

The Thyroidparathyroid.com Low Iodine Diet:

Why a low iodine diet?

The low iodine diet depletes iodine in your body, enhancing RAI uptake, improving the success of RAI imaging and treatment.

How long will I follow the low iodine diet?

The low iodine diet generally lasts for 1-2 weeks prior to radioactive iodine (RAI) imaging or treatment. Your treating physician should provide specific instructions about how long the low iodine diet should be continued in your specific case. In general, the diet is continued for 24-48 hours following RAI therapy. If you are only having a RAI imaging procedure without RAI treatment, you can stop the diet immediately once the imaging is completed.

How much iodine intake is allowed?

Iodine is in a lot of common foods—especially commercially packaged, processed, and baked items. You'll be most successful if you stick with freshly prepared meats, grains and vegetables, and remain mindful of the permitted items as well those *red flag* foods you must avoid as noted below.

The low iodine diet *is not a no iodine diet*. The goal is to reduce iodine intake from normal levels of 150-500mcg per day to less than 50mcg daily. If a small portion of a red-flag food slips by while you're on the diet—don't worry. Just do the best you can! A small slip will not endanger your treatment but poor general adherence to these recommendations can.

Foods to avoid!

Iodine is used extensively in commercial baking to condition dough, and in the dairy industry to prepare animals for milking. Along with almost all seafood and iodized salt, these are some of the most important foods you should avoid.

- *Commercially baked items the contain iodized salt, or iodinated dough conditioners* such as calcium and potassium iodinate are also very high in iodine and must be avoided. If you cannot confirm the integrity of baked foods you'd like to consume—avoid them! See the bread section below for further information.
- *Dairy products of all kinds are particularly high in iodine*, so avoid these foods while on the low iodine diet.
- With the exception of some freshwater fish, *all seafood is very high in iodine* and must be avoided.
- *Iodized table salt also contains high levels of iodine* and is another red-flag food. You may safely use non-iodized salt instead.

Other red flag foods:

- Other foods with high iodine content include: processed meats, pudding mixes, candies, frozen dinners, fast food products, and foods that contain red dye #3. Many multivitamins also contain iodine. Avoid these vitamin products or use multivitamins that you're sure are iodine free.

Medical procedures that use intravenous iodinated contrast can delay your treatment:

If you've had a CT scan, cardiac catheterization, angiogram, or any other procedure that uses intravenous iodinated contrast in the 8 weeks prior any planned RAI imaging or treatment, notify your physicians before starting a low iodine diet! Intravenous contrast is loaded with iodine, and the resulting *iodine intoxication* will require at least a month and possibly longer before your iodine levels return to normal. Your RAI procedure will likely need to be delayed in this case. Your physician may use small urine sample to confirm that your iodine levels have returned to normal.

Sometimes medically necessary contrast-enhanced imaging will be recommended prior to your RAI imaging or treatment. In urgent situations, delaying your RAI procedure may be reasonable and is usually safe. Discuss this with your thyroid cancer doctor to see what's right for you.

Tips for success on the low iodine diet:

The low iodine diet will require you to do without the convenience of many commercially prepared foods and you will instead need to rely on fresh meals you prepare. A little prior planning will therefore go a long way!

Take a few days prior to getting started on the diet to plan meals and do all needed shopping. Order some no-salt Dijon mustard on Amazon or make your own (below). Make sure you stock up on permitted snacks as well as other ingredients you'll need for recipes you plan to use.

Cook Smart:

The other big secret is to cook in bulk! The No Knead/Dutch oven bread is so easy to make (and turns out so deliciously perfect) that you can easily prepare these loaves as needed as you go. Roast a whole chicken and enjoy it for a couple of days! Prepare a big soup or stew, portion these into zip lock plastic bags and freeze for use as needed for lunches or dinners. Make a batch of pasta sauce and prepare a cup or two of salad dressing that you can use as needed. You'll be able to quickly and easily assemble meals from these prepared foods which will make daily life much easier and keep you on track! We have tried to provide recipes that can be enjoyed by everyone in the family while you're stuck with the restrictions of the low iodine diet. Though they'll be able to eat other foods you cannot have, these recipes will be enjoyed by all.

As you start the low iodine diet, you've likely been through a lot—a new cancer diagnosis, thyroidectomy, and now preparation for RAI treatment. The community of the table, sharing meals, and literally breaking bread with your family and loved ones may be some of the best medicine you can have. We hope these recipes and meal suggestions serve as way of not only sustaining you, but also uniting you and those you care about as you rise to meet the new challenges you are now facing.

Food Type	PERMITTED FOODS	RED FLAG FOODS: AVOID!
Dairy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No dairy products are allowed Safe dairy alternatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Almond milk Hemp milk Rice milk Coconut milk Non-dairy cream substitutes Unsalted butter and margarine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All milk, ice cream, yogurt, and cheese products including cream cheese and sour cream Salted butter and margarine
Meat and Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beef, pork, veal WITHOUT injected broth or marinade Small portions of FRESH chicken, turkey Egg whites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All cured meats All luncheon meats All bacon, ham, chipped beef Frankfurters, hot dogs, and sausage Egg yolks and all dishes made with whole eggs
Fish and seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No fish or seafood products are allowed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fish Shellfish Seaweed and kelp Canned fish including sardines and tuna
Breads and baked products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homemade bread Commercially baked products that do not contain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iodized salt dough conditioners that contain calcium iodate or potassium iodate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any bread containing iodized salt, calcium iodate, or potassium iodate Pastries, cookies, and commercially baked cakes, pies, and other products if the iodine content is unknown
Grains and starches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rice you prepare from scratch (no packaged rice mixes) Fresh potatoes without the skin Pasta (without egg, and prepared without iodized salt) Cooked hot cereals prepared without iodized salt (example: oatmeal, cream of wheat) Cold cereal (example: shredded wheat and puffed rice) Flour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egg noodles Packaged rice and pasta mixes Instant hot cereals
Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh fruit Dried fruit Natural fruit preserves or jam with no added coloring Fresh fruit juices and smoothies Natural fruit juices in bottles or cartons Canned fruit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maraschino cherries (Red dye #3) Rhubarb Packaged fruit juice products (example Tang, Hi C, Kool-Aid)
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All fresh vegetables other than spinach Homemade tomato sauce made with fresh tomatoes No salt added tomato paste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canned and frozen vegetables Spinach Pickles and sauerkraut Commercially prepared tomato/pasta sauce

Food Type	PERMITTED FOODS	RED FLAG FOODS: AVOID!
Restaurant foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may eat freshly prepared foods in restaurants as long as you ensure there is no added salt, or other commercially prepared sauces or seasonings. Stick with freshly grilled vegetables, meat, and poultry prepared with olive oil. Use lemon and pepper instead of iodized salt for seasoning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid all other prepared restaurant foods
Snacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsalted peanut butter Popcorn prepared with vegetable or olive oil with no added salt Unsalted Rice cakes Natural sorbet with no added color Unsalted nuts Unsalted peanut butter Carrot sticks Raisins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Salted peanut butter Salted nuts All salted snack foods such as pretzels, potato chips, corn chips Salted crackers Red Jell-O Candy, milk chocolate Salted nuts
Oils and dressings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vegetable and olive oil Unsalted butter and margarine Homemade mayonnaise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial salad dressings and mayonnaise Salted butter and margarine
Beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Black coffee, black tea (nondairy creamer can be added) Sprite and 7-Up Homemade lemonade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hot cocoa mix Instant coffee and instant tea All powdered and canned beverages All other sodas Instant breakfast and nutrition shake mixes All commercially prepared lemonade and iced tea Beer Mineral water containing sodium
Condiments and spices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Onion and garlic powder Vinegar No-salt, or homemade mustard (below) only Homemade Ketchup (below) Homemade Mayonnaise (below) Fresh and dried herbs Natural honey 100% pure maple syrup Molasses (other than black strap molasses) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea-salt and iodized salt Soy sauce Onion and garlic salt Ketchup Mayonnaise All mustards, except <u>no salt mustard</u> (check on Amazon) Meat tenderizers
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instant breakfast drinks Diet/nutrition bars Tofu Canned soups, bouillon cubes Multivitamins that contain iodine All foods containing red dye #3 Black strap molasses Foods containing alginates, agar-agar, carrageenan, and other seaweed-based thickeners

Sample Meals:**Breakfast #1:**

- Hot cereal with dried fruit, nuts, and real maple syrup (not artificial syrup). Steel cut Irish oatmeal is delicious and easy to prepare with a very little bit of planning (see below)

Breakfast #2:

- Egg white frittata (see below)

Breakfast #3:

- Scoop ½ or a whole avocado on to 1-2 slices of home-made wheat toast (recipe below)
- Drizzle with olive oil
- Add a slice of tomato
- Season with a pinch of non-iodized salt and black pepper

For any breakfast:

1-2 slices toast with natural honey, natural jam (no food coloring) unsalted butter or margarine, or olive oil

Any fresh fruit or fresh fruit juices (not canned)

Black coffee or clear tea (nondairy creamer is OK!)

Lunch Suggestions:**Main courses:**

- Homemade vegetable or chicken soup (recipe below)
- 3-4 oz. fresh poultry, roast beef, lamb, veal, pork

OK for every lunch!

- Fresh vegetables (no canned, frozen allowed if no added salt)
- Salad, with homemade oil and vinegar dressing (no store-bought dressing)
- Fresh potato (without skin) or homemade rice (not enriched or a packaged mix)
- Coffee, tea or 100% fruit juice (natural, not canned)

Dinner Suggestions:**Main courses:**

- 3-4 oz. fresh poultry, roast beef, lamb, veal, pork
- Pasta (with no salt or eggs) with homemade tomato sauce (not from a can or jar—see Lucia's tomato sauce below)

OK for every dinner!

- Fresh vegetables (no canned, frozen allowed if no added salt)
 - Steam, or fry in olive oil with garlic (yum)
- Salad, with homemade oil and vinegar dressing (no store-bought dressing)
- Fresh potato (without skin) or homemade rice (not enriched or a packaged mix)

Snack Suggestions:

- Fresh fruits
- Fresh vegetables (including salads with homemade dressing, carrot or celery sticks)
- Popcorn (homemade with non-iodized salt and olive or vegetable oil)
- Rice cakes (no salt added) with unsalted peanut butter
 - Add a drizzle of honey and some sliced banana!
- Natural sorbets (no food coloring or added salt)
- 1-2 slices toast (homemade...see below) with natural honey, natural jam (no food coloring) or olive oil
- Black coffee or clear tea (nondairy creamer is OK!)

Irish Oatmeal:

1 cup of regular (not instant) Irish oatmeal
1 pinch of non-iodized salt
½ cup raisins (optional)

Add oatmeal to a 2-quart pot and rinse with cold water a few times until water is clear

Add 4 cups cold water

Add raisins if you like them

Bring to boil on high heat.

Immediately turn heat off and cover pot.

Leave the pot on the stove until the next morning.

The next morning, reheat a portion in the microwave, or rewarm the entire pot and feed your family!

Store unused cooked oatmeal in the fridge in a sealed container and you'll be set for at least the next few days!

Egg White Frittata:

4 egg whites (yolks are not allowed!)

veggies you like. Try combinations from any of the items below to make ½-¾ of a cup:

2 handfuls of kale

4-6 baby bella mushroom sliced

½ diced red bell pepper and ½ cup diced potato

½ cup broccoli rabe (cooked and squeezed to remove all liquid)

½ diced tomato

Preheat your oven to broil

Saute mixed veggies in a 7-8" non-stick pan on medium heat with a bit of oil to soften.

Squeeze out and discard any liquid that is released during the saute

Whisk egg whites in a bowl until lightly beaten and pour over contents of pan

Season with non-iodized salt and pepper

Cook on low-medium heat for 1-2 minutes until the bottom and sides of the frittata start to set

Gently peel away the edges of the frittata from the pan and allow the uncooked egg white to fill in the sides. Cook for 1 more minute

Toss the whole pan in to the oven and broil until the frittata puffs up and starts to get a bit of color on top

Remove the pan and cut the frittata in half (use a spatula so you don't ruin your non-stick pan).

Serve with some homemade ketchup and a dash of cayenne pepper if you like it spicy!

Bread (and the bread conundrum):

You have to have bread—right? The problem with store-bought and commercially baked goods is that *iodized salt* and *iodinated dough conditioners* are used in some commercial bakeries and these ingredients may introduce 50-60mcg of iodine per 100g of product. ***That means that an entire day's allowance of iodine on the low iodine diet may be contained in 1-2 slices of commercially produced bread, cake, etc.*** Whether a bakery uses iodized salt or iodinated dough conditioners may not be reported and the iodine in these products can blow your diet very easily!

The traditional solution for a low iodine diet is to make your own bread. Baking at home is still a great option, and will be even easier if you have a bread machine. If you don't have a bread machine—baking will take a bit of time but it's still a great option. If you decide to bake your own, we've provided a recipe below for No Knead/Dutch Oven Bread that will produce fabulous results with very little effort. *But here is an important tip*—if you're able to find bread at a store or from a local baker and *can confirm that neither iodinated conditioners, nor iodized salt (including sea salt) are used in their recipes*, that bread will be just as safe as bread you can make yourself. The key is making sure you trust the baker and that they can confirm the integrity of their product. Many artisanal bakers pride themselves on the purity of their bread which fundamentally is a simple mix of flour, salt, yeast and water. Small artisanal bakeries typically avoid additives and conditioning agents used in larger scale commercial bakeries but watch out for iodized salt and sea salt! If they can assure you that their product is made the same way you would make bread at home—and you trust them—go for it. You'll be fine, and you'll save loads of time.

No Knead/Dutch Oven Bread

We think the recipe originated with Jim Lahey at the Sullivan Street Bakery in New York—first made famous by Mark Bittman of the NY Times as “No Knead Bread” in 2006. There are now many variations, but all props (and many thanks) to Jim for popularizing this simple and stupefyingly crusty, chewy amazing loaf. You will need a 4 to 6 quart Dutch oven with a cover—like the enameled cast iron products made by Le Creuset, Staub, and others. But a heavy pyrex, steel, or ceramic pot will work as long as you have a cover. If you even think you might want to try this—go for it! You won’t be sorry!

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour. This recipe will work with white flour only or a mix of whole wheat and white flours

½ cup flour, wheat bran, or corn meal to cover prep surfaces and the dough

¼ teaspoon instant yeast

1 ¼ teaspoons non-iodized salt

1 ½ cups cold water right from the tap

Options:

Mix in a couple of handfuls of any combination of the following with the flour, salt and yeast before you add the water and then proceed with the recipe:

- Walnut, pecan or other nut pieces
- Dried sour cherries, cranberries, or other dried fruit
- Seeds like poppy, Nigella, flax, sunflower, pumpkin, or any others you like

In a large bowl, combine all dry ingredients and mix by hand for a few seconds to blend them all together

Add nuts, seeds or dried fruit if you want to

Add water

Mix the dough to form a very shaggy, wet dough

Leave the dough in the bowl and cover with plastic wrap

Set the dough aside to rise on a counter top where it isn’t drafty for at least 12 and up to 24 hours (yup—12-24 hours). This dough is forgiving and as long as you’re in this window you don’t need to precisely time the rise. When the dough has risen sufficiently, it will have numerous small air bubbles on the surface and generally at least doubles in size

When the first rise is done, turn the dough out onto a well-floured surface—it will be quite wet and very soft. Don’t panic—it’s supposed to be that way!

Pat it down gently into a rounded disk

As though you’re folding a letter, fold the dough in thirds, first from top to bottom and then again from the sides.

Place the dough, seam side down on cotton tea towel (not terrycloth) that is heavily sprinkled with flour, bran or corn meal. This dough is wet and sticky and if you don’t cover the towel sufficiently, your dough will stick

Sprinkle more flour or wheat bran on top of the dough and fold the towel to cover

Set the dough aside to rise on a counter top where it isn’t drafty for another 1-2 hours

30 minutes prior the end of the second rise, heat the covered Dutch oven in a 475°F oven. Make sure it’s fully up to temperature before you proceed!

Once your Dutch oven is hot, remove it from the oven (careful!) and set the cover aside. Unwrap the dough, and flip it into the pot so the seam side is now up.

Cover the pot and return it to the 475°F oven for 30 minutes with the cover on, remove the cover and bake for another 15-20 minutes with the cover off

You’re done when bread is nicely browned and looks crusty

Turn the bread out of the pot and allow to cool

Eat and be amazed. Yes...you made that!

Tight on time? Want to cook a Dutch oven bread even faster?

Just double the yeast and use warm water. These modifications will significantly shorten the prep time. Because the rise is faster, the crumb will be a bit less airy but it’s still an awesome loaf!

3 cups all-purpose or bread flour. This recipe will work with white flour only or a mix of whole wheat and white flours

½ cup flour, wheat bran, or corn meal to cover prep surfaces and the dough
½ *teaspoon* instant yeast
1 ¼ *teaspoons* non-iodized salt
1 ½ cups *very warm* water

Combine all the dry ingredients (be sure you're using ½ *teaspoon* of instant yeast for this recipe)
Add the warm water. The water should feel quite warm but should not hurt when you insert a finger! As long as the temperature is not hot enough to hurt you, your yeast won't be unhappy either.
Mix and leave the dough in the bowl
Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and set the dough aside to rise on a counter top for 4-8 hours. The first rise is done when the dough approximately doubles in size and has innumerable tiny bubbles on the surface
When the first rise is done, turn the dough out onto to a well-floured surface-it will be quite wet and very soft
Pat it down gently into a rounded disk
As though you're folding a letter, fold the dough in thirds first from top to bottom and then again from the sides.
Place the dough, seam side down on cotton tea towel (not terrycloth) that is heavily sprinkled with flour, bran or corn meal. This dough is wet and sticky and if you don't cover the towel sufficiently, your dough will stick
Sprinkle more flour or wheat bran on top of the dough and fold to cover or cover it with another tea towel
Set the dough aside to rise on a counter top where it isn't drafty for another 1-2 hours
30 minutes prior the end of the 2-hour rise, heat the covered Dutch oven in a 475°F oven. Make sure it's fully up to temperature before you proceed!
Once your Dutch oven is hot, remove it from the oven (careful!) and set the cover aside. Unwrap the dough, and flip it into the pot so the seam side is now up. Cover and return to the 475°F oven for 30 minutes with the cover on, remove the cover and bake for another 15-20 minutes with the cover off until the top is nicely browned and it looks crusty
Turn the bread out of the pot and allow to cool before eating

Low Iodine Condiments and Basics:

Homemade mayonnaise:

1 egg white. No egg yolk
1 *teaspoon* non-iodized salt
½ *teaspoon* no-salt or homemade Dijon mustard
½ *teaspoon* paprika
3 *tablespoons* cider, champagne, white balsamic, or white vinegar (your choice)
1 cup corn, safflower, canola oil (your choice)

Place all the ingredients except the oil in a blender or small food processor, and mix on low-speed until fully combined
If you have an arm that does not tire easily, you can make this recipe in a bowl and mix by hand with a whisk
While mixing continuously by hand, or in a blender the slowest speed possible, slowly drizzle in 1 cup of oil. If the oil starts to pool and is not being quickly incorporated into the mayonnaise, stop adding oil and wait until the pooled oil is incorporated before you restart drizzling in the oil.
Once fully combined, place into a sealed container and keep refrigerated between uses
Makes about 1-1/2 cups of mayonnaise

Home Made Ketchup:

12 ounces of no salt added tomato paste
4 *tablespoons* of white, white balsamic, or champagne vinegar (your choice)
½ *teaspoon* dry mustard
½ *teaspoon* salt
1 *teaspoon* chili powder
½ cup white or brown corn syrup
1 pinch of allspice
1 pinch of dried cloves
¼ *teaspoon* cayenne pepper

2-3 ounces of water sufficient to thin mix to desired consistency

Mix all ingredients until fully combined

Transfer to a sealable container and keep refrigerated between uses

Dijon Mustard

Mustard is a great condiment and a key ingredient for many salad dressings. Here is what to use unless you can find no-salt Dijon mustard which is available on Amazon and in some food stores (and to which you may want to add some non-iodized salt)!

3 ½ cups dry white wine
½ cup champagne, white balsamic, or white wine vinegar
1 cup white or yellow onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 oz dry mustard powder
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
2 teaspoons non-iodized salt
2 teaspoons white sugar

Combine the wine and vinegar in a sauce pan with the onion and garlic and bring to a boil

Reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes, remove from the stove and set aside to cool

Place the dry mustard powder into another pan

Strain the wine/vinegar to remove all solids. Discard the solids and pour the liquid into the pan with the mustard powder

Add the salt, sugar, and vegetable oil and mix until smooth

Place the pan on low heat and stir continuously until the mustard has thickened

Add more vinegar or salt as needed and continue to thicken to a nice thick creamy consistency

Transfer the mustard to a non-metallic container and store in the refrigerator.

Once cool, you can use the mustard right away but its flavor will continue to develop over several days

Homemade salad dressings:

These are true emulsified dressings so they are little work, but the recipe will make enough to last a week or so, and the taste is worth it!

Note that both recipes use mustard. The small amount in the basic vinaigrette helps the dressing become an emulsion. The larger amount in the Dijon vinaigrette adds depth of flavor and a real tang!

Basic Vinaigrette:

1 tablespoon no-salt or homemade Dijon mustard
½ cup champagne, white balsamic, or red wine vinegar
1 ½ cup olive oil
non-iodized salt
Pepper to taste
1 peeled and smashed cloves of garlic

Dijon mustard vinaigrette:

¼ cup no-salt or homemade Dijon mustard
½ cup champagne vinegar
1 ½ cups olive oil
non-iodized salt
Pepper to taste
1 peeled and smashed cloves of garlic

Optional: dress up either of these dressings with 1-2 tablespoons of chopped chives, shallots or both

A teaspoon of chopped fresh or dry thyme will nicely perfume the basic recipe, but keep the thyme out of the Dijon vinaigrette—that simply isn't done!

Place the garlic in a mixing bowl

Add the Dijon mustard in the right amount according to the recipe you're following

Add all the vinegar and mix

Slowly drizzle in the olive oil mixing with a whisk constantly. If the oil starts to accumulate and isn't incorporating into the dressing, slow your pour rate and keep mixing until it does!

When all the oil is incorporated, the dressing should be thick and not runny.

Add non-iodized salt and pepper to taste.

Test the dressing by dipping a piece of lettuce or a vegetable into the bowl and tasting. A good dressing will maintain the ping of the vinegar and the tang of the mustard (if used). If you need to push the flavor a bit more—add vinegar or mustard as needed and whisk

If the dressing is too bright, tone it down with some additional oil.

Add shallots or herbs at this point if you'd like and you're all set!

If your friends ask for the recipe...tell them it's our secret!

Israeli lemon dressing:

¼ cup fresh squeezed lemon juice

1 medium smashed garlic clove

½ cup olive oil

¼ non-iodized salt

Pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a jar with a tight-fitting lid, large enough so that it is no more than 2/3 full.

Shake until all ingredients are well mixed

Season with non-iodized salt and pepper to taste

Serve immediately and refrigerate the rest

This dressing is not emulsified and will separate, but can be shaken and remixed for subsequent uses.

The classic pairing for this dressing is diced cucumber (the long skinny seedless kind) and diced tomato (Roma tomatoes are best since they don't have a lot of juice). It's also great on tabbouleh (below)

Stock and Soups:

Chicken Stock:

Chicken stock is versatile and can be used to make soups or as a base for stews. If you make a pot of this, you won't be sorry!

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 medium white or yellow onion

2 leaks, white only

2 stalks of celery

1 large carrot

1 large clove of garlic

2 bay leaves

One very large sprig of thyme

5 pounds of chicken (chicken backs are the least expensive, and have great flavor)

2 teaspoons of non-iodized salt

Fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Coarsely chop all vegetables and garlic

Wash and drain chicken pieces

On medium heat, heat oil in stock pot deep enough to hold all the chicken with at least several inches to spare.

And garlic and onion, and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until the onions become translucent

Add all remaining vegetables, season with half the salt and continue to sauté for another 3-5 minutes until the vegetables are well wilted.

Remove the pot from heat and add all chicken pieces

Add water sufficient to cover the chicken with 1-2 inches and return to medium heat until boiling

Reduce heat to low and continue to cook uncovered until the chicken pieces are falling apart (1-2 hours)

Remove pot from heat, and allow to cool so contents can be easily handled

Using a china cap, colander, or strainer, strain the broth and remove all solids

Season with remaining salt and black pepper as needed to taste

*for an even deeper flavored broth, prior to adding garlic and onion, sauté the chicken pieces on low heat until evenly browned. Remove from pot and continue with the recipe as above

Potato Leek Potage:

A really easy recipe that makes a delicious filling soup. It's super easy and super fast to make. Even easier if you have an immersion blender!

4 large leeks
1 large potato
6-8 cups of chicken broth (above)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove of garlic
½ teaspoon non-iodized salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
Optional pinch of cayenne or hot paprika

Split the leeks from just above the root end to the green top and carefully clean under cold water. Be careful!

Leeks are usually very sandy. Get it all out!

Cut off the green tops of the leeks conserving only the white part. Trim off the root end

Coarse chop the leeks

Chop the potato into 1/2" cubes

Smash the garlic clove

Heat 2 tablespoon olive oil on medium heat in a soup pot

Add garlic and leek and sauté until the leek is soft and translucent

Add the potato

Add chicken broth until vegetables are covered with ½" of stock

Cook on low-medium heat for 20 minutes

Use an immersion blender to puree the soup, or blend in a blender in batches as needed

Add additional water or stock as needed to bring soup to a thick but not gloppy consistency

Season with black pepper, non-iodized salt to taste

Ladle and serve in a bowl topped with a pinch of cayenne or paprika for color and some extra zip!

Refrigerate the leftovers and enjoy again whenever possible!

Quick (and delicious) Noodle Soup:

If you went to the trouble of making a pot of stock, here is a fast recipe that you can make anytime using the stock as a base.

1 ½ cup of chicken broth (above)

A handful of egg-free pasta, soba or udon noodles

A handful of coarse chopped greens like broccoli rabe, kale, or any other you like (but not spinach!)

1-2 scallion: white part sliced fine

Heat the broth until simmering

Add the noodles and simmer until nearly cooked

Add the greens and simmer until wilted

Toss in the scallion

Season with non-iodized salt and pepper to taste

Zip it up with a pinch of cayenne if you'd like

Pasta Dishes:

Lucia's Tomato Sauce:

There is a real Lucia in Lucca, Italy who gave us this recipe, so in addition to being delicious, it's authentic! Listen to Puccini while you prepare it. He is one of the greatest Italian opera composers ever and also was from Lucca.

12-15 whole Roma tomatoes

1 large head of garlic

1 generous pinch of cayenne pepper
1 cup olive oil (yes—1 cup!)
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon non-iodized salt

Peel each clove of garlic and remove the end
Clean and rinse the tomatoes. Set aside to drain
Half-fill a large stock pot with water and bring to a boil
Please a large bowl half filled with ice and enough water to keep the ice loose

Score each tomato with a shallow x on the bottom (the side opposite the stem) just deep enough to break the skin. Don't cut deeply into the flesh.
In batches of 4-5, add tomatoes to the stock pot and simmer on medium heat for 30-60 seconds. Don't add too many tomatoes or the water will cool and the tomatoes will not blanch. Immediately remove the tomatoes and shock them by placing in the bowl with ice and enough water to keep the ice loose. When the tomatoes are cool remove them from the ice bath and set them aside.
When all of the tomatoes have been prepared, peel the skins and discard. Conserve the tomato flesh.

Drain the stock pot and dry completely. Add the olive oil and heat on low/medium heat. Add all the garlic clothes and sauté until they become light to medium nutty brown in color—don't burn the garlic! Remove the garlic clothes from the oil and set aside.

Add the conserved tomato to the olive oil. Be careful—liquid will cause the oil to splatter.
Add sugar, salt, and cayenne pepper
Cook on low/medium heat for 20-30 minutes until the tomatoes are falling apart, and most of the tomato juice has evaporated.
While tomatoes are cooking, fine chop all the garlic once it has cooled sufficiently to handle
When the tomatoes have finished cooking, add the chopped garlic and completely incorporate

Serve the sauce now, topped with chopped basal if you'd like, or place it in a sealable container and keep refrigerated for a later use

Chicken and Pasta

2 cups uncooked non-egg noodles bow-tie or rotini pasta
1 teaspoon non-iodized salt
1 tablespoon oil
1 lb chicken breast cut into 1-inch pieces
1 small squash, sliced
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh green beans, cut into 2-inch pieces
1 cup chicken broth (recipe above)
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped fresh or 2 teaspoons dried basil leaves

Cook pasta in 3 quarts of boiling water with a generous teaspoon of non-iodized salt.
Drain the pasta into a colander as soon as it is still al-dente (firm to the bite and not cooked all the way through—if you bite it, it should feel like a new stick of gum).
Quickly cool the pasta under cold running water for a few seconds to stop the cooking and set aside to drain
In a large skillet heat the olive oil on medium heat
Add chicken and cook for 3-4 minutes
Add squash and cook for another 3-4 minutes until the chicken is fully cooked through
Remove the squash and chicken from the skillet and set aside
Add the green beans and chicken stock to the skillet and cook 5-6 minutes until the beans are bright green and cooked but still crisp
Return the chicken and squash to the pan
Add the cooked pasta
Cook the meal for another 2 minutes or so until all ingredients are completely warmed through
Stir in basal
Enjoy!

Perfect Roast Chicken:

The key to a really good roasted chicken is to start with good quality chicken, a really hot oven, a really hot roasting skillet, and really dry skin (the chicken's not yours). The best skillet is heavy cast iron, ceramic or glass. You'll be able to enjoy this the day it's made and then pick on it to make lunches and additional dinners for several more days. Little pieces you pick off the bone are great in the Quick and Delicious Noodle soup (above), added to some tomato sauce and eaten over egg-free pasta, or in a chicken salad you can make with the mayonnaise recipe (above).

1 4-5 lb roasting chicken

Olive oil for drizzling

Non-iodized salt

Black pepper

5-6 peeled cloves of garlic

A handful of fresh herbs like rosemary, sage, thyme or any combination: chop these fine

Place the skillet on a middle rack in the oven at 500°F (yep--500° F!) and heat for at least 15 minutes before use

While the pan is heating:

Rinse the chicken in the sink and completely dry with paper towels. The chicken must be dry for the oil to stick in the subsequent step and encourage proper browning (you do like crispy skin, don't you?)

Once your chicken is dry, tuck the wing tips behind the wing to prevent burning.

Drizzle the chicken generously with olive oil

Season the chicken with non-iodized salt, black pepper, and garlic powder (not garlic salt) as you like

Carefully remove the cast iron roasting pan from the oven

Place the chicken *breast side up* in the pan and drop in the peeled garlic cloves

Return the chicken to the 500°F oven

After 15 minutes at 500°F or once the skin of the chicken is nicely browning, reduce the heat to 350°F

When you reduce the heat to 350°F you can toss your chopped herbs on top of the chicken or just cook it plain. It's great either way!

Continue to cook for another 25-30 minutes (depending on the size of your chicken) until done. A properly cooked chicken will be nicely browned, and the juices will flow clear (not pink or bloody) when you pierce the crisp skin between the thigh and the chicken body.

Salads:

Tabbouleh Salad:

2 large garlic cloves smashed and minced

1 cup bulgur (cracked wheat)

1 cup boiling water.

1 cup chopped seeded Roma tomatoes.

3/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley.

1-2 tablespoons of chopped shallot or white onion

½ cup Israeli lemon dressing (above)

½ teaspoon salt

Pepper to taste

Place the bulgur in large bowl and pour 1 cup boiling water on top. Mix and let stand about 15 minutes until the bulgur is tender and the water is absorbed.

Mix in tomatoes, parsley, onion or shallot

Add the dressing

Mix and adjust seasoning with more fresh lemon juice if the flavor is not bright enough, and salt and pepper to taste

Return the tabbouleh to the refrigerator to stand for at least 30 minutes to 24 hours before serving

Moroccan carrot salad

This recipe makes a big batch that will take you a few days to finish. But don't worry! Though it's delicious from day one, it only gets better as it sits in the fridge—the carrots will soften and the flavors will

meld and synergize! You must have a food processor or a mandolin that will allow you to julienne the carrots, but as long as you do (and you like carrots) this is a real winner! Do not use the pre-shredded carrots you find in your supermarket. Though they may seem tempting, they're too dry and the finished product will be completely disappointing!

3 lbs of carrots washed and peeled. Cut the ends off
1 cup currants or raisins (currants are the best!)
1 bunch dill, washed
1 bunch cilantro, well washed (watch out for sand)
½ bunch Italian flat parsley, well washed (watch out for sand)
1 clove garlic, peeled
1 bunch of green onions, white part sliced
1 rounded teaspoon ground cumin
2 rounded teaspoons paprika (not the spicy or smoked varieties)
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper (more or less as you like)
½ teaspoon non-iodized salt
¼ cup lemon juice (fresh squeezed)
¾ cup olive oil

Julienne the carrots with a mandolin or food processor and place them in a large bowl

To prepare the dill—don't get crazy plucking out the dill fronds and separating the stems—too much work! Take the entire bunch and hold it by the stem end. Using a sharp knife, slice the dill off the stems like you're whittling a piece of wood. Remove any large stems and fine chop the rest. Small stems don't matter! Throw the dill in the bowl with the carrots.

To prepare the cilantro, you can do much the same thing but you'll need to do a bit more work separating the leaves which you'll keep, from the larger stems that you won't. The small stems are fine! Fine chop and throw in the bowl.

Ditto for the parsley

Toss all the other ingredients in the bowl and mix.

The salad should be wet, but not soupy. Add more lemon juice and olive oil as needed—usually in the same 1:3 ratio

Season with more salt, pepper, cumin and paprika as needed, and spice to taste with more cayenne if you'd like.

Serve and enjoy. Refrigerate the rest and get ready for days of deliciousness!

Beets with faro and herbs

Faro is an ancient grain that the Romans loved. It has a great nutty flavor and chewy texture.

Beets are special. Some people love them, and some...not so much. But, as long as you do like beets (and with this recipe—we really do!) you get an extra bonus—they really keep you regular! No joke! Keeping your bowels moving is really important to move RAI through your gut after your treatment ([see the RAI video for more details](#)). Red beets will also turn your urine pink but don't panic! All those betacyanins passing through your bowels and bladder are totally healthy! Delicious and cathartic! Could anything be better? And, another healthy, fantastic, and satisfying salad that only gets better as it sits.

2-2 ½ lbs of red, gold, or mixed beets. Select beets of similar size for even cooking

1 cup faro
1 bunch dill, washed
1 bunch cilantro, well washed to remove sand
½ bunch Italian flat parsley, well washed to remove sand
1 bunch of green onions, white part sliced
1 teaspoon non-iodized salt
¼ cup lemon juice (fresh squeezed)
¾ cup olive oil
Pepper to taste

Prepare the beets:

Cut the leaves off the beet if present.

Wash under cold water to remove loose dirt from the skin which you'll leave on for now
Snip off the long central root if it's still present. Don't worry about snipping the rough top of the beet where the leaves attach. You'll get that later
Place the cleaned beets in a heavy cast iron, glass or ceramic skillet with a lid
Add a few glugs of olive oil
Cover and place in the oven
The beets are ready when a knife can be inserted without a lot of resistance—about 40-45 minutes.
Remove the beets from the oven. Leave them in the covered skillet and set aside to cool
When they're cool enough to handle, work in the sink with a paring knife and running water as needed.
Peel off the skin which should now come off quite easily, and cut off the tops of the beets
Cut the beets into bitesize wedges and place in a large bowl

Prepare the faro:

Rinse the faro a few times under cold water to remove excess surface starch
Place the faro in saucepan large enough to hold the faro and 4 cups of water
Add ½ teaspoon of non-iodized
The faro to a boil. Cover and reduce to a rolling simmer until the faro until it is al dente (just like pasta—you should be able to cut through it with your teeth and it should have the firmness of a new piece of chewing gum)—about 30 minutes
Drain and run under cold water to stop the cooking

To prepare the dill—don't get crazy plucking out the dill fronds and separating the stems—too much work!
Take the entire bunch and hold it by the stem end. Using a sharp knife, working from the stem end to the top of the bunch, slice the dill off the stems like you're whittling a piece of wood. Remove any large stems and fine chop the rest. Small stems don't matter! Throw the dill in the bowl with the beets.

To prepare the cilantro, you can do much the same thing but you'll need to do a bit more work separating the leaves which you'll keep, from the larger stems that you won't. The small stems are fine! Fine chop and throw in the bowl.

Ditto for the parsley

Add the sliced green onion to the bowl

Add the remaining ½ teaspoon of non-iodized salt

Add the lemon juice and olive oil and mix

Add more lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper to taste

The faro will eventually absorb some of the oil and lemon juice, so don't worry if the salad is a little wet.

As long as it's not soupy—you're good!

Serve as is or after it's chilled in the fridge! Yum!