

# **Privacy Policy**

*Last Updated: October 24, 2025*

## **Introduction**

Welcome to The Food Doctor ("we," "us," or "our"). We respect your privacy and are committed to protecting your personal information. This Privacy Policy explains how we collect, use, disclose, and safeguard your information when you visit our website [thefooddoctor.co.za] (the "Website") and use our services.

Please read this Privacy Policy carefully. By accessing or using our Website, you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to be bound by this Privacy Policy. If you do not agree with the terms of this Privacy Policy, please do not access the Website.

## **Information We Collect**

### *Personal Information You Provide*

We may collect personal information that you voluntarily provide to us when you:

- Subscribe to Our Newsletter or Email List:
  - Email address
  - First name
  - Last name
  - Location/city
- Comment on Blog Posts:
  - Name
  - Email address
  - Website URL
  - Comment content
- Contact Us:
  - Name
  - Email address
  - Subject matter
  - Message content

- Any other information you choose to provide
- Participate in Surveys or Contests:
  - Information you provide in responses
  - Contact information for prize delivery

We do not collect sensitive personal information such as racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, health information, or financial data unless you voluntarily provide it in comments or communications.

### *Information Automatically Collected*

When you visit our Website, we automatically collect certain information about your device and browsing behavior:

- Log Data:
  - IP address
  - Browser type and version
  - Operating system
  - Referring/exit pages
  - Date and time stamps
  - Pages viewed and time spent on pages
  - Links clicked
- Cookies and Tracking Technologies:
  - Cookies (small data files stored on your device)
  - Web beacons
  - Pixel tags
  - Similar tracking technologies

*See our "Cookies and Tracking Technologies" section below for more details.*

### *Third-Party Information*

We may receive information about you from third-party services:

- Analytics Providers:
  - Google Analytics provides aggregated demographic and interest data
- Social Media Platforms:
  - If you interact with our social media pages, we may receive information from those platforms according to their privacy policies

- Email Marketing Platforms:
  - Services like MailChimp or ConvertKit track email opens, clicks, and engagement

## **How We Use Your Information**

We use the information we collect for the following purposes:

- To Provide and Maintain Our Services:
  - Deliver content you've requested (newsletters, updates)
  - Respond to your comments, questions, and requests
  - Process contest or survey entries
  - Send administrative information (policy changes, service updates)
- To Improve Our Website:
  - Analyze usage patterns and trends
  - Understand which content resonates with readers
  - Optimize website performance and user experience
  - Troubleshoot technical issues
- To Communicate With You:
  - Send newsletters and blog updates (with your consent)
  - Respond to inquiries
  - Notify you about relevant content or events
  - Send promotional communications (you can opt-out at any time)
- To Protect Our Rights:
  - Detect, prevent, and address fraud or security issues
  - Enforce our terms and conditions
  - Comply with legal obligations
- For Marketing and Analytics:
  - Understand our audience demographics and interests
  - Create aggregated, anonymized data for analysis
  - Improve our content strategy
- Legal Basis for Processing (GDPR)
  - If you are located in the European Economic Area (EEA), our legal basis for collecting and using your personal information depends on the data and context:
    - Consent: You have given clear consent for us to process your personal information for a specific purpose (e.g., newsletter subscription)

- Legitimate Interests: Processing is necessary for our legitimate interests (e.g., improving our services, analytics) and does not override your rights
- Legal Obligation: Processing is necessary to comply with the law

## Cookies and Tracking Technologies

### What Are Cookies?

Cookies are small text files stored on your device when you visit websites. They help websites remember your preferences and understand how you use the site.

- Types of Cookies We Use:
  - Essential Cookies:
    - Necessary for the Website to function properly
    - Cannot be disabled without impacting site functionality
    - Example: Session cookies for secure areas
  - Analytics Cookies:
    - Help us understand how visitors use our Website
    - Provide aggregate statistics on page views, bounce rates, etc.
    - Example: Google Analytics cookies
  - Functionality Cookies:
    - Remember your preferences and choices
    - Enhance your user experience
    - Example: Language preferences, comment form information
  - Advertising/Marketing Cookies:
    - Track your browsing to show relevant content or ads
    - May be placed by third-party advertising networks
    - Example: Social media tracking pixels
  - Third-Party Cookies:
    - We use the following third-party services that may place cookies:
      - Google Analytics: Tracks website usage and provides analytics
      - Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn pixels for remarketing
      - Email Marketing Services: Track email engagement
      - Advertising Networks: May display ads based on your interests
- Managing Cookies:

- You can control and manage cookies in several ways:
  - Browser Settings:
    - Most browsers allow you to refuse or accept cookies
    - You can delete cookies already stored on your device
    - Settings vary by browser (Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Edge)
  - Opt-Out Tools:
    - Google Analytics Opt-out Browser Add-on: [<https://tools.google.com/dlpage/gaoptout>]
    - Network Advertising Initiative Opt-out: [<http://www.networkadvertising.org/choices/>]
    - Digital Advertising Alliance Opt-out: [<http://www.aboutads.info/choices/>]

*Note: Disabling cookies may impact Website functionality and your user experience.*

## **How We Share Your Information**

We do not sell, rent, or trade your personal information to third parties. We may share your information in the following circumstances:

- Service Providers:
  - We share information with third-party service providers who help us operate our Website:
    - Email Marketing Platforms: MailChimp, ConvertKit (to send newsletters)
    - Analytics Providers: Google Analytics (to analyze site traffic)
    - Website Hosting: Hosting provider (to store website data)
    - Content Delivery Networks: To deliver content efficiently
    - Comment Management Systems: To manage blog comments

These providers are contractually obligated to protect your information and use it only for the services they provide to us.

- Legal Requirements:
  - We may disclose your information if required to do so by law or in response to:
    - Court orders or legal processes
    - Requests from government or law enforcement agencies
    - Protection of our rights, property, or safety
    - Prevention of fraud or illegal activities
- Business Transfers:

- If The Food Doctor is involved in a merger, acquisition, or sale of assets, your information may be transferred. We will provide notice before your information becomes subject to a different privacy policy.
- With Your Consent:
  - We may share your information for purposes not described in this policy with your explicit consent.

## **Your Privacy Rights**

Depending on your location, you may have the following rights regarding your personal information:

- General Rights:
  - Access: Request a copy of the personal information we hold about you
  - Correction: Request correction of inaccurate or incomplete information
  - Deletion: Request deletion of your personal information (subject to legal obligations)
  - Objection: Object to our processing of your personal information
  - Restriction: Request restriction of processing in certain circumstances
  - Portability: Request transfer of your information to another service
  - Withdraw Consent: Withdraw consent for processing based on consent (doesn't affect prior processing)
- How to Exercise Your Rights:
  - To exercise any of these rights, please contact us at [hello@thefooddoctor.co.za](mailto:hello@thefooddoctor.co.za). We will respond to your request within the timeframe required by applicable law (typically 30 days).
- Email Communications:
  - Unsubscribe: Every marketing email contains an unsubscribe link. Click it to stop receiving promotional emails.
  - Note: We may still send administrative emails (e.g., policy updates, response to your inquiry) even after unsubscribing from marketing.

## **Regional Privacy Rights**

European Economic Area (EEA) - GDPR Rights:

- If you are located in the EEA, you have additional rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR):

- Right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority
- Right to data portability
- Right to object to automated decision-making

California Residents - CCPA Rights:

- If you are a California resident, you have rights under the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA):

- Right to Know: What personal information we collect, use, disclose, and sell
- Right to Delete: Request deletion of personal information
- Right to Opt-Out: Opt-out of the sale of personal information (we do not sell personal information)
- Right to Non-Discrimination: We will not discriminate against you for exercising your rights
- Shine the Light: Request information about personal information disclosed to third parties for direct marketing
- To exercise CCPA rights, contact us at [hello@thefooddoctor.co.za](mailto:hello@thefooddoctor.co.za).

Other Jurisdictions:

- We comply with applicable privacy laws in all jurisdictions where we operate. If your location has specific privacy laws, those rights apply to you.

## **Data Security**

We implement appropriate technical and organizational measures to protect your personal information against unauthorized access, alteration, disclosure, or destruction:

- Security Measures:
  - SSL/TLS encryption for data transmission
  - Secure hosting with reputable providers
  - Regular security updates and patches
  - Access controls and authentication
  - Regular backups

- Limitations: No method of transmission over the internet or electronic storage is 100% secure. While we strive to protect your information, we cannot guarantee absolute security.

- Your Responsibility:

- Keep your passwords confidential
- Log out of your account when finished
- Report any unauthorized access immediately

## **Data Retention**

We retain your personal information for as long as necessary to fulfill the purposes described in this Privacy Policy, unless a longer retention period is required by law:

- Newsletter Subscribers: Until you unsubscribe or request deletion
- Blog Comments: Indefinitely unless you request deletion
- Contact Form Submissions: Until inquiry is resolved, then archived
- Analytics Data: Aggregated data retained indefinitely; individual data per Google Analytics retention settings
- Legal Requirements: Data may be retained longer if required by law

## **Children's Privacy**

The Food Doctor is not directed to children under the age of 13 (or 16 in the EEA). We do not knowingly collect personal information from children.

If you are a parent or guardian and believe your child has provided personal information to us, please contact us immediately. We will delete such information from our systems.

## **International Data Transfers**

If you are accessing our Website from outside South Africa, please be aware that your information may be transferred to, stored, and processed in South Africa or other countries where our service providers are located.

These countries may have data protection laws different from your country. By using our Website, you consent to the transfer of your information to these countries.



- EU-U.S. Data Transfers: We comply with applicable legal frameworks for transferring data from the EU, including Standard Contractual Clauses where appropriate.

### **Third-Party Websites**

Our Website may contain links to third-party websites, including:

- Restaurant websites
- Research sources
- Product recommendations
- Social media platforms

This Privacy Policy applies only to The Food Doctor. We are not responsible for the privacy practices of third-party websites. We encourage you to read their privacy policies before providing any information.

### **Social Media Features**

Our Website includes social media features such as:

- Share buttons (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest)
- Like buttons
- Embedded content (videos, posts)

These features may collect your IP address, page visits, and set cookies. They are governed by the privacy policies of the respective social media platforms.

### **Changes to This Privacy Policy**

We may update this Privacy Policy from time to time to reflect:

- Changes in our practices
- Legal, regulatory, or operational requirements
- New features or services
- Notification of Changes:
  - Updated "Last Updated" date at the top
  - Significant changes will be highlighted on the Website
  - Email notification for material changes (if you're subscribed)

Your Continued Use: Continued use of the Website after changes constitutes acceptance of the updated Privacy Policy.

### **Do Not Track Signals**

Some browsers have "Do Not Track" (DNT) features. Currently, there is no industry standard for responding to DNT signals. We do not respond to DNT signals at this time.

### **Contact Us**

If you have questions, concerns, or requests regarding this Privacy Policy or our privacy practices, please contact us:

- Email: [hello@thefooddoctor.co.za](mailto:hello@thefooddoctor.co.za)
- Response Time: We aim to respond within 5-7 business days

For GDPR or CCPA requests, please include:

- "GDPR Request" or "CCPA Request" in the subject line
- Sufficient information to verify your identity
- Specific nature of your request
- Consent

By using The Food Doctor Website, you consent to this Privacy Policy and our collection, use, and sharing of your information as described herein.