

VAGUS NERVE EXERCISES BOOK



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RECOMMENDED TRACKS & PLAYLISTS

Title	Artist / Album	Why It Helps with Vagus Nerve Activation
Relaxing Music for Vagus Nerve Stimulation	Spotify playlist Spotify	Ambient nature sounds + slow instrumental pads – supports calm and lowers physiological arousal.
Music for the Vagus Nerve	Meditation Music Zone Spotify	Gentle melodies useful for breathing, humming, or visual practices.
Meditations for the Vagus Nerve	Spa Maestro Spotify	Soft, immersive music that can sustain longer meditative holds.
Vagus Nerve Healing	Meditation Music Zone Spotify	Slow-moving background tones that help reduce stress and anxiety.
Vagus Drift	Spa Maestro Spotify	Dreamy, slow rhythms ideal for deep breathing or guided imagery.
Relaxing Music for Vagus Nerve	Kistaro (Album) Spotify	A full album-length set that's useful for longer practice sessions.
Pranic Energy	Spa Maestro Spotify	Slightly more energetic but still calm, good for warming up or transitioning between practices.

⚙️ How to Use This Playlist in Practice

- **During breathing exercises:** Choose tracks with slow tempo and minimal instrumentation to avoid distraction.
- **Vocal, throat, or humming practices:** Use tracks where frequencies are neutral – these support your voice rather than clash with it.
- **Visualization or relaxation/massage exercises:** Ambient, immersive music helps maintain calm focus without sensory overload.

COLD EXPOSURE SAFETY GUIDE

Cold exposure can be a powerful tool for stimulating the vagus nerve, reducing stress, and improving resilience. However, it must be approached with caution and gradual adaptation to avoid risks such as hypothermia, fainting, or cardiovascular strain.

✓ General Safety Principles

- **Consult a doctor first** if you have heart conditions, respiratory disorders (asthma, COPD), or circulatory problems.
- **Never practice alone** when trying full immersion (ice baths, cold lakes). Always have supervision.
- **Avoid extremes:** Cold exposure is about controlled stimulation, not endurance contests.
- **Listen to your body:** Stop immediately if you experience dizziness, chest pain, or numbness in extremities.
- **Warm up slowly afterward:** Use a towel, dry clothes, and light movement – never jump straight into very hot water.

📦 Safe Practice Steps

1. Start Small

- Begin with 15–30 seconds of cool water at the end of a shower.
- Keep the temperature mild (not ice-cold).

2. Progress Gradually

- Increase by 10–15 seconds per session until you can tolerate 2–3 minutes.
- Aim for 3–4 sessions per week rather than daily at first.

3. Breathing is Key

- Use slow diaphragmatic breathing to prevent gasping and maintain calm.
- Inhale gently through the nose, exhale longer through the mouth.

4. Focus on Specific Areas First

- Splash the face, apply a cool compress to the neck, or soak hands/feet before attempting whole-body exposure.

5. Full Immersion (Advanced)

- Only after several weeks of gradual adaptation should you consider cold baths or longer exposures.
- Limit to 2–5 minutes max, under supervision, and only if healthy.

⚠ When to Avoid Cold Exposure

- Fever, illness, or infection.
- Uncontrolled hypertension or heart disease.
- Pregnancy (consult a doctor first).
- Recent injuries or open wounds.

MORNING AND EVENING VAGUS NERVE ACTIVATION ROUTINES

MORNING ROUTINE

1. Energizing Belly Breath

Description: Upon waking, lie on your back or sit upright. Place one hand on your abdomen. Take 10 short but deep breaths, letting the belly rise quickly on inhale and fall on exhale. This stimulates the diaphragm and gently activates the vagus nerve.

Beginner Tip: Keep shoulders relaxed and focus only on the abdomen moving. This should feel like a wake-up «charge», not like hyperventilating.

2. Morning Sunlight Breathing

Description: Sit near a window or stand outdoors. Close your eyes, face toward natural morning light. Inhale slowly through the nose, exhale gently through the mouth. Continue for 3–5 minutes, noticing warmth on your skin and brightness behind the eyelids.

Beginner Tip: Even on cloudy days, exposure to natural light supports circadian rhythm and vagus activation. Keep breath slow and steady, not forced.

3. Morning Vowel Tone Flow

Description: Take a deep breath, then exhale while chanting short vowel sounds such as «ah», «eh», and «oh». Repeat several times, gradually raising the pitch slightly with each round. The vibration stimulates the throat, chest, and vagal pathways.

Beginner Tip: Keep the sound gentle, not loud. Focus on the vibration in the chest and head rather than musical quality.

4. Four-Direction Mindful Walk

Description: In a safe space, take slow steps forward, backward, to the left, and to the right. With each step, coordinate your breathing. Inhale as you take one step and exhale on the next. Continue for 2–3 minutes, keeping attention on rhythm and balance.

Beginner Tip: This exercise sharpens awareness. Move slowly, like a mindful dance, not as exercise for speed.

5. Sun-Reach Stretch

Description: Stand tall with feet hip-width apart. Interlace your fingers, turn palms upward, and stretch arms overhead. Slightly lift the sternum as though reaching toward the sun. Hold for 20–30 seconds, breathing slowly. Repeat 2–3 times.

Beginner Tip: Avoid arching the lower back. Keep the movement gentle, focusing on lengthening the spine.

6. Gratitude Reflection Pause

Description: Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and take 3 calming breaths. With each breath, mentally list one thing you are grateful for. Finish with a long, slow exhale, letting gratitude soften tension in the body.

Beginner Tip: Keep the gratitude simple, like appreciating warm sunlight, a safe home, or a good night's sleep.

EVENING ROUTINE

1. Evening Boxed Calm Breath

Description: Sit or lie in a comfortable position. Inhale for 4–6 counts, exhale for 4–6 counts, without holding the breath. Maintain this rhythm for 10 cycles. This balances the nervous system and prepares the body for rest.

Beginner Tip: If counting feels stressful, just keep the inhale and exhale the same length by feeling your body's natural rhythm.

2. Starry Night Visualization

Description: Close your eyes and imagine a clear night sky filled with stars. With every exhale, picture the sky expanding wider, as if your breath makes the stars drift farther. Continue for 3–5 minutes, synchronizing breath and imagery.

Beginner Tip: Visualization should feel effortless. Do not force an image; allow it to form naturally.

3. Silent Jaw Release

Description: Sit quietly and bring awareness to your jaw. On each exhale, consciously soften and unclench the jaw. If needed, gently open and close the mouth once or twice to reset. Continue for 1–2 minutes until the jaw feels loose.

Beginner Tip: Many people hold tension in the jaw without noticing. Imagine the jaw «melting» downward with gravity.

4. Shoulder Melt Down

Description: Sit upright. Inhale gently, then on each exhale, let the shoulders drop down and away from the ears. Repeat for 5–8 breaths, noticing the weight of the shoulders sinking with every exhale.

Beginner Tip: Avoid rolling your shoulders and just allow gravity to do the work.

5. Warm Compress Over Eyes

Description: Place a warm, moist cloth over closed eyes for 2–3 minutes. Breathe deeply while focusing on the gentle heat. This signals the nervous system that it is safe to rest.

Beginner Tip: If you don't have a cloth, rub your palms together until warm and place them gently over your eyes.

6. Moonlit Emotional Release

Description: Before bed, write down one stressful thought or event from the day. Take a deep breath, and as you exhale, imagine letting that thought leave your body. Sit for 1–2 minutes in stillness afterward.

Beginner Tip: Keep the practice simple. No need for full journaling. One sentence is enough to free the mind before sleep.

WHY MORNING AND EVENING ROUTINES ARE IMPORTANT

The vagus nerve functions as the body's natural calming system, counterbalancing stress by activating the parasympathetic nervous system.

- **Morning routines** prepare the nervous system for the day ahead. They gently stimulate vagal pathways to wake the body, stabilize mood, and boost resilience before stressors arise.
- **Evening routines** guide the body into rest mode. They downshift nervous system activity, preparing for quality sleep, emotional recovery, and physical repair.

Consistent practice, even for short sessions, builds long-term benefits such as improved digestion, balanced mood, and better stress recovery (Goggins, 2022; Gerritsen, 2018).

How Many Practices to Do

- **Morning:** Choose **3–4 practices** from the list of six. Total time: **10–15 minutes**.
 - **Example:** Energizing Belly Breath (2 min) + Morning Sunlight Breathing (3 min) + Four-Direction Mindful Walk (3 min) + Gratitude Reflection Pause (2 min).
- **Evening:** Choose **3–4 practices** from the list of six. Total time: **12–15 minutes**.
 - **Example:** Evening Boxed Calm Breath (3 min) + Starry Night Visualization (2 min) + Warm Compress Over Eyes (3 min) + Shoulder Melt Down (4–5 min).

Tip: *Rotate practices daily to prevent monotony and engage different vagal pathways.*

General Timing & Structure

- **Each exercise:** 2–4 minutes unless otherwise noted.
- **Total duration:** Morning 10–15 minutes | Evening 12–15 minutes.
- **Consistency:** Daily practice is more effective than longer, irregular sessions.

What to Pay Attention To

- **Morning focus:** Exercises should feel activating but not exhausting. You should finish with more energy and clarity.
- **Evening focus:** Practices should progressively quiet the body and mind. Avoid overly energizing methods late in the day.
- **Check-ins:** Notice mood shifts, changes in stress, sleep quality, and digestion.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Doing *all* the exercises every time – this may feel overwhelming. Pick 3–4 to keep it simple.
2. Rushing through the practice instead of slowing down.
3. Using strong force in breath or stretches (activation comes from gentleness, not strain).
4. Practicing in a distracting or noisy environment.
5. Skipping practice on stressful days can actually be the most helpful.

BREAKFAST RECIPES

GREEK YOGURT PARFAIT WITH BLUEBERRIES, WALNUTS & FLAXSEED

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 10 oz (280 g) plain unsweetened Greek yogurt
- 6 oz (170 g) fresh blueberries
- 1.5 oz (42 g) raw walnuts, chopped
- 1 tbsp (10 g) ground flaxseed
- 4 oz (120 g) cooked rolled oats, cooled
- 2 tsp (10 ml) raw honey or sugar-free alternative
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) ground cinnamon

Directions:

1. **Prepare the base:** Divide the Greek yogurt equally into two medium serving glasses or bowls (5 oz / 140 g each). Smooth the surface with a spoon.
2. **Add the grains:** Layer 2 oz (60 g) of cooked oats over the yogurt in each glass, pressing lightly to create an even base.
3. **Layer the fruit:** Spoon 3 oz (85 g) of blueberries on top of the oats in each serving. Save a few whole berries for garnish.
4. **Add crunch and fiber:** Sprinkle 0.75 oz (21 g) of chopped walnuts and 0.5 tbsp (5 g) of ground flaxseed over each portion.
5. **Finish with sweetness (optional):** Drizzle 1 tsp (5 ml) of honey (or sugar-free sweetener) over each parfait.
6. **Garnish:** Add the reserved blueberries and a light dusting of cinnamon on top for flavor and presentation.
7. **Serve immediately:** Enjoy chilled for a refreshing, balanced breakfast.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 365 | Protein: 18 g | Fat: 18 g | Carbohydrates: 35 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 28 g | Omega-3 fatty acids: 1.8 g | Cholesterol: 8 mg | Sodium: 65 mg | Potassium: 410 mg | Calcium: 210 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace Greek yogurt with unsweetened coconut or almond yogurt (choose probiotic-fortified versions).
- Swap walnuts for pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds if nut allergies are a concern.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) of sliced strawberries or raspberries for variety and additional antioxidants.

SPINACH & MUSHROOM OMELET WITH AVOCADO SLICES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 large eggs (8 oz / 228 g)
- 2 oz (57 g) baby spinach, chopped
- 3 oz (85 g) mushrooms, sliced
- 1 oz (28 g) onion, finely chopped
- 1 oz (28 g) feta cheese, crumbled (optional, adds calcium and flavor)
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 medium avocado (6 oz / 170 g), sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare vegetables:** Wash spinach, slice mushrooms, and chop onion.
2. **Cook vegetables:** Heat olive oil in a non-stick pan over medium heat. Add onion and mushrooms, sauté for 4–5 minutes until soft. Stir in spinach, cook 1 minute until wilted. Remove from pan.
3. **Beat eggs:** Crack eggs into a bowl, whisk with a pinch of salt and pepper until smooth.
4. **Cook omelet base:** Pour eggs into the same pan over medium heat, tilting the pan so they spread evenly.
5. **Add filling:** When eggs start to set but top is still slightly runny, spoon the spinach-mushroom mix and feta onto one half of the omelet.
6. **Fold and finish:** Fold the omelet gently in half. Cook for 1–2 minutes until set inside.
7. **Serve:** Divide into two portions. Add avocado slices on top or on the side. Serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 330 | Protein: 16 g | Fat: 25 g | Carbohydrates: 10 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 4 g | Cholesterol: 190 mg | Sodium: 210 mg | Potassium: 630 mg | Magnesium: 55 mg | Calcium: 120 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace feta with nutritional yeast for a dairy-free option.
- Add fresh herbs (parsley, dill, or basil) for more flavor.
- For extra protein, add 1 oz (28 g) smoked salmon slices on the side.

OVERNIGHT OATS WITH CHIA, ALMOND BUTTER & RASPBERRIES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Resting time: overnight (8 hours) |
No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 4 oz (115 g) rolled oats
- 2 tbsp (20 g) chia seeds
- 10 oz (280 ml) unsweetened almond milk (or other plant milk)
- 2 oz (56 g) almond butter
- 4 oz (113 g) fresh raspberries
- 2 tsp (10 ml) raw honey or sugar-free alternative (optional)
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) ground cinnamon

Directions:

1. **Mix base:** In a medium bowl, combine oats, chia seeds, almond milk, and cinnamon. Stir well so chia seeds don't clump.
2. **Add almond butter:** Stir in almond butter until evenly distributed.
3. **Sweeten:** Add honey if using, and mix.
4. **Refrigerate:** Divide mixture into two jars or containers. Cover and refrigerate overnight (at least 8 hours) to allow oats and chia seeds to soften.
5. **Top with fruit:** In the morning, stir oats and top each jar with 2 oz (57 g) fresh raspberries. Serve chilled.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 320 | Protein: 10 g | Fat: 17 g | Carbohydrates: 33 g | Fiber: 9 g | Net Carbs: 24 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 85 mg | Potassium: 370 mg | Magnesium: 110 mg | Calcium: 180 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Swap almond butter for peanut butter or sunflower seed butter.
- Replace raspberries with blueberries or sliced strawberries.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) pumpkin seeds on top for extra crunch and zinc.

QUINOA BREAKFAST BOWL WITH BERRIES, PUMPKIN SEEDS & COCONUT YOGURT

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 oz (115 g) quinoa, rinsed
- 10 oz (280 ml) water
- 4 oz (113 g) unsweetened coconut yogurt (probiotic-rich)
- 4 oz (113 g) mixed berries (blueberries, raspberries, or strawberries)
- 1 oz (28 g) pumpkin seeds
- 1 tsp (5 ml) maple syrup or sugar-free option (optional)
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) ground cinnamon

Directions:

1. **Cook quinoa:** Place rinsed quinoa and water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 12–15 minutes until water is absorbed and quinoa is fluffy. Remove from heat and let cool slightly.
2. **Prepare toppings:** Wash berries and measure yogurt and pumpkin seeds.
3. **Assemble bowls:** Divide quinoa into two bowls (2 oz / 57 g each cooked portion). Add 2 oz (57 g) coconut yogurt on top of each.
4. **Add berries & seeds:** Spoon 2 oz (57 g) of mixed berries over each bowl, sprinkle with pumpkin seeds, and dust with cinnamon.
5. **Sweeten if desired:** Drizzle lightly with maple syrup before serving.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 310 | Protein: 11 g | Fat: 12 g | Carbohydrates: 40 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 33 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 18 mg | Potassium: 460 mg | Magnesium: 105 mg | Calcium: 65 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Use almond yogurt instead of coconut yogurt for a different flavor.
- Replace pumpkin seeds with chia seeds or hemp hearts.
- Cook quinoa the night before to save time in the morning.

SMOKED SALMON & AVOCADO WHOLE-GRAIN TOAST

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 4 oz (115 g) smoked salmon slices
- 1 medium avocado (6 oz / 170 g), peeled and sliced
- 4 oz (115 g) whole-grain bread (2 slices per serving, toasted)
- 1 oz (28 g) arugula or baby spinach
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) black sesame seeds or flaxseeds
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Toast the bread:** Toast the slices of whole-grain bread until golden and crisp.
2. **Prepare avocado:** Slice avocado and drizzle with lemon juice to prevent browning.
3. **Assemble:** Place a layer of arugula or spinach on each toast. Add avocado slices, then smoked salmon on top.
4. **Garnish:** Sprinkle sesame seeds or flaxseeds and season lightly with salt and pepper.
5. **Serve:** Divide between two plates and enjoy immediately.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 345 | Protein: 18 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 26 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 19 g | Cholesterol: 30 mg | Sodium: 580 mg | Potassium: 690 mg | Magnesium: 55 mg | Calcium: 80 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Use gluten-free bread if needed.
- Replace smoked salmon with grilled turkey slices for a non-fish option.
- Add thin cucumber slices for extra crunch.

TURMERIC GOLDEN SMOOTHIE WITH BANANA, GINGER & HEMP SEEDS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 2 medium bananas (8 oz / 228 g), peeled and sliced
- 12 oz (340 ml) unsweetened almond milk (or coconut milk)
- 2 tsp (4 g) ground turmeric
- 1 tsp (2 g) fresh grated ginger
- 2 oz (56 g) hemp seeds
- 1 tsp (5 ml) raw honey or sugar-free sweetener (optional)
- 3 ice cubes

Directions:

1. **Prepare ingredients:** Slice bananas and grate ginger.
2. **Blend:** Place bananas, almond milk, turmeric, ginger, hemp seeds, honey (if using), and ice cubes into a blender.
3. **Process:** Blend on high speed for 1–2 minutes until smooth and creamy.
4. **Serve:** Pour into two glasses and drink immediately for best texture and freshness.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 300 | Protein: 11 g | Fat: 14 g | Carbohydrates: 34 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 28 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 40 mg | Potassium: 680 mg | Magnesium: 110 mg | Calcium: 200 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Add 1 oz (28 g) spinach for extra antioxidants.
- Replace hemp seeds with chia seeds if preferred.
- Use frozen banana for a creamier, thicker smoothie.

SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH KALE, CHERRY TOMATOES & OLIVE OIL

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 8 minutes | Cooking time: 7 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 large eggs (8 oz / 228 g)
- 2 oz (57 g) kale, chopped (remove thick stems)
- 3 oz (85 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 oz (28 g) onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare vegetables:** Wash kale, halve cherry tomatoes, and chop onion.
2. **Cook vegetables:** Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add onion and cook 2 minutes until softened. Add kale and cherry tomatoes, sauté 3–4 minutes until kale is wilted.
3. **Scramble eggs:** Beat eggs with a pinch of salt and pepper. Pour into skillet with vegetables.
4. **Stir gently:** Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until eggs are softly set (3–4 minutes).
5. **Serve:** Divide evenly between two plates. Serve warm with whole-grain toast if desired.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 260 | Protein: 13 g | Fat: 19 g | Carbohydrates: 10 g | Fiber: 3 g | Net Carbs: 7 g | Cholesterol: 185 mg | Sodium: 160 mg | Potassium: 530 mg | Magnesium: 45 mg | Calcium: 115 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace kale with spinach for a milder taste.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) feta cheese for extra flavor and calcium.
- Cook eggs gently over low heat for a creamy texture.

BUCKWHEAT PANCAKES WITH ALMONDS & FRESH STRAWBERRIES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 12 minutes

Ingredients:

- 3.5 oz (100 g) buckwheat flour
- 1 large egg (2 oz / 57 g)
- 5 oz (150 ml) unsweetened almond milk
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil (plus extra for cooking)
- 1 tsp (4 g) baking powder
- 1 tsp (5 ml) raw honey or sugar-free sweetener (optional)
- 4 oz (113 g) fresh strawberries, sliced
- 1 oz (28 g) raw almonds, chopped

Directions:

1. **Prepare batter:** In a mixing bowl, whisk together egg, almond milk, olive oil, and honey. Add buckwheat flour and baking powder. Mix until smooth and lump-free.
2. **Cook pancakes:** Heat a nonstick skillet over medium heat and lightly brush with olive oil. Pour batter to form small pancakes (about 3–4 inches wide).
3. **Flip and finish:** Cook 2–3 minutes per side until golden brown and cooked through. Repeat with remaining batter.
4. **Serve:** Divide pancakes onto two plates. Top each with sliced strawberries and sprinkle with chopped almonds.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 330 | Protein: 11 g | Fat: 16 g | Carbohydrates: 38 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 32 g | Cholesterol: 95 mg | Sodium: 140 mg | Potassium: 360 mg | Magnesium: 85 mg | Calcium: 95 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace almonds with walnuts for more omega-3s.
- For extra protein, add 1 scoop (20 g) plant protein powder to the batter.
- Use blueberries instead of strawberries for an antioxidant-rich variation.

COTTAGE CHEESE BOWL WITH PINEAPPLE, CHIA & ALMOND SLIVERS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (228 g) low-fat cottage cheese (probiotic-rich)
- 4 oz (113 g) fresh pineapple chunks
- 1 oz (28 g) raw almonds, slivered
- 2 tbsp (20 g) chia seeds
- 1 tsp (5 ml) raw honey or sugar-free sweetener (optional)

Directions:

1. **Prepare base:** Divide cottage cheese into two serving bowls (4 oz / 114 g each).
2. **Add fruit:** Place 2 oz (57 g) pineapple chunks on top of each bowl.
3. **Add crunch and fiber:** Sprinkle 0.5 oz (14 g) almond slivers and 1 tbsp (10 g) chia seeds over each serving.
4. **Finish:** Drizzle lightly with honey if desired. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 260 | Protein: 20 g | Fat: 12 g | Carbohydrates: 18 g | Fiber: 5 g | Net Carbs: 13 g | Cholesterol: 15 mg | Sodium: 280 mg | Potassium: 420 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 140 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace pineapple with mango or papaya for tropical variety.
- Use Greek yogurt instead of cottage cheese for a smoother texture.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) pumpkin seeds for extra zinc and crunch.

SAVORY SWEET POTATO HASH WITH TURKEY SAUSAGE & SPINACH

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (228 g) sweet potato, peeled and diced small
- 4 oz (113 g) lean turkey sausage, sliced
- 2 oz (57 g) fresh spinach, chopped
- 2 oz (57 g) red bell pepper, diced
- 1 oz (28 g) onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook sweet potato:** Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add diced sweet potato and cook for 8–10 minutes, stirring often, until lightly browned and tender.
2. **Add vegetables:** Stir in onion and bell pepper. Cook 3–4 minutes until softened.
3. **Add sausage:** Add sliced turkey sausage to the pan. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring until heated through.
4. **Add spinach:** Stir in chopped spinach and cook 1 minute until wilted.
5. **Season & serve:** Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Divide evenly between two plates and serve hot.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 345 | Protein: 19 g | Fat: 17 g | Carbohydrates: 32 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 25 g | Cholesterol: 55 mg | Sodium: 510 mg | Potassium: 720 mg | Magnesium: 70 mg | Calcium: 80 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace turkey sausage with chicken sausage for variety.
- Add 1 poached egg on top for extra protein and healthy fats.
- Swap sweet potato with diced zucchini for a lower-carb option.

LUNCH RECIPES

MEDITERRANEAN SHRIMP LENTIL SALAD WITH FETA & OLIVE OIL DRESSING

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 6 oz (170 g) cooked green lentils
- 2 oz (57 g) cucumber, diced
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 oz (28 g) red onion, finely sliced
- 1.5 oz (42 g) feta cheese, crumbled
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) dried oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook shrimp:** Heat a skillet over medium heat, add 1 tsp olive oil, and sauté shrimp for 3–4 minutes until pink and cooked through. Set aside.
2. **Prepare dressing:** In a small bowl, whisk olive oil, lemon juice, oregano, salt, and pepper.
3. **Assemble salad:** In a large bowl, combine lentils, cucumber, cherry tomatoes, and red onion. Add cooked shrimp.
4. **Add feta & dressing:** Sprinkle with feta cheese and drizzle with dressing. Toss gently.
5. **Serve:** Divide between two plates and serve fresh.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 380 | Protein: 29 g | Fat: 19 g | Carbohydrates: 26 g | Fiber: 8 g | Net Carbs: 18 g | Cholesterol: 165 mg | Sodium: 380 mg | Potassium: 710 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 150 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace shrimp with grilled salmon chunks for more omega-3s.
- Use goat cheese instead of feta for a milder taste.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) olives for extra Mediterranean flavor.

GRILLED CHICKEN SALAD WITH BULGUR, ARUGULA & POMEGRANATE SEEDS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) chicken breast
- 4 oz (113 g) bulgur
- 2 oz (57 g) arugula leaves
- 2 oz (57 g) pomegranate seeds
- 1 oz (28 g) walnuts, chopped
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) apple cider vinegar
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook bulgur:** Boil bulgur in water until tender (about 12 minutes), then drain and cool.
2. **Grill chicken:** Season chicken breast with salt and pepper. Grill or pan-sear over medium heat for 6–7 minutes per side until fully cooked. Slice into strips.
3. **Make dressing:** Whisk olive oil, apple cider vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper.
4. **Assemble salad:** In a bowl, mix cooked bulgur with arugula, pomegranate seeds, and walnuts.
5. **Add chicken & serve:** Top with sliced chicken and drizzle with dressing. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 410 | Protein: 33 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 30 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 23 g | Cholesterol: 85 mg | Sodium: 220 mg | Potassium: 760 mg | Magnesium: 75 mg | Calcium: 85 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace bulgur with quinoa for a gluten-free version.
- Swap walnuts for pumpkin seeds for a nut-free option.
- Use spinach instead of arugula for a milder green.

MISO SOUP WITH TOFU, SEAWEED & BROWN RICE ON THE SIDE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 oz (113 g) firm tofu, cubed
- 2 tbsp (30 g) miso paste
- 16 oz (475 ml) water
- 0.5 oz (14 g) dried seaweed (wakame), rehydrated
- 2 oz (57 g) green onions, sliced
- 6 oz (170 g) cooked brown rice (served on the side)

Directions:

1. **Prepare seaweed:** Soak dried wakame in warm water for 5 minutes until rehydrated. Drain.
2. **Cook soup base:** In a pot, bring water to a gentle simmer. Stir in miso paste until fully dissolved (do not boil to preserve probiotics).
3. **Add tofu & seaweed:** Gently add tofu cubes and rehydrated seaweed. Simmer for 3–4 minutes.
4. **Finish with green onions:** Stir in green onions and remove from heat.
5. **Serve:** Divide soup into two bowls and serve with a side of cooked brown rice.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 285 | Protein: 13 g | Fat: 7 g | Carbohydrates: 42 g | Fiber: 5 g | Net Carbs: 37 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 620 mg | Potassium: 530 mg | Magnesium: 70 mg | Calcium: 160 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace brown rice with quinoa or soba noodles for variety.
- Use chickpea miso for a soy-free option.
- Add mushrooms (shiitake or enoki) for extra umami flavor.

TURKEY & AVOCADO LETTUCE WRAPS WITH HUMMUS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) roasted turkey breast slices, nitrate-free
- 1 medium avocado (6 oz / 170 g), sliced
- 2 oz (57 g) hummus
- 4 large romaine or butter lettuce leaves (about 2 oz / 57 g total)
- 2 oz (57 g) cucumber, thinly sliced
- 1 oz (28 g) shredded carrot
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare lettuce wraps:** Wash and pat dry the lettuce leaves. Lay them flat on a cutting board.
2. **Spread hummus:** Spread a thin layer of hummus inside each lettuce leaf.
3. **Add fillings:** Layer turkey slices, avocado, cucumber, and shredded carrot evenly across the wraps.
4. **Season:** Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper.
5. **Serve:** Fold the lettuce leaves over the filling and enjoy immediately.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 315 | Protein: 23 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 15 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 8 g | Cholesterol: 55 mg | Sodium: 370 mg | Potassium: 690 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 75 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace turkey with grilled chicken for a variation.
- Use gluten-free wraps instead of lettuce if preferred.
- Add a sprinkle of sesame seeds for extra crunch and minerals.

ROASTED VEGETABLE & CHICKPEA BUDDHA BOWL WITH TAHINI DRESSING

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) cooked chickpeas
- 4 oz (113 g) sweet potato, diced
- 3 oz (85 g) zucchini, sliced
- 3 oz (85 g) red bell pepper, diced
- 2 oz (57 g) red onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 4 oz (113 g) cooked quinoa
- 2 tbsp (30 g) tahini
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) water (to thin dressing)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Preheat oven:** Set oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. **Roast vegetables:** Place sweet potato, zucchini, bell pepper, and onion on a baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and roast for 20–25 minutes until tender.
3. **Prepare chickpeas:** Rinse cooked chickpeas and set aside.
4. **Make dressing:** Whisk tahini, lemon juice, and water until smooth.
5. **Assemble bowls:** Divide quinoa into two bowls. Add roasted vegetables and chickpeas on top. Drizzle with tahini dressing before serving.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 410 | Protein: 15 g | Fat: 18 g | Carbohydrates: 50 g | Fiber: 11 g | Net Carbs: 39 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 180 mg | Potassium: 780 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 110 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace quinoa with brown rice for variety.
- Add fresh parsley or cilantro for more freshness.
- Swap tahini dressing with yogurt-based dressing for a probiotic boost.

WILD SALMON SALAD WITH SPINACH, WALNUTS & CITRUS VINAIGRETTE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) wild salmon fillet
- 4 oz (113 g) baby spinach leaves
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 oz (28 g) walnuts, chopped
- 1 oz (28 g) cucumber, sliced
- 1.5 tbsp (22 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) orange juice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) Dijon mustard
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook salmon:** Season salmon with salt and pepper. Grill or pan-sear over medium heat for 4–5 minutes per side until cooked through. Let cool slightly, then flake into chunks.
2. **Make vinaigrette:** In a small bowl, whisk olive oil, orange juice, lemon juice, mustard, salt, and pepper.
3. **Assemble salad:** In a large bowl, combine spinach, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, and walnuts.
4. **Add salmon & dressing:** Top with salmon chunks and drizzle with vinaigrette. Toss gently.
5. **Serve:** Divide evenly between two plates.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 395 | Protein: 28 g | Fat: 26 g | Carbohydrates: 12 g | Fiber: 4 g | Net Carbs: 8 g | Cholesterol: 70 mg | Sodium: 200 mg | Potassium: 770 mg | Magnesium: 75 mg | Calcium: 85 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace walnuts with almonds or pumpkin seeds.
- Use grilled trout instead of salmon for a lighter option.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) goat cheese for extra creaminess.

QUINOA-STUFFED BELL PEPPERS WITH BLACK BEANS & CORN

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 large bell peppers (10 oz / 285 g total), halved and seeds removed
- 4 oz (113 g) cooked quinoa
- 3 oz (85 g) black beans, cooked and rinsed
- 2 oz (57 g) corn kernels (fresh or frozen, thawed)
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, diced
- 1 oz (28 g) red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (2 g) ground cumin
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Preheat oven:** Set oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. **Prepare filling:** In a skillet, heat olive oil. Sauté onion and cherry tomatoes for 2 minutes. Add quinoa, black beans, corn, cumin, salt, and pepper. Stir until warm.
3. **Stuff peppers:** Place halved peppers on a baking tray. Fill each with quinoa mixture.
4. **Bake:** Roast for 20–25 minutes until peppers are tender.
5. **Serve:** Divide evenly onto two plates and serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 340 | Protein: 12 g | Fat: 12 g | Carbohydrates: 50 g | Fiber: 11 g | Net Carbs: 39 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 220 mg | Potassium: 790 mg | Magnesium: 90 mg | Calcium: 65 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Add 1 oz (28 g) feta cheese for extra creaminess.
- Replace quinoa with brown rice if preferred.
- Use yellow and red peppers for a colorful presentation.

ASIAN-INSPIRED SHRIMP & BROWN RICE BOWL WITH EDAMAME

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 6 oz (170 g) cooked brown rice
- 3 oz (85 g) edamame (shelled)
- 2 oz (57 g) carrot, julienned
- 2 oz (57 g) cucumber, sliced thin
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) sesame oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) low-sodium tamari or soy sauce alternative
- 1 tsp (5 ml) rice vinegar
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) grated fresh ginger

Directions:

1. **Cook shrimp:** Heat sesame oil in a skillet. Add shrimp and ginger, sauté 3–4 minutes until pink and cooked.
2. **Prepare dressing:** Mix tamari and rice vinegar in a small bowl.
3. **Assemble bowl:** Divide brown rice into two bowls. Top each with shrimp, edamame, carrot, and cucumber.
4. **Finish:** Drizzle with dressing. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 365 | Protein: 26 g | Fat: 12 g | Carbohydrates: 40 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 34 g | Cholesterol: 165 mg | Sodium: 390 mg | Potassium: 680 mg | Magnesium: 80 mg | Calcium: 75 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace shrimp with grilled salmon cubes for more omega-3s.
- Add a sprinkle of sesame seeds for crunch.
- Swap brown rice for quinoa or soba noodles.

MACKEREL WITH BROCCOLI AND ZUCCHINI NOODLES WITH FRESH VEGETABLES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 12 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) mackerel fillet
- 4 oz (113 g) zucchini, spiralized into noodles
- 3 oz (85 g) broccoli florets
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 oz (28 g) red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook mackerel:** Season fish with salt and pepper. Pan-sear in olive oil over medium heat, 4–5 minutes per side, until skin is crisp and flesh cooked through.
2. **Prepare vegetables:** Steam broccoli for 4 minutes until tender-crisp.
3. **Cook noodles:** In the same skillet, lightly sauté zucchini noodles for 2 minutes with lemon juice.
4. **Assemble plate:** Divide zucchini noodles and broccoli between two plates. Top with mackerel, add cherry tomatoes and bell pepper as fresh garnish.
5. **Serve:** Enjoy warm with a squeeze of lemon juice.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 355 | Protein: 28 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 15 g | Fiber: 5 g | Net Carbs: 10 g | Cholesterol: 75 mg | Sodium: 170 mg | Potassium: 720 mg | Magnesium: 70 mg | Calcium: 90 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace mackerel with sardines for another omega-3 rich option.
- Use spiralized carrots or sweet potatoes instead of zucchini.
- Add herbs like parsley or dill for freshness.

GRILLED TEMPEH & SWEET POTATO SALAD WITH MIXED GREENS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) tempeh, sliced
- 6 oz (170 g) sweet potato, diced
- 3 oz (85 g) mixed greens
- 2 oz (57 g) cucumber, sliced
- 1 oz (28 g) walnuts, chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil (for roasting)
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Roast sweet potato:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Toss sweet potato cubes with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Roast for 18–20 minutes until golden.
2. **Grill tempeh:** Heat a grill pan over medium heat. Grill tempeh slices for 3–4 minutes per side until golden brown.
3. **Prepare salad base:** Place mixed greens and cucumber in a large bowl.
4. **Assemble salad:** Add roasted sweet potato, grilled tempeh, and walnuts on top.
5. **Dress & serve:** Drizzle with balsamic vinegar, toss lightly, and serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 390 | Protein: 20 g | Fat: 18 g | Carbohydrates: 42 g | Fiber: 8 g | Net Carbs: 34 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 220 mg | Potassium: 750 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 100 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace tempeh with grilled tofu for a soy variation.
- Add pumpkin seeds for extra crunch and zinc.
- Swap balsamic vinegar with tahini-lemon dressing for creaminess.

DINNER RECIPES

HERB-CRUSTED BAKED SALMON WITH STEAMED BROCCOLI & QUINOA

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) wild salmon fillet, cut into 2 portions
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (2 g) dried dill
- 1 tsp (2 g) dried parsley
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) garlic powder
- 6 oz (170 g) broccoli florets
- 4 oz (113 g) quinoa, uncooked
- 10 oz (285 ml) water for quinoa
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Preheat oven:** Set oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. **Prepare salmon:** Place salmon on a baking sheet lined with parchment. Brush with olive oil, then sprinkle with dill, parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper.
3. **Bake:** Roast salmon for 15–18 minutes, until flaky and cooked through.
4. **Cook quinoa:** While salmon bakes, bring water to a boil in a saucepan. Add quinoa, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 12–15 minutes until water is absorbed. Fluff with a fork.
5. **Steam broccoli:** Place broccoli florets in a steamer basket over boiling water for 5–6 minutes until tender but still bright green.
6. **Assemble:** Plate salmon with quinoa and steamed broccoli. Serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 445 | Protein: 33 g | Fat: 19 g | Carbohydrates: 34 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 28 g | Cholesterol: 65 mg | Sodium: 190 mg | Potassium: 890 mg | Magnesium: 85 mg | Calcium: 70 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace quinoa with brown rice or millet.
- Add a squeeze of lemon juice before serving for brightness.
- Use fresh herbs if available for a more vibrant flavor.

LEMON-GARLIC CHICKEN WITH FARRO & ROASTED VEGETABLES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) chicken breast
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic (3 g), minced
- 4 oz (113 g) farro, uncooked
- 10 oz (285 ml) water for farro
- 3 oz (85 g) zucchini, chopped
- 3 oz (85 g) carrot, chopped
- 2 oz (57 g) red bell pepper, diced
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook farro:** In a saucepan, combine farro and water. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 minutes until tender. Drain excess water if needed.
2. **Roast vegetables:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place zucchini, carrot, and bell pepper on a tray. Drizzle with half the olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and roast for 20 minutes until tender.
3. **Cook chicken:** While vegetables roast, season chicken breast with salt, pepper, garlic, and lemon juice. Heat remaining olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Cook chicken 6–7 minutes per side until golden brown and fully cooked.
4. **Assemble:** Slice chicken and serve with farro and roasted vegetables.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 470 | Protein: 36 g | Fat: 15 g | Carbohydrates: 48 g | Fiber: 8 g | Net Carbs: 40 g | Cholesterol: 90 mg | Sodium: 180 mg | Potassium: 850 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 60 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace farro with quinoa for a gluten-free option.
- Add 1 oz (28 g) pumpkin seeds for extra crunch and magnesium.
- Marinate chicken in lemon and garlic for 30 minutes before cooking for deeper flavor.

SEARED MACKEREL WITH SPINACH, LENTILS & OLIVE OIL DRIZZLE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) mackerel fillet, cut into 2 portions
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil (plus extra for drizzle)
- 6 oz (170 g) cooked green lentils
- 4 oz (113 g) fresh spinach
- 1 oz (28 g) red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare lentils:** Warm lentils in a saucepan with a splash of water. Season lightly with salt and pepper.
2. **Cook spinach:** In a skillet, sauté onion in 1 tsp olive oil for 2 minutes. Add spinach, cook until wilted (2–3 minutes). Set aside.
3. **Sear mackerel:** Heat remaining olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Place mackerel skin side down and cook 4–5 minutes, flip and cook another 3–4 minutes until crisp and cooked through.
4. **Assemble:** Divide lentils and spinach between two plates. Place mackerel fillet on top. Drizzle lightly with olive oil and lemon juice.
5. **Serve:** Enjoy warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 420 | Protein: 34 g | Fat: 21 g | Carbohydrates: 22 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 15 g | Cholesterol: 75 mg | Sodium: 160 mg | Potassium: 880 mg | Magnesium: 90 mg | Calcium: 85 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace mackerel with sardines for another omega-3-rich fish.
- Add roasted cherry tomatoes for extra antioxidants.
- Use lentil pasta instead of lentils for a different texture.

TURKEY CHILI WITH BLACK BEANS & SWEET POTATOES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) ground turkey breast (lean)
- 6 oz (170 g) sweet potato, peeled and diced
- 4 oz (113 g) cooked black beans, rinsed
- 2 oz (57 g) onion, chopped
- 2 oz (57 g) red bell pepper, diced
- 10 oz (285 ml) low-sodium crushed tomatoes
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (2 g) ground cumin
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) smoked paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook turkey:** Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add turkey and cook for 6–7 minutes, breaking it apart with a spoon until browned.
2. **Add vegetables:** Stir in onion, bell pepper, and sweet potato. Cook 5 minutes until slightly softened.
3. **Add beans & spices:** Mix in black beans, cumin, paprika, salt, and pepper. Stir well.
4. **Simmer:** Pour in crushed tomatoes, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes until sweet potatoes are tender. Stir occasionally.
5. **Serve:** Divide evenly into two bowls. Serve hot.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 445 | Protein: 34 g | Fat: 15 g | Carbohydrates: 48 g | Fiber: 11 g | Net Carbs: 37 g | Cholesterol: 90 mg | Sodium: 300 mg | Potassium: 920 mg | Magnesium: 85 mg | Calcium: 80 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace turkey with ground chicken for variety.
- Add chopped zucchini for extra fiber.
- Use lentils instead of beans for a legume-based chili.

BAKED COD WITH TOMATO-OLIVE RELISH & BROWN RICE PILAF

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) cod fillet, cut into 2 portions
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, diced
- 1 oz (28 g) Kalamata olives, chopped
- 1 oz (28 g) red onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- 4 oz (113 g) brown rice, uncooked
- 10 oz (285 ml) water for rice
- 1 tsp (2 g) dried oregano
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook rice:** In a saucepan, combine brown rice and water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 25 minutes until tender. Fluff with a fork.
2. **Bake cod:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place cod fillets on a parchment-lined tray, brush with olive oil, season with salt, pepper, and oregano. Bake for 12–15 minutes until fish flakes easily.
3. **Prepare relish:** In a bowl, mix cherry tomatoes, olives, onion, lemon juice, and a pinch of pepper.
4. **Assemble:** Place rice pilaf on plates, top with cod fillets, and spoon tomato-olive relish over the fish.
5. **Serve:** Enjoy warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 430 | Protein: 32 g | Fat: 13 g | Carbohydrates: 49 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 43 g | Cholesterol: 65 mg | Sodium: 330 mg | Potassium: 840 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 85 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace cod with haddock or halibut.
- Add parsley or basil to the relish for freshness.
- Swap brown rice with quinoa for a lighter version.

STUFFED EGGPLANT WITH BULGUR, CHICKPEAS & TAHINI SAUCE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 20 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 2 medium eggplants (14 oz / 400 g total), halved lengthwise
- 4 oz (113 g) cooked bulgur
- 4 oz (113 g) cooked chickpeas, rinsed
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, chopped
- 1 oz (28 g) onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tbsp (15 g) tahini
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) lemon juice
- 1 tsp (5 ml) water (to thin sauce)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare eggplants:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Cut eggplants in half lengthwise. Scoop out some flesh to create space for filling, brush lightly with olive oil, season, and roast cut-side up for 20 minutes until tender.
2. **Cook filling:** While eggplants bake, sauté onion and tomato in a skillet with 1 tsp olive oil for 3 minutes. Add bulgur and chickpeas, season with salt and pepper, and stir well.
3. **Stuff eggplants:** Remove eggplants from oven. Fill each half with bulgur-chickpea mixture.
4. **Make tahini sauce:** Whisk tahini, lemon juice, and water until smooth. Drizzle over stuffed eggplants.
5. **Serve:** Divide onto plates and enjoy warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 420 | Protein: 15 g | Fat: 16 g | Carbohydrates: 55 g | Fiber: 13 g | Net Carbs: 42 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 210 mg | Potassium: 880 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 110 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace bulgur with quinoa for a gluten-free option.
- Add fresh parsley or cilantro on top before serving.
- Mix in roasted red peppers to the filling for sweetness.

GRILLED SARDINES WITH MEDITERRANEAN COUSCOUS & ARUGULA

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 12 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) fresh sardines, cleaned and gutted
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (5 ml) lemon juice
- 4 oz (113 g) couscous, uncooked
- 10 oz (285 ml) hot water for couscous
- 2 oz (57 g) cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1 oz (28 g) cucumber, diced
- 2 oz (57 g) arugula leaves
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare couscous:** Place couscous in a bowl. Pour hot water over it, cover, and let sit for 8 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Stir in tomatoes and cucumber.
2. **Prepare sardines:** Brush with olive oil, season with salt, pepper, and lemon juice.
3. **Grill sardines:** Heat a grill pan or outdoor grill over medium heat. Cook sardines 3–4 minutes per side until skin is crisp and flesh flakes.
4. **Assemble:** Place couscous and arugula, cherry tomatoes, cucumber on plates, top with grilled sardines. Serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 430 | Protein: 32 g | Fat: 18 g | Carbohydrates: 38 g | Fiber: 5 g | Net Carbs: 33 g | Cholesterol: 105 mg | Sodium: 170 mg | Potassium: 720 mg | Magnesium: 70 mg | Calcium: 120 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace sardines with mackerel for a stronger flavor.
- Use quinoa instead of couscous for gluten-free.
- Add olives or feta to couscous for more Mediterranean taste.

BEEF & VEGETABLE STIR-FRY WITH BROCCOLI, CARROTS & BROWN RICE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 15 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) lean beef strips
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) sesame oil
- 4 oz (113 g) broccoli florets
- 3 oz (85 g) carrot, sliced thin
- 2 oz (57 g) red bell pepper, sliced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) low-sodium tamari (or soy sauce alternative)
- 1 tsp (5 ml) rice vinegar
- 6 oz (170 g) cooked brown rice

Directions:

1. **Cook vegetables:** Heat half the sesame oil in a wok or skillet. Add broccoli, carrots, and bell pepper. Stir-fry 4–5 minutes until slightly tender. Remove and set aside.
2. **Cook beef:** Add remaining sesame oil to skillet. Stir-fry beef strips 4–5 minutes until browned.
3. **Combine:** Return vegetables to skillet. Add tamari and rice vinegar. Stir-fry for 2 minutes until coated and heated through.
4. **Serve:** Divide rice into two bowls, top with beef and vegetables. Serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 470 | Protein: 32 g | Fat: 18 g | Carbohydrates: 45 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 39 g | Cholesterol: 80 mg | Sodium: 260 mg | Potassium: 780 mg | Magnesium: 75 mg | Calcium: 65 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace beef with chicken breast or turkey strips.
- Use soba noodles instead of rice for variation.
- Add sesame seeds or cashews for crunch.

TOFU CURRY WITH COCONUT MILK, SPINACH & BASMATI RICE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 12 minutes | Cooking time: 18 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) firm tofu, cubed
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 clove garlic (3 g), minced
- 1 tsp (3 g) curry powder
- 6 oz (170 ml) light coconut milk
- 3 oz (85 g) fresh spinach
- 4 oz (113 g) basmati rice, uncooked
- 10 oz (285 ml) water for rice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Cook rice:** Combine basmati rice with water in a pot. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 15 minutes until fluffy.
2. **Cook tofu:** Heat olive oil in a skillet. Add tofu cubes and cook 5 minutes until golden on all sides.
3. **Make curry sauce:** Add garlic and curry powder to tofu. Stir 1 minute. Pour in coconut milk, simmer 5 minutes.
4. **Add spinach:** Stir in spinach and cook until wilted, 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
5. **Serve:** Plate rice, spoon tofu curry on top. Serve warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 455 | Protein: 17 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 55 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 49 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 170 mg | Potassium: 690 mg | Magnesium: 95 mg | Calcium: 120 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace tofu with chickpeas for a legume-based curry.
- Add zucchini or eggplant for more vegetables.
- Use full-fat coconut milk for richer flavor.

ROAST CHICKEN WITH BRUSSELS SPROUTS & GARLIC MASHED CAULIFLOWER

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 15 minutes | Cooking time: 30 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 oz (227 g) chicken thigh, skinless
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 1 tsp (2 g) dried rosemary
- 6 oz (170 g) Brussels sprouts, halved
- 8 oz (227 g) cauliflower florets
- 1 clove garlic (3 g), minced
- 1 oz (28 g) plain Greek yogurt (for creaminess)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Roast chicken & sprouts:** Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place chicken and Brussels sprouts on a baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil, season with rosemary, salt, and pepper. Roast 25–30 minutes until chicken is cooked and sprouts are tender.
2. **Make mashed cauliflower:** Boil cauliflower florets in salted water for 10 minutes until soft. Drain. Mash with garlic and Greek yogurt until smooth. Season with salt and pepper.
3. **Assemble:** Serve chicken with Brussels sprouts and garlic cauliflower mash on the side.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 435 | Protein: 35 g | Fat: 21 g | Carbohydrates: 26 g | Fiber: 8 g | Net Carbs: 18 g | Cholesterol: 115 mg | Sodium: 210 mg | Potassium: 880 mg | Magnesium: 80 mg | Calcium: 95 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace chicken thigh with chicken breast for leaner protein.
- Swap Brussels sprouts with broccoli or green beans.
- Add 1 tsp lemon zest for a fresh, bright finish.

SNACK RECIPES

APPLE SLICES WITH ALMOND BUTTER & CINNAMON

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 2 medium apples (8 oz / 227 g each), sliced
- 2 oz (57 g) almond butter
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) ground cinnamon

Directions:

1. **Prepare apples:** Wash apples and slice into thin wedges.
2. **Assemble:** Arrange apple slices on two plates. Drizzle each serving with 1 oz (28 g) almond butter.
3. **Season:** Sprinkle cinnamon lightly on top.
4. **Serve:** Enjoy immediately as a fresh, balanced snack.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 250 | Protein: 5 g | Fat: 13 g | Carbohydrates: 30 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 24 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 3 mg | Potassium: 320 mg | Magnesium: 55 mg | Calcium: 40 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace almond butter with peanut or sunflower seed butter.
- Use pears instead of apples for a softer, sweeter variation.
- Add a sprinkle of chia seeds for extra omega-3s.

CARROT & CELERY STICKS WITH HUMMUS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 7 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 4 oz (113 g) carrots, cut into sticks
- 4 oz (113 g) celery, cut into sticks
- 4 oz (113 g) hummus

Directions:

1. **Prepare vegetables:** Wash carrots and celery, cut into even sticks.
2. **Serve with hummus:** Divide vegetables between two plates. Place 2 oz (57 g) hummus on each plate for dipping.
3. **Enjoy:** Eat immediately as a crunchy, savory snack.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 185 | Protein: 6 g | Fat: 10 g | Carbohydrates: 20 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 14 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 190 mg | Potassium: 410 mg | Magnesium: 55 mg | Calcium: 60 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace hummus with Greek yogurt dip for a probiotic boost.
- Add cucumber sticks for more hydration and crunch.
- Try roasted red pepper hummus for extra flavor.

TRAIL MIX WITH WALNUTS, PUMPKIN SEEDS & DRIED CRANBERRIES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 3 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 2 oz (57 g) walnuts
- 1 oz (28 g) pumpkin seeds
- 1 oz (28 g) dried cranberries (unsweetened preferred)

Directions:

1. **Mix:** Combine walnuts, pumpkin seeds, and cranberries in a bowl.
2. **Divide:** Portion equally into two small serving bowls.
3. **Serve:** Enjoy as a portable, nutrient-dense snack.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 260 | Protein: 7 g | Fat: 20 g | Carbohydrates: 18 g | Fiber: 4 g | Net Carbs: 14 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 2 mg | Potassium: 310 mg | Magnesium: 75 mg | Calcium: 35 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace walnuts with almonds for a lighter crunch.
- Use dried blueberries or cherries instead of cranberries.
- Add 0.5 oz (14 g) dark chocolate pieces for a treat.

CHIA SEED PUDDING WITH COCONUT MILK & BLUEBERRIES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | Resting time: 2 hours minimum (or overnight)

Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp (30 g) chia seeds
- 6 oz (170 ml) unsweetened coconut milk
- 2 oz (57 g) fresh blueberries
- 1 tsp (5 ml) maple syrup or sugar-free option (optional)

Directions:

1. **Mix base:** In a bowl, combine chia seeds and coconut milk. Stir well to prevent clumping.
2. **Chill:** Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours (or overnight) until thickened. Stir once halfway through.
3. **Serve:** Divide pudding into two bowls. Top each with 1 oz (28 g) blueberries and drizzle with maple syrup if desired.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 220 | Protein: 6 g | Fat: 13 g | Carbohydrates: 21 g | Fiber: 9 g | Net Carbs: 12 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 25 mg | Potassium: 280 mg | Magnesium: 85 mg | Calcium: 120 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace blueberries with strawberries or raspberries.
- Use almond milk instead of coconut for a lighter pudding.
- Add a pinch of cinnamon or vanilla extract for flavor.

BOILED EGGS WITH SPINACH & OLIVE OIL DRIZZLE

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 8 minutes

Ingredients:

- 4 large eggs (8 oz / 227 g)
- 2 oz (57 g) fresh spinach leaves
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Boil eggs:** Place eggs in a pot, cover with water, and bring to a boil. Cook for 8 minutes for firm yolks. Transfer to cold water, peel once cooled.
2. **Prepare spinach:** Wash and pat dry spinach leaves. Divide onto two plates.
3. **Assemble:** Slice two eggs per serving and place over spinach. Drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper.
4. **Serve:** Enjoy warm or chilled.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 250 | Protein: 15 g | Fat: 19 g | Carbohydrates: 4 g | Fiber: 2 g | Net Carbs: 2 g | Cholesterol: 375 mg | Sodium: 150 mg | Potassium: 340 mg | Magnesium: 40 mg | Calcium: 80 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Add sliced avocado for extra healthy fats.
- Replace spinach with arugula or kale.
- Sprinkle with sesame seeds for added crunch and minerals.

CUCUMBER ROUNDS WITH COTTAGE CHEESE & DILL

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 7 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) cucumber, sliced into thick rounds
- 4 oz (113 g) low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 tbsp (3 g) fresh dill, finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare cucumber:** Wash and slice cucumber into even rounds.
2. **Top with cottage cheese:** Place about 0.25 oz (7 g) of cottage cheese on each slice.
3. **Season:** Sprinkle with chopped dill, salt, and pepper.
4. **Serve:** Arrange on two plates and serve immediately.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 115 | Protein: 9 g | Fat: 4 g | Carbohydrates: 9 g | Fiber: 2 g | Net Carbs: 7 g | Cholesterol: 8 mg | Sodium: 210 mg | Potassium: 280 mg | Magnesium: 35 mg | Calcium: 95 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace cottage cheese with Greek yogurt for a smoother texture.
- Add a drizzle of olive oil for extra healthy fats.
- Swap dill for parsley or chives.

KEFIR DRINK WITH GROUND FLAX & STRAWBERRIES

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 10 oz (285 ml) plain kefir (unsweetened, probiotic-rich)
- 4 oz (113 g) fresh strawberries
- 2 tbsp (20 g) ground flaxseed

Directions:

1. **Prepare ingredients:** Wash strawberries and cut into halves.
2. **Blend:** Combine kefir, strawberries, and flaxseed in a blender. Blend until smooth.
3. **Serve:** Pour into two glasses and drink fresh.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 190 | Protein: 8 g | Fat: 7 g | Carbohydrates: 22 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 16 g | Cholesterol: 5 mg | Sodium: 95 mg | Potassium: 420 mg | Magnesium: 60 mg | Calcium: 190 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace strawberries with blueberries or raspberries.
- Use dairy-free kefir for a vegan version.
- Add 0.5 tsp cinnamon for a warm flavor.

ROASTED CHICKPEAS WITH OLIVE OIL & HERBS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | Cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) cooked chickpeas, rinsed and dried
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) dried oregano
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) paprika
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Preheat oven:** Set to 375°F (190°C).
2. **Season chickpeas:** Toss chickpeas with olive oil, oregano, paprika, salt, and pepper.
3. **Roast:** Spread on a baking sheet in a single layer. Roast for 20–25 minutes, stirring half-way, until golden and crispy.
4. **Serve:** Cool slightly and divide into two bowls.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 210 | Protein: 8 g | Fat: 8 g | Carbohydrates: 27 g | Fiber: 7 g | Net Carbs: 20 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 160 mg | Potassium: 350 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 55 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Use cumin or curry powder instead of paprika.
- Store leftovers in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
- Add lemon zest after roasting for brightness.

AVOCADO RICE CAKES WITH HEMP SEEDS

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 8 minutes | No cooking required

Ingredients:

- 2 whole-grain rice cakes (1 oz / 28 g each)
- 1 medium avocado (6 oz / 170 g), mashed
- 1 tbsp (10 g) hemp seeds
- 0.5 tsp (2 ml) lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. **Prepare avocado:** Mash avocado with lemon juice, salt, and pepper until smooth.
2. **Spread:** Evenly spread avocado mixture over rice cakes.
3. **Top:** Sprinkle hemp seeds on top.
4. **Serve:** Place one rice cake per serving plate.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 245 | Protein: 6 g | Fat: 16 g | Carbohydrates: 20 g | Fiber: 6 g | Net Carbs: 14 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 100 mg | Potassium: 520 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 45 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Replace hemp seeds with chia seeds or pumpkin seeds.
- Add tomato slices on top for freshness.
- Use corn cakes instead of rice cakes for variety.

EDAMAME WITH SEA SALT & LEMON ZEST

Serves: 2 | Prep time: 5 minutes | Cooking time: 5 minutes

Ingredients:

- 6 oz (170 g) shelled edamame (fresh or frozen)
- 1 tsp (5 ml) olive oil
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) sea salt
- 0.5 tsp (1 g) lemon zest

Directions:

1. **Cook edamame:** Bring water to a boil in a pot. Add edamame and cook 4–5 minutes until tender. Drain.
2. **Season:** Toss edamame with olive oil, sea salt, and lemon zest.
3. **Serve:** Divide into two bowls and enjoy warm.

Nutritional Values (per serving):

Calories: 185 | Protein: 16 g | Fat: 7 g | Carbohydrates: 16 g | Fiber: 5 g | Net Carbs: 11 g | Cholesterol: 0 mg | Sodium: 210 mg | Potassium: 420 mg | Magnesium: 65 mg | Calcium: 60 mg

Tips & Variations:

- Add chili flakes for a spicy version.
- Replace lemon zest with lime for a citrusy twist.
- Use unshelled edamame for a fun finger food snack.

YOGA POSES FOR VAGUS NERVE STIMULATION & CALM

1. CHILD'S POSE (BALASANA CALM HOLD)



Purpose:

To induce deep relaxation, gently stretch the spine, and activate parasympathetic pathways by encouraging slow diaphragmatic breathing.

Methodology:

- Begin on your knees, sitting back onto your heels.
- Fold forward, allowing your forehead to rest on the floor or a pillow.
- Extend arms forward with palms down, or rest them alongside the body for a more restorative version.
- Keep the abdomen relaxed and focus on slow, even breathing.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 1–2 minutes, once daily.
- **Progression:** Extend to 3–5 minutes, focusing on lengthening each exhalation.

Physiological Mechanism:

This pose compresses the abdomen slightly, stimulating vagal pathways linked to digestion while deep exhalations enhance vagal tone and lower heart rate.

Practical Tips:

- Use a folded blanket under the knees if uncomfortable.
- Place a cushion under the torso if you experience hip tightness.

2. SHOULDER BRIDGE (GENTLE PELVIC LIFT)



Purpose:

To stimulate circulation, open the chest, and enhance vagal activation through coordinated breath and spinal movement.

Methodology:

- Lie on your back with knees bent, feet flat and hip-width apart.
- Place arms by your sides, palms pressing into the floor.
- On an inhale, lift the pelvis slowly, rolling the spine upward.
- Hold briefly while breathing steadily, then exhale as you roll the spine back down.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 5–6 slow repetitions, once daily.
- **Progression:** Increase

to 8–10 repetitions, holding the lifted position for 5 breaths.

Physiological Mechanism:

The chest opening and rhythmic spinal movement improve lung expansion and stimulate baroreceptors linked to the vagus nerve, enhancing parasympathetic response.

Practical Tips:

- Keep knees aligned, not splaying outward.
- Move slowly and avoid over-arching the lower back.

3. RECLINED BUTTERFLY POSE (SUPTA BADDHA KONASANA RELEASE)



Purpose:

To relax the hips, calm the nervous system, and stimulate vagal activity by opening the chest and abdomen for free diaphragmatic breathing.

Methodology:

- Lie on your back with knees bent and soles of the feet together.
- Let knees fall outward, supported with pillows if needed.
- Rest hands on the belly or sides, focusing on slow, natural breathing.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 2–3 minutes, once daily.
- **Progression:** Extend to 5–7 minutes, deepening focus on long exhalations.

Physiological Mechanism:

The open posture reduces muscular tension, while diaphragmatic expansion enhances vagal tone and activates relaxation pathways.

Practical Tips:

- Use yoga blocks or cushions under thighs if hips feel strained.
- Keep the lower back neutral and supported.

4. LEGS-UP-THE-WALL POSE (VIPARITA KARANI REST)



Purpose:

To promote relaxation, support circulation, and activate parasympathetic pathways by shifting blood flow and calming the nervous system.

Methodology:

- Lie on your back with your hips near the wall, legs extended up against it.
- Rest arms at your sides with palms up, shoulders relaxed.
- Breathe slowly and evenly, focusing on long exhalations.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** Hold for 3–5 minutes daily.
- **Progression:** Extend up to 10 minutes as comfort increases.

Physiological Mechanism:

Elevation of the legs encourages venous return, reducing strain on the heart, while diaphragmatic breathing in this position enhances vagal tone and calms stress responses.

Practical Tips:

- Place a folded blanket under the hips for added comfort.
- If hamstrings feel tight, move the hips slightly away from the wall.



5. SUPPORTED FISH POSE (HEART-OPENING RELAXATION)



Purpose:

To expand the chest, free diaphragmatic movement, and enhance vagus nerve activity by combining posture with calm breathing.

Methodology:

- Place a bolster or two firm pillows lengthwise on the mat.
- Sit in front of the support and recline back, allowing the upper spine and head to rest.
- Keep your legs bent in lotus position or extend the legs if comfortable.
- Rest arms open to the sides with palms up.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 2–3 minutes, once daily.
- **Progression:** Increase up to 5–7 minutes, focusing on longer exhales.



Physiological Mechanism:

The chest-opening effect reduces upper body tension, enhances lung expansion, and stimulates baroreceptors in the chest that regulate vagal activity.

Practical Tips:

- If lower back feels tense, keep knees bent and feet on the mat.

6. EASY SEATED POSE WITH GENTLE SIDE BEND



Purpose:

To release tension in the torso and ribcage, improve breathing depth, and promote vagal activation through slow, mindful stretching.

Methodology:

- Sit cross-legged or on a cushion for comfort.
- Place the left hand on the floor beside you and raise the right arm overhead.
- Inhale deeply, then exhale as you bend gently to the left, keeping both sit bones grounded.
- Hold for several breaths, then switch sides.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 3–4 breaths per side, once daily.
- **Progression:** Extend to 6–8 breaths per side, deepening the stretch slowly.

Physiological Mechanism:

Side bending stretches intercostal muscles, improves ribcage mobility, and enhances diaphragmatic efficiency, which supports vagal activation and parasympathetic calm.

Practical Tips:

- Avoid collapsing the chest, lift gently upward as you bend.
- If hips feel tight, elevate on a cushion to reduce strain.



7. MOUNTAIN POSE WITH SOFT SHOULDER DROP



Purpose:

To build postural awareness, encourage grounded breathing, and release upper-body tension that can inhibit vagal activation.

Methodology:

- Stand with feet hip-width apart, evenly grounding through heels and toes.
- Lengthen the spine upward while keeping the chin parallel to the floor.
- Inhale, lift shoulders up gently toward the ears.
- Exhale, let the shoulders drop heavily down, repeating for several breaths.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 30–60 seconds, once daily.
- **Progression:** Practice for 2–3 minutes, linking shoulder drops with slower exhalations.

Physiological Mechanism:

Releasing shoulder tension reduces cervical strain, improving vagal tone by freeing diaphragmatic and thoracic breathing patterns.

Practical Tips:

- Keep knees soft, not locked.
- Focus on the exhale as the shoulders drop to enhance relaxation.

8. HAPPY BABY POSE (GENTLE HIP OPENER)

Purpose:

To relax the pelvis and spine, stimulate abdominal pressure points, and calm the nervous system through rhythmic breath.

Methodology:

- Lie on your back, bend the knees, and bring them toward the chest.
- Hold the outer edges of the feet or shins with hands.
- Gently draw the knees toward the armpits while keeping the back flat on the floor.
- Breathe deeply, allowing the belly to rise and fall.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 3–4 breaths, once daily.
- **Progression:** Hold for up to 1–2 minutes, rocking slightly side-to-side for gentle massage of the spine.

Physiological Mechanism:

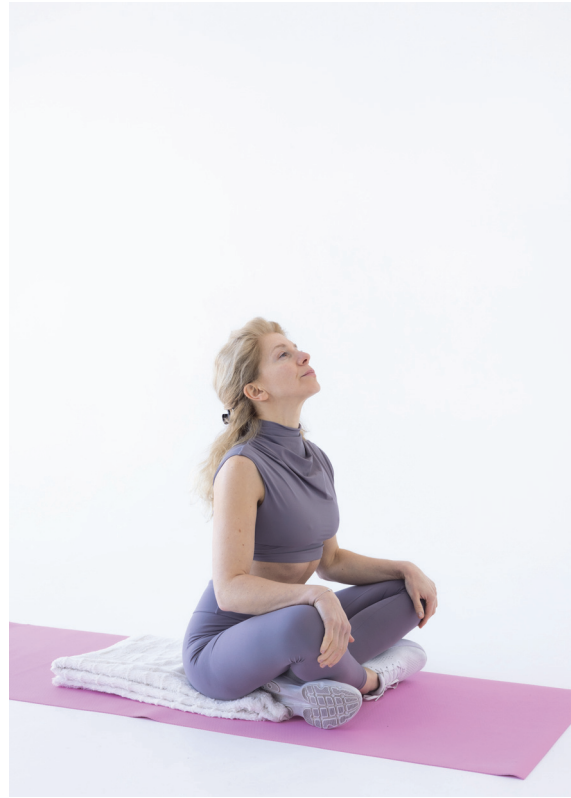
The pose compresses and releases abdominal organs, stimulating vagal pathways linked to digestion and emotional calm.

Practical Tips:

- If holding feet is difficult, hold thighs or use a strap around the soles.
- Avoid forcing knees too wide; keep movement natural and supported.



9. SEATED CAT STRETCH (UPLIFTING SPINE WAVE)



Purpose:

To mobilize the spine, coordinate breath with movement, and stimulate vagal activity through rhythmic flexion and extension.

Methodology:

- Sit cross-legged or on a chair with hands on the knees.
- Inhale, arch the back slightly, lifting the chest and looking upward (gentle extension).
- Exhale, round the spine, tucking the chin toward the chest (gentle flexion).
- Continue in a smooth wave-like rhythm.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 5–6 cycles, once daily.
- **Progression:** Build up to 10–12 cycles, extending exhalations for deeper relaxation.

Physiological Mechanism:

Spinal movement enhances circulation and synchronizes breath with vagal activation, improving resilience of the autonomic nervous system.

Practical Tips:

- Move slowly to avoid dizziness.
- Keep the motion comfortable, without forcing range of movement.

10. CORPSE POSE WITH HAND-TO-BELLY AWARENESS (SAVASANA CALM REST)



Purpose:

To achieve full-body relaxation, train diaphragmatic awareness, and promote deep parasympathetic activation.

Methodology:

- Lie flat on your back with legs extended, arms by your sides, palms up.
- Place one or both hands gently on the abdomen.
- Focus attention on the rise and fall of the belly with each breath.
- Maintain stillness while releasing muscle tension.

Training Parameters:

- **Beginner Frequency:** 2–3 minutes after practice.
- **Progression:** Extend up to 5–10 minutes for a deeper restorative effect.

Physiological Mechanism:

Direct hand-to-belly contact reinforces diaphragmatic breathing, enhancing vagal stimulation and lowering heart rate variability markers of stress.

Practical Tips:

- Support knees with a pillow if the lower back feels tense.
- Keep the jaw and forehead soft to avoid subtle tension.