

BIO-INDIVIDUAL BATCH COOKING



NEW STUDENT GUIDE





BIO-INDIVIDUAL BATCH COOKING

A flexible, dynamic, approach to meal prep that will empower and nourish each person at your table with ease.

As an FNTF student, the concept of bio-individuality is ingrained into every facet of the curriculum as one of the Nutritional Therapy Association's core beliefs is that each person is biochemically unique, meaning the dietary and lifestyle recommendations you make to support an individual's health goals

need to be tailored for each person —there is no one-size-fits all approach to wellness! Think a moment about the array of variable components that goes into making up a person's general state of health. Where did their ancestors originate? What foods and lifestyle practices did their grandparents use? What was their parent's diet during the preconception period?



YOUR BODY IS BEAUTIFULLY UNIQUE

Were they born vaginally or via cesarean? Breastfed, formula, or a combination? What types of foods did they eat as a child? Where did they live as a child? Have they ever been exposed to environmental toxins? Taken medications? Been vaccinated? What foods do they eat now? Where do they live now? What types of movement do they engage in regularly? Do they have strong positive social connections? Do they endure a lot of stress on a regular basis? What's in their water supply? The list goes on and on—but as you can see, none of us are going to have the same answers to these questions, so our bodies are going to be in different places when it comes to determining what foods, nutrients, and lifestyle choices will be needed for

each of us to achieve balance, function, and lasting wellness. Bio-individuality doesn't stop there either! An individual's biochemical needs change throughout the course of their life, so what might be the right recommendations for them now will need to be re-evaluated and shifted as their needs change. Whether it be due to the introduction of a new stressor such as moving to a bigger city with noise, pollution, and traffic, the discovery of a new food sensitivity, or just natural life events such as pregnancy, menopause, travel, or participation in endurance athletics—our bio-individual needs ebb and flow, they are not static and cannot be supported by adhering to one protocol for the rest of our lives.

While this concept is immensely critical and valuable in any discussion of optimal health—it can also be overwhelming to experience bio-individuality in action, especially at the dinner table. One family member can't tolerate dairy and refuses to eat anything green. Another dislikes spicy food and feels achy after eating nightshades. Yet another could survive happily on meat alone, and one more is incredibly active and chooses the vegetarian lifestyle. Unless the cook in the family is happy to make each person a different dinner every night, the unique dietary needs and preferences of everyone they have to feed can be a source of frustration and confusion when trying to decide



how to put a nourishing meal on the table night after night. Some of these bio-individual issues are merely likes/dislikes that a person can choose whether or not to accommodate, but some, as you will likely encounter often in your clients, are sensitivities, allergies, or lifestyle choices that need to be respected and mindfully addressed. This ebook, in addition to the many tools and techniques you will acquire in your studies as an FNTP, will empower and equip you to solve this all too common conundrum so you can embrace bio-individuality with gusto! Your dietary needs are as unique as your fingerprint—so your meals should be too.

Now that you are well-versed in the concept of bio-individuality and why it is important—let's dive in to how to incorporate this concept into a batch cooking process so you can have nutrient dense, readily available meals to serve up all week while you study! The first step to a successful batch cooking session is to meal plan—but not in the traditional way! A standard meal plan requires you to actually think of distinct meals to serve each day, which doesn't address the importance of tuning into your body and respecting diverse needs of the eaters at your table. Instead of this rigid method, our batch-cooking process begins with a more flexible, intuitive, and diverse method, which utilizes two unique concepts: Food Fingerprints and Flex Meals. As you read more about this strategy, consider how it could be helpful not only for yourself and your own family, but also as a tool you can share with future clients to support a successful shift to a whole, nutrient-dense food approach.



A FRESH, FLEXIBLE APPROACH

TO PLANNING AND EATING WELL

Although it sounds slightly scientific, Food Fingerprints is just a simple chart you create with a column for each person who you feed on a regular basis, listing the specific foods a person enjoys, dislikes, and needs to avoid due to sensitivities. The list doesn't need to comprehensively detail every single food someone loves, but it is important to document everything they cannot have for health reasons to ensure you always offer an alternative when that ingredient is being offered, and, so you can be mindful when you do your prep not to allow cross-contamination (more on that to come). When building this list, if you notice that nearly everyone in the family loves tomatoes, you can highlight that as a great ingredient choice that will please everyone. Similarly, if you see a trend that most

people are sensitive to dairy, you can note it as an ingredient to either avoid, or, to always offer an alternative for if you do include it for one person. It cannot be stressed enough that this list, like most things in life, is fluid. Taste preferences will change, food sensitivities can spring up, or tremendous healing can take place that allows someone to re-incorporate a food that was once on their list to avoid. Regularly revisiting this list and discussing it with each person you are feeding is a great way to stay mindful and encourage everyone to pay attention to how the foods they eat are making them feel. See the short sample below of how you can organize your Food Fingerprints chart. The color coding is helpful for easily spotting which ingredients should not be part of your meals.

Food Fingerprints

	Alice	Samuel	Micah	Annie
Enjoys	Tomatoes	Bison	Black beans	Tomatoes
	Lentils	Zucchini	Turkey	Black beans
	Arugula	Eggs	Tomatoes	Carrots
Dislikes	Pickles	Spinach	Carrots	Kale
	Radish	Spicy flavors	Anything green	Meat
	Peppers	Eggplant	Eggs	Artichoke
Sensitivities	Dairy	Almonds	Fish	Dairy
	Gluten	Corn	Almonds	Almonds
	Olives	Gluten	Dairy	Onions

This step can be helpful for you or a client, even if you don't want to batch cook. Just generating awareness for what foods you enjoy and what foods don't work for your body is immeasurably valuable. When you are trying to decide what to eat at any given moment, they can easily consult the list to get ideas quickly for what will nourish them best. The next page contains a blank Food Fingerprints chart you can use or share with clients--but you can also just use a standard notebook and pen for on-the-go access.



FLEX YOUR PLAN

A Unique Approach to Meal Planning

Once you have used the Food Fingerprints chart to determine the foods that work best for each person, you can enter the next stage of planning where you plug those ingredients into Flex Meal Templates. Flex meals are a style of meal that is designed to allow each person to customize what goes into their own serving, providing flexibility and variety without the stress of cooking multiple different dishes for each person's needs. You are probably already familiar with this type of meal without knowing it--a traditional salad bar takes this approach as no two diner's plates have to look the same, even though each

person is technically eating salad. One of my favorite benefits of the Flex Meal is it allows you to really connect with your body on a day to day basis and fuel it appropriately for that moment rather than hoping that what you decided to eat on Tuesday when you meal-planned last Thursday matches what you really need to meet the demands of the current day. Or, perhaps you are not a meal planner and consistently rely on whatever you can cobble together from the various ingredients lurking in the fridge and pantry to be sufficient for the ever-evolving needs of those you are feeding.

The Flex Meal succeeds where both regular meal planning and winging it fail—it allows you to strategically map out a meal to offer every food you purchase so nothing goes to waste while not requiring you to commit to having one set meal on any given day, thus enabling you to select the meal ingredients that resonate with your body when you are actually preparing to eat.

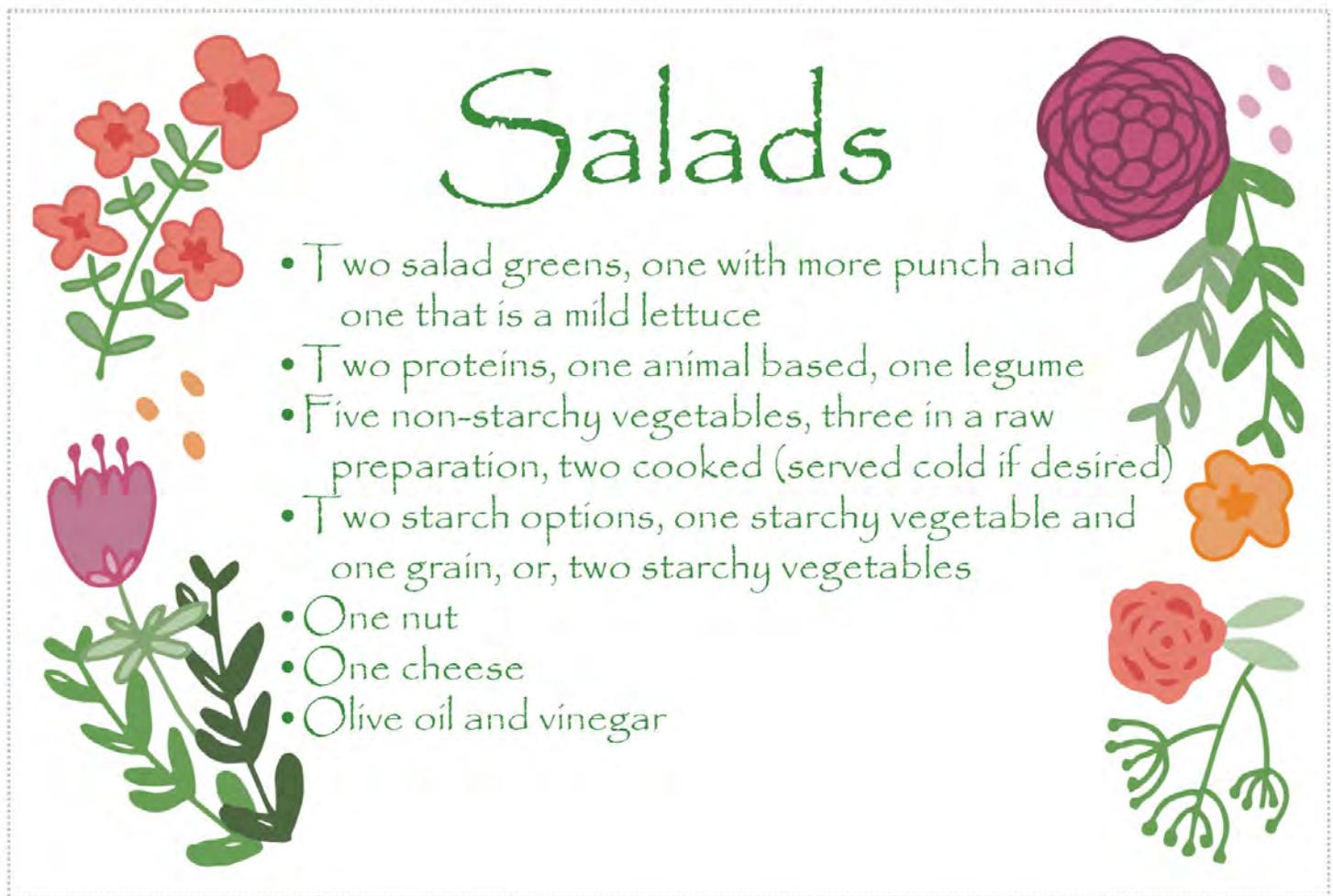
So, instead of writing out a calendar of meals like "Steak and broccoli on Monday, Chickpea curry and rice on Tuesday, Salmon and asparagus on Wednesday," which would require every eater to partake in the same food—you simply choose 7 Flex Meal templates (one for each night you will be making dinner) that can be shifted and customized depending on how each day unfolds and what each person needs.

Here are some of my favorite Flex Meal Templates that are infinitely adaptable. I am sure many of you are already serving up similar meals, but maybe have not yet tapped into the incredible flexibility they can offer with just a little adjusting and the incorporation of batch cooking.



Let's take a deeper look at how to plug ingredients from your Food Fingerprints into these Flex Meal Templates. I start by taking each template I want to use and making a formula of the general types of ingredients I want or need to offer for it. For example, let's say I am going to use the Pizza flex meal template and have someone who is nursing, someone who is low-carb, and someone who is dairy free. I would note that I want to offer two crusts, one from buckwheat groats and one from cauliflower, one kind of cheese and one cashew "cheese," two kinds of protein, one tomato sauce as well as olive oil, and five kinds of vegetables with at least two being lower-carb choices.

You can customize what ingredients you offer to those you are nourishing depending on the ages, stages, and needs of your group, but below are the formulas I have followed when using these templates with my own family and clients. You can offer more variety or less, or, flex the amounts such as offering only one protein but two kinds of nuts, or, leave a category out such as not offering a cheese—even the customization is customizable! Try to vary the vegetables you offer throughout the week, don't just offer the same five choices every meal, it would be more beneficial and diverse to offer two different vegetables every day than repeating the same five all week.



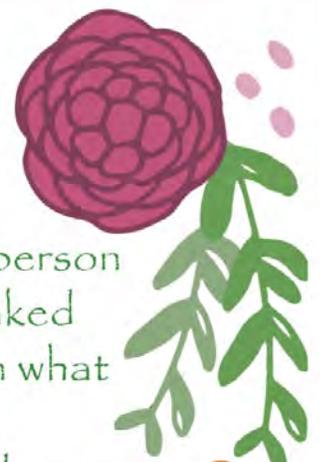
Salads

- Two salad greens, one with more punch and one that is a mild lettuce
- Two proteins, one animal based, one legume
- Five non-starchy vegetables, three in a raw preparation, two cooked (served cold if desired)
- Two starch options, one starchy vegetable and one grain, or, two starchy vegetables
- One nut
- One cheese
- Olive oil and vinegar

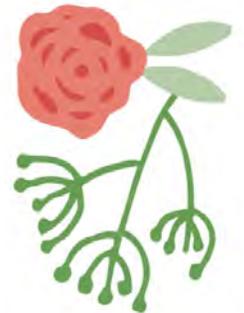
Floral template courtesy of the Humming Homebody



Potatoes



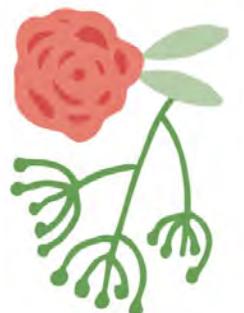
- One baked potato or sweet potato per person can offer a mixture of both, can be baked whole or as sliced planks depending on what your eaters prefer
- Three to five non-starchy vegetables, at least one raw, two cooked (served cold if desired)
- Two cheeses, one aged, one soft/fresh
- Chopped fresh dill, basil, and/or parsley, or, prepare as a pesto
- Two proteins, bacon and spiced lentils are delicious options



Tacos

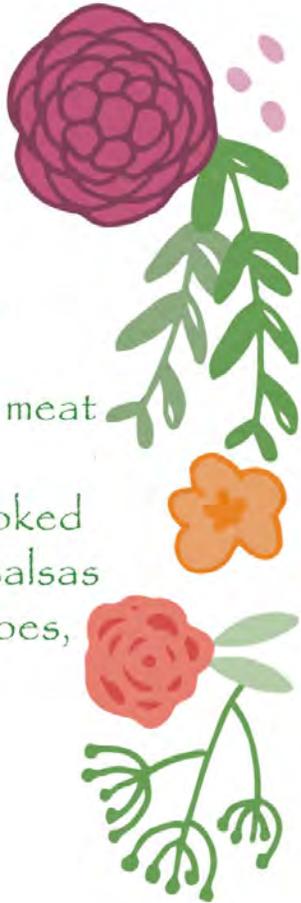


- Two proteins, one animal based, one legume
- Two shell options, corn or grain-free tortillas, and lettuce leaves
- Three non-starchy filling vegetables, cooked (served cold if desired)
- Two salsa options, one tomato-based or spicy, one fruit-based or mild
- One cheese
- Two sides, rice and cauliflower rice
- Garnishes as desired (cilantro, jalapenos, hot sauce)





Kabobs



- Two proteins, animal-based (one poultry, one red meat)
- Mushrooms as a vegetarian alternative to meat if needed
- Three to five non-starchy vegetables, cooked
- Two to three dipping sauces, pestos, or salsas
- Two starchy side options (roasted potatoes, oat groat pilaf, quinoa salad, etc.)



Shepherd's Pie



- Provide an individual ramekin for each person
- Two proteins, one animal-based, one legume
- Three to five non-starchy vegetables, cooked
- Two mashed vegetable options (potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsnips, carrots, cauliflower)
- Two sauce options (tomato based, gravy, bone broth, cream based, etc.) to be stirred in with the filling prior to baking



Burgers



- Two burger patty options, one ground meat based, one legume based (easily made from mashing leftover beans with a starchy vegetable and seasonings)
- Five non-starchy vegetables for toppings, mixture of raw and cooked as desired
- One cheese
- Three condiments (relish, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, kraut, aioli, etc.)
- Bun options if desired (roasted rounds of sweet potatoes, portobello mushrooms, buckwheat buns, lettuce leaves, etc.)
- Two starchy or non-starchy vegetables for sides (broccolini, sweet potato fries, peas, cauliflower salad, zucchini, etc.)



Hearty Bowls



- Two bowl base options, one grain, one starchy vegetable (or two grains or two starchy vegetables depending on the needs)
- Two protein options, one animal-based, one legume
- Three to five non-starchy vegetables, mixture of raw and cooked as desired
- One cheese
- Two toppings (sauces like pesto or chimichurri or a condiment like kraut or chopped nuts)



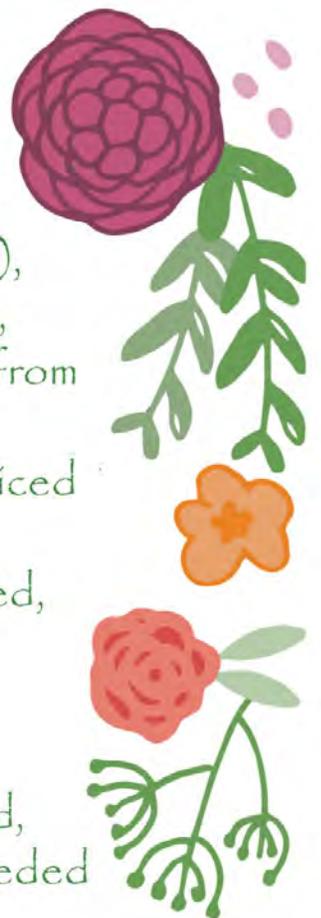
Omelets



- Eggs and/or chickpea flour for those with an egg intolerance
- Five non-starchy vegetables, cooked
- Two cheeses, one aged, one soft if tolerated
- Two sides, one salad-greens based, one starchy vegetable



Pizzas



- Two crust options (if variety is needed), grain-based from buckwheat or quinoa, grain-free from cassava flour, or made from pureeing steamed greens and eggs, grated plantains or yams with eggs, or riced cauliflower with eggs
- Two protein toppings, one animal-based, one legume
- Three to five non-starchy vegetable toppings, cooked
- Three cheese options, two dairy-based, one nut-based or zucchini-based if needed
- Two sauces, one pesto, one tomato



Patties/Fritters

- All leftover ingredients from the week
- Eggs, chickpea flour, coconut flour, or almond flour as a binder depending on the needs
- Two cheeses, grated or crumbled
- Two dipping sauces (one pesto, one tomato-based or avocado based)

Let's take a moment to review the steps we have covered so far on our journey to bio-individual batch cooking!

1. Create your Food Fingerprints chart to determine the foods that work best for each person
2. Select the Flex Meal templates you want to use for your week of dinners
3. Customize the provided formula to meet the needs of your eaters

The next step is to create your shopping list so you get exactly the ingredients you need, which can help you stay on budget and avoid food waste at the end of the week. To make an accurate shopping list, the easiest process is to just write or print out the Flex Meal templates you are going to use for the week and itemize the ingredients you will offer for each. Here is an example:

Hearty Bowls:

- Two bowl base options, one grain, one starchy vegetable (or two grains or two starchy vegetables depending on the needs) [Polenta and sweet potato cubes](#)
- Two protein options, one animal-based, one legume [Ground bison and black beans](#)
- Three to five non-starchy vegetables, mixture of raw and cooked as desired [Raw tomatoes, raw bell pepper, cooked broccolini, cooked asparagus, cooked mushrooms](#)
- One cheese [Feta](#)
- Two toppings (sauces like pesto or chimichurri or a condiment like kraut or chopped nuts) [Pesto and Kraut](#)

Salads:

- Two salad greens, one with more punch and one that is a mild lettuce [Arugula and butter lettuce](#)
- Two proteins, one animal based, one legume [Roasted chicken and chickpeas](#)
- Five non-starchy vegetables, mixture of raw and cooked as desired [Raw tomatoes, raw cucumber, raw carrots, sautéed zucchini, steamed peas](#)
- Two starch options, one starchy vegetable and one grain, or, two starchy vegetables [Plantains and Quinoa](#)
- One nut [Walnuts](#)
- One cheese [Parmesan](#)
- Olive oil and vinegar or dressing of choice [Maple Mustard Vinaigrette](#)

You would then go through and count up how many meals you need each ingredient and write it on your shopping list as “tomatoes X 2 meals” or “polenta X 1 meal” and so on. If you are like me and prefer to get exactly the amount of each ingredient I need, you can also choose to write the ingredients in quantities rather than by meal. For example, if I know I need tomatoes for 2 meals, I can think about if they are a focal element or just a supporting option in each meal, and then determine if 4 tomatoes or 8 tomatoes are the right amount for two meals. It is truly your preference in terms of the way your mind works. Here is a sample of how your shopping list could be organized:

Produce	Dairy, eggs, ferments	Meat	Frozen Foods	Bulk Items	Other
Tomatoes x 8	Eggs x 2 dozen	Chicken thighs x 1 pound	Peas x 2 pounds	Walnuts x 1 pound	Apple Cider Vinegar x 1
Zucchini x 5	Yogurt x 2	Ground bison x 2 pounds	Blueberries x 1 pound	Red rice x 1 pound	Olive Oil x 1 large bottle
Peaches x 4	Sauerkraut x 1	Ground turkey x 1 pound	Spinach x 1 bag	French Lentils x 2 pounds	Parchment Paper x 1 roll

Making this list may feel like a lot of effort if you aren't used to planning meals and shopping so specifically—but it will make a world of difference when you move through the store and know exactly what you need and how much of it. Where you are trying to stay on budget and avoid those splurge purchases that catch our eyes or you want to reduce your food waste by buying only what you will really use in the week, this meal planning and shopping list process has tremendous benefits if you stick with it. It is helpful to solidify this list at least 2 days prior to the day you plan to shop. If you save it for the night before, it can lead to a feeling of panic and become a stressor rather than a stress-reliever. That extra day will also give you time to review it with a clear mind and make sure you have accounted for everything (like you forgot your son was bringing a friend to dinner on Tuesday, so you should get an extra steak and one more zucchini, or, offer an extra legume) and to devote some time to thinking through the batch-cooking strategy you are going to use. When it comes time to actually go to the store or market and gather your ingredients, you will have confidence and peace of mind knowing you have it all mapped out.



SHOPPING AND PREP DAY

Once you have your list ready, it is time to go shopping--the final stage before you prep for batch cooking!

The shopping piece is a breeze after the work of building your templates and list is complete! Just follow your list and bring a copy of your Flex Meal plan just in case you need to deal with a substitution issues on the fly. For example, you intended to buy 8 tomatoes for the week, but the batch at the store this week just look pale and unappealing. Don't just add them to your cart because they are on the list--if the food doesn't look appealing, fresh, and full of life, it doesn't belong in your body. Instead, take a look at your Flex Meals to see where you were going to offer tomatoes



and determine if a different ingredient would fit well in those same applications. Unless you have a large amount of storage supplies and freezer space, I do recommend going shopping once a week (though this method can be applied to a month's worth of meals if you or your client need less frequent trips to the store). Once you get everything home, you need to decide which batch cooking prep strategy works best for you.



Big Bite Strategy: As the name implies, best for those who like to dive right in and take on a challenge in one big bite! Here, you will be chopping, shredding, steaming, roasting, sauteing, marinating, blending, baking, and generally preparing every ingredient you will offer for all meal templates during the week in one long prep day.



The largest benefit of the Big Bite method is that you get all the work, mess, cleanup, and thought taken care of in a single day. The rest of the week is simply going to involve minimal reheating and choosing which ingredients to offer for the day's flex meal. If you have a really hectic schedule and find time is your biggest hurdle to getting real food during the week, this might be the best option for you.



The main drawbacks include the potential that some nutrients will be lost as the prepared food sits throughout the week and it does take up an entire day, which can be a bit exhausting and may not always be how you want to spend a day off. You also need to have a wide variety of glass storage containers available and space in your refrigerator to hold all the prepared ingredients.

Small Bite Strategy: With this method, you can tackle the prep in stages rather than at once. There are two different approaches to choose from: You can opt to only pre-prepare certain categories of ingredients, like cooked vegetables, sauces, and legumes, and save meats, grains, and fresh vegetables to be made at the time of the meal, or, you can opt to prepare all the ingredients you want to offer for half of the week and then have another mini-prep day in the middle of the week to take care of the rest.

The largest benefit of either of the Small Bite methods is that you get to maintain the freshness of certain ingredients as you are preparing them in stages, more closely to when they will be eaten. It is also a bit more manageable for those who don't want to carve out an entire day as you can



just do some of the work and save some for later. If you have a bit more time to spare in the week and prefer your food at maximum freshness, this may be the right choice for you. The main drawbacks include less variety available at meals since you don't have all the ingredients pre-prepared to offer and more hands-on time in the kitchen throughout the week when it is time to actually get dinner on the table.

As you reflect on which of these styles will work best with your personal preferences, time availability, and resources, it is also important to consider that batch-cooking is not for everyone! On a nutritional level, batch-cooking is not a good strategy for someone with a histamine intolerance as ingredients that are cooked/cut/prepared and left to sit will develop more histamines than something that is made and immediately eaten.

It can also be a difficult strategy for someone who is struggling with extreme fatigue as it can be draining to prepare this quantity of food at once. Those who are inexperienced in the kitchen or who have had little interaction with real food in the past may also need to go slowly as they get used to the new lifestyle, or, they may be excited to go all in and embrace it—just be mindful



and guide yourself or your clients through these considerations before you commit to a plan. If you and your family all love many of the same foods and don't have many unique intolerances amongst you, it is also important to note that this method can be simplified—you do not have to prepare 20 different vegetables for a week (although your microbiome would love you for doing so) if you all thrive and love 10 of the same kinds. You can offer only one protein, one carbohydrate, and/or one fat source for a meal if everyone enjoys and tolerates the same ones—just be sure you are offering different ones throughout the week so everyone has healthy variety and balance.



There are a couple different timing possibilities to consider after you have come home with your haul of nourishing food. For some people, myself included, it feels like I have already given some of my day to grocery shopping, I might as well give the rest of it to food prep and just be done with the job! For others, especially those who like to do things in smaller chunks of time, are ready to move on to something else and would rather come back and do the prep the next day. Whichever method you choose, plan on having a clean kitchen with dishes put away, counters clear, and your storage vessels ready to be used when you want to start your prep. If you are preparing legumes and grains, which need to be soaked to reduce phytic acid and increase your body's ability to utilize their nutrients, you may have to prepare them the day after your major prep if you didn't remember to soak them the night before. The same is true if you are wanting to marinate any meats for more than a few hours.



Regardless of when I choose to do my prep day, there are a few tasks I do immediately when I get home from the store. These tasks just take a few minutes and go a long way in making sure my food stays fresh and my fridge stays clean:

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- Wrap fresh herbs in a damp tea towel and store in a cotton bag, or, in damp paper towels and a zip-closure bag. You can also store them upright with the stems submerged in a jar of water.
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- Place meats on plates or a dedicated bin situated on the bottom shelf of the fridge, or, put them in zip-closer bags. The goal here is to prevent any juices/liquids from the meat running onto other foods/surfaces. This is a great time to marinate them too!
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- Move any leftovers or unused ingredients to the front and group in a specific section of the fridge so they don't get lost behind all of the new items. Use these up in breakfast hash, a big salad, or make the leftover patties/fritters meal your next dinner so nothing goes to waste.
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- Compost, or toss if you don't have compost, messier components of foods that I know my family will not use. For example, though they can be eaten, no one in my family likes radish greens, beet greens, fennel fronds, or carrot tops. Rather than leaving them on and either dealing with little green flecks all over the fridge or worse, reaching for a radish to find a slimy green attached, I just tear them off before I even put the food away.
- Soak any legumes and grains you will be preparing on the prep-day or ferment items as needed (these items won't be ready for you to cook until the next day)

After these tasks are finished, you can decide if you are going to use the Big Bite strategy and dive into batch cooking, or, take the Small Bite approach and just do a mini prep session now. Either way, now is the time to get the kitchen in shape, put on some good music, and enlist the help of those you love--or not--depending on what you find most relaxing and enjoyable in the kitchen.



AND NOW IT IS TIME TO

BATCH COOK

You planned, you purchased, you prepared your environment and now it is time to do the batch cooking! Unlike other batch cooking approaches where you are actually preparing fully assembled meals for the week, with bio-individual batch cooking, you are simply preparing each ingredient as you wish to offer it in a Flex Meal template. For example, if you need chopped raw tomatoes for two meals and roasted tomatoes for one, you are going to chop and containerize two raw portions and roast a third. If you will use one pound of ground turkey as taco meat and another as meatballs for skewers, season and cook accordingly.

We are going to walk through what a Big Bite batch cooking session will look like as it is the most comprehensive example and can be scaled down for Small Bite approaches. This example is the result of my own trial of this process and the ways I have adapted batch cooking to work for me and my family. Embrace the opportunity to make your own adaptations too as you experiment--cooking should be fun and flavorful!



For this batch cooking session, I was preparing ingredients for a week of Flex Meals for my family of four and had selected the Salad, Tacos, Pizzas, Hearty Bowls, Omelets, Baked Sweet Potatoes, and Kabobs (which turned into meatballs and salad because I couldn't get skewers!). It took me about 5 hours total to prepare all the ingredients for the week, and that included having two little kitchen "helpers" who didn't make things the most efficient, but they did make it more fun.



My most valuable tips for batch-cooking success is to be as systematic and clean as you go and to use activity cycles. There is nothing quite as frustrating as staring down a mountain of dishes and messy kitchen after hours of prep, so I make it a habit to clean up after each "cycle" of tasks.





CYCLES

SEPARATION OF LIKE TASKS INTO ORDERED GROUPS

Cycles are my system for batch-cooking in an organized way that eliminates duplication of effort and maximizes efficiency. You may find other systematic approaches that work for you, but here is a general example of my cycles and prep-flow:

- Prepare produce that needs to be grated, store those that will remain raw and set aside those that will be cooked or marinated
- Prepare produce that needs to be chopped, store those that will remain raw, and set aside those that will be cooked or marinated
- Marinate grated and chopped produce as needed
- Cook grated and chopped produce on stove top as needed
- Cook meat on stove top as needed
- Make sauces/condiments
- Bake grated or chopped produce as needed
- Bake meat as needed
- Cook legumes and grains as needed (when soaking time is complete)
- Prepare other ingredients as needed (grate cheese, chop nuts, chop herbs, etc.)



After each of these tasks, I take 5 minutes to wash any dishes I used, wipe down the cutting board, counters, stove as needed, and reset for the next cycle. I use the same dishes from cycle to cycle as much as possible so that I don't end up trying to cram 20 bowls onto my drying rack. As long as I wash and towel dry in between uses, cross-contamination is not an issue for my family, but do be mindful about shared bowls/utensils if someone you feed has an intolerance or sensitivity to a food. Remember, if you are using a Small Bite strategy, you may only do some of these tasks on one day, and then finish the rest on another, or, you may do a short version of each cycle two times during the week. Your cycles might look a bit different as well depending on what meals you have chosen and how many different ingredients you needed to offer.



CELEBRATE

YOUR FOOD IS NOURISHING AND READILY AVAILABLE!

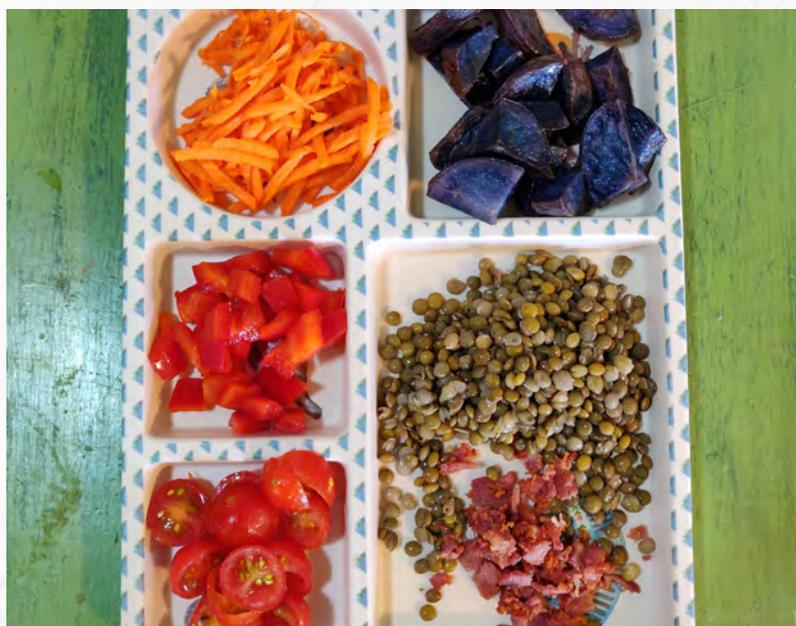
As you stare at the beautiful array of prepared ingredients, neatly tucked into jars and containers, lining the shelves of your fridge, you should take a moment to celebrate your accomplishment! You have chosen to value real food and honor the needs of each person's body by spending your time and energy on this batch-cooking process. You have made strides to form deeper connection with your own body, tuning into what foods make you feel fueled and what foods make you feel drained, by offering it a wide variety of options to meet its needs. You have also given yourself the gift of having a week's worth of nourishing foods at your fingertips, with a well-thought plan on how to use them—so you won't be left wondering what to feed everyone when dinner comes each night, and, you won't be preparing four different meals at once either!

Bio-individual Meals in Action

You now have all the information and strategies needed to plan, prep, and batch cook your own ingredients for a week of Flex Meals—but I also wanted to give you a glimpse of how it looks when each person customizes their own plates with the ingredients you offer.

In my family, my husband prefers meat and has a couple of intolerances, my oldest son likes every ingredient separate, my youngest son hardly likes anything and can't have cow-dairy, and I am happiest when I eat more vegetables and include pastured dairy. Here is a glimpse of how each person's plate turned out after selected the ingredients I set out for each Flex Meal.

This was Salad night.





Tacos (which we baked tacquito style) with Siete cassava tortillas (my one convenience item this week)--mine are pinto beans, my husband's is bison, both with kale. We served it with plantains and a chimichuri sauce.

Kabobs turned into meatballs and salads as I couldn't find skewers. I had less meat, more salad, and added cheese to mine, while my husband had more meat and no cheese. He also opted for no tomatoes in his salad, where I piled mine high with those luscious jewels.



For pizza night, I make a fermented buckwheat crust pizza (that was the odd looking fermenting goop you saw earlier). My husband, myself, and my youngest chose pesto sauce while my oldest chose tomato. I had black beans, asparagus, and parmesan, my oldest had bacon and tomatoes, my husband had bison and broccolini, and my youngest had blackbeans. All three boys had goat cheese, which they tolerate better.



For omelet night, my husband had goat cheese and mushrooms, and I had tomatoes and parmesan, both with a side of blue fingerling potatoes. My oldest chose hard boiled eggs (which I had offered for salad night too), frozen peas (can't explain it--he won't eat them cooked in any way, but loves them frozen), potatoes and some goat cheese while my youngest basically tossed around potatoes, roasted tomatoes, and goat cheese.

For baked sweet potatoes, we opted to bake them in planks and top them Mediterranean spinach lentils and pesto with a side of green apple cabbage ginger slaw. My oldest had plain lentils, cucumbers, slaw, and grapes, while my youngest had sweet potatoes, a bit of slaw, and a bit of the Mediterranean lentils.

And there you have it! Of course, none of these meals were —they each had their strengths and weaknesses— but each one was customized by the eater from the ingredients I chose to offer, I didn't have to make four different meals each night. Plus, there was no complaining or food battles either, which is a huge bonus to this method.

I also want to mention that these pictures don't show the wider variety of vegetables, proteins, and fats that each person had with breakfast and lunch—or the days where a bowl of chickpeas and celery was called lunch or plain yogurt was breakfast. All that is to say—give grace, show compassion, and allow space for the fact that we are only human and no one, even a Nutritional Therapy Practitioner, eats perfectly day in and day out.



As you prepare to begin your FNTP program, I hope you give some of the tips and techniques in this eBook a try to help get brain-fueling, body nourishing, soul satisfying meals on the table each night with less stress, minimal waste, and no frustration. Bio-individuality is complex and challenging, but also wondrous and special. Our bodies are capable of communicating and demonstrating its needs if we listen, and it is my sincere hope that if nothing else, the bio-individual batch cooking approach will empower you and your family to experience that conversation with your innate wisdom and discover how revitalizing it can feel to eat the foods that fuel you best. You are unique and that should be celebrated, cherished, and nurtured—go shine your light and share your color with the world!