

# Baker Spine and Sport

Presents



## 10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness

Baker Spine and Sport  
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**10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness**

Course Introduction

This course should provide a comprehensive foundation for you to achieve your best possible health. The approach will always be on NATURAL methods. And what you can expect in general from this course, in two words, is: Actionable Advice.

We'll link out to a lot more information, including all that confusing and wonderful science, for those who want to go down the Rabbit Hole. But the meat of the course will be in helping you *apply* this information to your daily life.

Weekly Topics List

- Week 1    Nutrition Basics
- Week 2    Emotional Health
- Week 3    Mental Health
- Week 4    Exercise and Movement
- Week 5    Healthy Lifestyle
- Week 6    Toxic Exposure and Detoxing
- Week 7    Alternative Therapies

Week 8 Superfoods

Week 9 Balancing Hormones

Week 10 Anti-Aging

For those of you who have struggled getting healthy in the past, or with breaking bad habits, we've got three tips below that should help you.

## EFT – Emotional Freedom Technique

You'll read more about EFT in Week 2, but if it can help you now get off to a successful start, why not share it.

EFT takes just minutes to learn. It's absolutely silly-looking, just to warn you. But it works. If you're feeling like certain things are limiting you – fears, self-defeating thoughts, anxiety, depression, lack of motivation, stress – maybe EFT is just what you need.

[EFT Instruction Videos](#)

## Kaizen

Kaizen is a Japanese business philosophy that has now been applied in numerous ways and industries. Kaizen simply means “change for better” and focuses on *continuous* improvement. Looking at getting healthy, and all that encompasses, in its totality can be overwhelming. So just focus on daily improvements. Small improvements.

It's like that old joke: How do you eat an elephant?

One bite at a time!

Don't look three months down the road. Focus on being better today. Small steps can lead to great things. That's pretty much how Toyota was built.

## Goal Setting

Setting goals contributes to a higher success rate, regardless of what you're trying to accomplish. It's that simple. This quick read will have you setting, and writing down, your goals inside of 10 minutes. (*Cannot stress enough how important this is.*)

### [Golden Rules of Goal-Setting](#)

Getting your mind ready for change is important. So, take a minute right now and think about all the reasons you want to get healthy ... and then decide to do it. Make up your mind! Commit to it! (*We know you can do it!*)

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# 10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness

## Week 1: Nutrition Basics

What you eliminate from your diet is just as important as what you add to your diet. So let's look first at what needs to go.

- Fast food
- Processed food
- Fake sugars

Foods you may want to consider limiting include:

- Wheat, gluten, other highly allergenic food
- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Natural sugars

## Individual Diet for Your Individual Needs

Some people can handle dairy; others cannot. Same goes for gluten, and many other foods. So, listening to your body is important. And if you really want to tailor your diet to your exact needs, you may want to consider keeping a food diary. How do you feel 30-60 minutes after meals? This will help pinpoint your needs better.

On that note, metabolic typing is an excellent tool for determining your physiological needs. In general, if you're a fast metabolizer, you'll want more protein and less carbs. If you're a slow metabolizer, you'll want less protein and more carbs.



To find out what your metabolic type is, and for a meal plan to accommodate that type, [click here](#).

## Eat Naturally

Your diet focus should be on organic, whole foods. Bonus points for local, seasonal foods, as your needs change based on the seasons, and fresher is better.

One simple tip is to eat like a rainbow looks. Each color – **red** pepper, **purple** eggplant, **green** spinach – represents a unique nutrient. The more colors you eat, the more variety of nutrients you'll be getting. So, look at your shopping cart in the grocery store, and ask yourself if you have enough *variety* of colors.

If you cannot pronounce it, leave it!

There are times you may have to buy processed foods. If you do, you can still find them with organic, whole-food ingredients. This, however, will require a bit of diligence. Because most items labeled as natural, are anything but.

Is your protein natural raised? Nothing wrong with eating meat. Just not meat from feedlot animals that have been pumped full of hormones and antibiotics and have never seen anything resembling *their* natural diet. Same goes for fish, as in farmed vs. caught. (When in doubt, ask yourself: Is this natural?)

Here are two great resources to help you find naturally raised animal products, local farmers markets, local farms, CSA programs, etc.

- [RealMilk.com](http://RealMilk.com)
- [LocalHarvest.org](http://LocalHarvest.org)

In the beginning, you may want to use a nutrient tracker to make sure you're giving your body everything it needs. This is an excellent tool that you can tailor to YOU: [Cronometer](#).

## The Keto Diet

Diets come and go, but once you really dig into the facts, it's hard to dispute a diet that prioritizes ample amounts of healthy fats, great sources of protein, and organic produce. The key is in the amounts of each.

- Healthy fats           75%
- Proteins               20%
- Carbohydrates       5%

The whole point of the keto diet is to turn your body into a fat burner. And the way you do that, is to eat fat. Some pretty magical things begin to happen once your body is in a state of ketosis. This is a wonderful comprehensive [ketogenic diet guide](#).

## Important Nutrients

There are some nutrients that most of us are deficient in, like vitamin D, for instance, which may be the most important nutrient that is most problematic. If you're not getting enough sun exposure, you're likely not getting enough vitamin D. (Unless you're eating a can of sardines a day – a challenge we'll get into in Week 8.)

This [Essential Nutrients Guide](#) by Dr. Axe outlines the 11 most important nutrients you need in your diet.

## Putting it All Together

Learning about your individual needs takes time. As does combining a couple different diet methodologies, and then listening to your body after meals (and recording those feelings). But once you find the right combination of foods that are most suitable for your needs, you'll notice the difference.

## In Action

Take every day this week to learn or do something. Take the metabolic typing test. Remove certain foods on certain days. And then add in good ones on other days. Make a plan for the week. What are you going to do each day to improve your diet?

Remember, how do you eat an elephant?

One bite at a time!

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# 10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness

## Week 2: Emotional Health

Anyone who has experienced negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, and depression knows just how crippling they can be. The good news is that simply adopting a keto diet will help clear up nutritional deficiencies that may lead to emotional instability. However, there are some other ways to optimize emotional health.

You may recall EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) from the Course Introduction. Let's take a little closer look at everything EFT can help with:

- Arthritis
- Insomnia
- Critical internal voices
- Goal setting
- Sugar addiction
- Acid reflux
- Motivation
- Weight control
- Stress relief
- Anxiety
- Physical pain
- IBS
- Depression

What you may notice from this list (that is in no way complete) is how much variety there is. It may seem to you that you can use EFT to solve a lot of problems. *And you can!*

EFT takes 10 minutes to learn. It usually works immediately, and often, at least, to some degree. (Sometimes you may have to do it multiple times to eliminate or greatly reduce the issue.) And the link below has dozens of videos that you can tap along to while you learn.

### [EFT Instructional Videos](#)

Warning: EFT looks absolutely insane. But it works. And you can test it for free and probably even get some relief in just 10 minutes.

## Stress Relief

Our bodies weren't meant to be in a state of chronic stress. But that's exactly where many of us are – in a heightened fight-or-flight response, and for no reason.

EFT should certainly help reduce your levels of stress, especially relationship stress. Has your boss got you fired up? Head to the restroom for two minutes of EFT. You will likely feel better. However, below are some stress relief tips that can help you in general. Because the truth is, many of us are in a state of chronic stress and probably don't realize it.

- Exercise
- Meditation
- Alternative therapies
- Keeping a journal
- Time in nature
- Adaptogenic herbs

There are a number of different approaches to reducing stress, and you'll likely find [this comprehensive approach](#) to work best.

When it comes to meditation, quieting the mind can be difficult for some. If that's the case, try a guided meditation audio program like [BrainSync](#). Programs like

BrainSync use binaural beats to put your mind into the right brain chemistry, which makes getting the benefits of meditation much more accessible, and much quicker.

Adaptogenic herbs are superstars in the nutritional world, and we'll get more into these in Week 8. The important thing to know about these special herbs is that they provide your body whatever it needs to adapt to whatever stress its experiencing. That includes physical stress, environmental stress, emotional stress, you name it.

Here are [seven stress-reducing adaptogenic herbs](#) you may want to focus on.

## Neurotransmitters – Feel Good Brain Chemicals

Neurotransmitters are naturally produced chemicals that our bodies use to send messages between nerves. Some help stimulate your body. Some help calm your body.

The most common neurotransmitters are:

- Serotonin (calming)
- GABA (calming)
- Glutamate (stimulatory)
- Dopamine (stimulatory)
- Adrenaline (stimulatory)

Neurotransmitters effect our mood, energy, focus, sleep, and memory. We can't get them from food. Our bodies have to make them. We can, however, give our bodies what they need to produce more of them.

Important nutrients for the production of neurotransmitters include:

- Proteins/amino acids
- Minerals – magnesium, zinc, iron

- B vitamins

Check out this resource for a very [comprehensive guide to neurotransmitters](#) from a naturopath who specializes in stress reduction. If you feel like your brain chemistry is off, this is a must read with actionable tips.

## In Action

Commit to trying EFT this week. Pick one thing you most struggle with and give it a try. One thing to remember about EFT is the more specific you can be about your issue, the better your results for overcoming it.

Choose one new stress-relief method from the list in this week's lesson and try it out. Bonus points for giving an adaptogenic herb a try. Two sources of quality herbs and superfoods are:

[The Raw Food World](#)

[Lost Empire Herbs](#)

Emotional health is something we all struggle with periodically. It's also a huge part of being healthy in general. If you feel you need improvements in this area, the material above should definitely help.

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Week 3: Mental Health

What you normally think of when someone says, Mental Health, we covered in Week 2 as Emotional Health. This week we're focusing specifically on brain health – the proper nutrients your brain needs to thrive, exercises to stimulate your brain and keep it young, and other ways to ward off cognitive decline regardless of your age.

### Feeding Your Brain

Since your brain is 60% fat, let's begin feeding it what it really wants: lots of healthy fat. And the absolute best fat you can give it is DHA, a type of omega 3 fatty acid mostly found in cold water fish like salmon and sardines.

Here are the best foods to feed your brain, including the aforementioned fish above.

1. Blueberries

Blueberries have a super high amount of anthocyanin compounds. These strong flavonoid antioxidants help protect your brain from oxidative stress, which is instrumental in preventing disease.

2. Avocados

Avocados are a fantastic source of healthy fats, particularly the monounsaturated variety. These fats help improve blood flow, which allows your brain to function at its best.



### 3. Dark Chocolate

The flavonol compounds in Cacao have been shown to enhance the widening of the blood vessels, which increases blood flow to your brain. This boost in circulation helps to improve memory and problem-solving skills, while also helping to prevent mental deterioration as we enter our twilight years.

### 4. Leafy Greens

Leafy greens like spinach, kale and collard greens are especially high in nutrients that benefit brain health, like magnesium, folate, and vitamin E. Greens are also rich in iron, which aids in transporting oxygen throughout your body. The average brain weighs in at only 2% of total body weight, yet it uses 25% of the body's oxygen.

### 5. Organic Eggs

Organic eggs, especially the yolks, provide valuable vitamins (A, D, E and K), omega-3 fats and antioxidants. They're also one of the best sources of choline available. Choline helps keep your cell membranes functioning properly, plays a role in nerve communications, and reduces chronic inflammation.

### 6. Cold Water Fish

Salmon, sardines, anchovies, mackerel, and herring are among the healthiest brain foods you can consume. They're packed with wonderful brain nutrients like high quality protein, vitamins D and B12, and folate. But it's the high omega 3 fatty acid content, including ALA, EPA and (especially) DHA, that really helps to protect your brain, particularly from accelerated aging and memory loss.

## Exercise Your Brain

There are a lot of ways to stimulate your brain, from certain exercises to simply trying new things. The problem for most of us is that we get into routines, and this includes mentally. When this happens, our brains don't get enough stimulation. So, just like your muscles will atrophy when they're not used, your brain will also suffer if you're not working it out.

Benefits you can expect from exercising your brain include:

- Stress reduction
- Improved memory
- Increase in creativity
- Improved concentration and focus
- Increase in motivation and productivity
- And so much more

Some very simple things you can do to get your brain out of its routine are:

1. Eat with chopsticks (IF you don't normally)
2. Switch hands for ordinary activities like teeth brushing
3. Read books out loud
4. Do simple chores with your eyes closed, like showering
5. Take different routes (aka: The Bill Gates tip)
6. Try new things, including new hobbies, languages, etc.

What about online brain training programs? These are certainly popular now, and many can be tried for free. Even Tom Brady has his own [method of brain training](#).

## Physical Exercise for Your Brain

Don't discount the effect physical exercise has on your brain. When you exercise, you increase your production of neurotransmitters – dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine. Numerous studies, included in the link below, have shown that physical exercise can protect against dementia and cognitive decline. And exercise improves circulation, supplying your brain with more oxygen, which it thrives on.

Check out [BeBrainFit.com](http://BeBrainFit.com) for much more information on optimizing brain health.

## In Action

See how many brain-boosting foods you can add to your diet this week. Bonus points if you can squeeze in some sardines – easily the best source of DHA on the planet. Beware, not all seafood is the same. Find great sources that are wild caught.

Get your brain out of its normal routine by adding a couple things from the list above. Or follow that link to Be Brain Fit for more ideas. Also, it's time to think about exercise, which happens to be next week's focus. Get ready to add more movement to your life!

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Week 4: Exercise and Movement

We spend way too much time sitting in our modern world. It wasn't that long ago that life was more active out of necessity. We'd all benefit just by simply not lying down so much, not sitting as often. Live life on your feet, and your physical improvements will be vast. But we can't let you off that easy. There's more work to do.

The three areas we'll be focusing on are: flexibility, cardio, and muscular strength and endurance. We'll also focus on getting the most benefits out of the least amount of time. After all, we do have lives to lead!

## Flexibility

Getting older doesn't have to mean getting stiffer. And there are a number of things you can do to improve, or maintain, your flexibility. Even if you're beginning at a point of extreme inflexibility – This is a [must-see inspirational video](#) that will have you diving into a yoga program immediately.

From simple stretching to, once again, the Tom Brady method of (this time) pliability, you can go a number of different ways to improve flexibility. But it's hard to beat yoga. And if it looks easy to those of you who haven't tried it, it's not! It's real exercise. And it will be hard.

The good news is that you can begin *wherever* you are now in your level of fitness. And you can get as many free yoga videos you can ever need at a little website called [YouTube](#). (That particular link will take you to a "beginner yoga" search page.)

Yoga benefits your body in so many more ways than just keeping it flexible. Here's [a great read](#) that delves into 38 of them.

## Cardio Exercises

When it comes to cardio exercises, the most effective and quickest to perform are HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) exercises, also known as Peak Fitness, Sprint or Peak 8, and Tabata Training.

Typically, high intensity exercises are performed in cycles that range from 20-30 seconds of all-out effort, followed by rest periods of 10-90 seconds. Eight repetitions is normal.

The way in which you choose to do these exercises is important, as for most of us, an all-out sprint would result in catastrophe. We could, however, easily go all-out on a stationary bike, or stair-climber. And like with yoga, it's super easy to go at your own pace. The trick, though, is to constantly strive to go harder, once you become comfortable enough to do so.

One huge benefit of high intensity interval training is the increase in HGH production. If you're looking for the Fountain of Youth, HGH is it. (More on that in Week 10.)

[Check out this resource](#) for a much more in-depth look at why you need to incorporate this type of cardio exercise into your life (especially when compared to others that aren't really healthy).

A typical HIIT routine takes 20 minutes. A [Tabata Training](#) routine takes just four. But it's a grueling four minutes. Novices would be best served going the longer route.

An [HIIT demonstration](#) with Dr. Joseph Mercola on a stationary bike.

## Muscular Strength and Endurance

You shouldn't ignore this area of fitness, regardless of your age. Strength training provides a number of benefits, including:

- More lean muscle mass
- Healthier blood cholesterol levels
- Healthier blood pressure levels
- Lower stress levels
- Better sleep
- More energy
- Reduced joint and bone pain
- Increased insulin sensitivity
- Increased resting metabolic rate
- Reduced risk of stroke, and overall cardiovascular mortality

There are a number of factors that go into choosing a strength training routine, and it'll depend on what your goals are, your age and current fitness level, among other things. There are, however, some things to keep in mind regardless of how you choose to strength train.

1. Mix it up – your muscles (just like your brain) likes variety. Don't get into routines.
2. Get the proper rest – overtraining is more common than undertraining. So, give your body time to recuperate.
3. Warm up and cool down – injuries aren't fun. And they can be avoided.
4. Start off small – if just getting back into the swing. Weight doesn't matter. Form does!

[Check out this resource](#) for an inexhaustible list of strength training articles.

And don't forget YouTube.

## In Action

You'll want to form a plan to incorporate all three of these into your life. For instance, you don't want to do HIIT more than three times per week. And two is fine, especially if you're going all-out.

Yoga can easily be a part of your daily routine, and it doesn't have to be time-consuming. Just 20 minutes of yoga will provide a ton of benefits.

As for the weight training, frequency will depend on you, your goals, and a number of other things. But if you're not worried about becoming a body-builder, one great whole-body strength training session a week will suffice.

Your job is to form a plan, and put it into motion.

And don't forget that just walking around in nature is exercise. However, the goal isn't to just exercise. It's to be more active in general. And to sit and lay down less!

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Week 5: Healthy Lifestyle

If you remember just one thing from this week's lesson, remember that one of the most important nutrients that your body needs is also one of the most underappreciated. In fact, even calling it a *nutrient* may raise eyebrows. But there are few things you can do for your health that are more important than getting the right amount of high-quality sleep.

This section also includes information on growing and producing your own food, and DIY healthy home and hygiene products.

### Sleep – The Forgotten Nutrient

Only about one-third of Americans are getting proper sleep. And when you don't, it upsets so many different systems in your body that you might not even believe it.

From your emotions, productivity, and performance, to being much more susceptible to certain ailments and diseases, proper sleep is the key to being the healthiest you can be.

[Check out this resource](#) for the most thorough read you'll ever find on getting high-quality sleep, along with 50 ways to improve your sleep. (Incorporating some of those will be on the homework list this week.)

### Grow Some Food



Gardening is healthy for several reasons – it's decent exercise, you're breathing in clean air, you're digging in the dirt and exposing your body to good bacteria, and you're getting sunshine/vitamin D, which may be THEE most important nutrient (other than sleep) that we're not getting enough of.

However, even if you don't want to commit to a garden, there are options.

Option 1 – [Garden Tower](#). Garden towers are gardens inside of a 55-gallon drum. All you need is a 3-foot by 3-foot amount of space, and you can grow dozens of plants. It couldn't be more simple or revolutionary.

Option 2 – [Grow microgreens](#). Microgreens are full of enzymes, antioxidants, and chlorophyll. Growing them yourself, and harvesting as you eat them, means getting the freshest possible produce you can get. And they're easy to grow.

Option 3 – [Grow sprouts](#). OK, no excuses. It doesn't get easier than this. And the same great things said about microgreens can be said about sprouts. Except they're even easier to grow. So easy you may wonder why you waited so long to get started.

## Prepare Some Food

You could include canning, dehydrating, and other types of food preservation here. But the one we're looking at is fermented foods.

Fermented foods like sauerkraut and kimchi – along with kefir, kombucha, and others – help support a number of systems and functions in your body, but none more important than your microbiome.

Your [microbiome](#) is essentially the mix of good and bad bacteria in your gut. This delicate ecosystem affects your health a number of ways including your ability to fight illness and disease.

(Taking probiotics is always an option here. And you could certainly do both.)

[Make your own cultured vegetables.](#)

[Make your own kombucha.](#)

[Make your own kefir.](#)

[Make your own yogurt.](#)

[Make your own sourdough starter culture.](#)

## DIY Home and Hygiene Products

We'll get into toxins (week 6) and hormones (week 9) soon enough, but just know your reasons for making your own cleaning and hygiene products are to minimize your exposure to toxins and other hormonal disruptors.

The good news is that making these products is super easy and can even be fun. Or if you'd rather, you can always buy organic products that don't contain any toxins or hormone disruptors. (Just make sure they really don't.)

The list of what you can make is inexhaustible. Take a look under your sinks, on top of your sinks, in your showers, vanities, laundry room, and kitchen. Do you have one dozen of these products? Two dozen? They start to add up, don't they? Imagine how your body feels trying to deal with them all.

[Make your own hygiene products.](#)

[Make your own cleaning products.](#)

## More Time in Nature (and Unplugged)

It wasn't that long ago in human history when we spent most of our lives outdoors. And less time ago when we didn't have our faces pressed against phone and computer screens 24/7. It's not healthy. And it's not natural.

A simple shift to more outdoor time can do wonders for your physical, emotional, and mental health. As can unplugging from our modern world on occasion.

## In Action

1. Incorporate at least three sleep tips from that Mercola article that we linked to.
2. Decide to grow and/or ferment some food, and begin assembling what you need to do so. Growing sprouts is the best possible place to start. Success is guaranteed!
3. Look around your house. What products can you trade out for healthier versions? (Make sure the ingredients are natural.) What products can you make?
4. Find ways to get more outdoor time, and more unplugged time.

A lot of information to digest this week. Remember to eat your elephant in small bites! (Continuous change is real change.)

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Week 6: Toxic Exposure and Detoxing

Unfortunately, our modern world is one filled with numerous hazards that are mostly unseen. They hide in our foods, our cleaning products, our hygiene products, our electronics ... pretty much everywhere. Which means to be truly healthy in 2018 and beyond, you must limit toxic exposure and remove the toxins already in your body.

### How to Limit Toxic Exposure

Half the battle here comes with knowing where the toxins are. Which is why #1 on the list below will be critical.

1. Read ingredient labels, and substitute for more natural products
2. Limit canned food, even if organic
3. Limit use of plastics, especially for food and drinks
4. Safely remove mercury fillings
5. Avoid ALL genetically modified foods
6. Limit (or avoid) prescription medications
7. Stress is a toxin! Reduce at all cost
8. Lose fat; that's where toxins accumulate
9. Prevent emotional toxins – EFT, meditation, etc.
10. Get proper sleep

Toxins are everywhere! Which means there's no way to remove them completely from your life. So, while limiting toxins is a great first step. You'll want to have a plan in place to remove them from your body. And a great place to begin is a detox diet.

## Detox Diets

The problem with detox diets is the backslide that comes after. It's not a quick fix. (Well, it kind of is actually.) At least, it shouldn't be seen as one. We're trying to break that mold, and affect lasting, positive change.

Just adopting a keto diet, and exercising, and doing everything we've outlined thus far in this course will help you detox your body (continuously) and help you avoid toxins in the future. But if you feel like you need to detox faster, here are a few foods and herbs to focus on.

- Grapefruit
- Brussel Sprouts
- Berries
- Beets
- Chia seeds
- Nuts
- Bone broth
- Red clover
- Stinging nettle
- Cilantro
- Burdock root
- [Chlorella](#) – the Superstar on this list

*\*Be warned that a small percentage of people are allergic to chlorella. Start small, and if you experience any digestive issues, you're likely allergic.*

## How to Remove Toxins from Your Body

Besides the foods on the list above, here are a few tips for keeping the toxins moving through your body, rather than letting them accumulate.

1. Sweat – exercise, sauna, etc.

2. Start your day with clean water and 1 Tbsp or apple cider vinegar
3. Consume freshly-squeezed vegetable juice daily
4. Drink more green and herbal teas
5. Lose the sugars and white flour
6. Eat more cultured and fermented vegetables
7. [Deep breathing exercises](#)
8. [Dry skin brushing](#)

## In Action

Heavy metals and chemicals are a real concern. There's only so much your body can handle before it becomes overburdened. So, let's begin by removing some of them from your life.

Make a list of specific ways you plan to remove toxic overload. Look at products, food labels. Dig deeper than replacing bad foods for healthy foods. (You should already have done that.)

Incorporate some of those foods and herbs into your diet that can speed up the detox process.

And finally, adopt some practices (from that list of eight) that can keep toxic overload to a minimum.

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### Week 7: Alternative Therapies

Chances are, if you're reading this, you're less than inspired by conventional, modern medicine. And you're looking for healthier alternatives.

The list of alternative therapies is practically endless, and includes chiropractic care, acupuncture, massage therapy, reiki, aromatherapy, and age-old systems like Ayurveda (India) and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

Consider this week's lesson a primer on all things alternative. If you're interested in more in-depth material, each alternative therapy below will include a link for more information.

#### [Chiropractic Care](#)

Maybe your back is fine. So is your neck. Then why should you consider seeing a chiropractor? (Great question, by the way.)

Chiropractic care goes far beyond back and neck pain. In fact, every process, function, and system in your body is reliant on a nervous system that works properly. And your nervous system is reliant on a spine that's straight and properly aligned.

Because your spine and central nervous system are so intertwined, any subluxation or misalignment can put pressure on your nervous system. When this happens, communication between your brain and nervous system is disrupted. And while this interference may not sound all that bad, it can cause problems anywhere in your body that seem IN NO WAY connected to your back.

Keeping your spine properly aligned should be part of your healthy routine. Considering the far-reaching implications of misalignment, and how it can affect any system in your body in a negative way, preventative and *continuous* care should be the goal.

(There's that word again: Continuous!)

## [Acupuncture](#)

Much like chiropractic care, acupuncture can provide relief for a number of different ailments including chronic pain, digestive issues, depression, anxiety, weightloss and more.

Acupuncture works by stimulating energy pathways (or meridians) in the body. It was developed in China thousands of years ago and has in recent years gone from science fiction to science in terms of overall perception.

The belief is that disruptions to the body's energy system (Qi) is what causes disease. And this happens, in part, because of interference in brain signaling. Acupuncture can help reduce inflammation, increase energy levels, and optimize immune function.

If you'd like some of the benefits of acupuncture in a DIY model, try this [energy medicine routine](#) by energy medicine expert, Donna Eden. It takes five minutes, and you tap your way around your body, stimulating those energy meridians as you go.

## [Massage Therapy](#)

Massage therapy provides numerous benefits, many of which are similar to chiropractic care and acupuncture. However, the focus is more on reducing stress and anxiety, soothing sore muscles (joints, connective tissue, tendons, etc.), and improving circulation of blood and lymph.



There are a number of different styles of massage therapy, including Swedish massage, reflexology, bodywork, etc. And most provide similar benefits, which include both physical and mental.

## [Aromatherapy](#)

Aromatherapy involves the use of essential oils for therapeutic benefits. Each essential oil has its own set of benefits, from increasing energy to stress relief and so much more.

## [Reiki](#)

Reiki works much like acupuncture and energy medicine, as it effects the life force energy in all of us. The big difference between reiki and acupuncture is reiki is performed using just hands, while acupuncture uses needles.

## [Ayurveda](#)

Ayurveda is an ancient healing modality from India that is all encompassing – diet, exercise, herbs, foods, etc. It focuses on the mind/body connection and individuality in terms of physiology and needs. It all begins with [your body type](#) (or *dosha*), as one size never fits all when it comes to health and wellness.

## [Traditional Chinese Medicine](#)

TCM, like Ayurveda, is an ancient healing system with Asian roots. However, TCM's main focus is on improving the flow of qi – that energy that supports all life. TCM also pays special attention to details like seasons, weather, time of day, as well as balance and harmony, with nature and within your own body, mind, and spirit.

## In Action

Pick one alternative therapy and learn more about it. And decide if you should integrate it into your normal health and wellness routine?

Each morning this week, try the [five-minute tapping routine](#) by Donna Eden. See if it provides a nice energy boost to start your day.

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**10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness**

Week 8: Superfoods

You know the phrase – more bang for your buck? That sums up superfoods! Though in this case, buck could refer to calories.

Getting all the nutrients you need within a set amount of calories, particularly with our modern agricultural model, can be difficult if not impossible. The key to getting everything your body needs might just reside with the healthiest foods on the planet. Those that are *Super*.

Mushrooms, algae, and herbs are some of the most potent foods on the planet. But how do you know which ones to focus on? After all, there are already hundreds of foods that have attained that *Super* status, and more are being added all the time.

## The Top 10 Healthiest Foods on the Planet

### 1. Chlorella

Chlorella is a single-cell green algae in the Chlorellaceae family. Its name comes from Latin, where chloros means "green" and ella means "small". Chlorella multiplies rapidly in nature, needing just carbon dioxide, water, sunlight, and a minute amount of minerals to reproduce.

The two biggest benefits of chlorella stem from its high chlorophyll content, and its ability to detoxify the body. There are a few ways to remove toxins from the body, and these include the use of infrared saunas, vigorous exercise, eating right, and reducing stored body fat.

When it comes to diet, the number one food to aid the removal of toxins is chlorella, as it binds to heavy metals, pesticides, and chemicals, drawing them from our tissues and excreting them from our bodies. Chlorella, however, won't bind to the beneficial minerals in our bodies, only the metals that don't belong there in the first place. Somehow, it seems to know the difference.

The other benefit of consuming chlorella comes from its ridiculously high chlorophyll content, easily more than any other plant. Chlorophyll is the green pigment found in plants and nearly identical to the molecular structure of our hemoglobin. Besides being a powerful antioxidant and detoxifier, it helps the body process more oxygen, aids in the growth and repair of tissues and cells, and alkalizes the body, all of which greatly improve our chances of preventing and treating disease.

Chlorophyll's role in benefiting health cannot be overstated, and it's the oxygen component that is most beneficial. Healthy cells equal a healthy body. And cells with more oxygen are healthier. While cells with less oxygen decay and die, or even worse, mutate.

## 2. Shilajit

Shilajit is a sticky, tar-like substance found most notably in the Himalaya and Hindu Kush ranges in central Asia. It is usually dark brown to black in color, with black being the most potent.

Shilajit is heralded in Ayurvedic medicine for being a miracle worker and vitality enhancer. It contains over 80 trace minerals, triterpenes, humic acid, and fulvic acid. It is also known as mineral oil, rock sweat, and stone oil.

Shilajit benefits health in many ways. Firstly, it's considered an adaptogen. To put it simply, adaptogens are a unique class of plant/herb that helps your body adapt to stress, whether it's physical, mental, emotional, or environmental.

Adaptogenic herbs can “adapt” their function based on your body’s specific needs. Which is why adaptogens can simultaneously give you an energy boost, and calm your body.

Secondly, it contains heavy amounts of humic and fulvic acids, which aid in transporting nutrients into the cells, (as well as numerous other benefits). And as many of us have absorption issues, this becomes even more vitality important.

### 3. Chaga

Chaga, *Inonotus obliquus*, is a fungus in the Hymenochaetaceae family that grows as a parasite from the trunks of trees, mostly birch. As you can see from the photo above, chaga has a burnt look and strongly resembles charcoal or charred wood. This is due to high levels of melanin in the mushroom.

The Chinese call chaga the "King of Plants" which is impressive considering their long and storied history using herbs and plants in traditional medicine. There are numerous beneficial compounds in chaga that deserve attention, in fact, too many. But let's start with betulinic acid.

Betulinic acid is a powerful antiviral, antimalarial, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and it has anti-cancer properties as well. The betulinic acid in chaga is derived from the bark of the host birch tree, which is home to the fungi for several years and responsible for much of its adaptogenic powers. Betulinic acid has been shown to combat melanoma, malignant brain tumors, ovarian cancer, leukemia, and breast cancer.

Another beneficial property in chaga is an enzyme called superoxide dismutase. This special antioxidant combats a free radical called singlet oxygen, which does great damage to our tissues and causes premature aging. Tests have shown that one gram of chaga contains between 10,000 and 20,000 units of this enzyme, which is the highest amount from any known food source. Getting this enzyme through food is important because levels of it decline quickly with age.

## 4. Rhodiola

*Rhodiola rosea*, also known as golden root, rose root, Arctic root, and king's crown, is a perennial flowering plant in the Crassulaceae family. It grows in colder climates around the world, such as the Arctic, the mountains of Central Asia and Europe, Siberia, Scandinavia, Iceland, and northeastern North America.

The greatest benefits that rhodiola provides is due mostly to its adaptogenic powers. An adaptogen, if you've been paying attention, regulates our neurological and physiological responses to all kinds of stress, including environmental, social, physical, emotional, and mental. And it increases our resistance to toxins, sleep deprivation, and even exposure to extreme temperatures.

Adaptogens like rhodiola balance our entire biological system safely and without side effects. The term "adaptogen" was coined by Russian scientist N.V. Lazarev in 1947. Which is appropriate since rhodiola hid behind the soviet curtain until a couple of decades ago.

During the cold war, rhodiola was secretly used to benefit Russian military officers, political leaders, cosmonauts, and Olympic athletes. They were well aware of the benefits it provided. You may recall the Soviets' dominance at the Olympics during this cold war period.

Rhodiola helps to reduce stress by reducing cortisol, known as the stress hormone. Cortisol is produced by the adrenal gland and released in response to stress or fear, triggering our fight-or-flight mechanism. However, many of us live in this constant state, which is extremely unhealthy. Elevated cortisol levels increase our risk for mental illness, depression, while also lowering our life expectancy.

## 5. Cordyceps

Cordyceps is a genus of ascomycete fungi, which includes around 400 species.

Most of these are native to Asia, and can be found in the continent's tropical forests. Some species have impressive pharmacological properties, along with a long history of medicinal use in Tibet and China.

In 1993, a team of Chinese runners obliterated world records at an important competition. When asked about it afterward, the coach attributed their successful performance to the consumption of Cordyceps. Cordyceps is still popular today among athletes to boost performance and increase stamina.

However, you don't have to be an athlete to benefit from Cordyceps supplementation. It's a wildly popular supplement with China's aging population, as it restores vigor and vitality and helps relieve fatigue.

Cordyceps also benefits the immune system by increasing natural killer cell activity. Natural killer cells provide rapid response to viral-infected cells and tumor formation. They can recognize stressed cells and provide a fast-immune reaction.

## 6. Reishi

The reishi mushroom, also known as Lingzhi, is a species of the genus *Ganoderma*, which is renown in East Asia for being a supernatural mushroom. In fact, it's been a medicinal mushroom in China for over 2000 years, where they are regarded as the king of herbs. In Chinese, Ling means sacred, divine, and miraculous, while Zhi translates as "plant of longevity". In Japan, they are known as an immortality plant.

Reishi mushrooms benefit health in numerous ways, mostly due to their powerful variety of antioxidants that combat the oxidative stress which causes healthy cells to die.

Reishi mushrooms have an extremely unique blend of these powerful antioxidants. First, they contain polysaccharides in the form of beta-glucans, which are a strong immune system builder. These complex sugars are also

responsible for normalizing body weight and cholesterol levels.

Reishi mushrooms are also an abundant source of triterpenes. Triterpenes improve the body's ability to supply oxygen to cells, while also improving immune function. Studies also support their ability to kill tumors and inhibit the effects of HIV.

And lastly, these special fungi contain the *Ganoderma lucidum* peptide, which is a unique protein and strong antioxidant. Studies show that this peptide can help rid the body of disease by reducing the free radical-scavenging compounds that cause disease.

## 7. Schisandra

*Schisandra chinensis* is a deciduous woody vine native to northern China and Siberia. The Chinese name is *wu wei zi*, which means "five-flavor berry", which is appropriate considering that its fruit has all five basic flavors - salty, sweet, sour, bitter, and pungent.

Schisandra is considered one of the most powerful adaptogenic herbs on the planet, as it contributes to a healthier and longer life. The natural health industry often uses words like longevity and anti-aging, but when using them to describe this super berry, it appears justified.

Schisandra increases energy and stamina by stimulating the central nervous system, and by boosting nitric oxide levels in the body, which improves the flow of blood and oxygen. This in turn decreases exercise-induced lactic acid buildup, which reduces fatigue during exercise, and recovery time after.

And though it seems contradictory, schisandra can also calm the nervous systems in times of stress, which is what an adaptogen does, making this herb a powerful weapon for stress reduction.

## 8. Triphala



Triphala is an herbal rasayana formula consisting of three fruits - Amalaki, Bibhitaki, and Haritaka. Amalaki, *Phyllanthus emblica*, which also goes by the names Amla or Indian Gooseberry, produces a sour and fibrous fruit. It supports digestive health, purifies the blood, and rejuvenates the liver.

One of the benefits of triphala is its potential to aid weight loss. It does this by increasing lean body mass, controlling blood sugar, and by getting rid of excess fat in your cells. But perhaps the most promising benefit of triphala is its cancer-fighting properties.

Numerous studies and clinical trials have shown that triphala has a cytotoxic effect on several types of cancer cells, meaning the herb is toxic to cancer cells. Triphala has also shown an ability to inhibit the growth of human pancreatic cells. And pancreatic cancer is one of the deadliest, if not the deadliest, types of cancer.

## 9. Curcuma

Turmeric, or *Curcuma longa*, is a perennial herb in the Zingiberaceae (or ginger) family. Curcuma is native to South India and grows well in hot and humid climates. It is the rhizomes, or root system, of the plant that is most often used.

There have been thousands of studies done on the effects of Turmeric, specifically the *Curcuma longa* variety. However, many of its benefits stem from one powerful ability. And that is its ability to reduce inflammation.

Chronic inflammation exists when the body initiates an immune response even when there's no threat, which causes an excess of inflammation. Chronic inflammation has been linked to many diseases, including the 80 or so autoimmune diseases, heart disease, and cancer.

One problem with chronic inflammation is that it can exist in the body for years undetected. Until suddenly your body is in a serious state of disease. And if you think anti-inflammatory drugs solve the problem, they don't. They merely mask it.

And they cause other problems (side effects, they call them) requiring more prescription drugs.

Turmeric also has high amounts of B6 which helps to reduce the risk of heart disease due to its effect on lowering homocysteine levels. High levels of this amino acid also causes blood vessel damage and arteriosclerotic plaque build-up. And finally, turmeric lowers LDL cholesterol by increasing the production of messenger proteins that help create LDL receptors. These receptors allow the liver to rid the body of more LDL cholesterol. All of which greatly benefit cardiovascular health.

## 10. Ashwagandha

Withania Somnifera, more commonly known as Ashwagandha, is a plant in the nightshade family, and a popular herb used in Ayurvedic medicine. In fact, it is widely considered the most highly prized Ayurvedic herb. The name somnifera means "sleep inducing" in Latin. And medicinal use of its roots dates back more than 3000 years.

Studies show that Ashwagandha benefits the entire body with its anti-tumor, anti-inflammatory and anti-fungal properties. It also has a reputation as being an anti-cancer herb because of its ability to disrupt the reproduction of cancer cells, essentially halting the disease.

Ashwagandha benefits brain health as well, and is a natural ally in the fight against Alzheimer's by reducing cognitive decline. In fact, studies show that Ashwagandha can also reverse Alzheimer's disease.

### In Action

There are too many superfoods to mention here, and each has its own specialty in terms of benefits. However, it's no coincidence that the best of the best consists mostly of adaptogens and mushrooms. (And then there's shilajit, which practically defies explanation.)

Pick one or two superfoods and give them a try. Want to rid your body of heavy metals, try chlorella. Want the powerful antioxidant protection only a fungus can provide, try chaga, reishi, or cordyceps. You really can't go wrong with any of these. And this list is just the tip of the superfood iceberg.

# Baker Spine and Sport Presents

## 10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness

### Week 9: Balancing Hormones

You can be doing everything else right in terms of your health, but if your hormones are out of whack, your health will be compromised.

Your hormones are your chemical messengers, and they include estrogen, testosterone, adrenaline, and insulin. They are secreted by a variety of glands and organs, such as your thyroid, adrenals, pituitary, ovaries, testicles, and pancreas.

Your endocrine system is responsible for controlling and balancing all of these hormones and circulating them around your body. Even a slight imbalance can cause major health problems.

Some common imbalances include low testosterone, low estrogen, high estrogen, hypothyroidism, hyperthyroidism, and adrenal fatigue. The causes of these imbalances include:

- Digestive issues, specifically leaky gut syndrome and lack of good bacteria
- Problems controlling weight, obesity
- Chronic inflammation
- Exposure to toxins
- Chronic stress

The average person likely struggles with a few of those issues on that list. Chronic stress and inflammation are issues most of us deal with, whether we fully realize it or not. You know how prevalent toxins are. More people than not suffer from digestive issues these days. And who among us couldn't stand to lose a few pounds.

In other words, there is a fantastic chance that your hormones are out of balance. The good news is that by week 9 in this course, you've addressed every single issue that's responsible for creating an imbalance in the first place, including each of those on that list, and are well on your way to becoming hormonally healthy.

## How to Achieve Hormonal Balance

1. Consume more healthy fats
2. Limit caffeine consumption
3. Avoid toxins
4. Get better sleep
5. Get the proper nutrients
6. Exercise
7. Balance gut bacteria
8. Balance your levels of leptin

[Check out this resource](#) for a more in-depth look at each item on that list and more.

As for leptin, also known as the *starvation hormone*, learning how to “turn it on” will have far-reaching health benefits. If you're carrying around more weight than you want and are having trouble ridding yourself of it, you've likely become leptin resistant.

Leptin is responsible for weight regulation, suppressing appetite, and burning fat. While its counterpart, ghrelin – the hunger hormone, does the exact opposite. If you're having trouble with those three issues, [this resource](#) on understanding and balancing leptin will be an invaluable read.

(Spoiler Alert: If you're following this program, you're already doing most of the things you need to be doing to control leptin levels.)

However, there are two things that article mentions that deserve attention: Eating mindfully and intermittent fasting.

Eating mindfully has a huge effect on our ability to really enjoy and experience the foods we eat. Not to mention the effects it has on us physically. If you routinely get to the end of your meal without really noticing, you could use some [mindful eating tips](#).

Fasting is practically a fountain of youth and something we'll get into in week 10. Intermittent fasting, like the name implies, means to fast intermittently. That can mean one day per week, 20 hours per day, it's really up to you. However, the easiest way to get started is to simply skip breakfast or dinner and reduce your eating window each day to around six to eight hours.

## In Action

Only you will know if you require extra special attention this week. If you're constantly feeling sluggish, perhaps you have hypothyroidism. If you're constantly feeling wired, you may have hyperthyroidism. And of course, if you're struggling with appetite and weight, leptin resistance may be to blame.

If you're in one of those situations, along with others that hormonal imbalance can cause, pick two or three things from the information and links above and put them into practice.

A great place to begin is intermittent fasting, as it's easy to implement. And the benefits are pretty special across the board. Here's [a great read](#) about the science of intermittent fasting and some tips for implementing it.

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**10 Weeks to Total Health and Wellness**

Week 10: Anti-Aging and Longevity Secrets

Ah, the fountain of youth! If only it really existed. But what if it did. Or they did. At least to some degree. And what are we really looking for? More years is always a good thing. But isn't being as healthy as possible as long as possible the goal? After all, what good are those extra years if you're too sick or immobile to enjoy them?

This last course installation is going to resemble a buffet line, where you can find just about anything you want. The only question, like actual buffet lines, is where to begin.

## HGH – The Real Fountain of Youth

In journalism, there's this thing called burying the lead. We're not going to do that. If you're looking for one way to regain the vitality and vigor of youth (or hang onto it for dear life), this is it.

The best ways to increase your production of HGH include:

- Intermittent fasting
- Whey protein after exercise
- High Intensity Interval Training

[Check out this resource](#) for much more HGH information.

## Intermittent Fasting

We touched on this a bit already, but it bears repeating. Here are three great reasons to begin intermittent fasting:

- Regenerates your immune system
- Cleans and recycles our cells
- Helps you learn self-control and break bad eating habits

Your immune system is literally responsible for keeping you illness-and-disease free. Anything you can do to support it will be reaped back on you ten-fold, and then some. But that second one deserves the most mention.

You are only as healthy as your cells. Healthy cells, healthy body. Your cells are where all good, and bad, health begin.

[Check out this resource](#) for a more in-depth look at intermittent fasting.

## Feed Your Mitochondria

Remember how cellular health is important. Your mitochondria are the energy that your cells run on. (Actually, 90% of your entire body!) Optimizing your mitochondria, “is a [central key to life extension](#),” according to a naturopath who specializes in such things.

Two things that most contribute to properly functioning mitochondria? Exercise and calorie restriction, as in intermittent fasting.

## Grow Your Telomeres

Chances are you may not have heard of telomeres. However, it’s beginning to look like (numerous studies) there is a very direct correlation between your telomeres and how long you will live.



Telomeres live at the very tips of your chromosomes, which you may recall from 6<sup>th</sup> grade science class is part of your DNA. It's still too early to tell, but [lengthening telomeres may not only prevent aging, but reverse it](#).

This is something to keep an eye on moving forward. There are other new ideas coming around soon on anti-aging, if you follow that link above.

## Get Up and Get Out

Sitting is so bad for us. We weren't meant to be sitting 12, 14, 16 hours a day. And there is a direct connection between inactivity and premature death. How much? [It may shock you!](#)

And if you're thinking, hey, I exercise every day, so I'm OK. Unfortunately, [you're not!](#)

Consider barbeque-ing your couch. Definitely consider a stand-up desk! Or stretch while you watch TV. Stand and watch. (Or maybe just watch less TV.)

Get outdoors. So much good comes from it – physically, mentally, emotionally. And walking is great, low-impact exercise. Breathe deep while you walk and inhale all that oxygen. Get some sun and vitamin D. Seriously, it may seem pretty elementary, but see how people live in the world's [Blue Zones](#). They're definitely not sitting down all day.

Remember, great health is about adding some things and eliminating others. Sitting is an Other.

## What's Between Your Ears

Also a simple concept, yet one many miss on. Much of life is attitude, and having a positive one will serve you well regardless of your age. Smile easy. Laugh easier.

If you want to live healthily to 100 and more, your positive thoughts will help guide you. But there's a number of ways to [increase your odds of living to 100](#).

## In Action

If you've made it this far in the course and have been making the necessary improvements along the way, the truth is that you're already contributing to living a longer and healthier life.

However, see if you can implement the three things at the top of this week's material, if you haven't already: Intermittent fasting, whey protein after exercise, High Intensity Interval Training.

Make sure your whey is from grass-fed animals. And minimally produced.

Get up more. See how much time you can avoid sitting.

Get out more. Doing the above will be easier if you go to the park. (Breathe deep; your lungs, and cells, will thank you.)

[Having trouble with negative thoughts](#)? EFT may be able to help with that, and maybe even help fast. What have you got to lose?

By the way, optimizing your diet, along with exercise, will also help you feel more positive, which hopefully you're already experiencing. (It is week 10, after all.)

One last, great read on tips to [improve your mental and emotional well-being](#). Pay particular attention to practicing mindfulness and expressing gratitude. Mindfulness may not necessarily help you live longer, but you'll be present for the life that you are living. Which means probably enjoying it a whole lot more.