

Q & A

With
KAREN RANZI

Is there something about the raw lifestyle you've always wanted to know? Ask our brand new Q&A star – Karen Ranzi – for her sage advice.



Q I know that you believe in food combining, but is it really beneficial for digesting raw food, and is it easy to follow?

Rosanne Ponchick, via Karen's 5-week Raw Food Group Coaching Programme

A When fewer combinations are eaten at one time, the food gets digested more easily. When only a single food is eaten, a mono meal, digestion functions ideally. When preparing a salad, it's best to use no more than 3 to 4 ingredients because each food requires its individual length of time and specific digestive chemistry. Meals on a daily basis need to be uncomplicated and problem-free for the system.

When I first started food combining in 1994, I hung a food-combining chart on my refrigerator door and referred to it often until the principles became automatic. You can find one of these in both my books.

One example people struggle with is digesting fresh fruits and vegetables, complaining it often results in bad gas. Fruit must be eaten only when ripe to be properly digested. I recommend eating fruit by itself, or with lettuce, other leafy greens or celery. Nuts, seeds, or an avocado combine best with non-starchy vegetables. Fruit does not combine well with complex starches or fatty foods. Following these food-combining principles simplifies and improves digestion.

Q How can I encourage my four-year-old daughter to increase her greens intake (she doesn't even like smoothies)? She also struggles with self-regulation when she gets frustrated and angry. I've heard gluten can be an issue; should I eliminate it completely?

Veronica Mollica, via email

A The more raw fruits and vegetables your daughter eats, the more her taste buds will begin to change and relish fresh nutritious fruits and veggies. An important tip is to change the texture. A child may not like green smoothies or salads but may enjoy green juices or green dips. Fun dips were a great way to get my children to eat a variety of vegetables, including leafy greens. Check out the Creamy Cucumber Dill Dip in my recipe book, *Raw Vegan Recipe Fun for Families*. My daughter would enjoy lots of leafy greens while dipping them.

You asked about the relation of gluten to behavioural issues. Gluten can cause excessive bacteria in the gut resulting in Candida, intestinal gas, mental confusion, fatigue and erratic behaviour. Gluten intolerance has been associated with a wide variety of neurological and psychiatric conditions. Fresh, raw foods are needed to supply the body with essential nutrients that are unavailable in cooked, processed food. We feel depleted and dissatisfied after eating cooked and otherwise processed foods. Since our emotional and physical states are closely connected, this physical dissatisfaction communicates itself emotionally through frustration, anger and irritability.

I would highly recommend that you continue to be the model for healthful high raw vegan eating, free of gluten and processed foods.





Karen Ranzi, MA, is a leading raw food coach and award-winning author who travels worldwide to teach the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual benefits of healthful eating to clients of all ages. Karen holds seasonal raw food workshops and events, and is working to complete an online raw food certification program at www.superhealthychildren.com

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Q I take fish oil for omega 3 fatty acids. As I'm increasing the amount of raw plant foods I'm eating, I'm wondering whether I should continue taking the fish oil?

Victoria Arias, via Karen's 5-week Raw Food Group Coaching Programme



A After years of being told that fish oil is good for us, and a great source of omega 3, there is now plenty of evidence to suggest that it's harmful to our health and a major cause of the ongoing extinction of the fish population. We now know that 29% of the fish population is extinct due to overfishing. The Journal of the National Cancer Institute recently published evidence that fish-derived omega-3s increase the chance of prostate cancer, the most common form of cancer in men. Other risk factors of taking fish oil supplements are cerebral hemorrhages, accumulation of heavy metals and other toxins, a rise in bad cholesterol, poor vitamin assimilation, and bleeding of the stomach, kidneys, and intestines.

Fish oil is unstable. With the processing of the oil, it easily gets rancid. It also gets rancid in the body because it's designed for cold temperatures.

Fish get their omega 3 from eating algae. You could also go directly to algae. You can get all the omega 3 fatty acids you need by eating plant foods, such as chia and hemp seeds, and leafy green vegetables that also contain vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. The wild green plant purslane is noted for its excellent amount of omega 3s. I forage for it in the wild when I can, or I buy it from my local organic farmer. If you still insist on oil, then opt for a stable omega 3 oil that contains many antioxidants, without the rancidity – clary sage seed oil.



Q I'm using a more natural sunscreen but am not sure if it's good to use. What is your opinion on the use of sunscreen?

Jenna Davila, via Facebook

A Make sure to enjoy the sun over as much skin surface as possible for the amount of time that will not create redness but will allow for the creation of vitamin D. Depending on your skin colour, this could be anywhere between 10 minutes for fair complexions and 30 minutes for the darkest ones.

Even the best sun creams contain toxic ingredients, which can become the cause of skin cancer. I would recommend carefully monitoring your time in the sun and using cover-up clothing and wide brimmed hats when appropriate.