



MEAT & DAIRY

- Meat and dairy are both excellent sources of fat and protein, two essential macronutrients that we need to consume in balance with carbohydrates for an active and healthy life. Fat contributes to proper brain function and hormone regulation, while protein is broken down into amino acids as the body's building blocks for growth and repair, as well as hormone and enzyme synthesis.
- Iron deficiency is the #1 micronutrient deficiency worldwide and is especially common in women and children. The dominant *heme* form of iron found in red meat, poultry, and seafood is much more bioavailable (readily absorbed) than *non-heme* iron found in plant sources.
- Don't fear cooking foods in a little bit of butter! Cooking vegetables in fat helps the body better absorb the fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E, and K. Even a little bit of butter goes a long way in adding flavor to food. Remember, enjoyment is just as important as nutrition when it comes to health!
- The brain needs fat to function and Omega-3 fatty acids are essential. High-yield dietary sources of Omega-3s include fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, anchovies, sardines, rainbow trout, and mackerel. Look for "wild caught" options to get the most nutritional bang for your buck. There is also significant amounts of omega 3 fats in grassfed or organic meats, poultry, eggs, cheese, butter and dairy.
- Vitamin B12 is a nutrient that can only be obtained from animal foods, although it can be supplemented. This vitamin plays crucial roles in brain and nervous system function, and creating red blood cells. Mood, including symptoms of anxiety and depression, can be impacted by a clinical or subclinical B12 deficiency.
- If you have ethical hesitations about consuming conventional meat or dairy, consider exploring local farms - you are often able to not only purchase meat, milk, and cheese from animals that have been treated very humanely, but you're also supporting local agriculture *and* can usually take any questions or concerns directly to the farmer! Weekend farmers' markets are a great avenue for offerings from multiple local businesses, or look into nearby [Community Supported Agriculture](#) (CSA) options.