



Brad's Raw Made Easy: The Fast, Delicious Way to Lose Weight, Optimize Health, and Live Mostly in the Raw

By Brad Gruno

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HEAL, ENERGIZE, AND SLIM DOWN WITH NATURE'S ORIGINAL FAST FOOD

Brad Gruno is someone who loved a good steak and never could have imagined going raw, until he did and it changed his life, his health, and his career. Three months after going raw he was forty pounds lighter and had eradicated his high cholesterol, insomnia and depression. It also put him on a whole new path and gave him a mission to share what he learned.

If you've been curious about raw foods, but are a little afraid that dieting this way is too hard to do, takes too much time, or is too expensive, then this is the book for you. With a simple 3-phase strategy that shows you how to make the transition, eating this close to nature has never been easier.

Dip in and discover:

- The science behind plant-based eating
- The basic 8-week eating plan—Prepare, Simply Raw, and Living It!
- The essential ingredients for continued success living 80/20 raw
- 150 quick, scrumptious, and easy recipes
- Your personalized food diary, as well as Brad's answers to his most frequently asked questions about this lifestyle.

Try it! You'll eliminate toxins, eliminate junk food cravings, and eliminate excess pounds. How easy is that?

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Editorial Review

About the Author

BRAD GRUNO is the founder and CEO of Brad's Raw Foods. After regaining his health through a predominantly raw diet, Brad wanted to share its benefits with others. This is how his product line was born. Brad's company is truly a business built on passion. He started it in a one-car garage, moved up to farmers markets, then his first Whole Foods store, and now it is a national brand. Brad's products, which includes raw chips and crackers, leafy kale, onion rings, raw wine and even dog treats, is sold in thousands of stores nationwide, including: Whole Foods, Wegmans, Balducci's Bristol Farms, King Soopers, Kroger, and elsewhere.

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The Science Behind a Raw Foods Diet

What could be more invigorating than a meandering walk in a verdant park on a bright sunny day? Think of breathing in the sweet, fresh air and feeling the spring of the grass beneath your feet. Think of how all your senses would be delighted, giving you mental clarity and a deep sense of connection to the physical world. Think of how just plain good you'd feel.

That's how you would feel if your diet consisted of only fresh, delicious, nutrient-rich food from nature. That's what happens when you eat raw foods. So how do you add more of these foods without breaking the bank or working in the kitchen all day? Keep reading.

WHAT IS RAW FOOD?

A raw foods diet is one that consists of raw fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, sprouts (including grains and legumes), root vegetables and squashes, fresh herbs, spices, fermented foods, and seaweeds. These foods are never heated beyond 115°F, which is why you will hear many people in the raw food community refer to this as eating only "living foods."

It is a myth to think of a raw foods diet as one of deprivation, where you can eat only "rabbit food" such as lettuce and carrots! There are countless satisfying dishes that can be created by following the raw food guidelines. Nearly anything that you loved in your old cooked diet can be created uncooked for your eating pleasure.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT EATING RAW

What makes a raw foods diet so unique and so nutritious has to do with heat. Or rather, the lack of it.

The magic number is 115. When any food item is heated above 115°F, its nutrient density begins to become comprised and degraded. We know this because most vitamins are water soluble, and a significant percentage is lost during cooking. When temperatures are kept low, vitamins and nutrients are preserved. Health enthusiasts and raw foodists also believe the living plant enzymes that aid with digestion are destroyed above 115°F and can no longer aid in the digestive process. Many raw foodists drink a lot of fresh

vegetable and green juices, which are packed with nutrients. Released by the juicing process, these nutrients are absorbed extremely quickly, so that your cells can receive a heavy-duty punch of what they need for optimal functioning.

After you've adjusted to eating raw, that's the reason you'll feel the benefits of this lifestyle so quickly. It's also why many raw foodists report weight loss, more energy, improved digestion and health, and an improved, glowing complexion. Their bodies are getting the fuel they need, when they need it--and it shows!

Why a Raw Food Diet Is So Good for Your Body

Eating raw foods or a high-raw diet (80 percent raw and 20 percent cooked foods) allows your digestive system to work efficiently, without stress. When you eat foods that need only minimal energy for your body to break down and absorb, you will have more energy to do whatever it is you want to do--finish a complex project at work, take a dance class, go to the movies with your children, have a date night with your partner--with more vigor. If, on the other hand, you eat processed and nonnutritious fatty or sugar-laden foods, your body goes into digestive overdrive to process and metabolize the food. Your pancreas will churn out large doses of insulin to break down and absorb all the sugar, causing spikes in your blood sugar that can leave you feeling tired and cranky and even hungrier, especially when these levels plummet. Worse, any excess sugar not immediately needed by your body will be stored as fat. Who needs that? Not me and not you. Not anyone, in fact!

Let me push this point a little bit more: Let's say you were late for work and barely had time to scarf down a bagel with cream cheese for breakfast. By the time lunch rolls around you're starving, and when your colleagues suggest going to the nearest diner, you happily agree that it's a great idea. You order a cheeseburger and fries for lunch and wolf them down because you're so hungry, and then you can't help ordering a piece of cheesecake for dessert. You go back to the office, but you're suddenly so tired you can barely concentrate and type out the report that's due. So you eat a candy bar for an instant pick-me-up, which works for about twenty minutes, but then all of a sudden you're even more tired and cranky, so you stop for a slice of pizza on the way home to tide you over until dinner.

I know exactly how you'd feel because this is the way I used to eat. I had no idea that eating a hamburger bun made from white flour was basically giving me no viable nutrients, and that the ground beef and gooey melted cheese from the burger would take up to three days to make its way through my intestines.

And I also understand the stress you're under every day and the limited options you might have for eating right. I am an entrepreneur going at a million miles an hour every day, and sometimes--even after eating a high-raw diet for so long--I stop at my local café and have a hummus and guacamole sandwich on sourdough bread. I love it and it tastes great while I'm eating it, but after a while I start to feel irritable and bloated--thanks, primarily, to the highly processed flour in the bread--and always want to crash for a nap. In other words, even the healthiest foods can have adverse reactions for someone like me, who is accustomed to eating raw, not cooked, food. (And hummus is a cooked food unless you make it from sprouted chickpeas!) When I stick to a green smoothie and salad for lunch instead of a sandwich, my energy level skyrockets and my thinking process remains clear.

So let's take a more detailed look at how the digestive process works.

The Good, the Bad, and Your Gut

It's really too bad that most Americans are too squeamish and embarrassed to talk about what's happening in

their bellies and guts. Digestion really is a fascinating topic--and an essential one to understand, because once your digestive system stops working properly, you will pay the price for it every day. Digestive problems don't just cause temporary constipation, diarrhea, or terrible bloating and gas. They can cause tremendous discomfort and pain and lead to complicated health issues if you ignore the warning signs that your body is not digesting and eliminating its waste properly.

Digestion is the process by which what you eat and drink is broken down into molecules that can be absorbed into your blood so the nutrients can be carried to the cells throughout your body. Your cells use the nutrients to create energy, and to build and replenish themselves.

Not surprisingly, your body wants the best possible fuel for itself. It wants to work efficiently, too, which is why human beings have evolved to easily store excess calories so they are readily available in times of famine. Unfortunately, in modern society we are rarely famished, so this hyperefficient storage process quickly converts excess calories into fat. If, however, you eat nutrient-dense foods, you will eat less and stay fuller longer because your body will be satiated quickly after you eat and during the digestive process.

Food digestion begins in the mouth--when you chew and the enzymes in your saliva begin their work--and is completed in the small intestine. The leftover liquid waste material is processed through your kidneys and excreted as urine. The solid waste material is solidified in your colon, or large intestine, and then excreted as a bowel movement. How often you need to "go" varies tremendously; what you want is to have consistent elimination so you don't feel plugged up and bloated.

There is a very large difference between how your body metabolizes different foods. Eating a piece of fruit takes, on average, a scant three hours to digest from the time it arrives in your stomach to its further processing in your small intestine. From there to complete elimination can take approximately sixteen to twenty-four hours. Many vegetables take only about six hours.

But red meat can take up to a whopping seventy-two hours to fully digest and eliminate. Yes, that's correct. Up to three days to get that burger out of your body. No wonder you feel so sluggish!

What Are Enzymes and How Do They Impact Your Digestion?

Enzymes are protein molecules that are made by plant and animal cells. There are three categories of enzymes: digestive, metabolic, and food-based. Digestive and metabolic enzymes are produced by your pancreas. Food-based enzymes come from the food you eat.

Enzymes function as catalysts to make the necessary chemical reactions your body needs. What's important for you to understand is that your digestive enzymes help the food you eat to be broken down quickly and effectively in your stomach and small intestine, and then sped off to your bloodstream and cells for nourishment.

Ideally, you should be ingesting the essential food-based enzymes on a daily basis, but if you're eating mostly processed foods that are devoid of any enzymes (or proper nutrients), then you are not getting any of them at all. Worse, the more you eat processed and unhealthy food, especially when it's full of sugar, the more your body needs to overcompensate in order to metabolize it, which further depletes its ability to make more of its own enzymes. And, as you know already, if you cook your food above 115°F, the naturally occurring enzymes in plant and animal cells are destroyed.

Most people don't ever think about enzymes or even know what they do--I certainly didn't! For example, I

believed that if I ate a meal with animal protein, such as a steak or a chicken breast, along with some veggies or a salad on the side, the veggies would somehow help me better digest the protein. Don't ask me where that notion came from; suffice to say that I thought it and I believed it and kept on eating whatever I wanted.

But I was very wrong. The raw salad would have contained enough enzymes to digest just that, the salad. It did not contain enough enzymes to digest the animal protein or anything else I would have ingested at that meal. No wonder I felt so awful afterward.

Something else to consider is that your body's own enzyme output decreases as you grow older. This starts for everyone around the age of twenty, and your body's enzyme production continues to decrease by 13 percent every ten years. In addition, as you age your stomach produces less hydrochloric acid, which is a crucial component in the activation of the digestive enzymes there.

The All-American Sugar Rush

Here's a shocking figure for you: According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average American consumes 156 pounds of sugar per year. No, that is not a typo. Get out your trusty calculator and you'll soon realize that this means that the average adult eater in the United States ingests thirty-one 5-pound bags of sugar in 365 days.

The only person who's happy about this is your dentist!

To understand what sugar does to your body, let me explain the basics of sugar metabolism. Whenever you eat anything, your pancreas releases insulin, the hormone that regulates how you metabolize sugar. Your cells can't process sucrose, which is the ingredient in table sugar, so it must be converted to glucose, which is the sugar that fuels your body.

There are two kinds of carbohydrates. Simple carbohydrates are sugars such as sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, fructose, dextrose, glucose, honey, malt sugar, and syrup. Though fruit contains fructose, a simple sugar, it is also nutrient-dense and contains fiber, which slows the digestion and absorption of sugar.

Complex carbohydrates include foods such as vegetables, legumes, corn, potatoes, rice, and grain products. Vegetables such as green beans, broccoli, and spinach have less complex carbs but contain a lot of fiber. The best complex carbohydrates to add to your diet are legumes and vegetables, which is why when people say that they're cutting out all carbs, I certainly hope they're not cutting out veggies!

It is a fallacy to think that all simple carbs are bad and all complex carbs are good. A delicious apple is a simple carb and is one of the best foods you can eat. A heaping serving of whole-grain pasta or cereal is a complex carb but is also highly processed and not as good for you as eating a salad or sprouted grain.

The most crucial point to remember is this: Eating raw, living foods in the portions you will read about in part 2 will not cause your blood sugar to spike. You will not have sugar highs or lows, so you will not release extra insulin to compensate for them. Blood sugar levels will remain consistent and stable, allowing you to have maximum energy to fuel your day and maintain a clear and balanced mind.

The reason for this is simple: Whenever you eat a food containing complex carbohydrates as well as fiber and other nutrients, this food is digested slowly and only a minimal amount of insulin is needed to convert the sugar into glucose that will be gradually released into your bloodstream. The key component here is the fiber--it's very difficult to eat a lot of fiber-rich food in one sitting, as your body will rebel! Portion control

throughout the day will keep your digestive system working at maximum efficiency.

Eat simple carbohydrates in the form of packaged and processed foods laden with sugar, however, and the opposite happens. Your pancreas goes into emergency mode and pumps out a large amount of insulin to manage all that sugar. I'm sure you know the feeling--it's that sugar rush you get after eating a bagel and coffee with sugar for breakfast, or a handful of cookies as an afternoon snack.

All that insulin and glucose need to go somewhere. As soon as your blood sugar spikes, your insulin levels plummet. You enter into a sugar low or crash, becoming sluggish and cranky, with low energy, often with your mind in a fog and nerves all jittery. You are probably already starting to feel hungry, too, especially for something that is sweet, because your body was primed to digest some real food when all that insulin was released, but it got nothing but empty calories. Yet if you eat more simple carbohydrates, you'll trigger the release of even more insulin, and the whole roller coaster of blood sugar peaks and valleys will start all over again.

When I talk to people who are trying to watch their weight, I explain that the problem with sugar--and one of the biggest contributing factors to the obesity and diabetes epidemics that are sweeping our country--is that it's not just about the few spoonfuls you might put into your coffee in the morning, or what's in the brownie you had for a treat for dessert. Part of the danger comes from food with hidden sugar. If you like those foods and eat them regularly, your taste buds will adjust to the sweetness and you'll find that you crave more and more sweetness without even knowing why.

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