat-free. Many avoid meat and animal products due to religious reasons, and others do it for health reasons, environmental and global purposes, or just for a challenge and lifestyle shift. All are completely valid.

I was raised vegetarian by my family until I was old enough to decide if I wanted to eat meat or not. Once I could make that decision though, meat was so foreign to me, I honestly couldn't fathom eating it; I still can't, really. So, here I am a few decades later, with a fully vegetarian perspective.

There are many misconceptions around being vegetarian.

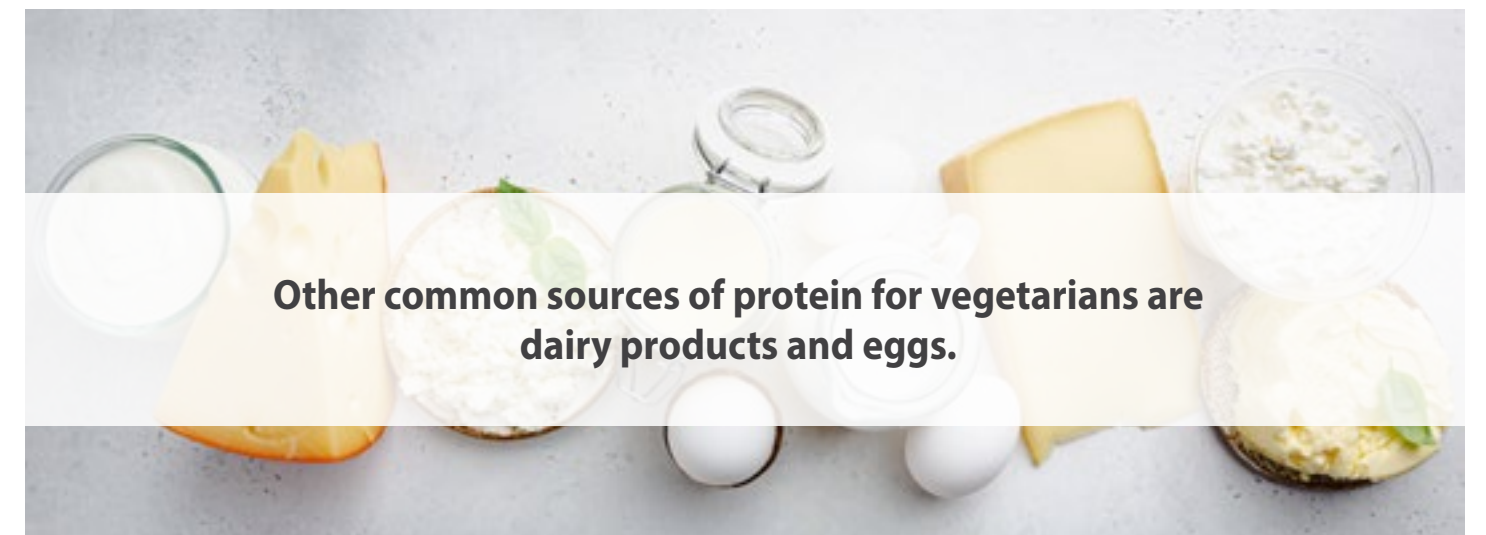
The most common is that "vegetarians don't get enough protein and will have weak bones." Of course, it depends on your eating habits and the food restrictions you may have, but there are many high protein plant-based foods. A favorite of mine are lentils, which not only contain 18 grams of protein per cooked cup, but more than half of your daily fiber intake in a single cup.



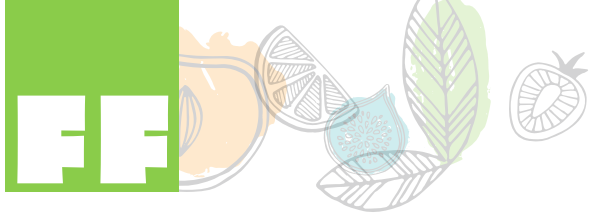
Other high protein options I eat often are: beans (pinto, black, chickpea, etc. all of these contain around 15 grams of protein per cooked cup), and soy based foods like tofu, tempeh, and edamame (which contain essential amino acids).



A few more plant-based sources that may work for you: green peas, quinoa, nutritional yeast, nuts, soy milk, oats, chia seeds, broccoli, spinach, potatoes, sweet potatoes, and wild rice are all high in protein.



Other common sources of protein for vegetarians are dairy products and eggs.



### Another myth that comes with being vegetarian is that it's really expensive to live a meatless lifestyle.

I can confirm that there are healthy ways to be vegetarian and unhealthy ways to be, and the same goes with expensive or inexpensive ways to be vegetarian. It always pays to do price comparisons and look for discounts at the grocery store. But also, from my experience, I notice on restaurant menus that whenever you add meat to a dish that is already vegetarian, you have to pay more. So, I would not say one way of eating is inherently more expensive than the other, it just depends on which foods you choose to invest your money.

### I love being vegetarian.

I personally have never viewed my diet as restrictive. I think that is for a combination of reasons: I already eat at home a lot due to my peanut allergy, and being vegetarian is a preference for me, so it doesn't seem on the same level as something requiring the use of a life-saving medication.

I have my priorities with food, though, and always have. When asked if I have dietary restrictions, I respond the exact same way I have since I was a child. I say, "I have a severe peanut allergy and carry epinephrine auto-injectors on me at all times..." and then I rattle off a quick, "I'm also a vegetarian, but that isn't life-threatening like my peanut allergy" at the end of it. Not that I'm trying to break my life-long streak and eat meat, but if someone is to remember anything about my food preferences, I try to ensure my peanut allergy takes precedence.

My family did rely heavily on nuts and peanut butter as a protein source before I was born. However, once I was diagnosed with my peanut allergy at a young age, my parents made the switch to other protein sources. They ended up being pleased with that choice after realizing how often peanut butter is loaded with sugar and unhealthy oils, so it worked out for us!

Maybe you're vegetarian already, and if that's the case, "hello!" from a fellow vegetarian! Maybe you practice "meatless" days of the week, or maybe this is a brand new concept to you. Regardless, I hope you have delicious and nourishing meals with foods that complement your dietary needs and restrictions. What matters is that the food you're putting in your body is safe and healthy to you, and that varies from individual to individual.



#### ABOUT ZOE

Zoë Slaughter resides in Louisville, KY and has a severe airborne and cross-contact reactive peanut allergy. In her free time she enjoys spending time with her rescue beagle, reading, painting and creating art, and recently started playing tennis. She started a blog called Invisibly Allergic in 2017 that is dedicated to living with severe food allergies. You can check it out here: [invisiblyallergic.com](http://invisiblyallergic.com)



## STEP INTO... AN OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME!

FEI fights for  
**nutrition security**  
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# THE TASTEMAKERS

## College Advice

By Claire Zegger

As a freshman in college, the highs and lows of the college application process are still fresh in my mind. Researching, visiting, and applying to the “right college” is a daunting task in itself, let alone as someone with food allergies. Searching for a school that will be able to offer the right dietary accommodations might seem stressful, but it doesn’t have to be.

I tried to make my search for an allergy-friendly campus dining hall as straightforward as possible, so I broke it down into three main steps.

1. When I was first researching colleges, I looked at online resources for lists of the best colleges for accommodating food allergies.
2. After narrowing down my list, I started visiting campuses. In order to ensure that the colleges I was considering would be accommodating of my dietary needs, I reached out to the nutrition and dining hall staff in advance to ask questions. If I had the chance to visit, I would set up a meeting to discuss what possibilities would be available to me.

3. Each time I visited a new campus, I would walk through a cafeteria, looking for allergy labels, a variety of options free from cross-contact, and get a general sense of the atmosphere.

Ultimately, the most important part about college dining with food allergies is feeling safe in the dining space and with the dining staff, and that comfort largely boils down to personal preference.



## My College Experience

It can be difficult to imagine what college dining life with food allergies will be like until experiencing it, so my best advice is always to have a backup plan. Now that I am a first year student at a university in Georgia, I can tell you that my backup plan has been keeping a stash of snacks on hand and in my room.

Additionally, one of the first things I did before heading off to college was to ask for a dorm room in close proximity to a kitchen. That way, if I ever feel unsafe eating in the dining hall, I know that I can always make something for myself. I also brought a small set of pots and pans so that I wouldn’t have to worry about cross-contact. So far, I have rarely cooked out of necessity, rather for fun.

When eating in a dining hall, what will work for you depends largely on the severity and variety of your dietary restrictions. For me, I decided that I felt safe

enough to eat the food served in the dining hall, but for others, having specially prepared meals is the best option. Many of the schools I visited were extremely flexible about this, and even offered to put me in contact with the chef so that I could coordinate meal times and preferences over text. This is a great option if allergen labeling at the dining stations is limited, or if you are worried about cross-contact. In my experience, I have found that it can be difficult to ask about ingredients, because the servers typically don’t know what is in the food, and it can be hard and time-consuming to track down the head chef.

In the end, the hardest part about college dining with food allergies is settling into the new atmosphere, as well as gaining confidence to self-advocate about allergies. It takes time to figure out what will work for you, but it is always best to be prepared and make choices that will keep you safe.



Want to become a member of the Teen Advisory Board?

Food Equality Initiative’s Teen Advisory Board (TAB) is dedicated to increasing support and information for those with food allergies, celiac disease, and other diet-related illnesses. TAB has a general meeting once a month and offers masterclasses quarterly. Recent projects include: writing personal letters explaining our experiences with food allergies and helpful tips for how to handle your own and creating posters to promote National Food is Medicine Day.

[CLICK HERE TO APPLY](#)

## A NUT-FREE AND GRAIN-FREE FLOUR GUIDE

Stephanie Ulrich, NTP | [The Open Cookbook](#)

While I have always had a sweet tooth, baking from scratch never really interested me until I was diagnosed with EoE and a gluten sensitivity.

Suddenly, it was really challenging to find store-bought baked goods or even baking mixes that were free-from my eosinophilic esophagitis (EoE) triggers. After learning more about the variety of nut-free and grain-free flours, I decided to start experimenting in the kitchen and realized that I absolutely love the possibilities that allergy-friendly flours provide and that delicious cakes, cookies, and muffins are still possible!

There is a learning curve with allergy-friendly baking, but once you understand the main properties of each alternative flour, you will quickly get a feel for how the ingredients work together to mimic more traditional baked goods made from wheat flour.

If I could give just one tip with allergy-friendly baking, it is to blend your flours. Blending alternative flours is really the key to creating textures that mimic gluten. In my early days of baking from scratch, I quickly learned that with alternative flours, you really can't just use one type of flour for a recipe. The best method is to mix and match.

Hopefully this nut-free and grain-free flour guide will provide you with a little knowledge about the properties of some different alternative flours to help you feel more confident and comfortable in the kitchen.



ARROWROOT POWDER

Light, powdery, and fluffy, arrowroot powder is extracted from the rootstems of the tropical perennial plant *Maranta arundinacea*, also known as arrowroot. Native to the West Indies and throughout Central and South America, the arrowroot plant can grow up to four feet tall and has been cultivated since 8200 BCE.

Arrowroot powder is most commonly known as a clear thickening agent, acting as a perfect swap for cornstarch in sauces or gravies. An easily-digestible starch, arrowroot powder is a good source of fiber that has a neutral flavor. Adding a small amount to a grain-free flour mix helps to bind together baked goods while providing some elasticity and lightness, mimicking the sticky texture of gluten.

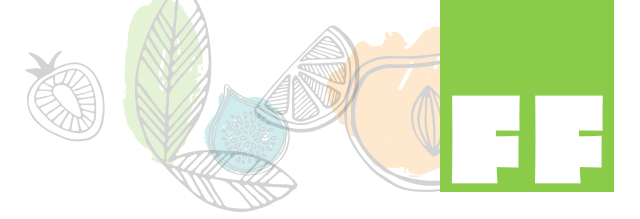
**Blending alternative flours is really the key to creating textures that mimic gluten.**



CASSAVA FLOUR

Derived from the roots of the woody shrub *Manihot esculenta*, also known as yuca, cassava flour is one of the main staples of grain-free baking. Native to South America, yuca is considered a major source of carbohydrates in the tropics. It is high in vitamin C as well as resistant starch, a type of starch known for supporting gut health.

Cassava flour is made by drying and grinding the white flesh of the yuca root. Its texture is fairly similar to wheat flour. Since it doesn't have a strong flavor, it can be used in a variety of baked goods like cookies, muffins, and cakes. While it can be used as a 1:1 replacement with all-purpose flour in baked goods, I find that it works best as a blend with other grain-free flours to achieve the desired texture.



COCONUT FLOUR

Rich in fiber and protein, coconut flour is a natural byproduct of coconut milk production, made by drying and grinding coconut meat.

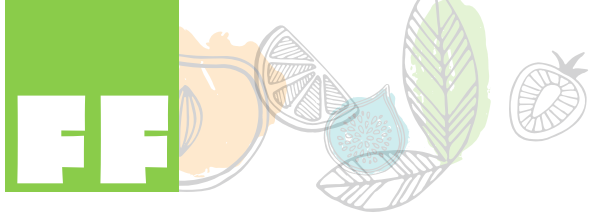
Known for being super porous, coconut flour soaks up a lot of moisture. Due to its absorbent nature, a surprisingly small amount is needed for baking—a general rule of thumb is 1/4 to 1/3 cup of coconut flour to all-purpose flour. It is best to start with a small amount and work up since it can easily dry out baked goods.

Similar to other alternative flours, coconut flour works best when mixed with other grain-free flours and can provide a nice fluffy texture. It does have a stronger flavor compared to other alternative flours, but if you enjoy the flavor of coconut, you will love trying out coconut flour!



GREEN BANANA FLOUR

Made from under-ripe green bananas that are peeled, chopped, dried and ground into a powder, green banana flour is commonly used in the Caribbean, Central America, and Africa as a sustainable low-cost replacement for wheat flour.



A great source of fiber, resistant starch, magnesium, and potassium, green banana flour is one of my favorite grain-free flours. It has a nice smooth texture and makes tasty soft cookies, muffins, and even mini-waffles. The banana flavor also disappears when baked, making it very versatile for all types of baked goods.



### TAPIOCA FLOUR/STARCH

Even though it is also derived from yuca root, tapioca flour is made from a completely different process compared to cassava, resulting in a unique texture. Tapioca flour is a byproduct of washing and pulping the yuca root, which extracts a starchy liquid. Once the liquid has evaporated, the remaining product is tapioca flour.

Since tapioca flour has a very different texture compared to cassava flour, it can't be used as a replacement. Instead, the texture of tapioca flour is more similar to arrowroot powder and can often be used interchangeably. It adds a nice chewiness to baked goods and works well blended with other flours in cookies, cakes, breads, and muffins.



### TIGERNUT FLOUR

Don't be fooled by the name! Despite the name, tigernut is not a nut. It is actually a tuber that grows on one of the only edible sedges, *Cyperus esculentus* (Yellow Nut Grass).

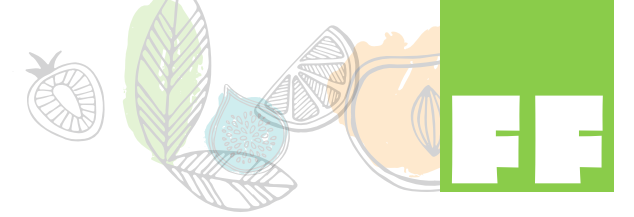


## ARROWROOT POWDER

## CASSAVA FLOUR

## COCONUT FLOUR

## TIGERNUT FLOUR



Tigernut flour is very rich in prebiotic fiber, a type of resistant starch, plus it is filled with micronutrients like magnesium, potassium, and vitamin C. It is probably my favorite alternative flour to bake with due to its naturally sweet and “nutty” flavor.

Tigernut flour has a similar texture to almond flour, but it is nut-free. It is the best flour to use as an alternative to almond flour since it has a heavier texture compared to other grain-free flours. Again, I find it works best when mixed with a little arrowroot powder or cassava flour to help bind ingredients together.



### ABOUT STEPHANIE

Stephanie Ulrich, NTP is a Brooklyn-based Nutritional Therapist specializing in supporting clients with food allergies and autoimmune disease. She shares her custom allergy-friendly recipes, resources, and stories of living with EoE at [theopencookbook.com](http://theopencookbook.com).



## THE ZESTY CORNER

### BEING A CONSCIENTIOUS CONSUMER

Kortney Kwong Hing & Shahla Rashid

What if you are concerned about your impact on the environment or animal welfare, but going vegetarian or vegan is really not a realistic choice for your health?



**R**emoving dairy from your diet if you have a food allergy or meat if you have alpha-gal syndrome is a necessity and finding alternatives becomes a management strategy for your allergic condition.

Removing these items by choice can be motivated by many equally important aspects of living such as animal well-being or climate change. However, eliminating food groups when you already have a medically-required limited diet can seem like a crazy idea, especially if these food groups are affordable staples in your diet.

Kortney was a vegetarian for eight years, but she was not getting enough protein. Meat alternatives and many other protein sources are not an option due to her set of food allergies (including all nuts, peanuts, soy and peas - to name a few). So, she **introduced meat back into her diet, but not without a few stipulations.**

Kortney was not prepared to become a full-on carnivore. Instead, she set some personal goals for being a conscientious omnivore. Here are the points she considers:

1

Be selective about the meat and other animal products you eat. This will help you shift your budget to prioritize more sustainable meat sources as well as eat less meat overall.

2

Experiment with your protein sources. Don't forget that proteins also come from non-meat sources, such as oats or rice and beans (which together are a complete protein). Try making a creamy soup using oats as an alternative to dairy and the bonus of protein from the oats. We suggest Zestfull's **Creamy Cauliflower Soup.**

3

Don't limit diversity; eat all the foods you can eat! Diversifying your diet not only delights your tastebuds, but it helps make sure that we get as many different nutrients as possible.

There are a ton of **recipes from Zestfull** to help you add more plant-based meals to your menu. If you are looking to learn more about climate change's impact on overall health and how your diet plays a role, listen to **Episode 47 of The Itch Podcast.**

*The Zesty Corner is brought to you by Zestfull, a nonprofit organization that empowers, supports and improves the emotional, physical and social well-being of individuals managing food allergies, asthma and eczema.*



#### ABOUT KORTNEY

Kortney was diagnosed with food allergies before she was 6 months old. She manages multiple food allergies, asthma, eczema, and oral allergy syndrome (OAS). She wants to spread joy in a community that can easily see the hard side of life with atopic disease and believes that you can have a full life with food allergies.



#### ABOUT SHAHLA

Shahla is a mom of two girls who live with environmental allergies such as asthma and eczema. Their food allergies include tree nuts, peanuts, sesame, and other seeds. Shahla wants to share the comfort that cooking has brought her family. She believes that everyone, regardless of dietary requirements, deserves a plate full of color and flavor.



## CHANGING YOUR DIET IS DIFFICULT

### Meet William Young

Sarah Guthrie

## 77-year-old William Young was diagnosed with Lymphocytic colitis in 2019.

**H**e finally had a reason for about 10 years of unexplained diarrhea and gas. “I was glad to have some kind of an answer,” he said. “I knew some foods bothered me, but I did not know why.”

Lymphocytic colitis is one type of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) that causes inflammation of the large intestine. This disease can lead to diarrhea, belly pain, and other symptoms. There is no one cause, but experts think that

bacterial and viral infections, certain medicines, or certain foods including caffeine and milk products may trigger it. According to Johns Hopkins, the incidence of this disorder is approximately 1.8 cases per 100,000.

### For William, however, this diagnosis was yet another in a series of debilitating diseases that changed his life.

The Salina, Kansas native who had worked in Chicago for a number of years before settling back in Merriam, Kansas, built his career mainly in the construction industry where he installed weatherizing in low-income housing. He felt good, liked to run, and enjoyed time at the gym. He ate anything he wanted.

In his 50s, however, he began “crashing” a few hours after his typical breakfast of coffee and a donut. He described it as feeling “shaky, dizzy -- it’s like you need to stop and do some deep breathing.” He didn’t know what caused it and didn’t pay too much attention to it at first. But after he had some blood work done, he learned he was diabetic. That ended his morning coffee and donut routine.

Then, his life changed again when he was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré Syndrome. The Mayo Clinic describes Guillain-Barre (gee-YAH-buh-RAY) syndrome as “a rare disorder in which your body’s immune system attacks your nerves.” In William’s case it affected the peripheral nerves in his arms and legs.

“I was paralyzed and had to learn to walk all over again. I could not even feed myself,” he said. “But it did not hit my lungs or throat and I could still swallow, so, it could have been worse.” He continues to have symptoms in his arms and legs today. That disease ended his job in construction and a steady income.

When he was later diagnosed with Lymphocytic colitis, the increased dietary restrictions took a toll on his budget,

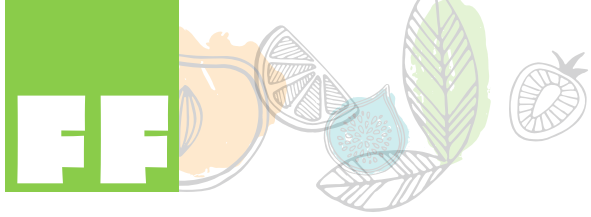
which was already limited. Fortunately for William, “the service coordinator at my apartments – I live in section 8 housing – told me about Food Equality Initiative,” he said.

Although his many illnesses have drastically changed his life, one of the best things that came from his most recent diagnosis was his referral to Food Equality Initiative (FEI) where he receives a subsidized grocery delivery once a month. “Because of FEI, I can get food that I can eat.”

William, who does not drive, says the direct-to-door delivery is so helpful. The variety of food in the box allows him to experiment with different foods – such as gluten-free flours – to see if they make a difference in how he feels. The website also introduces him to products and brands that meet his dietary requirements, so he knows what to look out for when he goes shopping on his own.

One of his favorite products are soups and chilis that you put in the microwave. Because of FEI, William can use his limited food budget to buy other products -- like meat or eggs -- to add to the soups and other items he receives in his monthly box.





## Changing diets is not a walk in the park

For William changing to a no dairy, low-fat diet wasn't great, but the worst thing about this diagnosis was limiting his coffee intake.

He fondly remembers drinking a pot of coffee, laced with sugar and cream, before he got on the train to go to work in Chicago. "There I'd drink coffee all day until mid-afternoon and I would switch to sodas. Then back to coffee when I got home," he reminisced.

He said he never measured his coffee intake in cups – only in pots. Now he limits his coffee to two cups a day, doctored with non-dairy flavored creamers.



William acknowledges that he feels better when he sticks to his diet, but it's still hard to make that change. With the symptoms he experienced, he wonders how he ignored his diet for so long. And, he's thankful for the service coordinator at his apartment complex who took an interest in helping him by recommending FEI.

William, who has received FEI-subsidized food boxes for about two years, likes that he can order online on his own time. He's also seen an increase in the variety of items available.

"The selection, the quality of food in the boxes, it's amazing," he said, "There is no other service that even compares."



### ABOUT SARAH

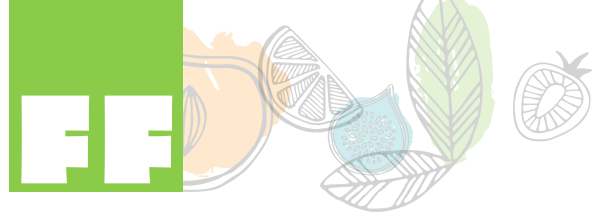
Sarah Guthrie is an award-winning writer and seasoned development professional. She began volunteering for FEI in 2019, where she helps with fundraising and communications. Sarah is also a dedicated food allergy mom.



## HOW FOOD ALLERGIES TAUGHT US TO EAT BETTER

Grace Lefall





## Before we knew about food allergies, my family and I would go to restaurants every single weekend.

**W**e would order fast food every week, too. Nowadays, we still go to restaurants and we order fast food, but not nearly as often. Just like other food allergy families, going out to a restaurant isn't the easiest choice, like it was before.

Ever since we found out about our daughter's food allergies, we have become much more aware of what we are ordering and what we are eating. So, my family and I had to make changes and, in the process, discovered that we were making better decisions on what type of foods and snacks we were going to have. It took a food allergy to motivate us to learn how to eat better, make better food choices, and actually pay attention to what we are putting into our bodies.



### Breakfast

To be honest, I am not the best cook or baker. Before food allergies, I preferred buying breakfast bars and frozen breakfast bowls from the grocery store that I could just heat up in the microwave in the morning. I did not realize how many processed foods we were eating for breakfast until our daughter with food allergies came along and we struggled finding options for her in the frozen breakfast aisle of the grocery store. Food allergies made us much more aware of making changes for our morning routine.

Even though I still buy breakfast bars and frozen breakfasts from the grocery store once in a while, I have learned to choose better breakfast options. For example, a few allergy-friendly options that we enjoy are fresh fruit bowls, smoothies, rice cakes, whole grain cereals, and whole grain breads. Another breakfast option that we have learned to change is what type of breakfast meat we buy. Before, I would just buy whatever kind of bacon was on sale or what kind of bacon I was craving. Nowadays, because of our daughter's food allergies we have to read every label because on the labels of some bacon there is the statement: 'may contain egg.' (If you asked me this before I had children, I would never have guessed that there could be cross-contact with egg in bacon.) So, we now choose organic bacon such as turkey bacon which has less antibiotics, no 'may contains' for most of them, and less sodium added, too.

### Vitamins

Gummy vitamins are an option for our older kids that don't have food allergies. However, sometimes vitamins for kids are not allergy friendly. Unfortunately, most kids' supplemental vitamins have ingredients that our daughter cannot have.

Personally, I had never been a big fan of fruits and vegetables, which are excellent sources of natural vitamins, but now I rely on them for the benefits that they offer us. Food allergies taught us how to incorporate more fruits and vegetables in our daily meals. For example, her favorite fruits are bananas,

apples, mandarins, and pears which provide potassium, vitamin C, vitamin B, and antioxidants, respectively. As for vegetables, she loves kale (vitamin K), cabbage (vitamin C), and carrots and sweet potatoes (vitamin A).

There are also several other fruits and vegetables that we are currently trying for our daughter's OIT at the moment, such as berries which are full of healthy antioxidants. Another great source of healthy vitamins are whole grains. We have been choosing whole grain bread mixes and whole grain cereals that are allergy friendly.



### Lunch & Dinner

Restaurants and fast food places used to be my go-to every weekend because it was something that was fun and also easy to plan for lunch and dinner. Now that there are more delivery service options out there, it is even easier to just order out.

However, when there are food allergies in the house, it does make us more cautious of going out to eat and the extra planning often discourages us from going out as often. While we do still go to restaurants and we enjoy take out and fast food places once in a while, we definitely have learned to limit the amount of times we order each month.

**FREE-FROM**  
Podcast

FOOD COMES IN ALL SHAPES AND FORMS, BUT NOT ALL FOOD IS CREATED EQUALLY.

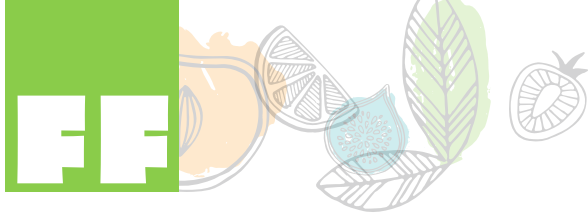
**Coming May 1st, 2022**

Tune into the Free-From Podcast from Food Equality Initiative to hear 'the good stuff' about how healthy has a different definition for every body.

**Let's learn together how Food is Medicine and how we can all benefit from eating better.**

Have a pitch? Send it to [free-from@foodequalityinitiative.org](mailto:free-from@foodequalityinitiative.org).

The graphic features a blue background with a white microphone icon and the text 'FREE-FROM Podcast'. Below this is a quote: 'FOOD COMES IN ALL SHAPES AND FORMS, BUT NOT ALL FOOD IS CREATED EQUALLY.' A pink box contains the text 'Coming May 1st, 2022'. Further down, it says 'Tune into the Free-From Podcast from Food Equality Initiative to hear 'the good stuff' about how healthy has a different definition for every body.' Below that is another quote: 'Let's learn together how Food is Medicine and how we can all benefit from eating better.' At the bottom, it says 'Have a pitch? Send it to free-from@foodequalityinitiative.org.' The background of the bottom half of the graphic shows a variety of fresh green fruits like kiwi, apples, and avocados. There are also icons for social media or podcast platforms like Spotify and Apple Podcasts.



Not only has eating at home helped us make better choices for our health, but it has also helped us with our family budget! For example, if we are tempted to order stir fry noodles for lunch, instead we are now more likely to choose leftover veggies and meat in the fridge to make a quick allergy-friendly stir fry noodle dish at home. Or, if we are craving a good plate of steak and fries for dinner, we prefer to cook it at home to make it allergy friendly for our daughter as well.



### Overall Health

Food allergies do pose some obstacles when it comes to meal options, but the experience has taught our family that there are many ways to overcome them and improve overall health at the same time. There are so many healthy options out there! I wouldn't have made these changes to my family's diet if I did not have to check ingredients in every single food product in the grocery store.

Food allergies have really pushed our family to make better decisions for our bodies. This lifestyle change is difficult at times, but we do it for our daughter so that she feels included and safe. In every negative or challenging situation such as food allergies, we can make it a positive outcome and always remember: it does get better.



### ABOUT GRACE

Grace Leffall is a wife and a mother of 3 beautiful children (and their dog Astro too!). She loves to read, spend time at the beach, and create memories with her family. She is a food allergy advocate who wants to help educate people and to help create awareness in the food allergy community.



# ADVOCACY AISLE



## Elijah's Law Kathy Downing

For parents, dropping our children off at a daycare center means placing our trust in caregivers and educators to properly care for them. Parents of children with food allergies know they must work closely with staff to ensure that they are well informed of the child's food allergens.

But what if there is turnover in staffing? Or the center does not have access to the resources and training it needs to properly prepare for a potential life-threatening allergic reaction?

That's why our partners, Thomas and Dina Silvera of the [Elijah-Alavi Foundation](#), work tirelessly to advocate for [Elijah's Law](#).

The law is in response to the tragic death of their three-year-old son, Elijah Silvera, who was fed a grilled cheese sandwich at a [New York City preschool in 2017](#), despite having a known severe dairy allergy.

More than 40 percent of children with food allergies and more than half of adults with food allergy have experienced a severe allergic reaction such as anaphylaxis according to Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE).

"To pass this law, Elijah's Law, is important not just to my family, but also for all families who have children suffering with severe food allergies," Silvera said. "What my son Elijah has taught us is that challenges are simply an opportunity to use our superpowers, and that limitations are invitations to change the world as we know it."

Elijah's Law, the first of its kind in the United States, requires all daycare programs, in addition to public schools, to implement guidelines to prevent, recognize, and respond to anaphylactic reactions.

So far, school districts and day care centers in New York, Illinois, and Virginia are required to follow protocols to prevent, recognize and respond to life-threatening allergic reactions thanks to Elijah's Law being passed at the individual state level. The law states that childcare institutions must have policies for education around possessing and administering epinephrine, requiring that at least one employee be trained and have access to epinephrine at all times.

FEI is working with the Elijah-Alavi Foundation to get this law passed in Kansas and Missouri.

## RE-CENTERING & RELAXING WITH YOGA

Anagha Kalvade

I have been teaching yoga, including breathing exercises, and mindfulness for 19 years now.

My 15-year-old son suffers from severe food and environmental allergies, asthma, and eczema which disrupts his normal life and encourages social isolation. I have seen how practicing yoga has helped him deal with these health issues elegantly.

Also, my years of teaching has helped me understand how people have benefited from these techniques to deal with anxiety and depression.

Research shows that yoga helps to improve the respiratory function of the lungs and stabilize the overall immune system. Yoga helps to correct the posture, boost self-confidence, allows the chest to expand resulting in increased lung capacity, loosens the neck muscles to reduce pressure, and allows mucus drainage. A common trigger of asthma symptoms is stress. The various breathing techniques in yoga help to manage stress effectively by relaxing your mind and emotions. I believe that adopting these techniques can benefit you long-term.

Incorporate these yoga poses and breathing techniques in your daily routine to help manage your allergies better.\*

*\*Note that these techniques should not be treated as a cure and medical attention is required for severe allergy symptoms.*

### Yoga Postures/ Asanas for allergies:

#### Bridge Pose/Setu Bandhasana:

This yoga posture expands the chest and lungs while increasing lung capacity. This pose falls under the 'backbends' category and is recommended to everyone who spends time in front of a computer or on a cell phone. It counterbalances forward bending, strengthens the back, and corrects posture.



#### Fish Pose/Matsyasana:

This yoga posture also opens the chest, lungs, and throat encouraging better blood circulation and increasing lung capacity. This pose stimulates the thymus gland, which regulates the lymphatic system (an important part of the immune system), which is located under the sternum.



**NO RENEÉ,  
YOU ARE ALLERGIC!**

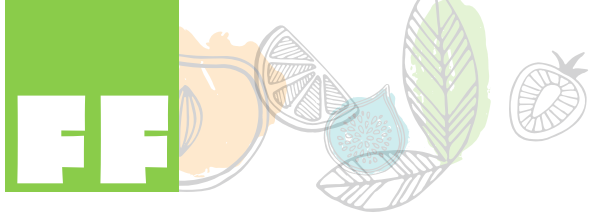
Meet Reneé.  
Reneé has allergies to a lot of foods.



Learn how her family and friends help her have fun and stay safe at parties and playdates



**GRAB YOUR COPY TODAY!**



### Shoulder Stand/Sarvangasana:

This yoga posture opens nasal passages and improves drainage. During this pose, blood circulation increases towards the brain helping relieve stress and anxiety while providing calming effects to the brain.

It is recommended to do this inversion under the guidance of a yoga teacher and can be practiced for short periods of time as a beginner. You can take support of a wall and do a supported shoulder stand as well.



### Yogic Breathing/Pranayama for allergies:

These breathing techniques help increase lung capacity while reducing stress, improving immunity, and reducing the effects of allergies and colds.

#### Alternate Nostril Breathing/Anulom Vilom Pranayam:

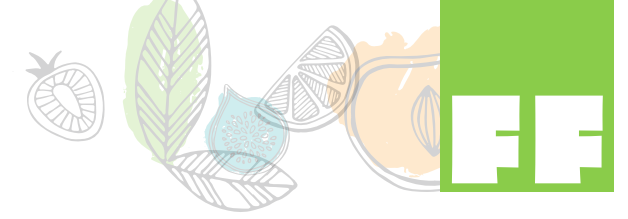
- Sit in the easy sitting pose (criss cross applesauce) with your spine straight, close your eyes and sit in meditation pose with the index finger touching your thumb, and your wrists resting on your knees.
- Now bring attention to your breath, connecting your mind with your breath and removing all thoughts from your mind.
- Place your right thumb on your right nostril and breath in from the left nostril, slowly and deeply filling your lungs with fresh air.
- Now close your left nostril with the middle two fingers and release your right thumb exhaling slowly through the right nostril.
- Now inhale through the right nostril gently and exhale through the left nostril. This makes one round.
- Repeat at least 5-6 rounds, in the beginning, practicing conscious inhalation and exhalation and noticing its effects on the mind and body.



### Bumble Bee Breathing/Bhramari Pranayam:

This is an easy and powerful breathing technique that releases tension, reduces stress, and nurtures self-healing and peace. The Bhramari Pranayama lowers one's blood pressure, thus relieving hypertension.

- Begin by sitting in a comfortable, cross-legged position with your spine straight.
- Now close your ears with your thumbs and rest your middle two fingers on your closed eyes, your mouth closed.
- Breathe in slowly through your nostrils, and then exhale steadily, making a soft and smooth humming sound 'hmmm' like a bee.
- Repeat at least 5-6 times as a beginner. The Bhramari Pranayama should be performed at least 10 times to get the most benefits.
- Feel the vibration of the bee sound resonate through your head and allow your mind, body, and emotions to examine how you feel. Concentrate on the vibrations and the calmness within. Sit with your eyes closed in this position for a few more minutes to enjoy the peaceful feeling.



**KOREAN CONVENIENCE**

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**CHECK OUT THE BLOG!**

# ARE YOU?



- a doctor,
- registered dietician,
- nurse,
- medical student,
- or medical researcher?

**Are you interested in getting involved in health equity work?**

**Food Equality Initiative's Medical Advisory Board (MAB) is looking to expand.**

**Send us a short message of interest to get connected.**

**[CONTACT@FOODEQUALITYINITIATIVE.ORG](mailto:CONTACT@FOODEQUALITYINITIATIVE.ORG)**

# RECIPES!



## SUN-DRIED TOMATO HUMMUS 3 WAYS

Elizabeth Shaw MS RDN CPT, | Nutrition Expert at ShawSimpleSwaps.com

### Full Recipe + Nutrition Facts Available

Looking for the perfect meatless recipe that you can serve multiple ways? Then this Sun-Dried Tomato Hummus is just what you need in your life! Made with just a few simple ingredients, this is hands down the easiest hummus you'll ever make. Not only is this recipe free from the top 9 allergens, but it also counts as a protein and vegetable thanks to the canned beans! Using canned beans in your regular meal plan is a convenient, affordable, and nutrient-packed way to help your family meet their needs. Grab the recipe below and tag @shawsimpleswaps on social media when you make it!

Prep/Cook Time: 5 Minutes

### INGREDIENTS

#### Hummus Ingredients

15.5 oz can Chickpeas/Garbanzo, rinsed and drained  
 1/2 cup Sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained  
 3 Tbsp Extra virgin olive oil or sun-dried tomato oil from jar  
 1 Tbsp Water, optional  
 1 tsp Lemon juice, optional

#### Pairing Ingredients

Cucumbers sliced, optional  
 Whole-grain pita, optional\*  
 Plant-based milk optional\*  
 Cooked pasta optional\*

\* Choose the pasta, plant-based milk, and pita that suit your families dietary needs.

### DIRECTIONS

- Toss all hummus ingredients into a high-powered blender or food processor. Process until smooth, about two to three minutes, scraping down the sides as needed.

- Serve immediately as a dip for crackers and veggies, and/or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator and use within 3 to 5 days.

To make a pasta sauce: Add 2-3 tablespoons milk of choice and toss with your preferred cooked pasta.

To make into a pizza: Spread 2-3 tablespoons on preferred whole grain crust and top with desired veggies/toppings. Heat at 375 degrees F in an air fryer/oven for about 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

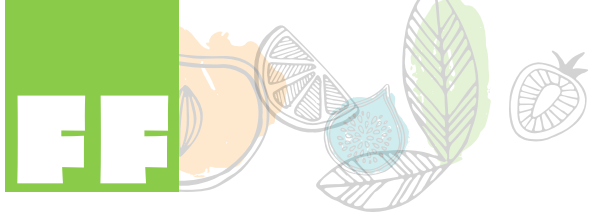
#### Notes:

- Spend the time to really drain the water from the canned chickpeas/garbanzo beans after you rinse them. This helps to ensure you don't have an excess amount of liquid going into the recipe! If needed, gently pat them dry with a paper towel or clean kitchen towel.
- Don't have time to measure out the sun-dried tomatoes and oil? No problem! It's pretty hard to mess this recipe up, so feel free to pour about 3/4 of the 7-ounce container of the sun-dried tomatoes and almost all the oil into your

blender. The flavor will be there but you'll save yourself a few dishes! Store the remaining sun-dried tomatoes from the jar in the refrigerator and use as an extra topping on the flatbread or pasta you whip up!

- On the same note, if you can't find the sun-dried tomatoes in oil, but found sun-dried tomatoes and have olive oil on hand, you can still make this recipe. Simply use about 1/2 cup of the sun-dried tomatoes and soak them in roughly 4 tablespoons of extra-virgin olive oil overnight (this helps them have the time to really soak up the oil) with 1 teaspoon of Italian seasoning. Toss this mixture into the blender with your canned chickpeas/garbanzo beans, adding 1 tablespoon or so more of oil and 1 tablespoon of water to reach desired consistency.





# ROSEMARY FLATBREAD

Stephanie Ulrich | *The Open Cookbook*

I couldn't believe how delicious this flatbread tasted the first time I made it — after not having found a good bread replacement option since removing gluten, nuts, seeds, and eggs from my diet, I was overjoyed. I knew right away that this flatbread would be part of my go-to recipes, plus it is so easy to make. The rosemary flatbread tastes amazing on its own, works great as a side to a cup of soup, or as a wrap for a sandwich.

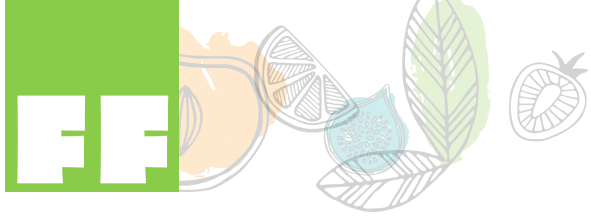
## INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup Cassava flour
- 1/2 cup Arrowroot flour
- 1/4 cup Tigernut flour
- 1 Tbsp Rosemary, dried
- 1/2 tsp Salt
- 1 can (13.5 oz) Coconut milk, full-fat

## DIRECTIONS

- In a large bowl, mix cassava flour, arrowroot flour, tigernut flour, rosemary, and salt.
- Add in coconut milk and stir until there are no lumps and the batter is smooth. The texture should be a little runny and not too thick.
- Heat up a non-stick griddle or frying pan. Once the pan is hot, pour 1/4 cup of batter onto the pan. Each flatbread will be roughly 4" to 5" in diameter.
- Add a pinch of salt to the flatbread on the pan while it is cooking if desired. Wait roughly 5 minutes before flipping.
- Once the flatbreads are nicely browned on both sides, place on a cooling rack. If you find the texture on the inside of the flatbread to be too gummy, place back onto the pan and cook for a bit longer. If using a plate to cool off, make sure the flatbreads aren't stacked on top of each other as they can be a bit sticky due to the cassava flour.
- Let cool 10 minutes before serving. Store leftovers in an air-tight container in the fridge or freezer. Reheat in the oven.





# ALLERGY FRIENDLY GROUND TURKEY & VEGGIE STIR FRY WITH NOODLES

Grace Leffall | Grace's Food Allergy Blog

I love this recipe because you can use any leftover veggies, meat, or vegan options that you already have in your fridge. You can also use any type of allergy-friendly pasta or noodles as well.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 package of Noodles (our little one loves Tinkyada Organic Noodles!)
- 1 lb Ground turkey
- 1 Cabbage, julienne sliced
- 2 Carrots, julienne sliced
- 4 Garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 Onion, chopped
- 2-3 Tbsp Olive oil
- 1/2 cup Water

## DIRECTIONS

- Cook noodles in a large pot according to the instructions on the package. Set aside.
- In a separate wok or large pan, heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil and saute the garlic cloves and onion for 2-3 minutes.
- Add ground turkey and cook on medium heat for 20 minutes.
- Add veggies and water. Cover on high heat for 5 minutes.
- Serve stir fry on top of the noodles, enjoy!





## PAN-FRIED TOFU

Zoë Slaughter | [Invisibly Allergic](#)

This pan-fried tofu pairs great with a salad, in a stir fry, or with sauteed or steamed vegetables on the side.

### INGREDIENTS

1 package Firm or extra-firm tofu (note: firm is important, you don't want it soft, that's more for creamy and blended foods like smoothies, puddings, and sauces)

1 Tbsp Oil, to sauté, (I use avocado or coconut oil)

Spices, of your choice (I use small amounts of McCormick's paprika, turmeric, and cayenne to cook the tofu in- no more than ½ tsp per spice)

Soy sauce (optional, can be put on the cooked tofu before eating, about 1 tbsp soy sauce)

### DIRECTIONS

- To get the tofu to be sturdy and crisp: about 30 minutes before cooking, put a clean kitchen towel or 2-3 paper towels on a medium or large plate. Take the tofu block out of its packaging and place it in the center of the plate on top of the towel. Place another clean towel or paper towel directly on top of the tofu. Then, place another plate on top and apply some pressure (stack a few cans or heavy objects on top) to drain excess moisture out of the tofu.
- After 25-30 minutes, preheat your skillet to medium heat with your cooking oil.
- Remove the heavy objects and pat dry your tofu.
- Slice your tofu into 1" or 2" rectangles, usually 1

make these rectangles if the tofu is being used as a side, or I'll cut them into smaller cubes if I'm using them to go on top of a salad or in a soup - whatever size you choose, try to make them all around the same size so they cook evenly together.

- Place each tofu piece in the pan so they aren't stacking, and cook on medium heat for 4-5 minutes. Sprinkle with any spices at this time, being sure not to cake too much spice on. I use probably ⅛ of turmeric, cayenne, and paprika.
- Remove from heat if oil is spitting. Flip each piece with a spatula, return to heat and continue cooking for 4-5 more minutes, or until each side is a light golden brown.
- Done! Turn off the heat, and you can add in your soy sauce if you'd like it for flavor. Serve & enjoy!





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