
21-Day Gut Reset

The microbiome has now come to be seen as the foundation of human life, health, and most interesting to me - human consciousness itself.

- Zach Bush MD



What is a gut reset?

As we enter into a new year, this is the perfect time for new beginnings. A seasonal reset has the potential to bring new opportunities and allow us to express ourselves in new and creative pathways, both in mind and body. Many people experience stress and dis-ease leading up to the end of the year. Along with the joy of gathering together, the high demands we put on our bodies through extra travel, activities, heavier foods and the stress of the seasonal shifts can often cause immune dysfunction, sluggishness and an overall feeling of inflammation in the body. A gut reset is a way for your digestive system to take a break, to allow the body to relax and let go of its daily duties of constantly digesting food, toxins and life's stressors.

The gut is made up of billions and billions of cells laced together, creating your gut membrane – a highly intelligent mechanism that pulls together nutrients, water and life force. These nutrients are delivered into the vascular system and into the liver where they are repackaged and delivered into the blood vessels, feeding each individual cell. It is constantly working.

The microbiome is the source of your cell identity, just like it's the source of your ideas and your creativity, it is a data field for everything. We now know the microbiome can talk to your brain directly. When you reset the gut, you make space for new ideas, new beginnings and a deeper expression of you.

This 21 Day Reset is a combination of Zach Bush MD's protocols and the knowledge of ayurvedic coach and educator, Mary McQuate. Ayurveda is an ancient healing modality that originated in India over 3,000 years ago. Literally translated as the knowledge of life, Ayurveda is a systematic approach that mimics the cycles and intelligence of nature's cyclical rhythms.

This ayurvedic approach to a cleanse (or reset) is very gentle on the system, which is why it's appropriate to do at any time of the year, however, resets can be most beneficial during seasonal shifts or when the body is in need of some extra attention or healing.

Benefits

When you fully allow the body to rest and take a break from its regular functions, you make space for healing and regeneration to take place. According to Zach Bush MD, there is a simple golden ratio of the rate of injury to the rate of repair in your body. If we change that ratio, we can fundamentally change the course of our lives. If the rate of injury is slightly higher than the rate of repair, you are going to be on a downward path towards more inflammation and dis-ease. However, if we are able to do the opposite by applying healing modalities, tools and resources that will help to increase the rate of repair, we have the ability to build a different and more vibrant human being.

After this reset, most people walk away feeling lighter, have increased vitality, a strengthened digestive system, improved sleep, clearer skin, stronger immunity and even better eyesight! Along with the improvements on the physical body, the mental and emotional bodies are also affected. Ayurveda often describes one with a strong digestive capacity as one that can not only digest the food on their plate, but one that has the capacity to digest their life.

What to expect

Undergoing a reset of any kind will often come with some challenges, discomfort or resistance when we begin to make shifts in our food, habits, and lifestyle patterns. In the first week, you may experience mild headaches, some changes in your bowels, and possibly some moodiness. This is normal, but can often be avoided if you follow the proper steps laid out in week one.

Week 1

Welcome to the first week of your gut reset! This week is the preparatory phase. In this phase you are slowly preparing your body for a gentle detoxification. The list of things to avoid will be relevant for the entire reset, though in this first phase, it's okay to start slowly. If you have a caffeine habit, it can be especially critical to wean yourself over the course of the week to avoid major headaches. It's important to keep in mind, the foods to avoid aren't inherently bad, however certain foods take a higher toll on the digestive system and the nervous system and should be minimized when undergoing a reset. Please note, these meal plans are samples only. Feel free to diversify your vegetables, grains and legumes. If you have a particularly sensitive system or if legumes are particularly challenging for you, try substituting cooked cabbage instead of kale, or lean into supportive broths like miso or vegetable broth with kombu. With anything, start slowly and give yourself time to adjust to the change.

Things to Avoid

coffee, alcohol, sugar, meat, raw foods, all processed foods, wheat and dairy.

Lifestyle Suggestions

As you begin to take things out of your diet, it is best to adjust your schedule for the next three weeks in a way that will set you up for success. Travel should be avoided and social gatherings might need to be more limited. This is a time to go inward. Try to free up your time to allow for preparation for week two. This can also be a perfect time to integrate a meditation practice or begin journaling. Journaling will bring you great insights and reflections on how you feel before and after the reset. Consider integrating these journal prompts into your daily rhythm.

Sample Meal Plan + Recipes

Morning Hydration

1. Zach Bush, MD's lemonade: warm water with lemon/lime and a pinch of Celtic gray salt or himalayan sea salt.
2. or warm water with apple cider vinegar and a dash of honey

Breakfast

oatmeal with spiced apples + fresh ginger

Lunch

herbed quinoa with chickpeas + roasted vegetables and cooked greens with a tahini dressing

Dinner

coconut curry vegetable soup

ION should be taken first thing in the morning + 30 min prior to each meal.

Week 2

In the active cleansing phase of the reset, it's important to be the most disciplined in this seven-day time period to receive the biggest impact and benefits from the entire 21-day period. During these seven days, it is recommended that you mostly follow a kitchari diet. Kitchari is an Indian daal, or soup, that is extremely easy to digest. It is made using mung beans, spices, and rice. Mung beans are very unique within the legume family. Known for their digestibility, their detoxing effect and their ability to move stagnation within the body, mung beans can be truly healing. Unlike fasting, a kitchari cleanse allows the body to feel nourished while detoxing. While this 7-day period may feel challenging, you should still have enough energy to continue working.

Things to Avoid

coffee, alcohol, sugar, meat, raw foods, all processed foods, wheat, most fruit and dairy.

Lifestyle Suggestions + What to Expect

For the next 7 days, it would be best to completely clear your schedule as much as possible. Really allow yourself to dive deep into the experience of the reset. Try to integrate a meditation practice every day this week. Keep a steady routine: go to bed and wake at the same time every day, eat your meals at the same time (preferably eating your last meal by 6pm), and keep the screen time to a minimum (especially prior to bedtime). Week two will likely be the most challenging week, but you can do it! Instead of resisting change and discomfort, embrace the opportunity for transformation and rejuvenation. Try to take it easy this week. Avoid intense exercise and instead opt for gentle yoga or walking.

Sample Meal Plan + Recipes

Morning Hydration

1. Zach Bush, MD's lemonade: warm water with lemon/lime and a pinch of Celtic gray salt or himalayan sea salt.
2. or warm water with apple cider vinegar and a dash of honey

Breakfast

simple porridge with spices or mung bean kitchari

Lunch

mung bean kitchari and steamed vegetables

Dinner

mung bean kitchari (if you are really trying to feel lighter, you can opt to skip dinner or have a warm vegetable broth)

Optional supportive digestive teas: ginger, fennel, licorice + mint

Week 3

Congratulations! You have made it to week three of the reset. This phase is all about reintegration. Instead of jumping back into your old habits of consumption, think about how you feel right now. What would you like to continue from this experience? What are you missing that would feel most nourishing? Slowly add one food back at a time. This will give you more clarity on how that food or substance may be affecting you (dairy, wheat, coffee, etc). It's also important to slowly add other foods back in to give your digestive system time to recalibrate.

Lifestyle Suggestion

Consider continuing to journal through this week. What worked for you? What felt the most difficult? How do you feel now? Slowly start to add in your higher energy workouts, be gentle with yourself and take note of how you feel each day in order to determine the energy output that is most appropriate for you.

“We cannot exist apart from the biology of the microbiome, so how could we possibly rise to a high level of awareness without the connection to this rudimentary source of intelligence. As we become aware of the invisible life within and around us, we can seize new opportunities to move our species toward a healthier future.”

- Zach Bush MD

Sample Meal Plan + Recipes

Morning Hydration

1. Zach Bush, MD's lemonade: warm water with lemon/lime and a pinch of Celtic gray salt or himalayan sea salt.
2. or warm water with apple cider vinegar and a dash of honey

Breakfast

oatmeal with seasonal fruit, spices and toasted almonds

Lunch

roasted kabocha squash, sauteed kale and garlic, and oven-baked tempeh

Dinner

red lentil stew

ION should be taken first thing in the morning + 30 min prior to each meal.

If you are interested in learning more protocols for deeper intrinsic healing, consider joining Zach Bush, MD's online health education course, The Journey of Intrinsic Health. For all gut-resetters, use code 'GUTRESET200' for \$200 off of Group Immersion.

The Journey of Intrinsic Health is an international hub of personal transformation. With offerings spanning from community membership to individual or group coaching, accepting the call to change becomes not only possible, but inevitable. Join us this January to witness others thriving and in turn, be supported in your own metamorphosis.

Ready to take this Gut Reset with you into the New Year?

Come join the Journey of Intrinsic Health for 5 days of free events, live chats with Zach Bush, MD, and authentic community January 15th - January 19th.

If you have any questions about the Journey of Intrinsic Health, feel free to reach out to: info@journeyofintrinsichealth.com.

Oatmeal with Spiced Apples

Ingredients:

- Organic rolled oats or quick cooking oats
- 1 apple cubed
- ½ tsp of fresh ginger
- A dash of cinnamon, cardamom, sea salt and nutmeg
- 1 Tbsp walnuts (or any nut of your choice)
- 1 tsp of ghee or coconut oil
- Water or unsweetened nut milk

Directions:

Refer to the cooking instructions on the oats you have purchased. Usually the ratio is 1/2 cup of oats to 1 cup of water. To add more ease to the digestive capacity, add more water or warm nut milk while you cook. First add the oil to a small cooking pot, then add the cubed apples and generously coat them in the spices. Next add the oats and the walnuts and let them absorb some of the spices. Lastly, add the water or nut milk and bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer for about 10 minutes. You may need to add a touch more milk or water while you stir.

Optional topping: a small amount of raisins, pumpkin seeds, a drizzle of tahini, a dash of honey or maple syrup.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Quinoa with Chickpeas

Ingredients:

- 1/2 – 1 cup of quinoa (depending on if you want leftovers)
- 1 can of chickpeas
(option to use dry chickpeas - will need to follow different cooking instructions)
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- A dash of sea salt and pepper
- 1 handful of chopped fresh herbs of your choice (parsley, cilantro or basil)
- 1 tbsp of olive oil

Directions:

Refer to the cooking instructions on the quinoa you have purchased. Usually the ratio is 1/2 cup of quinoa to 1 cup of water. Once the quinoa has finished cooking, add the chickpeas to the pot along with the spices, oil and fresh herbs. Stir everything together and cover with a lid to allow the extra steam to warm the added ingredients.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Roasted Roots

Ingredients:

- 1 – 2 cup root vegetables: beets, sweet potatoes, and carrots (cubed)
- 1 tbsp avocado oil (coconut oil)
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

Directions:

Place the root vegetables on a baking tray and cover with the avocado oil and spices. Bake on 420 for about 22–25 minutes.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Cooked Bitter Greens

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup of kale, chopped
- 1/2 cup of dandelion greens
- 1/2 yellow onion
- 1 clove of garlic, diced
- sea salt and pepper
- 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 - 1 tbsp of ghee coconut
- handful of finely diced parsley

Directions:

On a medium-low heated pan add the ghee or coconut oil, the finely diced onion, and a pinch of salt. Cover with a lid, and wait until the onions have turned clear. Finely chop kale and dandelion greens, add half of the amount of greens to the onions, cover with a lid and wait until the greens cook just a bit (until they are a bright green), then add the rest of the greens, and cover with a lid. Mash and dice the garlic, add to the greens, and mix around a bit. Cover with the lid again. Lastly add a splash of water pepper, parsley, and lemon and mix in the greens. Serve immediately or cover with a lid and enjoy later.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Tahini Dressing

Ingredients:

- 1 cup tahini
- 3/4 cup water (maybe more depending on consistency)
- 1 clove of garlic (mashed)
- A juice of 1 lemon or 1/4 cup of apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 tsp sea salt
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley and dill (thinly chopped)

Directions:

Add all ingredients to a high powered blender and blend until smooth. You may need to add a little more water to get the consistency you want.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Coconut Curry Vegetable Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp coconut oil
- 1 onions, finely chopped
- 1 clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp turmeric, pepper, cumin and paprika
- 2 medium-sized carrots (chopped)
- 1 cup of shiitake mushrooms (diced)
- 1 red bell pepper (sliced)
- 2 stalks of celery (finely chopped)
- 1 zucchini (cubed)
- 1/2 sweet potato (chopped)
- 1 can of full-fat coconut milk
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley or cilantro (or both)
- 3 cups of vegetable broth (or water)

Directions:

Saute all ingredients in coconut oil in the order of how they are listed above (except the coconut milk and the broth). In between adding each ingredient, cover with a lid. Allow each ingredient to have a little bit of time sauteing in the oil before adding the next ingredient. Lastly add the coconut milk, the broth, and let simmer for about 45 minutes or longer if cooking in a crock pot. (Add more water if needed)

For Serving: Serve with fresh herbs and lemon.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Simple Porridge

Ingredients:

- organic rolled oats or quick cooking oats
- 1/2 tsp of fresh ginger
- 1 tsp ghee or coconut oil
- a dash of cinnamon, cardamom and nutmeg
- water or unsweetened nut milk

Directions:

Refer to the cooking instructions on the oats you have purchased. Usually the ratio is 1/2 cup of oats to 1 cup of water. To add more ease to the digestive capacity, add more water or warm nut milk while you cook. First add the oil to a small cooking pot, then add the oats and generously coat them in the spices. Next add the water or nut milk and bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer for about 10 minutes. You may need to add a touch more milk or water while you stir.

Optional toppings: a small amount of raisins, pumpkin seeds, a dash of honey.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Mung Bean Stew

Ingredients:

- 1.5 cups of split mung beans (soaked in water overnight)
- 2–3 cups of vegetable broth
- 4 celery stalks
- 2 carrots
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp ginger (if using fresh - just up the dose)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 2 tbsp of coconut oil or ghee
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro or parsley (chopped)
- 1/2 lemon (for topping)

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Mung Bean Stew (continued)

Directions:

Drain and rinse your mung beans. Add them to a large cooking pot and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer and let them cook for about 30 minutes. Monitor the water and skim the “gunk” that rides to the surface.

In a separate pot, add the ghee, celery and carrots. Let these cook until tender. Next add all the spices and stir all together (better to have more spices, than less). You may need to add a splash of broth to reduce sticking. Once the mung beans are mostly cooked, add them to your veggie/spice mixture. Cover with your broth, bring to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer. Let this all simmer for about 45 minutes. Garnish with fresh cilantro.

*note: this can also be made in a slow cooker for ease or to save time.

For the Rice:

Simply purchase your favorite organic white rice and follow the instructions (white rice is best when working to clear out the system and enhance digestion). I like making my rice in a rice cooker and I add a tiny bit of ghee (1 tsp), salt and lots of black pepper.

Preparation:

Add a 1/2 cup of rice to a bowl, cover with the mung bean dal, garnish with a squeeze of lemon and chopped cilantro.

*note: traditional kitchari combines the rice and mung beans together during the cooking process. Either way will have the same effect. If you would like to combine the two, simply add your rice to the mung beans during the simmering time.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Red Lentil Stew

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp each - turmeric, cumin, salt and pepper
- 1 tsp turkish paprika
- 1 can, organic tomato paste
- 2 medium-sized carrots (chopped)
- 1 can, crushed tomatoes (or 2 fresh tomatoes chopped)
- 2–3 cups vegetable broth (or water)
- 1/2 cup red lentils (soaked overnight)

Directions:

Rinse and boil the red lentils (will take about 20 minutes until tender). While the lentils are boiling, saute ingredients in olive oil in the order of how they are listed above except for the broth. In between adding each ingredient, cover with a lid to allow for each ingredient to begin to tenderize before adding the next ingredient. Once you have added the tomato paste and the crushed tomatoes, let that mixture simmer for about 10 minutes. Lastly, pass the lentils through a strainer and discard that water. Add the cooked lentils to your mixture, cover with vegetable broth, and let simmer for about 30 minutes or longer if cooking in a crock pot. To make this stew extra creamy and delicious, pour everything into a high powered blender (or a food processor) and blend until smooth.

For Serving:

Garnish with a tiny bit of ghee or olive oil, dried mint and paprika.

For all ingredients, it is best to use organic and local when available

Roasted kabocha squash, sauteed kale with garlic, and oven-baked tempeh

Roasted Kabocha Squash

Ingredients:

- 1 whole kabocha squash (remove the seeds and chop in cubes)
- 1 tbsp of avocado oil or coconut oil
- 1 tsp of smoked paprika

Directions:

Place the cubed kabocha squash on a baking tray. Cover with the oil and spices (you can use your hands to mix all together). Bake at 400 degrees for 25–30 minutes.

Oven-Baked Tempeh

Ingredients:

- 3–6 ounces of organic tempeh
- 1 tsp of avocado oil, ghee or coconut oil
- 1/2 tsp of smoked paprika

Directions

Use a cutting board to prep the tempeh. Slice longways and cover with the oil and spices. Add the tempeh to the baking tray with the kabocha squash midway through the squash's cooking time (about 15 minutes total cooking time for the tempeh).

For the sauteed kale with garlic use same recipe/method as the bitter greens.

Journal Prompts

Sometimes a simple phrase or even one word can be enough to spark the inspiration for writing. Use these prompts to allow for a stream of conscious flow for your morning or evening journal sessions.

Day 1 – Right now I am...

Day 2 – Today I want to...

Day 3 – I remember...

Day 4 – What I know to be true is...

Day 5 – I'm grateful for...

Day 6 – I'm happiest when...

Day 7 – I'm worried that...

Day 8 – My healing happens when...

Day 9 – I'm excited for...

Day 10 – I am most proud of...

Day 11 – I love...

Day 12 – I am hopeful that...

Day 13 – I can digest...

Day 14 – I am fully capable of...

Day 15 – I am dreaming of...

Day 16 – I feel most content when...

Day 17 – I am hungry for...

Day 18 – I am confident...

Day 19 – I will never forget...

Day 20 – The last thing that made me smile...

Day 21 – I am astonished by...