

THE HEALTHY GUT DIET



by Dr Michael Mosley

AUTHOR OF THE BRILLIANT NEW
CLEVER GUTS DIET BOOK

FOR years, I bemoaned the fact that no matter how careful I was about my diet, I couldn't seem to stop the insidious creep of middle-age spread — yet my wife, Clare, always seemed to stay effortlessly slim.

I've now learned to control my weight through intermittent fasting, healthy eating and steely willpower (bar occasional lapses), but am beginning to realise my tendency to gain weight might not have been entirely my fault after all.

I've become obsessed with our guts and the amazing work performed by the trillions of microscopic bacteria that live there. I have discovered that my personal mix of bacteria — called your microbiome — is quite different from my wife's, and could have been sabotaging my weight-loss bid.

Thanks to very exciting research, we now know that gut microbes help regulate body weight, decide how much energy our body extracts from food and control hunger signals and the degree to which your blood sugar spikes in response to a meal.

The bad news is that an unhealthy microbiome, or mix of gut bacteria, really can help make you fatter. But the good news is, you *can* change your biome so it works with you, rather than against you.

I have written a book, based on the latest science, which explains what our gut bacteria is up to, and how best to nourish it. All this week in the Daily Mail, I will reveal the impact of gut bacteria on your life, and tell you what to eat to improve it.

With nutritional therapist Tanya Borowski and my wife, GP Clare Bailey, I've developed delicious, gut-friendly recipes the whole family can enjoy.

In Saturday's paper, I packed 17 recipes into one glossy magazine (if you missed it, see details at the end of this piece to order a copy).

In today's supplement, you'll find healthy breakfast, lunch and dinner recipes you can add to those in the magazine, to create a repertoire of meals. There are also gut-friendly snacks.

If you follow my plan, you should find losing weight is easier than you thought, but I hope you'll see other health benefits, too.

We still don't understand everything that determines an

individual's personal microbiome mix, but genetics clearly play a part. Whether you were born naturally or by Caesarean, whether or not you were breast-fed and your early exposure to antibiotics all seem important.

However, we do know that your microbiome is heavily influenced by what you eat and how you live your life.

Once you've improved your

microbiome, you should notice less bloating, wind and gut pain (if you suffer from these).

There is also evidence that a healthy microbiome improves mood, raises energy levels and dampens down inflammation throughout the body.

Surprisingly, skin conditions such as acne and eczema have been linked to a poor microbiome, while the health of your

immune system and ability to fight off gut infections are dependent on it.

One of the important things is to have lots of different species of microbe in your microbiome.

Studies show that unhealthy, overweight people tend to have a less diverse mix than healthy, slim people. This doesn't mean lack of diversity is making you fat, but it might help explain why

losing weight is harder for some. For many, the big dieting challenge is not so much losing weight as keeping it off. Many people go on a diet, shed the pounds, plateau, despair — and pile the weight back on.

One reason for this is that your body responds to weight loss by trying to counter it. As you shed

Natural new way to lose weight



SCRUMPTIOUS SALMON & TOMATO BURGERS

A PERFECT choice for dinner, this is a clever, family-friendly way to boost your intake of oily fish. Salmon is a great source of anti-inflammatory omega fats.

SERVES 4

● 6 cherry or sunblush tomatoes

● ½ red chilli, deseeded

and chopped

● 4 cm piece root ginger, chopped

● Bunch fresh coriander

● 2 tsp capers, rinsed

● Zest and juice of 1 unwaxed lemon

● 4 organic salmon fillets, skinned

● 1 tbsp wholegrain, gluten-free flour (such as buckwheat), plus extra for dusting

● 2 tbsp olive oil

USING the lowest setting on your hand blender or food processor, so that you keep some texture, briefly blitz the tomatoes along with the chilli, ginger, coriander, capers, lemon zest and half of the lemon juice.

Dice the salmon and stir into the mixture, then pulse again, but only very briefly, so that the salmon is just flaked and has not turned to mush.

Add 1 tbsp flour to bind the mixture, then

shape it into eight fairly small patties, dusting your hands with flour first so that they don't stick. Place the patties on a plate, cover with clingfilm and leave in the fridge to firm up for at least 20 minutes. Heat the olive oil in a large, flat-based pan. Brown the patties on both sides, then turn the heat right down and fry gently for 8-10 minutes, or until they're cooked through.

Serve with a salad of mixed leaves or greens, such as spinach, chard and kale, and a couple of spoonfuls of cooked quinoa — a nutritious alternative to pasta or rice.

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ALTHOUGH your gut bacteria will be happy if you extend the gaps between meals, homemade dips will increase your gut-friendly vegetable intake at lunch or as a snack between meals — particularly if they are packed with ingredients such as nuts, seeds and chickpeas.

Try the delicious rainbow hummus and creamy cashew nut spread recipes (below) — spread them on a wholemeal cracker or scoop up with raw vegetable crudites.

It's a great idea to have a sealed container full of washed and prepared carrot, celery, red pepper, cucumber, broccoli and cauliflower pieces in your fridge, ready for dipping when hunger strikes. Alternatively, try spreading a little almond or cashew butter on slices of apple or celery sticks.

If you're out and about, and reaching for a snack at a convenience store or petrol station, search for fruit or plain (unsalted) nuts.

Nuts and seeds are high in soluble and insoluble fibre, which encourages the growth of 'good' bacteria.

Better still, if your snack options are likely to be limited away from home, take a small bag of almonds or fruit and a few pieces of cheese with you.

Even a slice of homemade cake, such as our aubergine brownies (right) or the indulgent treats we will reveal in Wednesday's Mail, will be better for your microbiome than snacking on crisps, sweets or fizzy drinks.

Beware over-processed protein bars, too — many masquerade as 'healthy', but use artificial sugars that can inflame the gut.

When the chocolate cravings hit, I find it useful to imagine I am slowly starving out those sugar-hungry microbes in my gut. It's man versus microbe — and I aim to win!



Snacks to keep you SLIM

CHOCOLATE AUBERGINE BROWNIES

WHEN you really want a treat, why not pick one that's packed with vegetable goodness, as well as the nutrients from dark chocolate? This combination may sound odd, but it is surprisingly delicious.

MAKES 12 SMALL SQUARES

- 1 medium aubergine (200g), peeled and diced
- 150g dark chocolate (minimum 70 per cent cocoa solids), broken into pieces
- 60g coconut oil
- 60g soft pitted dates, diced
- ½ tsp salt
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 80g ground almonds

PREHEAT the oven to 170c/fan 150c/gas 3. Steam the aubergine for 15 minutes, until soft (or microwave it in less time), then stir in the dark chocolate and coconut oil. The warm aubergine will melt the chocolate and oil together. Add the chopped dates and salt and blitz in a blender until smooth. Allow to cool slightly, then add the eggs and baking powder and blitz again for another minute, then stir in the ground almonds. Spread the mixture over a medium-sized baking tray lined with greaseproof paper and bake in the oven for around 20 minutes. It is cooked when a knife comes out clean.



HUMMUS FIVE WAYS

SERVES ABOUT 4

- 250g tinned chickpeas, drained
- Juice of ½-1 lemon
- 1 tbsp tahini
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- 5 tbsp olive oil

PLACE all the ingredients in a food processor and blend to a paste. Serve as it is or try one of the varieties below:

GREEN HUMMUS

BLEND an extra garlic clove and 150g cooked peas into the basic hummus mixture.

PURPLE HUMMUS

BLEND 2 peeled, chopped, roasted beetroots and mint leaves with the mix.

RED HUMMUS

CHAR 1 large red pepper (halved and deseeded) and blend in the mix.

YELLOW HUMMUS

BREAK 1 small cauliflower into florets, toss in 2 tsp turmeric and 1 tbsp olive oil. Roast for 15-20 minutes at 170c/fan 150c/gas 3. Blend into the basic hummus mix with 1 extra garlic clove.



CREAMY CASHEW NUT SPREAD

A GREAT spread for wholegrain bread or crackers. Alternatively, use as a substitute for mayonnaise on a chopped boiled egg, or as a dip with vegetable crudites.

SERVES 2-4

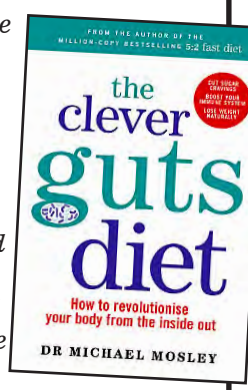
- 340g raw cashews, soaked in water and drained
- 120ml water
- 4 tbsp nutritional yeast

- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp live apple cider vinegar
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- Salt and ground black pepper

BLITZ together all the ingredients in a blender until you have a thick, creamy paste. Season and serve.

TOMORROW: THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES THAT REALLY PACK A PUNCH

ADAPTED by Louise Atkinson from *The Clever Guts Diet*, by Dr Michael Mosley, published by Short Books on May 18, price £8.99. © Michael Mosley, 2017. To buy a copy for £6.29 (offer valid to May 27, 2017), visit mailbookshop.co.uk or call 0844 571 0640, p&p is free on orders over £15. cleverguts.com



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OVER the years, I have introduced more plants into my diet, and I do try really hard to meet the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables each day.

If I'm really honest, however, it's only recently that I've started being a bit more adventurous and the same old veggie culprits do tend to find their way into my shopping basket each week.

But my recent voyages into the murky world of the gut have shown me how crucial my 'microbiome' — the trillions of microscopic bacteria that live inside my digestive tract — is to my general health and well-being.

And one of the most important lessons I have learned is that if you want a happy microbiome, you really should feed it a rich and varied diet.

All this week in the Mail, I am revealing the latest scientific findings in relation to gut bacteria, packing each day with delicious gut-friendly recipes developed with the help of nutritional therapist Tanya Borowski and GP Clare Bailey.

Yesterday, I explained the impact your microbiome has on your weight and the weight-loss benefits to be gained from nurturing it. Today, my focus will be on the importance of boosting the range of plant-based foods in your diet.

On the following pages, you will find recipes for tasty, vegetable-based main courses and soups, all bursting with a wide variety of nutritious ingredients.

Our understanding of the complex world of gut bacteria is still very much in its infancy, but we do know that most of the 'good' bacteria — the ones we want to cultivate — thrive on plant fibre.

So a very good way to increase the diversity of your biome — your personal mix of microbes — is to spread your fruit and vegetable wings really wide and build as much plant diversity into your diet as possible.

If you wander around a modern supermarket, the aisles appear to be heaving with choice, but most processed foods actually contain surprisingly similar ingredients.

The truth is that 75 per cent of the world's food comes from just 12 plants and five animal species, and most families eat from a limited repertoire of set meals with a boringly small

range of ingredients. The problem is that the more limited the range of foods you eat, the more limited your bacterial diversity is likely to be.

By eating a wider variety of vegetables and other gut-friendly foods, you will not only be cheering up your plate, but doing your best to support the armies of 'good' bacteria tucked away along your digestive tract. Make them happy and they'll

make you happy. One simple way to do this is to introduce more colour to your plate.

Colour is a great indicator of nutritional diversity. That's because the pigments that plants produce not only give them their colour, scent and flavour, but also mean they contain hundreds of different bioactive compounds, known as phytonutrients.

These phytonutrients tend to

be concentrated in the skins of fruits and vegetables. Their role in the plant is, among other things, to protect it against fungi and bacteria. But they also have powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Eating a wide variety of different-coloured fruits and vegetables will give your gut bacteria something to chew on, as well as providing valuable nutrients. The phytonutrients in

BAKED RAINBOW RATATOUILLE

THIS rainbow-coloured ratatouille is packed with a whole range of phytonutrients.

SERVES 4

- 4 beetroots
- 4 sweet potatoes
- 3 red onions
- 2 courgettes
- 1 fennel bulb
- 1 small pumpkin (or ½ butternut squash), deseeded and quartered
- 2 yellow peppers
- 250ml homemade tomato sauce (see below)
- 1 tsp Maldon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp olive oil

FOR THE TOMATO SAUCE

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- Bunch fresh basil, leaves only, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh oregano leaves, chopped (or 1 tsp dried)
- 6 medium-sized fresh tomatoes, chopped
- 400g tin chopped organic tomatoes
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

TO MAKE the tomato sauce, fry the onion gently in the olive oil for 6-7 minutes until soft and golden. Stir in the garlic, basil and oregano, followed by the fresh and tinned tomatoes and vinegar. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Blend briefly and set it aside (it will keep in the fridge for about five days). Preheat the oven to 190c/fan 170c/gas 5. Cover the bottom of a baking dish with your tomato sauce (you only need half of it for this recipe). Cut all the vegetables into 1cm slices, except the courgette and peppers, which need to be 2cm. Starting from the outer edge of the dish, arrange the veg by colour: slices of beetroot, then sweet potato, courgette and so on, until you fill it. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle the olive oil over the surface. Bake for 30-40 minutes. This works well with steamed kale or a large green salad and avocado.

Why variety really is the SPICE of LIFE



fruit and vegetables come in a range of colours — blue and purple; white; yellow, orange and red; and green. The key is to eat a wide variety of colours, aiming for two or more of each per day.

BLUE AND PURPLE: Purple foods get their colouring from anthocyanins, a type of flavonoid, and the more intense the colour, the greater the concentration of anthocyanin. You'll find high

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Seaweed, the latest superfood

NOT ALL seaweeds are edible, and some are poisonous — so unless you know what you are doing, it is not a great idea to pluck it from the sea shore.

However, the seaweeds that are safe to eat are excellent prebiotics, packed with vitamins and minerals, as well as fibre and omega 3 fatty acids.

Studies show pigs fed on seaweed gave birth to piglets with better gut bacteria (they were less likely to need antibiotics), and one of the first studied human trials of seaweed (due to be published this year) found that people who took a daily seaweed capsule for six weeks saw an increase in 15 different types of 'friendly' bacteria in their gut.

These bacteria were mainly from groups that produce short-chain fatty acids such as butyrate, which encourage the growth of the gut's mucous lining.

The researchers found that the seaweed eaters experienced less inflammation and increased insulin sensitivity compared with subjects who took a placebo.

The volunteers also reported feeling less desire for sugar and fast carbs, which could be due to the change in gut flora.

Seaweed is a popular part of Asian cuisine, so we have incorporated seaweed (available in large supermarkets and called nori strips — usually in the world food section) into some of our recipes this week.

Prebiotics and probiotics: how do they differ?

AS I explained earlier on these pages, a prebiotic is a type of plant fibre (found in onions and leeks, asparagus, oats and bananas for example), which your body struggles to digest, but which acts like a fertiliser for your microbiome, encouraging the growth of 'good' bacteria in your gut.

Probiotics, on the other hand, are the live bacteria or yeast that you can parachute into your intestine (via yoghurt, cheese, sauerkraut or supplements), in the hope that they will take root and do you some good.

Soup-er charge your tum!



CELERIC & BEETROOT SOUP

ALTHOUGH knobbly and a bit awkward to handle, celeriac only needs the minimum of peeling, as most of its nutrients are concentrated just beneath the skin. Like beetroot, it is full of complex carbohydrates loved by your gut biome. The delicate flavours of the two root vegetables combine beautifully here to make a creamy, filling soup.

SERVES 4-6

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, peeled and chopped
- 350g beetroot, peeled and chopped
- 800g celeriac, peeled and chopped
- 2 cm piece root ginger, peeled and diced

- Juice ½ lemon
- ¼-½ tsp chilli flakes
- 1.2 litres vegetable stock
- Salt and pepper
- Grated cheese or toasted nuts, to serve (optional)

HEAT the oil in a medium pan and saute the onion for around 5 minutes, until softened. Add the beetroot, celeriac, ginger, lemon juice and chilli flakes, then pour in the vegetable stock. Bring to the boil then simmer, covered, for around 20 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Blitz with a hand blender until smooth, adding more stock if you like a looser consistency. Season to taste and serve topped with grated cheese or a few toasted nuts.

PEA SOUP

PEAS are high in fibre and protein, leaving you fuller for longer. They also provide an excellent source of vitamins and minerals such as iron, vitamin C, calcium and zinc.

SERVES 4

- 500g frozen petits pois
- 2 ripe avocados
- A few fresh mint leaves, chopped
- 2 spring onions, chopped
- 1 tbsp tamari sauce (or soy sauce)
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

COOK the petits pois in boiling water for 3-4 minutes, drain (retain the water to thin the soup), then blitz them with the other ingredients. Season with a little salt and pepper to taste and add the reserved pea water to reach your preferred consistency.



CREAMY CAULIFLOWER AND JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE SOUP

CAULIFLOWER is a good source of vitamin C and contains compounds that stimulate detoxification enzymes, while Jerusalem artichokes are full of gut-friendly inulin fibre.

SERVES 4

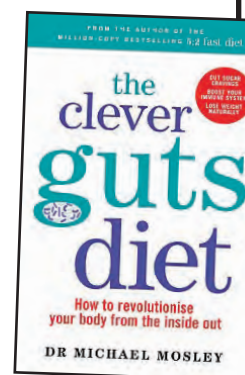
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- ½ tsp ground turmeric or 1 tsp fresh root, grated
- 1 large head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 150g Jerusalem artichoke, scrubbed, peeled and sliced
- 400ml tin full-fat coconut milk
- 600ml vegetable stock
- 2 tsp tamari sauce

- Freshly ground black pepper
- Handful fresh coriander leaves, chopped

IN A large saucepan on a medium heat, gently fry the onion, garlic and turmeric in the oil for 5 minutes. Add the cauliflower and artichoke and stir everything well, then pour in the coconut milk, stock and tamari sauce. Bring to the boil, then immediately lower the heat and simmer gently for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Season with pepper to taste. Process the soup in a blender until it's smooth. Serve with chopped coriander and a slice of flaxseed or sourdough bread.

TOMORROW: WHY SAUERKRAUT'S THE ELIXIR OF LIFE (REALLY)

ADAPTED by Louise Atkinson from *The Clever Guts Diet*, by Dr Michael Mosley, published by Short Books on May 18, price £8.99. © Michael Mosley, 2017. To buy a copy for £6.29 (offer valid to May 27, 2017), visit mailbookshop.co.uk or call 0844 571 0640. P&P is free on orders over £15. cleverguts.com



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LIKE many people, I used to be an ardent follower of the low-fat mantra, so I'm delighted to have discovered that many of the foods we used to think of as unhealthy — such as eggs, butter and chocolate — are once more back on the menu.

You might be surprised, however, to see me tucking into a thick piece of stinky cheese with a spoonful of sauerkraut on the side!

My views on which foods really count as 'healthy' changed some years ago, when I first started exploring the latest science around diet. My investigations spawned the invention of the 5:2 diet and my bestselling Fast Diet and Blood Sugar Diet books.

I remain obsessed by the impact food has on our bodies, but my focus right now has shifted to the effect of our diet on the trillions of microbes that live in our guts.

All this week in the Daily Mail, I have been explaining just how important your 'microbiome' — your personal mix of gut microbes — is to your mental and physical health.

Yesterday, I showed how you can nurture it and minimise gut problems by eating more of the foods your 'good' bacteria love.

Today, I want to show how you can increase your gut population of beneficial bacteria with real food — including stinky cheese, bio-yoghurt, kefir milk (a fermented drink) and fermented pickles such as sauerkraut and kimchi. If you've never done so, I would urge you to try these naturally 'probiotic' foods.

Fermentation is a natural process by which microbes subtly change the form of certain foods. Alcohol, chocolate and cheese are all products of fermentation, and fermented foods — particularly vegetables and yoghurt — have long been popular in Eastern Europe and Asia.

Now it's taking off in the UK, too. Not only does fermentation add delicious flavour and texture, it also provides an abundant source of healthy microbes to populate your gut.

When you soak vegetables in salted water, the natural bacteria start to break down the vegetable sugars, producing lactic acid as a by-product (giving a tangy, vinegary taste). As the veg continue to ferment,

the salt and acid prevent harmful microbes from growing, while allowing the health-promoting ones to survive and thrive.

This process helps improve the nutrient profile of the food, while creating an abundance of good bacteria and the chemicals they produce, which, ultimately,

benefit our health. Fermentation might sound exotic, but it's not really so different from pickling, and people have been fermenting foods as a way of preserving them for hundreds of years.

As you can see from the recipes on these pages, krauts and kimchis are relatively simple to

make — you then leave them for a few days to do their thing, and store them in the fridge to stop or slow the ongoing fermentation process.

One reason fermented foods are so good for the gut is that, gram for gram, they contain a huge number of different

Ice cream could be your new secret weapon



KEFIR GINGER ICE CREAM SERVES 4-6

THIS deliciously tangy ice cream is made from kefir milk, a fermented drink that tastes like thin yoghurt or buttermilk, but is far richer in a whole variety of healthy bacteria than live yoghurt.

- 500ml kefir milk (see following recipe)
- 3 balls preserved ginger in syrup, drained and finely diced
- 2 tsp xanthan gum (a thickening agent available in supermarkets or health stores)

BRIEFLY whisk all the ingredients in a bowl suitable for the freezer. Cover and freeze. Remove hourly for the next 2-3 hours and stir vigorously each time

to maintain a creamy texture. Serve with baked or stewed apple or rhubarb.

FOR THE KEFIR MILK (MAKES 500ml)

- 1-2 sachets kefir starter culture powder or 2-3 tbsp fresh grains (from health stores or Lakeland)
- 1 litre organic, full-fat milk
- 1 litre glass container with lid

FIRST, sterilise your equipment with boiling water, or put through a hot cycle in the dishwasher to kill any bugs. Next, mix the starter culture into a smooth paste with a little milk, then

add it to the rest of the milk in a glass container and stir well. Loosely cover with a cloth held tight with an elastic band and keep in a warm place (ideally 22-24c) for 24 hours. Your kefir is ready when it is lightly set. Strain it through a fine nylon sieve or muslin and pour into a lidded glass container in the fridge to cool. Seal and store in the fridge for a week. It can be enjoyed chilled as a drink, added to smoothies or poured over granola or fruit, or stir in a spoonful of chopped fruit, a few drops of vanilla extract or a fruit-flavoured tea bag to add flavour.

microbes — and diversity is crucial for gut health.

Another bonus of fermenting is that it encourages growth of the sort of acid-resistant microbes that are likely, once you've swallowed them, to safely make their way through to the colon, where they can begin their

work on your behalf. The same cannot be said for many of the probiotic foods and supplements currently on sale.

There's a lot of hype in this market, and only a few brands have decent science behind

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TASTY TREATS FOR YOUR TUM!

LEMON CHIA MUFFINS

TANGY, with a slight crunch of poppy seeds, these muffins are remarkably low in sugar and high in fibre.

MAKES 12

- 80g stoned dates
- 150ml coconut oil, melted
- 4 eggs, beaten
- Zest and juice 2 lemons
- 225g ground almonds
- 1tbsp gluten-free wholemeal flour
- 1tsp gluten-free baking powder

- 3tsp chia seeds
- 2tsp poppy seeds

PREHEAT the oven to 170c/fan 150c/gas 3. Place 12 paper muffin cases into a tray. Chop the dates in a food processor. Add the coconut oil, eggs, lemon zest and juice, and process again, until it becomes a loose batter. Add the ground almonds, flour, baking powder and chia seeds and process until you have a cake mixture. Spoon into the cases and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake for 20 minutes, until risen and lightly golden. Cool on a rack before serving.



RED RICE PUDDING

IDEAL for using up leftover rice, this has a slightly exotic, nutty flavour and makes a deliciously creamy pudding. Cooling and reheating the rice converts more of the starch into gut-friendly resistant starch.

SERVES 4

- 200-300ml full-fat coconut milk
- 200g cooked red and brown rice (cooled and refrigerated for 12 hours)
- ½tsp each of nutmeg and cinnamon
- Seeds of a cardamom pod

- 1tsp vanilla essence
- 1tbsp maple syrup

POUR 200ml coconut milk into a pan and stir in the rest of the ingredients. Bring to the boil, then add extra coconut milk to cover the rice. Simmer gently, covered, for around 15 minutes. Alternatively, bake the rice mixture in a dish in the oven, at 160c/fan 140c/gas 3 for 10-15 minutes. Check it doesn't dry out — it should have a creamy consistency. If necessary, add a drop more coconut milk.

EXOTIC TANGY CARROT CAKE

WONDERFULLY moist, with hints of spices and a slight citrus tanginess, this cake is full of plenty of good stuff for your gut and has no added sugar.

SERVES 12

- 80g dates, chopped
- 80g coconut oil, melted
- 3 large eggs, beaten
- Zest 1 orange
- 320g carrots, peeled and grated
- Seeds of 8 cardamom pods
- 160g wholemeal buckwheat flour (or alternative wholegrain, gluten-free flour)
- 120g desiccated coconut, plus 1tbsp for sprinkling
- 1tbsp baking powder
- ½tsp salt
- 120g walnuts, chopped

PREHEAT the oven to 170c/fan 150c/gas 3. Grease and line the base of a 28cm square tin. Blitz the dates in a food processor, then add the coconut oil, eggs and orange zest, mixing to form a batter. Add the remaining ingredients (except the walnuts) and mix, then stir in the chopped walnuts. Spoon into the tin and smooth the top. Bake for 1 hour, until a knife inserted into the centre comes out clean. If the top starts to brown before the cake is cooked, cover with foil. Five minutes before the end of cooking time, sprinkle the remaining desiccated coconut over the top. When ready, take out of the oven and cool for 5 minutes, before removing from the tin and cooling on a rack.



COFFEE AND WALNUT CAKE

CREAMY coffee cake is a delicious classic. With plenty of protein and healthy fats, walnuts are great for the gut. This cake is low in sugar and contains surprising amounts of fibre to feed your biome.

SERVES 6-8

- 1 rounded tbsp instant coffee
- 60g dates
- 100g coconut oil, melted
- 2 large eggs
- 100g ground almonds
- 60g walnuts, finely chopped (plus 20g for topping)
- 1tsp baking powder
- ½tsp salt
- 1-2tbsp coconut milk (or dairy, if using)
- Maple syrup and creme fraiche, to serve

PREHEAT the oven to 170c/fan 150c/gas 3. Grease and line the base of a 2lb loaf tin. Dissolve the coffee powder in 1tbsp hot water. Meanwhile, place the dates in a food processor and process until they are chopped, then add the coffee mixture, coconut oil and eggs, and process until nearly mixed. Add the remaining cake ingredients and stir well. Spoon in to the prepared tin and smooth down the top. Bake for 35-40 minutes, until a knife inserted into the centre comes out clean and the top is golden. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with 1tbsp maple syrup and the remaining 20g chopped walnuts, and leave to cool for 5 minutes, before removing from the tin and cooling further on a rack. Serve with a dollop of creme fraiche.

TOMORROW: HOW TO BEAT IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

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