



The Joys of *Effervescence*

The basic guide you can teach you:

*Why fermented foods are so important
to good health*

The best ways for you to enjoy them

*How you can easily create them in
your own home*

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What Are Fermented Foods?

There's a huge buzz right now surrounding probiotics and how good they are. This was mainly spurred on by mass marketing from foods like Activia Yogurt (not such a great food) but the fact that it got people talking is great! When I ask my clients if they consume fermented foods on a regular basis, usually they'll say 'yes I eat yogurt', but when I ask if there's anything else they get a blank look as if to say 'uhhh what else is there besides booze?' Most people in our society don't realize that with the mass production and sterilization of food, we have lost one of the most valuable nutrient sources we have!



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Fermented foods have been through a process in which natural bacteria feed on the sugar and starch in the food creating lactic acid. This process preserves the food, and creates beneficial enzymes, b-vitamins, Omega-3 fatty acids, and various strains of probiotics. Natural fermentation of foods also preserves nutrients in food and breaks it down to a more digestible form. This, combined with all the probiotics created during the fermentation process, could

explain the link between consumption of fermented foods and improved digestion- and therefore better health in general!

Natural fermentation precedes human history- however humans have been controlling fermentation for thousands of years, probably originating with wine in China, and a little later with kefir- a fermented milk drink from the Caucasus Mountains. Sauerkraut, vinegar, kimchi, tempeh, miso, sourdough (and yes-cheese and yogurt) are all more common examples.

So Where Did They Go?



<http://old-photos.blogspot.ca/2012/06/milk-man.html>

As our societies grew bigger and specialization occurred, people didn't make time to make their own food anymore- so food had to be transported over distances to reach people, and without the advent of refrigeration, some foods, like milk were prone to spoilage and caused illness in many people. So, people, being the problem solvers that we are, started boiling everything to kill the bacteria that were killing us. Pasteurization is a process that is also quite old- it's the process of heating food to a specific temperature to kill any live bacterial and halt enzyme activity- thus reducing spoilage and increasing shelf time. Most of our food these days is pasteurized, sterilized or



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_industry

irradiated, to kill microorganisms that may harm us. Unfortunately, these processes also kill the microorganisms that are good for us. In fact most of the nutrient rich foods full of enzymes and probiotics that our grandparents ate in raw milk, homemade vinegar, pickled vegetables and sauerkraut have been replaced by a diet that consists mainly of sugar laden, lab created dead foods.

However, folks like us are realizing that although sterilizing food has had many benefits and probably saved many lives over the years, we need living foods in our bodies to keep them healthy, and not everything we eat has to be dead. In fact, one of the biggest wellness trends of 2014 is supposed to be tracking research in the human microbiome (the world in our gut) and how it affects different aspects of our health.

So Why Should I Eat Living Bacteria?



When you first think about it, it can seem kind of creepy- who wants to think about creepy crawlers living out their lives on our tissues? However, once you calm down and realize that this is a fact, and that we evolved into the brilliant species we are with the help of and in synchrony with these little guys, I hope that you can accept that they are there,

and learn how best to get along with them! The bacteria in your bowels outnumber the cells in your body by a factor of 10 to one. There are 100 trillion bacteria (that's about three pounds worth!) that line your intestinal tract. These bacteria are crucial to the digestive process, for instance, in this photo we see some friendly bacteria, probably *Lactobacillus acidophilus* or *Bifidobacteria* species munching away on a piece of plant fiber. Vitamin K, which is necessary for blood clotting and important to bone health is made by these bacteria, just one of the exchanges we make for feeding them. However, they interact with our body and each other through chemical

messaging- which can lead to some nasty symptoms if they're out of balance. A simple example relates to beans- the musical fruit- all that tooting is a result of the bacteria having a ton of fiber to eat and releasing chemical gases as they themselves digest food. Next time you let one go in public, feel free to blame your microflora, they're the rude ones! There are also bad microorganisms that cause us issues. That is partially why we need to eat good bacteria in live foods- to make sure that we maintain a higher level of good bacteria than bad. These probiotic foods have also been shown to help slow or reverse some diseases, improve bowel health, aid digestion and improve immunity. This is because having the proper balance of gut bacteria and enough digestive enzymes helps you absorb more of the nutrients in the foods you eat, which means you will have more vitamins, minerals, healthy fats and proteins to build healthy vibrant tissues. So, if you have a healthy whole foods diet, and are regularly eating fermented foods, then you probably won't need as many supplements because you'll be absorbing more of the live nutrients in your foods.

If you're not used to eating fermented foods, you may not like them at first- mostly because they taste sour- and we're taught that sour foods are foods that have gone bad. I wouldn't say that they are an acquired taste, but certainly one that takes some getting used to. Once you've integrated one or two into your diet though, you'll find that they really grow on you, and you'll have a hard time going without them.

So How Can I Easily Add These Food to My Diet?

Incorporating healthy foods into your diet can get expensive, but not so with fermented foods. Granted yes, health food stores can charge an arm and a leg for fermented beverages, but you can actually make them at home for very little effort. Apple cider vinegar and miso (fermented rice and soy paste) are better to buy in my opinion, as they are quite affordable and can be energy intensive to make. But there are many that you can easily make at home. Lactofermentation

is a method that many people use, because you can store these foods for longer periods of time without losing the nutrients like you would with traditional canning. All you just need is whey, sea salt and vegetables. If you order the starter grains, you can make your own kombucha (fermented tea), kefir (fermented milk) or tempeh (fermented soy) for only pennies per serving. Adding these things to your diet can also cut down on the number of supplements you need, further helping the budget.

If you're not into nurturing bacterial cultures continually living in your cupboard like houseplants (which I'm pretty into), there are still easy ways to experiment with ferments. I'm going to give you two super simple recipes to try, that only take minutes to make and provide all the benefits of probiotics (but are free of dairy!)

Homemade Sauerkraut

- *8 cups finely chopped cabbage (red/purple or green)*
- *1 tbsp Himalayan or celtic sea salt*

You'll need a 1 litre (1 quart) glass jar with a tight fitting lid. I like the jars with a glass lid and rubber seal that clamp down. A canning jar with a tight fitting lid will work fine too.



Wash and drain the cabbage well. Cut off any outer leaves that don't look good. Cut off and save one of the nicer looking outer leaves and put it to one side. After you've made and packed all the sauerkraut in the jar, you'll fold up this leaf and put it on top to help press down the cabbage to keep it under the brine.

Slice the cabbage as finely as you can, you can use a food processor for this if you have one. (The reason you want to slice it so finely is to maximize the surface area. This will make it easier to massage and quicker to ferment.) Add the sliced cabbage to a large mixing bowl, along with the salt. Using your hands, massage the salt into the cabbage by grabbing handfuls of the cabbage and squeezing it like you would squeeze out a large sponge then let go and drop the cabbage back into the bowl. Grab another handful and do the same. Repeat this until the cabbage starts to get soft. As the cabbage softens you'll notice more and more juice in the bottom of the bowl. The juice will dissolve the salt, which will in turn draw more juice out of the cabbage. That's exactly what you want! **Don't drain the juice off**, it's the brine that will allow the cabbage to ferment without going 'off'. You'll also notice that the volume of cabbage gets smaller as you massage it. Keep massaging until the cabbage is quite soft and limp, almost the consistency it is after being stir-fried or steamed. You want to keep massaging until the volume of the cabbage is reduced by about half.

Now it's time to pack the jar that you'll ferment your sauerkraut in. Grab a few handfuls of cabbage and put them into the jar and add a bit of the brine, just to the top of the cabbage. Reach in with a wooden spoon and press the cabbage down into the bottom. You want to release any air pockets and pack the cabbage in as tightly as you can. Continue to pack the cabbage into the jar in this way, a few handfuls at a time until you nearly reach the top of the jar. Add more brine if you need so that all the cabbage is under brine. This prevents bad bacteria from forming during the fermentation process. Take the outer cabbage leaf you saved at the beginning and fold it up so that it will just fit inside the mouth of the jar. You want to use it almost like a lid to keep the sliced cabbage pressed down underneath the brine.

Put the lid on the jar, and leave it out at room temperature (out of direct sunlight) for about 4 days. Your fermentation time may vary depending on the temperature and how fermented you like your kraut.

Take off the lid once a day to release any gasses that may build up from the fermentation process. Use a wooden spoon to press the cabbage down and release any gas bubbles that have formed. That helps it ferment better and ensures that the cabbage is kept under the brine level and helps prevent the brine from overflowing your container.

You'll notice the color of the cabbage has changed after massaging it, and it will keep changing over the next few days as it ferments. I always do a taste test starting at day 3, and then daily after that. Once the sauerkraut gets to the point that you like it, put it in the fridge to slow down the fermentation process. It will keep for about 2 months.

Lacto-Fermented Homemade Ketchup

- *12 ounces organic tomato paste (no salt added)*
- *1/4 + 1/8 cup water*
- *1/8 cup whey (or water)*
- *2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar*
- *1/4 tsp mustard powder*
- *1/4 tsp cinnamon*
- *1/8 tsp cloves*
- *1/8 tsp allspice*
- *1/8 tsp cayenne*
- *1/2 tsp sea salt*
- *1/4-1/3 cup maple syrup*
- *2 tsp blackstrap molasses*

In a medium sized bowl, whisk together all ingredients. Pour sauce into a glass jar. Cover and leave at room temperature for two days. Move to the fridge.

Where can I learn more about this?

Here are a few of the best web resources (in my opinion) for learning more, finding recipes, and buying starter culture grains:

<http://www.wildfermentation.com/>

<http://www.culturedfoodlife.com/>

<http://www.upayanaturals.com/>

As always, if you have any questions about the material in this e-book, please feel free to contact me! I am an adamant proponent of nutritional and energetic medicine and believe it can be used to address the causes of all ill health and prevent them in the future. It is my passion to help people bring balance and well being back into their lives.

If you would like to go one step further and see how Nutritional Consulting and Wellness Coaching could help You achieve optimal health, please take the opportunity to [contact me](#) about a free consultation to see how I can help you achieve your goals!

In health,

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