

Eating Nose to Tail

One of the most remarkable things about traditional hunter-gatherer diets is that, despite the fact that early humans developed them without the benefits of modern science or even the concept of micronutrients, they often provided all of the nutrients required for optimal health.

Our ancestors learned which types, amounts, and combinations of nutrients they needed the old-fashioned way: through experimentation over thousands of generations.

They understood that parts of the animal such as the organs, bones, and skin had an important place in their diets to maintain good health and promote fertility. Plus, they didn't have the luxury of throwing away the less appealing parts of the animal!

Today, unfortunately, much of this ancient and time-tested wisdom has fallen by the wayside. Organ meats, bone broths, skin and cartilage, fish eggs, egg yolks, and many other nutrient-dense parts of animals consumed have all but disappeared from the modern diet. Your grandparents may have eaten these foods, but chances are you and your children don't.

The problem is that these now-unpopular foods provide nutrients that work synergistically with those found in more commonly eaten foods and are difficult to obtain elsewhere in the diet. In other words, we may be well fed, but we're undernourished.

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The solution is to return to the practice of our ancestors and "eat from nose to tail." This means eating not only the lean muscle meat (like steak or chicken breast) of animals but also the organs, skin, cartilage, bones, and fattier cuts.

These parts of the animal are superfoods, as they contain high levels of essential nutrients such as glycine, vitamin A, choline, B vitamins, and vitamin K2.

Here are some guidelines for how to increase the nutrient density of your diet by consuming all of the parts of the animal – nose to tail.

- Consume one-half to one cup of homemade bone broth daily, in soups, sauces, stews, or as a beverage; eat tougher cuts of meat, like brisket, chuck roast, oxtail, and shanks; and don't shy away from skin and cartilage. These are all excellent sources of glycine.
- Use gelatin powder to make gelatin-based desserts, or add hydrolyzed collagen to hot or cold liquids. Check out the article [5 Reasons Why Nearly Everyone \(Even Vegetarians\) Should Eat Gelatin](#) for more information on why gelatin is important.
- Eat one to two three-ounce servings of chicken and/or beef liver per week. See below for tips on how to prepare it. Liver is rich in B vitamins, vitamin A, and several other nutrients. (Those with iron overload should not consume organ meats.)
- Other nutrient-dense organ meats to try are heart, kidney, tongue, and even brain. Read my article [How to Eat More Organ Meats](#) for preparation ideas.
- Eat at least four to five egg yolks per week (if not more), preferably from eggs that come from pasture-raised chickens. Egg yolks are the highest source of choline in the diet.
- Take one-half teaspoon of extra virgin cod liver oil per day. Cod liver oil is one of the richest sources of vitamin A, and it also contains vitamin D, and the omega-3 fats EPA and DHA.
- Eat two servings per day of fermented foods (for example, sauerkraut, kefir, natto), cheese and butter (from pasture-raised cows), and/or eggs (from pasture-raised chickens) to obtain adequate amounts of vitamin K2.
- If you eat canned salmon or sardines, find a brand that includes the bones. They're soft and safe to eat, and they're a great source of calcium and omega-3 fats.