

10 Foods for Boosting Adrenal Function

Start with only one food and add in one more food per week. You need only 10 weeks — 2-1/2 months — to work all of them into your diet, heal your body, and boost your adrenal function! Begin with the foods that are easiest to work into your routine; there is no “perfect” food, and all foods have a place of importance. Let food be your medicine, and let the following dosages guide you toward the perfect prescription for adrenal health.

- **Almonds:** Grab a handful of these healthy omega-6 packed nuts for a quick snack. You’ll get a dose of protein, fiber, and vitamin E. Eating just 23 almonds a day promotes heart health, weight loss, blood sugar control, and gut health.

Research published in 2012 from the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* showed that whole almonds provide 20 percent fewer calories than once thought. Additionally, the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition* in 2013 found that snacking on 1.5 ounces of almonds each day resulted in decreased hunger, boosted vitamin E levels, and didn’t result in weight gain. Both study outcomes make almonds an excellent addition to an adrenal diet. **Delicious dose:** 1 to 1-1/2 ounces (about 23 to 30 nuts) per day

- **Avocados:** Just one-fifth of an avocado’s fruity flesh (yes, it’s a fruit) packs a nutrient punch. It’s loaded with potassium, omega-3 fatty acids, folate, and fiber. According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES), people who consume avocados have been shown to have a better-quality diet, better nutrient intake, and lower metabolic risk factors. **Delicious dose:** Two avocados per week
- **Fresh herbs:** Use more herbs and use them more often. From parsley to rosemary to thyme, fresh herbs bundle nutrition into a small package. Throughout the world, people use fresh herbs as the base of their salads; in the United States, by contrast, traditional salads are made with iceberg or romaine lettuce.

Even grain salads in the U.S. are bland in color. Nutritionally, ounce for ounce, fresh herbs knock traditional lettuces off the charts. It’s time to make the switch! Dish up the parsley and mint Mediterranean salad known as tabbouleh for your next side dish! **Delicious dose:** 1 to 2 cups per day

- **Kale:** Kale is touted as the most nutritious green on the market, and it is! Kale is packed with vitamins A, C, and K. It contains calcium, an antioxidant boost of quercetin, and omega-3 fatty acids. To reap the benefits of this nutritionally dense green, be sure to top it with something fatty, like a drizzle of olive oil or an avocado. Note that commercially grown kale is often doused with chemical pesticides, so be certain to buy organic kale. **Delicious dose:** 1 cup per day
- **Kefir:** Kefir, a fermented milk product, is a great-tasting source of eight or more strains of probiotics, B vitamins, vitamin K₂, and calcium. Because of the bacterial content, kefir is

lactose-free. The bacteria break down lactose into galactose and glucose, so your body doesn't have to do it. If you're allergic to dairy, you can find coconut kefir and water kefir on the market; however, you won't get the same protein and vitamin benefits. **Delicious dose:** 1 cup per day

- **Kimchi (kimchee) or sauerkraut:** Aside from wine, nothing represents fermented foods more than the spiced cabbage known as kimchi (kim-chee) from Korea. It's a quick way to get a healthy daily dose of probiotics, which promote a healthy gut (the gateway to adrenal wellness).

You can also try sauerkraut, Germany's favorite fermented food. Instead of picking up a can of kimchi or sauerkraut, look for a jar in the refrigerated section of your grocery store. You want a variety made without vinegar. The ingredients should read "cabbage, water, and salt." **Delicious dose:** 1/4 cup two to three times per week

- **Lemons:** Before your lips begin to pucker, realize that even a small amount of lemon each day can aid digestion by stimulating the digestive juices in your stomach. The citrus peels have long been recognized for their dense phytochemicals, limonene, and perillyl alcohol.

In 2013, the *European Journal of Pharmacology* reported promising research on limonene and elevated blood cholesterol. It's clear that both the peel and the citrus fruit have nutritional benefits beyond vitamin C. Add a slice of lemon to your drinking water, toss lemon zest with your favorite vegetables, or make a vinaigrette with lemon juice in place of vinegar for all your favorite salads.

Delicious dose: 1/2 lemon per day

- **Quinoa:** Quinoa (pronounced *keen-wa*) is actually a seed. This gluten-free "pseudocereal" is in the same family as spinach, chard, and beets — not in the wheat or grain family. The little seeds are packed with fiber and protein, along with the anti-inflammatory antioxidants quercetin and kaempferol.

You can buy quinoa in bulk and also in pasta shapes at your local natural foods co-op. Don't opt just for the savory style of preparation; try it in the place of any breakfast grain and sweeten it with 1/4 cup dried fruit. **Delicious dose:** 1/2 cup cooked four to five times per week

- **Salmon:** It must be the fight upstream to spawn that makes this fish such a winner. Wild salmon is packed with omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, potassium, phosphorus, iron, zinc, and a powerful load of protein. If you don't like the taste of salmon, opt for anchovies, sardines, Atlantic herring, or Atlantic mackerel to get similar adrenal health benefits. **Delicious dose:** 3 ounces two to three times per week
- **Tart or sour cherries:** The bright and bold red of tart cherries (*Prunus cerasus*) signals that they're an anti-inflammatory powerhouse. For aches, pains, sleep disorders, or gout, a daily dose of tart cherries has been shown to provide relief and reduce muscle inflammation. **Delicious dose:** 1 cup of tart cherry juice or 1/4 cup of dried tart cherries per day