

Let common sense win

Nutrition has gotten far more confusing than it needs to be. Every week there's a new debate, a new number to hit, a new rule to follow. Eat more of this. Avoid that completely. Track it. Time it. Optimize it. Somewhere along the way, normal eating got buried under charts, reels, and people who make money by keeping us unsure. Much of what circulates online sounds convincing because it's specific, confident, and framed as "insider" or even "scientific" knowledge. Here's a reset.

If a nutrition question feels controversial, try answering it with common sense first. In most cases, the answer is obvious once you step back and look at food the way humans always have. Here are five examples.

1. "I need more protein." You've probably seen wildly different protein targets. Grams per kilogram. Per pound. Per day. Per meal. It can feel like you're either falling short or doing it wrong.

Here's the common-sense check. If you're eating enough food to meet your energy needs, and that food includes things like beans, lentils, tofu, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and vegetables (and minimally processed animal foods if you eat them), you're getting enough protein. Almost certainly more than enough.

Humans did not evolve calculating grams of protein. We evolved eating food. Across cultures, across continents, across thousands of years, people met their protein needs simply by eating a varied diet. The idea that most people walking around today are protein deficient is not supported by reality or clinical practice.

Unless you're under-eating, dealing with a medical condition, or training at an elite level, protein math is just a distraction.

2. "Fruit is basically sugar." This one keeps coming back, usually with dramatic graphics and warnings. Here's the simple truth. Fruit comes packaged in fiber, water, vitamins, minerals, and protective plant compounds. Candy and soda do not. Your body handles those two things very differently.

If fruit were truly a metabolic problem, humans would not have survived long enough to invent podcasts. Fruit has been part of the human diet for as long as we've been eating plants. The problem isn't apples or berries. The problem is diets dominated by added sugar and ultra-processed foods with little fiber or structure. If a food grew on a tree or a bush and looks like it always has, it's probably not the villain.

3. "I need to avoid carbs." Carbohydrates are often talked about as if they're a single thing. They're not. Vegetables, beans, oats, barley, potatoes, fruit, white bread, pastries, and soda all contain carbohydrates. Lumping them together and declaring them "bad" makes no sense.

Here's the common-sense filter. Does the food still resemble something that was grown or harvested? Does it come with fiber and volume that fills you up? Does it support your energy rather than spike and crash it? Carbs didn't suddenly become harmful in the last 30 years. Highly processed diets did.

4. "Seed oils are toxic." If seed oils were uniquely dangerous, you'd expect populations that have cooked with them for decades to show clear, dramatic health declines directly tied to oil consumption alone. That's not what we see.

What we see instead is ballooning portion sizes, a surge in ultra-processed foods, and a steady diet of fast food and takeout. People started eating fewer vegetables, beans, and whole foods overall.

Most people aren't getting sick because they sautéed their broccoli in canola oil. They're struggling because most of their calories come from packaged foods designed to be easy to overeat. Zoom out. Focus on the pattern, not a single ingredient.

5. "I need supplements to be healthy." Walk through a pharmacy and it's easy to believe you're missing something essential.

Think this way: If supplements were the key to good health, the healthiest populations in the world would be built on powders and pills. They're not. They're built on fresh foods, regular meals, and shared habits. While supplements can be useful in specific situations, they are not a substitute for eating actual food, and they don't cancel out a poor diet. If your meals are mostly made of recognizable foods and you eat them consistently, you're already doing the most important work.

Bottom Line Nutrition doesn't need to be mysterious to be meaningful. When advice sounds extreme, scary, overly precise, or disconnected from how humans actually eat, that's your cue to pause.

You don't need to memorize macros, fear food groups, or outsource your judgment to the loudest voice (or best-looking influencer) online. Most of the time, your common sense is more reliable than whatever is trending this week.

Next time you see a nutrition claim that makes you anxious or second-guess normal food, ask one simple question: "Does this pass the common-sense test?"

If not, you can probably keep scrolling.

Crispy Potatoes with Garlicky Greens & Yogurt Sauce



Potatoes have been feeding people for generations. They're filling, affordable, and part of normal meals across cultures. This dish shows how easily they fit into a balanced meal.

Ingredients (serves 3-4):

- 1½ pounds baby or Yukon gold potatoes, halved
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt, plus more to taste (less if you're following a low-sodium diet)
- Black pepper
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 4 packed cups leafy greens (kale, chard, or spinach)
- 1 cup plain yogurt (dairy or plant-based)
- Zest and juice of ½ lemon
- Optional add-ons: olive oil drizzle, red pepper flakes, grated Parmesan, nutritional yeast

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Toss the potatoes with olive oil, salt, and pepper on a sheet pan. Roast for 30–35 minutes, flipping once, until golden brown and crisp at the edges.
3. While the potatoes roast, heat a skillet over medium heat. Add a small drizzle of olive oil and the garlic. Cook just until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the greens and cook until wilted and tender. Season lightly with salt.
4. Stir lemon zest and juice into the yogurt. Taste and adjust seasonings.
5. Serve the potatoes topped with the garlicky greens and a generous spoon of yogurt sauce. Finish with any optional add-ons.