



## Happy New Year and Welcome 2026!

Let's start this new year with clear intentions and a positive attitude! This month, join us in focusing on supporting your body with consistency, healthy habits, and realistic goals. Forget detoxes and strict resolutions, and take a look at tips from how science shows us how to support our bodies, in the long-term.

In this month's Nutrition Bites newsletter, we'll explore some nutrition themes that are predicted to be popular in 2026 and changes in Canada's vitamin D fortification regulations in dairy products. Plus, we'll share practical strategies for setting goals, and ways to best support your body after the holiday season. Let's make this year about progress, not perfection, and support our bodies the way they deserve!

*Wishing you all the best this January!*



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## DO I NEED A JANUARY RESET?

While this sounds great, the truth is, you don't need a reset!! Clear intentions that include consistency can go a longer way. Instead of approaching January with strict New Year's resolutions, consider focusing on realistic goals.



Extreme January resets can place unnecessary stress on the body, often worsening fatigue, cravings, and mood rather than improving them.

It's normal to feel like you are "off track" after the holidays, however January doesn't require a transformation, it may just simply need to find its way back to routines. As your return to routine, it is a good time to reflect on the past year by acknowledging both accomplishments and challenges and thoughtfully considering what you'd like to strive towards in the year ahead.

One question I have been asking clients to answer is "[what would your future self ask of you today](#)"? Move a little more, drink more fluids, have more vegetables at mealtime, include probiotic-rich foods, or develop a better sleep routine? Your future self will THANK YOU for the small changes you choose to focus on today and into 2026. Whatever you do, think "my future self will thank me"!



## DO I NEED A DETOX AFTER THE HOLIDAYS?

After the holidays, it is easy to feel like you need to take drastic measures to "reset" or "cleanse" your body, however detox culture assumes our bodies need "fixing" when in reality they are constantly working to maintain balance. "Detoxing" isn't something our bodies do when we start a special diet; Our liver plays a central role in the process every

day which can help explain why restrictive detoxes can actually make the liver's job harder. Let's dig in a bit deeper to understand why:

### 1. The role of the liver

The liver is an essential organ that performs over 500 vital functions to keep the body in balance. It plays key roles in: (1)

- filtering the blood to remove waste products
- regulating blood sugar levels by storing excess glucose as glycogen for later use
- producing compounds for the body to function properly
- filters every drop of blood that leaves the digestive tract by removing toxins, byproducts, and other harmful substances
- produces bile, which is a critical fluid needed in the digestion and absorption of fats
- regulates blood clotting
- stores key vitamins and minerals

Focus on how to support a healthy liver - focus on balanced nutrition with whole foods! Let us help you understand this better by having a consultation in office!

### 2. Why restriction backfires

Typical detox diets, such as juice cleanses, eliminating major food groups, and long-term fasting (24 hours +), [have no compelling research evidence to support their use for weight management or toxin elimination](#) (2).

With that said, when we look at the liver from a logical point of view, all of its functions require energy from calories, and many key nutrients. Without enough nutritious food, the liver doesn't have the raw materials it needs to keep these systems operating efficiently. For example, the liver needs protein that provides the building blocks for enzymes that are used to remove harmful compounds from the body (3).

When calorie intake is too low, the body sees this as a form of stress which triggers it to increase the stress hormone, cortisol. Over time, high levels of cortisol influence how the liver operates which can lead to liver inflammation, stimulating the release of stored glucose into the bloodstream and interrupting other body processes including insulin resistance, and interfering with fat metabolism (4). Too much cortisol not only negatively affects the liver, but also can contribute to high blood sugar, visceral weight gain, high blood pressure, poor sleep, mental health disorders, and muscle weakness.

Additionally, restrictive detox diets can do more harm than good by increasing the risk of nutrient deficiencies, losing muscle and water weight instead of the intended fat weight, dehydration, and metabolism slowdown.

Forget the quick fixes! Improve your diet not only for your liver but for your overall health! We are here to help you!

### 3. Detox pathways are naturally supported through food

- **Protein:** provides the amino acids that the liver needs to make enzymes involved in detoxification and metabolism. Good sources of protein include eggs, poultry, legumes, and fish.
- **B Vitamins:** including B2, B3, B6, folate, and B12 are co-factors in the reactions in the liver which converts harmful substances into forms that our bodies can safely remove. B vitamins are found in foods such as whole grains, leafy greens, beans, eggs, and dairy.
- **Fibre:** after the liver has processed the toxins, fibre plays a key role in helping to excrete them out of the body. Fibre binds to bile, which is carrying the detoxified compounds, and helps move it through the digestive tract to be excreted instead of reabsorbed. Fruits, vegetables, legumes, seeds, and whole grains are good sources of fibre.
- **Antioxidants:** during the liver's detox process, they can produce reactive by-products called free radicals. Antioxidants help neutralize these, which in turn regulates harmful oxidative stress on our bodies' organs. Berries, citrus fruits, and cruciferous vegetables are some sources of antioxidants.

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## HOW CAN I SUPPORT MY BODY THIS JANUARY?

- **Consistent eating matters more than you think:** Eating regular and balanced meals helps keep your blood sugar stable. In turn, this supports steady energy, mood, and focus throughout the day. When meals are skipped, blood sugar can dip too low and trigger a stress response in the body, this often leads to higher levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, which in the long run is linked to fatigue, irritability, and increased cravings.

Eating at consistent times supports your body's internal rhythms which makes it easier to regulate hormones like cortisol and insulin. Steadiness promotes better energy throughout the day, as well as balanced appetite and cravings.

- **Nervous system regulation:** The nervous system and digestion are very much connected. When your body feels safe it signals to your parasympathetic nervous system that it can

focus on essential functions, including digestion, instead of being in a state of “fight or flight” which can prioritize stress responses over digestion.

This means that habits that support nervous system regulation can also enhance digestion, metabolism and immune functions (5).

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Mindful eating:** eat without screens, pay attention to each bite.
- **Getting enough rest:** take some time for yourself between your daily obligations.
- **Regular movement:** implementing a simple weekly routine where you have scheduled times to move your body can go a long way.
- **Stay hydrated:** dehydration can disrupt nerve signals.
- **Add one habit:** something that supports your body and feels doable (add a habit instead of restriction). For example, aiming to drink a full glass of water before breakfast to help reach your hydration goals.

## 5 STRATEGIES FOR GOAL SETTING IN 2026



Did you know that the second Friday of January has adopted the nickname “**Quitter’s Day**”? It’s the day when many people tend to abandon their New Year’s resolutions.

But why do resolutions often fail? Perhaps it’s due to setting overly ambitious goals, neglecting the underlying “why” behind the resolution, or sometimes not being fully prepared for change. Despite these challenges, year after year, many of us continue to set resolutions, however by setting clear intentions as goals and using these steps as a guide, we can build sustainable habits that support our health without restriction, guilt, or burnout.

### 1. Set SMART goals

- **Specific:** clearly define what you want to achieve
- **Measurable:** establish criteria to track progress and determine success
- **Achievable:** ensure your goal is realistic given your available tools and resources
- **Relevant:** align your goal with your long-term aspirations
- **Time-bound:** set clear deadlines to propel yourself forward

## 2. Put it in writing

Jot down your goals and keep them visible. This simple act helps to keep your objectives at the forefront of your mind.

## 3. Break it down

Divide larger goals into smaller, more manageable steps. Setting these smaller milestones makes your objectives feel less overwhelming and keeps you on track.

## 4. Enlist an accountability partner

Seek out someone who can regularly check in on your progress and hold you accountable. If your goal is nutrition-related, let Inner Health Nutrition be your trusted accountability partner!

## 5. Visualize success

Take time to visualize yourself achieving your goal. This powerful technique can serve as a motivating force, boosting your confidence and commitment.

As Registered Dietitians, we are equipped to help you set realistic, manageable nutrition goals to achieve health and wellness! Contact our office to book an appointment to help you prioritize yourself this new year.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE NUTRITION THEMES FOR 2026?

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### 1. FOOD AS A TOOL FOR LONGEVITY

Nutrition is increasingly about helping people live *better*, not just longer. There's growing focus on foods that support brain health, support memory, focus, and resilience against age-related cognitive decline, especially as populations age and interest in disease prevention rises.

Everyday nutrition that supports long-term wellbeing that starts with prevention, rather than treatment, is becoming more central to how we think about healthy eating. Some nutrition trends relating to this include a focus on whole foods, prioritizing healthy fats, increasing protein intake, and minimizing processed foods. Functional ingredients like antioxidants, omega-3s, and polyphenols are part of this growing area of interest (6). No surprise here!



## 2. GENDER-BASED HEALTH

New research is beginning to close the gap in understanding men's and women's distinct nutrition needs. This includes everything from hormonal balance to life-stage-specific nutrient priorities, leading to more tailored, evidence-based nutrition approaches for different genders.

The reality is that as of now, much of the research that shapes nutrition guidelines come from studies that historically underrepresented women, meaning evidence may not fully reflect women's unique physiological responses.

This gap matters because sex and gender can influence how people respond to foods, nutrients, and metabolic processes. Newer research efforts are working to include more female participants and explore sex-specific responses to diet, which helps build more inclusive and accurate nutritional science (7). It's about time!

## 3. REGULATORY CHANGES IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Front-of-package nutrition labeling is becoming more common globally, with many countries introducing mandatory labels that make key nutrition information easier and quicker to see. These policies aim to help consumers make healthier choices while encouraging food manufacturers to reformulate products to meet healthier standards.

As of January 2026, Canada is implementing a front-of-package nutrition labelling mandate that requires companies to label prepackaged foods with "High in Saturated Fat", "High in Sugars", or "High in Sodium" if they exceed specified amounts of these nutrients (8). Have you noticed these on packages already? Has this been influencing your buying decisions?



## 4. SUSTAINABLE NUTRITION

Sustainability is moving from a niche concern to a core part of how we think about food systems. Climate change, soil degradation, and biodiversity loss are all influencing how foods are produced and how resilient our food supply can be without compromising the ability of future generations to access nutritious foods.

It's easy to overlook that healthy soil is a foundation of growing nourishing food, but recent research highlights that soil health directly affects crop quality, nutrient availability, and long-term food security. Evidence is starting to show us how protecting soil health is not just an environmental issue... it relates to nutrition as well (9)! This is definitely one we will keep an eye on!

## 5. THE RISE OF FIBRE

Dietary fibre is projected to be one of the biggest dietary themes of 2026 as it's becoming more of a mainstream health focus with more people gaining interest in their gut health. Fibre is increasingly recognized not only for supporting digestion, but also for its role in blood sugar balance, cholesterol management, hormone regulation, and long-term metabolic health.

As research continues to highlight the connection between a diverse gut microbiome and overall wellbeing, people are shifting toward fibre-rich foods like legumes, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds (10).

Did you know that we now offer gut microbiome testing in office through GutCheck™? A simple stool sample can tell us a lot about what is happening in your gut. A detailed report provides explanation of what types of bacteria exist in your gut, how to improve it with diet, and so much more! Want to know more about GutCheck and VIVO by GutCheck which is specifically designed for women?

Click [HERE](#) to read more about this test and how it can help you. Let's get you started on a tailored, personalized approach to dietary change!



## RECIPES TO TRY THIS MONTH

### TURKEY SOUP



### PROTEIN PANCAKES



**BEAN DIP**



**COTTAGE CHEESE EGG BAKE**



**BUFFALO CHICKEN STUFFED SPAGHETTI SQUASH**





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