

DANGEROUS FOODS THAT CAUSE DAMAGE TO NIGERIANS

What you eat every day is either building you or breaking you. Most Nigerians have never been told which is which.

DAVID RANSOM

PaddyPaddy Naturals Ltd

Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (N.D)

Trained by a Research Institute in India (N.D)

Recognised by the Federal Ministry of Health as a Traditional Medicine Practitioner in Nigeria

Licensed by the Lagos State Traditional Medicine Board

Certified by the African Centre of Excellence for Drug Research, Herbal Medicine Development and Regulatory Science

World Bank Funded Research Centre · University of Lagos

Registered Member, Modern Traditional Medicine Practitioners of Nigeria (MTMPN)

Author of multiple books on hormonal health and metabolic medicine

+234 905 407 2711

@paddypaddynaturals

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WHY THIS BOOK EXISTS

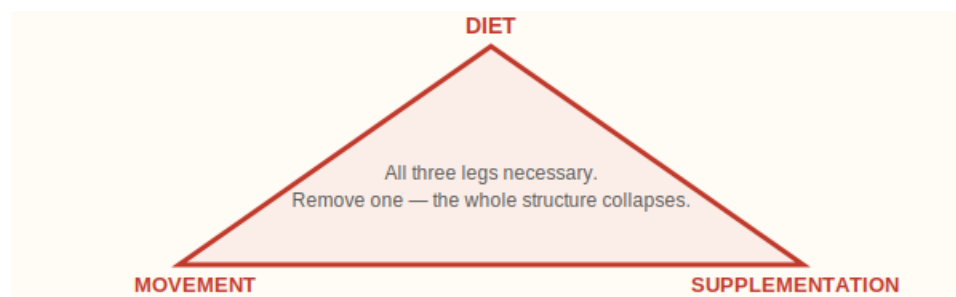
Go to any Nigerian family gathering and look around. There is the uncle with the big belly that has not moved in ten years. The aunty managing diabetes with medication but still eating the same food that caused it. The young cousin who is always tired. The neighbour whose blood pressure keeps climbing no matter what her doctor prescribes. This is not bad luck. This is food.

Nigeria is in the middle of a health crisis that nobody is talking about loudly enough.

High blood pressure affects about one in three Nigerian adults. Diabetes is growing every year. Fibroids affect so many women that some people have started to accept them as normal. Liver disease from fatty food and sweet drinks is sending people to the doctor with symptoms their GP cannot easily explain. Big belly is so common it has been given nicknames and made into jokes.

None of this is funny. And none of it is inevitable.

These are not conditions that fall from the sky. They grow slowly, one meal at a time, over years. And the food that grows them is sitting in Nigerian kitchens and on Nigerian plates right now, today, being eaten by millions of people who have no idea what it is doing inside their bodies.



The Triangle of Healing. Diet, Movement, and Supplementation. All three legs must stand for the body to heal.

If you cannot give it to a baby or a plant, your body does not know what to do with it either. That is the test. Ask it about everything on your plate.

This book is different from most health books for one reason. It does not give general advice. It names specific foods that are causing specific damage to Nigerian bodies at specific stages of life. It explains exactly what each food is doing and why. And it gives you a specific, affordable, Nigerian-market replacement for each one.

There are chapters for children, for teenagers, for pregnant women, for women dealing with fibroids and hormonal problems, for men dealing with pot belly and low energy, and for older Nigerians managing the conditions that have been building since their twenties.

Wherever you are in life, there is something in this book that is about you.

THAT SEASONING CUBE IS NOT JUST FLAVOUR

She had been using three cubes in every pot, every day, for thirty years. She thought it was just seasoning. She did not know it was feeding the fibroid growing inside her.

FIBROIDS

HORMONAL PROBLEMS

LIVER DAMAGE

BIG BELLY IN MEN



Alcohol + xenoestrogens compete for the same liver pathway. Hormones lose every time.

The liver clears excess hormones. When it is busy with chemicals from seasoning cubes, alcohol, and processed food, it cannot clear estrogen. Estrogen piles up. Problems follow.

What Is Actually Inside That Cube

Commercial seasoning cubes are in most Nigerian kitchens. Open any packet and read what is inside. You will find monosodium glutamate (MSG), artificial flavour compounds, chemical preservatives, and substances that act like the female hormone estrogen inside the body.

Scientists call these substances xenoestrogens. Xeno means foreign. So foreign estrogen is entering millions of Nigerian bodies through the seasoning cube in the cooking pot, at every single meal, every day.

The body has no quick way to remove these foreign estrogens. So they pile up. And piled-up estrogen causes problems that doctors treat with medication and surgery, without ever addressing the food that is producing the condition in the first place.

What Piled-Up Estrogen Does to Women

Fibroids are fed by estrogen. They cannot grow without it. Every woman with fibroids who is also cooking with three seasoning cubes

per pot is adding fuel to a fire she is trying to put out. The food and the treatment are working against each other.

Heavy, painful periods are caused by the uterus shedding a lining that estrogen has made too thick. The estrogen that built that lining came from many places: seasoning cubes, processed meats, alcohol, soya products. All of these pour foreign estrogen into the body.

PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome) involves a disruption in the balance of hormones that control ovulation. Insulin resistance from white rice and sweet drinks is one driver. Estrogen overload from seasoning cubes and processed food is another. They often arrive together.

What Piled-Up Estrogen Does to Men

Men have estrogen too, but in small amounts. When estrogen rises in a man's body, testosterone drops. Low testosterone in men means: belly fat that will not go away, low energy, low drive, difficulty building muscle, mood that is flat and tired.

The pot belly that Nigerian men celebrate as a sign of success is often a sign of falling testosterone and rising estrogen, driven partly by the same seasoning cubes their wives use in the cooking pot.

Three cubes per pot. Three meals a day. Your body receives foreign estrogen at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Every single day. The liver is trying to clear it. But the liver also has your alcohol, your processed food, and your reused frying oil to deal with at the same time.

What To Cook With Instead

Nigerian food does not need commercial seasoning cubes. It never did. Before these cubes existed, Nigerian food was deeply flavourful. The flavour was in the real ingredients.

DANGEROUS FOOD: All commercial seasoning cubes

WHAT IT DOES: Xenoestrogens that feed fibroids, disrupt hormones in women and men, and overload the liver

REPLACE WITH: Crayfish powder, dried fish, garlic, ginger, onion, thyme, turmeric, uziza, bay leaves

Cook one pot this week without seasoning cubes. Use crayfish, dried fish, garlic, fresh ginger, and onion. Taste it. Your family will likely not notice much difference. Your hormones will.

Can you give a commercial seasoning cube to a baby? That is all you need to know.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove seasoning cubes from every pot. Replace with crayfish, dried fish, ginger, garlic, thyme, bay leaves, onion. Every single one of these is available in any Nigerian market.

MOVEMENT: Movement helps the liver clear estrogen faster. A thirty-minute walk daily is also a hormonal intervention, not just an exercise one.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower contain compounds that directly help the liver remove excess estrogen from the blood. Eat more of them.

WHITE RICE, CARBOHYDRATES, AND HOW TO EAT THEM

White rice is not the enemy. The problem is not the rice. The problem is rice every day, three times a day, alone, with nothing to slow it down, at the wrong time, in portions that keep growing. That is a very different conversation.

DIABETES

HIGH BLOOD SUGAR

BIG BELLY

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE



When white rice is eaten alone, in large portions, every day, the blood sugar response looks like this. Change the pairing, the portion, and the frequency and the picture changes too.

What Is Actually Happening in the Body

White rice is a refined carbohydrate. The husk and fibre have been removed. When it enters the body, it breaks down into glucose quickly. Blood sugar rises. The body releases insulin to bring it down. Blood sugar drops. The body feels hungry again. This cycle is normal and manageable when it happens occasionally, with the right foods alongside, and at the right time of day.

The problem most Nigerians face is not that they eat rice. The problem is that rice is the main meal, eaten alone or with a little stew, in large quantities, every single day, sometimes twice or three times a day, often late at night when the body is least equipped to handle it. At that frequency and in those conditions, the blood sugar spike-and-crash cycle happens constantly. Over years, the body starts to lose its sensitivity to insulin. Blood sugar stays elevated. The door to type 2 diabetes opens.

The issue is not rice once or twice a week, paired with protein, vegetables, and eaten at the right time. The issue is rice as the foundation of almost every meal for years.

Frequency: How Often Is Too Often

White rice eaten two to three times a week, as part of a varied diet, is something the body can manage for most people. White rice as the main food at most meals, most days, is what creates the long-term problem.

The body needs variety. Different carbohydrates digest at different speeds and feed different gut bacteria. When rice is the only carbohydrate for most meals, the blood sugar is constantly working against the same stimulus. There is no recovery. There is no balance.

A practical guide for most people: rice two or three times a week. Rotate with beans, cocoyam, unripe plantain, and local unpolished rice varieties. The body responds very differently to variety than to repetition.

Pairing: What to Eat Alongside

The single most powerful change anyone can make to how the body handles rice is what they eat alongside it. Eating rice alone causes a sharp blood sugar spike. Eating rice with protein and fat slows digestion significantly. The same portion of rice eaten with eggs, fish, or a piece of chicken, alongside a serving of vegetables, produces a much gentler and more manageable blood sugar response than rice eaten with only a thin stew.

- Protein alongside rice: eggs, fish, fresh chicken, beans, crayfish. Protein slows how fast glucose enters the blood.
- Fat alongside rice: avocado, a little palm oil, coconut, groundnuts. Fat further slows digestion.
- Vegetables with rice: ugu, spinach, cabbage, garden egg, tomatoes, cucumber on the side. Fibre from vegetables moderates the blood sugar response and feeds gut bacteria.
- The plate rule: the rice should not be more than one third of the plate. Protein and vegetables should fill the rest.

Rice with protein, fat, and vegetables is a genuinely nourishing meal. Rice alone with thin stew is mostly glucose. The food is the same. The pairing makes the difference.

Timing: When Matters As Much As What

The body handles carbohydrates very differently at different times of day. In the morning and early afternoon, insulin sensitivity is higher and the body is better equipped to process glucose. In the evening, especially after 7pm, insulin sensitivity drops. The same plate of rice eaten at 1pm and at 10pm does different things inside the body.

Late night rice, eba, or any heavy carbohydrate meal produces a higher insulin spike, more fat storage, and poorer sleep quality than the same food eaten earlier. The belly that keeps growing despite reasonable eating is often being built by heavy carbohydrates eaten late at night.

- Main carbohydrate meal: before 3pm where possible.
- Evening meals: lighter, more protein and vegetables than carbohydrates.
- After 8pm: if eating is necessary, eggs, fish, or vegetables. Heavy rice or eba at this hour is the body receiving what it is least equipped to handle.

Kpomo, Potato, and Other Foods That Depend on How They Are Prepared

Kpomo (cow skin) is a good food. It is rich in collagen, protein, and nutrients. The problem is not kpomo. The problem is kpomo that has been fried hard in oil that may have been reused many times. Boiled kpomo is genuinely nourishing. Fried kpomo from a roadside stall cooked in reused oil is kpomo plus a dose of trans fats and oxidised compounds. The kpomo is fine. The oil is the issue.

Potatoes are a good food. Boiled potato is low in fat, filling, rich in potassium, and a reasonable carbohydrate. Baked potato with a little fat is also good. The problem arrives when the potato is deep-fried in vegetable oil, especially in commercial settings where the oil has been used repeatedly. The potato becomes a vehicle for delivering damaged fat into the body. Same food, very different outcomes depending on preparation.

This principle applies widely. The food is often not the problem. How it is cooked and what it is cooked in is frequently where the damage begins.

Better Carbohydrate Choices When Rice Is Not on the Plate

- Local unpolished rice (ofada, abakiliki, local brown varieties): the fibre and nutrients in the husk are still present. Blood sugar rises more slowly.
- Unripe plantain: significantly lower sugar impact than ripe plantain or eba. Rich in resistant starch that feeds good gut bacteria.
- Cocoyam: lower glycaemic response than yam, cassava, or pounded yam. Good option for those managing blood sugar.
- Beans: protein and carbohydrate together. The protein moderates the glycaemic response significantly.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Keep white rice in the diet if it is part of life. Reduce frequency to two or three times a week. Always pair with protein, fat, and vegetables. Reduce the rice portion and increase the protein and vegetable portions. Eat it earlier in the day.

MOVEMENT: A twenty-minute walk after the main carbohydrate meal of the day measurably reduces the blood sugar spike. The muscles use the glucose directly when the body is moving.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Magnesium supports insulin sensitivity and is depleted by high-carbohydrate diets. Nuts, seeds, dark green vegetables, and cocoa are the best food sources.

EVERY SUGARY DRINK IS DOING THE SAME DAMAGE

The child had never eaten a spoonful of sugar her mother knew about. She drank two bottles of juice every day. By age ten, her blood sugar markers looked pre-diabetic.

DIABETES

LIVER DAMAGE

BIG BELLY

JOINT PAIN AND GOUT

Drinking Sugar Is Worse Than Eating Sugar

When you eat something sweet like a ripe mango, your stomach has to work to digest it. The fibre in the mango slows things down. Sugar enters the blood gradually over time.

When you drink something sweet, juice, soft drinks, malt drinks, flavoured drinks, there is no fibre, no chewing, nothing to slow it down. Sugar goes straight into the blood in minutes. The spike is faster and sharper than anything you would get from eating solid food.

One particular type of sugar called fructose is in almost every sweet drink. The liver is the only organ in the body that can process fructose. When too much fructose arrives too quickly, the liver cannot keep up. It converts the extra into fat and stores it inside itself. This is how the liver gets fatty and damaged without a person drinking a single drop of alcohol. This condition has a name. It is called Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease, and sweet drinks are one of its biggest causes.

There is no healthy sugary drink. Soft drinks, malt drinks, fruit juice, flavoured water. They all damage the liver and the blood sugar in the same way. Some just do it faster than others.

The Drinks People Think Are Safe

DANGEROUS FOOD: Malt drinks, commercial fruit juice, energy drinks, kunu and zobo with added sugar

WHAT IT DOES: Liver fat, blood sugar spike, insulin resistance, belly fat, and gout from uric acid buildup

REPLACE WITH: Zobo without added sugar, tiger nut drink without sugar, fresh coconut water, water with lemon and cucumber

- Malt drinks: the label often says vitamins or nourishment. The content is mostly sugar. The vitamins do not cancel the damage.
- Fruit juice from a carton: most brands add extra sugar. Even without added sugar, there is no fibre. You are drinking the sugar of five oranges with nothing to slow it down.
- Energy drinks: sugar plus caffeine. You feel a boost. Your adrenal glands and your liver pay for it later.
- Kunu and zobo with sugar added: the base drink is genuinely good for you. The added sugar removes the benefit.

About Gout: The Pain Nobody Warns You About

Gout is a condition that causes intense, sudden pain in joints. Usually the big toe, knee, or ankle. Many Nigerians describe the pain as feeling like the joint is on fire.

Fructose in sweet drinks is one of the main causes. It produces a substance called uric acid. When uric acid builds up and crystallises in joints, the result is gout. The Nigerian man in his forties who gets gout attacks has usually been drinking sweet drinks and eating processed meats for a long time. The pain did not arrive suddenly. It was building quietly.

Can you water a plant with a sweet malt drink every day and expect it to thrive? The liver is slower to show damage than the plant. But the process is the same.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove all sweet drinks from the house. Replace with water, unsweetened zobo, tiger nut drink without sugar, and fresh coconut water.

MOVEMENT: Movement helps the kidneys clear uric acid faster. This directly reduces the risk of gout.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Vitamin C helps clear uric acid and supports liver recovery. Eat more oranges, guava, tomatoes, and fresh peppers.

THE OIL IS THE PROBLEM, NOT THE FOOD

Akara is a good food. Beans, ground and fried. Rich in protein and fibre. The problem is not the akara. The problem is the seed oil it is fried in, heated and reheated across days in a roadside pan. Same food. Very different outcome depending on what it is cooked in.

INFLAMMATION

HEART DISEASE

LIVER DAMAGE

JOINT PAIN



The oil used three days in a row is not the same oil it started as
REUSED FRYING OIL -- TRANS FATS -- SYSTEMIC INFLAMMATION

The food is often fine. The oil it is cooked in, heated and reheated many times, is where the damage starts.

Seed Oils and Why They Cause Problems

Most of the cooking oil sold in Nigerian supermarkets and used in commercial frying is what is called a seed oil. Soybean oil, sunflower oil, corn oil, vegetable oil. These oils are made by chemically extracting fat from seeds at high heat and high pressure.

Seed oils are high in polyunsaturated fats. Polyunsaturated fats have a weak molecular structure. They are chemically unstable, meaning they break down easily when exposed to heat, light, and oxygen. When a polyunsaturated oil is heated to frying temperature, it begins to oxidise. Toxic compounds called aldehydes and other harmful molecules form. These compounds cause inflammation in the body.

The damage is worse the more times the oil is heated. The first heating causes some oxidation. The second heating causes more. By the third or fourth heating, the oil is generating significant amounts of inflammatory and toxic compounds. Most commercial frying

operations use the same oil across a full day or across multiple days. The oil used to fry akara at a roadside stall in the evening may have been heated and reheated five or six times since morning.

It is not the akara. It is not the puff-puff. It is not the fried plantain. It is the polyunsaturated seed oil they are cooked in, heated repeatedly until it becomes something the body was not designed to process.

Why Reusing Oil Is Specifically the Problem

Fresh polyunsaturated oil, used once at moderate temperature, is considerably less harmful than the same oil reused. The problem in Nigerian cooking, both at home and commercially, is that oil is expensive. So it is saved, reused, and reheated.

Each round of heating creates more oxidised compounds. The colour darkens. The viscosity changes. The smoke point drops, meaning the oil starts smoking at lower temperatures as it degrades. An oil that is smoking has crossed the threshold into producing harmful compounds at a significant rate. A darkened, smoking, reused frying oil is no longer a cooking medium. It is a source of inflammation being transferred directly into the food.

This is why akara bought fresh from a well-kept home kitchen using fresh palm oil is a different food from akara bought from a roadside stall using oil that has been in the pan since morning. The bean cake is the same. What is in that bean cake is not.

What Makes Palm Oil Different

Red palm oil is not a seed oil. It is a fruit oil, pressed from the fruit of the oil palm tree, not extracted chemically from seeds. This is an important difference.

Palm oil is high in saturated and monounsaturated fats. These fats have a more stable molecular structure than polyunsaturated fats. They do not oxidise nearly as easily when heated. This means palm oil is significantly more resistant to the kind of heat-damage that makes seed oils harmful.

Palm oil also contains vitamin A, vitamin E, and other antioxidants that protect against oxidative damage. It has been used in West

African cooking for thousands of years. The body recognises it. It was in our food long before imported seed oils arrived.

Palm oil is not perfect in large quantities. But used in cooking, in reasonable amounts, it is a considerably safer choice than commercial vegetable or sunflower oil, especially for frying.

Coconut Oil and Animal Fats

Coconut oil, like palm oil, is high in saturated fat. Saturated fat has been unfairly blamed for heart disease for decades based on research that has since been significantly challenged. Saturated fats are chemically stable at high heat. Coconut oil does not oxidise and degrade the way seed oils do when heated.

Beef tallow, the rendered fat from beef, is another stable cooking fat used traditionally across the world. High in saturated and monounsaturated fat, stable at high heat, and it was what West Africans used alongside palm oil before commercial seed oils became cheap and widely available.

These are not exotic or expensive alternatives. Palm oil is in every Nigerian market at a reasonable price. The shift from commercial vegetable oil to palm oil for cooking is not a difficult or expensive one. The difference it makes to the inflammatory load of everyday cooking is significant.

The Akara Principle

Akara is not a bad food. It is a very good food. Beans provide protein, iron, and fibre. Fried in fresh palm oil at home, akara is genuinely nourishing. The same akara fried in reused commercial seed oil from a roadside stall is protein plus a delivery mechanism for inflammatory compounds.

This principle applies to everything fried. Puff-puff, plantain, potatoes, yam chips, fried fish. The food itself is generally fine. What determines whether it is nourishing or damaging is the oil, how many times that oil has been heated, and what type of oil it is.

Practical Changes

- At home: use red palm oil or coconut oil for frying. Use fresh oil every time. Do not save and reuse frying oil.

- Frying temperature: keep it moderate. If the oil is smoking, it is too hot and producing harmful compounds. Turn down the heat.
- Outside the home: be aware that most commercial frying uses reused seed oil. Eat less fried food from roadside stalls and fast food places. This is not about refusing all fried food, it is about frequency.
- Alternative methods: grilling, baking with a small amount of fresh oil, and stewing produce the same foods with significantly less oxidative damage.
- For cooking generally: palm oil for frying, olive oil or coconut oil for sauteing, natural animal fats where available.

Red palm oil is a fruit oil. Coconut oil is a stable fat. Beef tallow is what our ancestors used. These are not new health trends. They are the original fats. The seed oils that replaced them in Nigerian kitchens over the last fifty years are the new ones, and the health problems followed.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Switch from commercial seed oil to palm oil or coconut oil for home cooking. Never reuse frying oil. These two changes reduce the daily inflammatory load significantly without changing what is cooked.

MOVEMENT: The inflammatory compounds from oxidised oils accumulate in tissues over time. Regular physical movement supports the lymphatic system, which helps the body clear inflammatory waste.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Omega-3 from fresh mackerel, sardines, and local oily fish directly counteracts inflammation. Eating fatty fish twice a week provides a natural anti-inflammatory balance.

THE BREAKFAST MOST NIGERIANS ARE GETTING WRONG

Pap. Three tablespoons of starch in hot water. Given to sick people, to babies, to healthy working adults as a complete morning meal. It is almost nutritionally empty.

LOW ENERGY

HIGH BLOOD SUGAR

POOR CONCENTRATION

CHILDREN'S HEALTH



The brain a child takes to school is built by what they eat at home. Biscuits and juice produce a different brain from eggs, moringa, and crayfish.

The Old Pap and the New Pap Are Not the Same Thing

When people argue that pap is traditional and our grandmothers gave it to us, they are right. But what our grandmothers made is not what most people are serving today. The old pap and the new pap are completely different things. One was beneficial. The other is a sugar dump.

The original pap, the real *ogi* or *akamu*, was allowed to ferment. The corn or guinea corn was soaked in water for several days, sometimes up to three or four days, before it was ground and processed. That fermentation period was not just about softening the grain. It was doing serious biological work.

During fermentation, bacteria break down the phytic acid in the grain. Phytic acid is an antinutrient that locks up minerals like iron and zinc and prevents the body from absorbing them. Fermentation unlocks those minerals. Fermented pap also develops probiotic bacteria that

are good for the gut. The natural lactic acid that forms during fermentation lowers the glycaemic impact, meaning the blood sugar does not spike as sharply. And the partial breakdown of the starch during fermentation begins to pre-digest the food, making it easier on the digestive system.

So properly fermented pap from our grandmothers was not just acceptable. It was genuinely beneficial. Lower blood sugar impact than plain starch. Better mineral availability. Living bacteria supporting the gut. This is why it made sense to give it to babies, to the sick, to adults.

What Most People Are Making and Serving Now

What is called pap in most Nigerian homes and markets today is not fermented pap. It is corn starch that has been commercially processed, ground fine, packed in a cellophane bag, and sold immediately. No fermentation. No breakdown. No probiotic benefit. Just raw starch that the body converts to sugar in minutes.

And then there are the commercial breakfast cereals, the custard powders, the refined corn-based sachets that are marketed as nourishing baby food or as a healthy breakfast. These are even further from the original. They are straight starch, often with added sugar and artificial colour, sometimes fortified with a token amount of synthetic vitamins that barely compensate for what the processing removed.

When a mother gives her child a bowl of commercially processed corn starch in hot water every morning, she believes she is giving the child pap the way pap was always given. She is not. She is giving the child a blood sugar spike with almost no nutritional content.

The pap argument is understandable. But the pap your grandmother made was soaked for three days before use. The pap in the market today was ground, bagged, and sold without a single day of fermentation. They are not the same food.

The Custard and Cereal Problem

Custard powder is refined corn starch with colour and artificial flavour added. That is it. When you add hot water and sugar, you have created a bowl of essentially pure glucose with colouring. It enters the

blood immediately, causes a sharp insulin spike, crashes just as fast, and leaves the body with nothing useful.

Commercial breakfast cereals marketed to Nigerian children and adults are similar. Most are made from refined grains that have been stripped of their fibre, their natural oils, and most of their nutrients during processing. What is added back are synthetic vitamins in amounts that do not replace what was removed. The dominant ingredient in most of these products is sugar, often in second or third place on the ingredient list.

A child who eats custard or commercial cereal every morning before school is essentially eating a bowl of sugar. The energy lasts thirty minutes. By 9am the blood sugar has crashed. The child is tired, fidgety, cannot concentrate, is told they are not trying hard enough. The real problem is what was on the breakfast table.

For children and adults managing blood sugar, these products are particularly harmful. There is nothing in them to slow the glucose absorption. No fibre. No protein. No fat. Nothing to moderate the spike.

What Genuinely Fermented Pap Looks Like

If you want to serve real pap the way it was always meant to be, soak the corn or guinea corn in clean water for at least two to three days before grinding. The water will become slightly sour-smelling. That sour smell is the fermentation working. It is a good sign, not a sign that the food has gone bad.

After grinding, the fermented paste can be used immediately or stored for a few days. Cooked simply with hot water, properly fermented pap already has a better nutritional profile than any commercial corn starch product on the market.

Then fortify it further. The fermentation is the base. The fortification is the upgrade.

For Children: What Plain Pap Actually Gives Versus What They Need

Plain commercial pap, whether from a bag or a box, gives a child: a blood sugar spike, a fast crash, hunger again within the hour, and almost nothing the developing brain requires. For a child whose brain

is being physically built during the early years, this is not a small deficit. It is a structural problem.

For children, it is a serious issue. A child eating unfermented commercial starch every morning and going to school has almost no nutritional fuel in the brain by 9am. The restlessness, the inability to sit still and concentrate, the slow reading that teachers and parents describe. A lot of that is not personality. It is food.

The Bread, Margarine, and Sweet Tea Trap

This is the breakfast of millions of urban Nigerians. White bread, margarine, and sweet tea.

DANGEROUS FOOD: White bread with margarine and sweet tea

WHAT IT DOES: Immediate blood sugar spike, trans fats from margarine, no protein, energy crash by 9am, insulin resistance building daily

REPLACE WITH: Eggs with avocado and tomato with banana and groundnuts, fortified pap, or leftover local rice with eggs

Margarine specifically deserves attention. Most commercial margarine in Nigeria contains partially hydrogenated oils, which is a trans fat source. Millions of Nigerian families are spreading trans fats on bread every single morning without knowing it.

What you eat in the first hour of the day sets your energy, your blood sugar, and your mood for the next six hours. Start with starch and sugar and you will be chasing energy all morning.

How To Make Pap Worth Eating

Do not throw the pap away. Upgrade it. These additions cost almost nothing and change the nutrition completely:

- Egg yolk: stir into hot pap. Provides fat for the brain and complete protein for the body.
- Ground crayfish: one teaspoon. Minerals, zinc, omega-3 fats.
- Red palm oil: a small amount. Vitamin A, which many Nigerian children are low in.

- Moringa powder: one teaspoon has more iron than spinach, more vitamin C than orange, real protein. Buy in the market or dry and grind the leaves yourself.
- Mashed liver from eight months for babies: the most nutrient-rich food available. Iron, zinc, B12, vitamin A. A small amount is enough.

The fortified pap and the plain pap cost almost the same. The difference in what the brain receives is enormous, especially for a child whose brain is being built meal by meal.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Fix breakfast before changing any other meal. One meal at a time. Protein and fat in the morning means steady energy and no sugar crash.

MOVEMENT: Fifteen minutes of morning sunlight before or after breakfast supports vitamin D levels and helps regulate the body clock.

SUPPLEMENTATION: For children with poor concentration or slow development, iron and DHA from fatty fish and eggs are the two nutrients most directly linked to brain function. Fix the diet first, supplement the gaps.

WHAT ALCOHOL IS DOING TO YOUR LIVER

She did not think of herself as someone with a drinking problem. A glass of wine on Friday. Beer at naming ceremonies and birthdays. She did not know her liver had been quietly swelling for five years.

LIVER DAMAGE

HORMONAL PROBLEMS

BIG BELLY

FATIGUE



Alcohol + xenoestrogens compete for the same liver pathway. Hormones lose every time.

Every time alcohol enters the body, the liver drops everything else and deals with the alcohol first. Hormones, blood sugar, toxin filtering, all of it waits.

What the Liver Does

Most Nigerians think the liver is mainly for managing alcohol. The liver does over five hundred things. Three matter most for understanding why so many Nigerians are sick:

- It removes excess estrogen from the blood. When it cannot do this properly, estrogen piles up. Fibroids grow. Periods become heavier. Men develop belly fat and low testosterone.
- It controls blood sugar. A damaged liver cannot store and release glucose properly. Blood sugar becomes unstable.
- It filters chemicals from everything you eat, drink, and breathe. Seasoning cube chemicals, preservatives, pollution, medication. All of it passes through the liver.

Alcohol forces the liver to drop everything and deal with it as an emergency. While the liver is processing alcohol, it is not clearing

estrogen, not managing blood sugar, not filtering the other chemicals in your food. Everything else waits.

What Regular Drinking Is Doing

DANGEROUS FOOD: Regular alcohol consumption, even moderate: beer at events, wine on weekends, spirits at celebrations

WHAT IT DOES: Impaired estrogen clearance causing hormonal problems, disrupted sleep quality, belly fat storage, liver inflammation building silently

REPLACE WITH: Unsweetened zobo, fresh palm wine in very small amounts, water with fresh lime, ginger beer made without sugar

Alcohol also destroys deep sleep even when it helps someone fall asleep faster. The repair sleep that the body needs does not happen properly when alcohol is present. Poor sleep raises the stress hormone cortisol. High cortisol causes belly fat storage, worsens insulin resistance, and suppresses the immune system. One drink on Friday night can affect how the body works for two days afterward.

The liver processes alcohol and estrogen through the same pathway. Every time alcohol comes in, estrogen clearance is paused. This is why heavy drinkers, even occasional heavy drinkers, often have the worst hormonal problems.

Foods That Help the Liver Recover

- Bitter leaf and bitter melon: West African plants with documented liver-protective properties
- Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower: help the liver remove excess estrogen from the blood
- Warm water with lemon every morning before food: gently activates liver function
- Turmeric in cooking every day: one of the best liver-protective foods available
- Moringa: antioxidants that protect liver cells from further damage
- Ginger tea: helps bile flow, which is how the liver packages and removes waste

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Support the liver with bitter leaf, cruciferous vegetables, and warm lemon water while alcohol is being reduced. Both changes work better together.

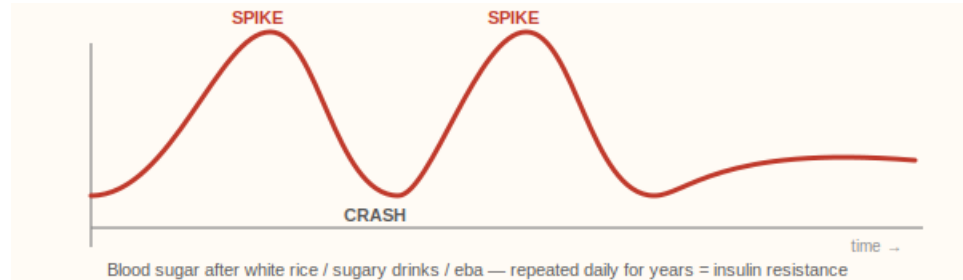
MOVEMENT: Reducing alcohol immediately improves sleep quality. Better sleep means lower cortisol, less belly fat, better insulin response.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Alcohol depletes B vitamins, vitamin C, and zinc. These are exactly the nutrients the liver needs to repair itself. Replace them through food and, where needed, supplementation.

THE LIVER CAN BE SICK WITHOUT A DROP OF ALCOHOL

He had never touched alcohol in his life. Deeply religious, completely sober. His scan showed a fatty, swollen liver. He was shocked. He thought liver disease was for drinkers. He was wrong.

FATTY LIVER **DIABETES** **BIG BELLY** **FATIGUE**



Too much white rice and sweet drinks flood the liver with sugar it cannot process. The liver turns the excess into fat and stores it inside itself. This is fatty liver. Alcohol is not required.

Fatty Liver Without Alcohol: How It Happens

Doctors call it Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease. The short name is NAFLD. You do not need to drink to get it. You just need to eat the way most Nigerians eat.

When you eat too much white rice, eba, sugary drinks, biscuits, and processed food, the liver gets more sugar than it can handle. The liver converts the extra into fat. When this happens meal after meal, year after year, that fat starts to collect inside the liver itself. The liver becomes heavy with its own fat and begins to lose the ability to do its many jobs properly.

Think of a kitchen sponge soaked in oil. It cannot absorb water properly anymore. A fatty liver is similar. It cannot clear hormones, cannot manage blood sugar, cannot filter chemicals properly. Everything connected to liver function starts to fail slowly and quietly.

Most Nigerians with big belly, high blood sugar, constant tiredness, and hormonal problems who have never had a drink almost certainly have a fatty liver. The sugar and white carbohydrates built it. Not the alcohol.

Why Most People Do Not Know They Have It

Fatty liver disease usually has no clear symptoms in the early stages. You may feel more tired than you should. There may be mild discomfort under the right side of the ribs, where the liver sits. You may find it hard to lose weight no matter what you do. The belly may keep growing even when you are eating less.

Most Nigerian doctors do not routinely check for fatty liver. A standard blood test may even come back normal in the early and middle stages. The disease is growing quietly while the person has no idea.

The first sign for many Nigerians is a scan done for something else entirely, perhaps an antenatal scan or a routine checkup, and the doctor mentions almost casually that the liver looks bright or echogenic on the scan. That brightness means fat.

Who Should Be Concerned

- Anyone who eats white rice, eba, pounded yam, or white bread as their main food at most meals
- Anyone who drinks sweet drinks regularly, including juice, malt drinks, and soft drinks
- Anyone with a growing belly, especially firm fat around the middle
- Anyone with type 2 diabetes or pre-diabetes
- Anyone who is always tired even after a full night of sleep
- Anyone who finds it very hard to lose weight despite eating less

If you recognise yourself in this list, ask your doctor specifically for a liver ultrasound scan. Ask them to check the liver specifically. Do not wait for symptoms to get worse.

How to Reverse Fatty Liver

This is the good news. Fatty liver in the early and middle stages can be reversed. The liver is one of the few organs in the body that can fully repair itself if given the right conditions.

DANGEROUS FOOD: White rice, eba, sweet drinks, biscuits, processed snacks eaten daily

WHAT IT DOES: Excess sugar floods the liver, which converts it to fat and stores it inside itself, causing fatty liver disease over years

REPLACE WITH: Local unpolished rice, unripe plantain, cocoyam, water, unsweetened zobo, bitter leaf, broccoli, fatty fish twice a week

- Cut white rice and white carbohydrates significantly. Switch to local unpolished rice, unripe plantain, cocoyam.
- Remove all sweet drinks. This is the single biggest liver recovery change.
- Add bitter leaf, broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower. These directly help the liver clear fat and repair itself.
- Eat fatty fish (fresh mackerel, local fatty fish, salmon) at least twice a week. The omega-3 directly reduces fat inside the liver.
- Warm lemon water first thing every morning before anything else. Cheap, consistent, effective.
- Walk thirty minutes every day. Physical movement helps the liver process and clear fat.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: The same food changes that reverse fatty liver also address diabetes, big belly, and high blood pressure. Less white carbohydrate, less sugar, more vegetables, more protein, more fatty fish.

MOVEMENT: Thirty minutes of walking daily is one of the most proven interventions for reducing liver fat. It is free. It must become a daily habit.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Omega-3 fatty acids directly reduce fat inside the liver. If you cannot eat fatty fish twice a week, consider fish oil capsules. Vitamin E also has real documented benefit for fatty liver.

LATE NIGHT EATING AND WHAT IT DOES TO THE BODY

He exercised every morning without fail. Ate reasonably during the day. But by 10pm he was at the suya spot or ordering delivery. He could not understand why the belly would not shift. The body at 10pm is not the body at 1pm.

BIG BELLY **DIABETES** **POOR SLEEP** **FATTY LIVER**



After 7pm the body is preparing for repair work. Eating heavily late forces it back into digestion mode. The repair keeps getting postponed.

What the Body Is Doing After 7pm

After about 7pm, the body starts slowing its digestion and metabolism, preparing for overnight work. During deep sleep, the body repairs damaged tissue, clears waste from the brain, balances hormones, resets the immune system. This overnight repair work is why sleep matters so much for health.

When you eat a heavy meal at 9 or 10pm, the body has to change plans and go back into digestion mode. The liver, which was beginning its overnight cleaning work, has to stop and process the food instead. Night after night of eating late means the body is always behind on its repair schedule.

Why Late Eating Builds the Belly

At night the body is less sensitive to insulin. The same food that the body handles reasonably at 1pm causes a bigger insulin spike at

10pm. Because insulin is high during sleep, more fat gets stored around the belly overnight.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Heavy carbohydrate meals (rice, eba, bread) eaten after 9pm

WHAT IT DOES: Belly fat storage accelerated by nighttime insulin spikes, poor sleep quality, liver forced into digestion instead of repair

REPLACE WITH: Finish eating by 7pm when possible. If eating late, choose eggs, fish, vegetables. No heavy carbohydrates after 8pm.

The liver works through the night. But it cannot clean your blood and digest your late suya at the same time. Every time you eat heavily late, you choose digestion over repair. The repair gets postponed again.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Move your biggest meal to 6 or 7pm. Leave at least two hours between the last meal and sleep. This one timing change reduces belly fat accumulation and improves sleep quality without changing what you eat.

MOVEMENT: A short walk after dinner, even fifteen minutes, clears blood sugar from the evening meal before the body shifts into nighttime mode.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Magnesium before sleep supports sleep quality and helps the body run the overnight repair processes. Eat nuts, seeds, dark green vegetables, or take a magnesium supplement at night.

HOW CHRONIC STRESS DRIVES FAT STORAGE AND SICKNESS

She ate well. She exercised. She was careful. She still had hormonal problems, belly fat that would not shift, and tiredness that never went away. Nobody told her that the stress she had been carrying for four years was fighting against everything else she was doing.

BIG BELLY**HORMONAL PROBLEMS****DIABETES****FATIGUE**

What the Stress Hormone Does

When you are stressed, the body releases a hormone called cortisol. Cortisol is a survival hormone. In a genuine emergency, it floods the body with energy to react fast. It is designed for short bursts.

Modern Nigerian stress is not short bursts. It is traffic that never ends. Bills that keep coming. Work pressure that does not stop. Worry about children, family, money, health. These stresses go on for months and years. Cortisol stays elevated. The body stays in emergency mode.

And a body that stays in emergency mode for too long starts to break down. Digestion is suppressed. The immune system is weakened. Hormonal production is disrupted. Belly fat storage is increased. Blood sugar goes up. Repair work is postponed.

Cortisol and a female hormone called progesterone are made from the same raw material in the body. When stress is chronic and cortisol demand is always high, there is less material left to make progesterone. This is why stressed Nigerian women have hormonal problems, heavy periods, and mood changes regardless of what they eat.

Why the Belly Will Not Go

Cortisol specifically tells the body to store fat around the abdomen. It is a survival instruction. Fat near the vital organs is energy that can be accessed quickly in an emergency.

When cortisol is permanently high, the body is permanently storing belly fat. Exercise burns it off. But if cortisol is still high, the body just restores it. This is why the person who exercises regularly and eats well but is chronically stressed cannot lose the belly. The stress hormone is louder than the exercise.

Managing Stress Is Not Optional. It Is Medicine.

- Prayer and meditation: ten minutes three times a day measurably reduces cortisol levels in the blood. This is not soft advice. It is biochemistry.
- Walking: the body's natural cortisol-clearing mechanism. A thirty-minute walk after a stressful day metabolises the cortisol produced that day.
- Deep breathing: breathe in for four counts, hold four, breathe out for six. Five rounds, three times a day. Activates the calm-down system within minutes.
- Consistent sleep time: cortisol follows a daily rhythm. Random sleep times break that rhythm and keep cortisol high at the wrong hours.
- Time with people you trust: isolation raises cortisol. Real community lowers it. This is not a metaphor. It is measurable.

Most people can eat well and exercise daily and still not lose the belly if the chronic stress is not addressed. Stress management is the missing leg for most Nigerians.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Magnesium is the mineral most consumed by the stress response and most needed by the nervous system to calm down. Eat nuts, seeds, dark leafy greens, and cocoa every day.

MOVEMENT: Movement is both exercise and stress medicine. Walking clears cortisol from the body. The walk after a hard day works better than sitting and worrying.

SUPPLEMENTATION: B vitamins, magnesium, and vitamin C are depleted by chronic stress. They need to be actively replaced or the stress response worsens over time.

GRANDMA WAS RIGHT ALL ALONG

Our grandmothers did not have fibroids at this rate. Did not have this much diabetes. Did not have this level of constant tiredness. They ate differently. Not because they were poorer. Because the food they had was real.

ALL CONDITIONS

PREVENTION

GUT HEALTH

HORMONAL HEALTH



Bitter leaf · Moringa · Ugu · Ginger · Turmeric · Scent leaf
Grandma's pharmacy — in every Nigerian market — almost free

*Bitter leaf, ugu, moringa, ginger, turmeric, scent leaf. In every Nigerian market. Nearly free.
More powerful than most supplements.*

What Changed in One Generation

Think about what your grandparents ate. Fresh vegetables, fish from the river or market, unprocessed grains, no commercial seasoning cubes, no soft drinks, no margarine. In thirty years the Nigerian diet changed more than it had in the previous three hundred. The disease pattern followed that change exactly.

Fibroids became an epidemic. Diabetes became ordinary. High blood pressure in people in their thirties became common. These things did not happen randomly. They followed the food.

The Medicine Already in Your Market

Bitter leaf (efo ewuro): research shows it lowers blood sugar, supports liver function, and reduces inflammation in the body. Your grandmother cooked with it three times a week. It costs almost nothing.

Ugu (fluted pumpkin leaves): rich in iron, vitamin C, vitamin A, and blood-building nutrients. One of the most nutritious greens available anywhere in the world. It has been in Nigerian cooking for generations.

Moringa: more vitamin C than oranges, more iron than spinach, complete protein. It grows across Nigeria. Dry the leaves, grind them, add to food. A teaspoon a day is medicine.

Scent leaf (efirin): antibacterial, antifungal, flavourful. It belongs in cooking pots, not just in pepper soup as an afterthought.

The answer is not abroad. It has never been abroad. It is in the market down your road. It is the green leaves your grandmother grew behind her house.



Good gut bacteria are fed by fermented foods and fibre. Bad bacteria are fed by sugar and white carbohydrates. What you eat every day is feeding one side or the other.

The Fermentation Tradition That Got Lost

Iru (fermented locust beans) and dawadawa are fermented foods containing living bacteria that are good for the gut. Your grandmother used iru in cooking for flavour. She was also feeding her gut bacteria without knowing it. We replaced iru with seasoning cubes. The gut paid for that trade.

The gut contains trillions of bacteria. When the good bacteria are winning, your immune system works, your mood is stable, your hormones are cleared properly, and your body absorbs nutrients efficiently. When bad bacteria are winning, the opposite happens. What you eat every day determines which side wins.

Raw Honey

Raw honey heals wounds, kills the bacteria that causes stomach ulcers, and has antibacterial properties that scientists are still

studying. Your grandmother applied it to every cut and wound. Can you give it to a baby over twelve months? Yes. Can a plant grow with honey in the soil? Yes. It passes the test. Real raw honey is darker, thicker, and less sweet than the commercial golden honey in supermarkets. The commercial one is mostly sugar syrup. Buy real raw honey from a trusted source.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Return to the ingredients your grandmother used. Bitter leaf, ugu, moringa, iru, scent leaf, raw honey. All available. All affordable. All more effective than people realise.

MOVEMENT: Traditional life involved constant movement without scheduling. Rebuild daily movement deliberately. Your body was designed for it.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Food first. Every nutrient your body needs is in traditional Nigerian food, eaten properly. Where years of poor eating have created serious deficiencies, supplement specifically.

BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

The brain being built in the first five years of life is the brain that child will use for the rest of their life. There is no second chance at this window. What goes in now determines what comes out later.

BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

IRON DEFICIENCY

CONCENTRATION

GROWTH



BABIES (0-2 yrs)

Plain pap = empty starch, no brain fuel

Fortified pap = egg yolk + crayfish + moringa

Iron deficiency at this age affects the brain for the rest of the child's life

The brain being built now cannot be rebuilt later

The brain is being built right now, meal by meal. What goes in determines what comes out.

The Most Dangerous Foods for Young Children

DANGEROUS FOOD: Plain pap as the main baby food

WHAT IT DOES: Near-zero nutrition. No protein, no fat, no iron, no brain-building nutrients. Blood sugar spikes and crashes. Slow brain development.

REPLACE WITH: Fortified pap: add egg yolk, crayfish, moringa, small palm oil. This transforms pap from empty to genuinely nourishing.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Biscuits and sweet drinks as snacks

WHAT IT DOES: Daily blood sugar spikes building insulin resistance from childhood. No nutrition. Feeding bad gut bacteria. Causing restlessness and poor concentration.

REPLACE WITH: Tiger nuts, groundnuts, fresh fruit, boiled egg, garden egg, cucumber sticks

DANGEROUS FOOD: Instant noodles as a regular meal for children

WHAT IT DOES: High sodium, seasoning packet chemicals, refined flour with no nutrition, MSG in quantities not appropriate for a small body

REPLACE WITH: Beans, local unpolished rice with eggs, moi moi, fortified pap

What the Brain Needs at Every Stage

Ages 0 to 2: This is the most important period. The brain is being physically built, wire by wire. Iron deficiency at this age does not just cause tiredness. It slows brain architecture development in ways that no amount of schooling can fully reverse later.

- Iron: found in liver, beans, ugu, crayfish. Always pair with vitamin C for absorption. Tomatoes, orange juice, fresh peppers.
- DHA (a type of fat): found in egg yolk and fatty fish. Essential for brain cell structure. Cannot be made by the body in adequate amounts. Must come from food.
- Zinc: found in crayfish, eggs, pumpkin seeds, seafood. Needed for brain signalling.
- Choline: found almost exclusively in egg yolk and liver. Critical for memory and learning.

Ages 3 to 7: Language, memory, and emotional regulation are developing. Nutritional deficiencies at this stage produce children who struggle in school not because they lack intelligence, but because their brains lack the raw materials to function properly.

Ages 8 to 12: Concentration, logical thinking, and learning capacity. What a child eats directly determines how well they can sit still, retain information, and perform in exams.

A fifty thousand naira school term cannot overcome the cognitive damage of iron deficiency. The most important investment is not the school fees. It is the food at home.

How To Fortify Pap: Step by Step

- Cook the pap as normal.
- While it is still hot, stir in one egg yolk. It will melt in and you will not see it.

- Add one teaspoon of ground crayfish. Flavour and minerals.
- Add a small amount of red palm oil. Vitamin A.
- Add half a teaspoon of moringa powder if you have it.
- From eight months, mash a small amount of cooked liver and stir in. Start small.

This is not complicated. It costs very little more than plain pap. The brain your child takes to school when they are six was built by what you fed them between zero and five. Build it well.

TEENAGERS

The habits a teenager builds between age thirteen and nineteen will determine their health at forty. Most Nigerian teenagers are building insulin resistance, hormonal problems, and liver damage without knowing it.

INSULIN RESISTANCE

HORMONAL PROBLEMS

SKIN ISSUES

WEIGHT GAIN



TEENAGERS (13-19 yrs)

Indomie + biscuits + sweet drinks daily
= building insulin resistance before age 20
Skin problems, mood swings, period pain
in girls: often food and hormone related

Habits formed now determine health at 40

Nigerian teenage diet. Instant noodles, biscuits, sweet drinks, fried everything. Insulin resistance before age twenty is the result for many.

What the Typical Nigerian Teenager Eats

Breakfast: nothing, or biscuits and a sweet drink. Lunch: instant noodles, fried plantain, puff-puff, sausage roll. After school: more biscuits, another sweet drink, or fried snacks from the school canteen. Dinner: white rice and stew with fried chicken. Throughout the day: very little water, several more sweet drinks.

This eating pattern, repeated every day for six years of secondary school, builds insulin resistance. It causes hormonal disruption. It builds belly fat early. It creates the conditions that make type 2 diabetes arrive in the thirties instead of the sixties.

The Most Dangerous Foods for Teenagers

DANGEROUS FOOD: Sweet drinks consumed multiple times daily (soft drinks, juice, malt drinks, energy drinks)

WHAT IT DOES: Insulin resistance building from the teenage years, liver fat accumulating, gout risk rising, hormonal disruption

REPLACE WITH: Water, zobo without sugar, tiger nut drink, fresh coconut water

DANGEROUS FOOD: Instant noodles as a regular meal

WHAT IT DOES: High sodium, MSG, refined flour, chemical seasoning packet. No protein, no real nutrition. Kidney strain from excess salt.

REPLACE WITH: Boiled or scrambled eggs, beans, local unpolished rice. Fast to make, genuinely nourishing.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Canteen and roadside fried snacks cooked in reused oil

WHAT IT DOES: Trans fats from reused oil causing inflammation, worsening skin (acne), and building cardiovascular risk early

REPLACE WITH: Groundnuts, boiled eggs, fresh fruit, tiger nuts as portable snacks

For Teenage Girls Specifically

Many Nigerian girls accept severe period pain as normal. It is not normal. Period pain at the level that requires medication every month is usually a sign that inflammation and estrogen are already out of balance. The daily instant noodles, the sweet drinks, the fried snacks, and the seasoning cube in the home cooking are all contributing.

Hormonal acne in teenagers is also largely food-driven. White carbohydrates spike insulin. High insulin raises androgens (male hormones). High androgens increase oil production in the skin. Blocked pores and inflammation follow. Treating the skin from the outside without addressing the food driving it from the inside is like mopping the floor while the tap is still running.

For Teenage Boys Specifically

Teenage boys building their physical strength and muscle are doing it with whatever raw materials the food provides. A teenager eating instant noodles and biscuits every day is building muscle from incomplete materials. Zinc deficiency from poor diet affects testosterone production even at seventeen. The energy and drive that teenage boys feel naturally can be significantly reduced by a diet of processed food and sweet drinks.

The habits built between thirteen and nineteen follow you for the rest of your life. This is the easiest and most important time to establish good eating patterns because the body is still building everything.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Two changes that make the biggest difference for teenagers: remove sweet drinks and replace daily instant noodles with eggs. Just these two changes significantly reduce the insulin resistance and hormone disruption being built every day.

MOVEMENT: Daily movement of at least thirty minutes, even walking, is especially important during teenage years to balance insulin and support healthy hormone levels.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Zinc for teenage boys (from eggs, crayfish, pumpkin seeds) supports healthy hormone development. Iron for teenage girls (especially after periods start) prevents the anaemia and chronic fatigue that many accept as normal.

PREGNANT AND BREASTFEEDING WOMEN

Everything the mother eats, the baby receives too. The food on the mother's plate is the material the baby's brain, organs, and body are being built from. There is no more important time to eat correctly than during pregnancy.

BABY'S BRAIN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

GESTATIONAL DIABETES

ANAEMIA

BABY'S IMMUNE



PREGNANCY

What you eat is what the baby is built from
 Iron deficiency: anaemia in mother AND brain delay in baby
 Seasoning cubes: xenoestrogens reach the baby too
 Gestational diabetes: white rice three times a day
 Folate deficiency: affects baby's spine in first weeks

Nine months of food becomes a lifetime of health.

Nine months of food becomes a lifetime of health for the baby. What the mother eats is what the baby is built from.

The Most Dangerous Foods During Pregnancy

DANGEROUS FOOD: Seasoning cubes used in every meal during pregnancy

WHAT IT DOES: Xenoestrogens from seasoning cubes cross the placenta and reach the developing baby. The baby's hormonal system is being built during pregnancy. Disrupting it at this stage has effects that can last decades.

REPLACE WITH: Crayfish, dried fish, garlic, ginger, natural herbs. Same flavour, zero xenoestrogen loading.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Sweet drinks and white carbohydrates as the majority of calories during pregnancy

WHAT IT DOES: Gestational diabetes (diabetes that develops during pregnancy). This increases the risk of a large baby, difficult delivery, and type 2 diabetes for both mother and child in later life.

REPLACE WITH: Local unpolished rice, unripe plantain, cocoyam, beans. Pair every carbohydrate with protein.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Processed and preserved meats (sausages, corned beef, canned meats)

WHAT IT DOES: Chemical preservatives, excess sodium, estrogen-disrupting compounds. Not appropriate during a period when the baby's development depends on a clean hormonal environment.

REPLACE WITH: Fresh chicken, fresh fish, eggs, beans, liver in small amounts

What a Pregnant Woman Actually Needs

Iron: the most critical nutrient during pregnancy. The mother's blood volume increases by about fifty percent during pregnancy. Iron deficiency causes anaemia in the mother and limits the oxygen available to the baby. A baby born to an iron-deficient mother starts life with a deficit that affects brain development and energy levels from day one.

- Iron food sources: liver (small amounts, once or twice a week), dark leafy ugu, beans, crayfish, red meat
- Always eat iron-rich food with vitamin C. Fresh tomatoes, orange, guava, peppers help the body absorb iron properly

Folate: critical in the first twelve weeks, often before the woman even knows she is pregnant. Folate is needed to properly close the tube that forms the baby's spine. Deficiency causes spina bifida, a serious condition affecting the spinal cord.

- Folate food sources: ugu, spinach, beans, liver
- If you are of childbearing age and not using contraception, take a folate supplement daily. You may be pregnant before you know it.

Omega-3 (DHA): the structural fat in the baby's brain. Sixty percent of the brain is fat. DHA is the most important type. A baby whose mother

ate fatty fish during pregnancy has measurably better brain development than a baby whose mother did not.

- Omega-3 food sources: mackerel, fresh local fish, salmon, eggs, walnuts, crayfish

Protein: the baby's every cell, organ, muscle, and tissue is being built from protein. A pregnant woman who eats mainly white rice and garri is not giving the body enough building material.

The seasoning cube you use in every pot during pregnancy is delivering xenoestrogens to your developing baby at the exact moment their hormonal system is being built. This is not a small thing. Change this first.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove seasoning cubes from all cooking during pregnancy and breastfeeding. Eat iron-rich food with vitamin C at every meal. Eat fatty fish twice a week.

MOVEMENT: Gentle daily movement during pregnancy supports blood circulation, reduces swelling, and helps manage blood sugar. Walking is appropriate throughout a normal pregnancy.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Folate supplement before and during the first trimester. Iron supplement if blood tests show deficiency, which is very common. Omega-3 if fatty fish is not being eaten twice weekly.

WOMEN: FIBROIDS, PCOS, HORMONES, AND WEIGHT

Fibroids affect so many Nigerian women that some people have started to accept them as a normal part of being a woman. They are not normal. They are a symptom of an internal environment that food has been feeding for years.

FIBROIDS

PCOS

HEAVY PERIODS

HORMONAL WEIGHT GAIN



WOMEN: Key conditions

Fibroids: fed by estrogen from seasoning cubes, processed meats, alcohol, soya products

PCOS: driven by insulin resistance from white carbs

Heavy periods: excess estrogen not cleared by liver

Hormonal weight gain: cortisol stealing progesterone

The liver clears estrogen. Protect your liver.

The key conditions affecting Nigerian women and the foods most connected to each one.

How Fibroids Grow

Fibroids are benign growths in the uterus. They are fed by estrogen. Without estrogen, they cannot grow. When estrogen is removed (as it naturally falls in menopause), fibroids typically shrink.

So the question for every Nigerian woman with fibroids is: what is producing so much estrogen that fibroids are growing? The answer is almost always dietary. Xenoestrogens from seasoning cubes.

Estrogens from processed meats. Excess estrogen that the liver cannot clear because it is overloaded with alcohol and chemical food additives. Insulin resistance from white carbohydrates, which raises estrogen production further.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Commercial seasoning cubes, processed meats, alcohol, soya products, refined carbohydrates

WHAT IT DOES: All of these add estrogen or estrogen-like compounds to the body, feeding fibroid growth and worsening hormonal imbalance

REPLACE WITH: Natural seasoning (crayfish, ginger, garlic, thyme), fresh meat and fish, local unpolished rice, unripe plantain, cruciferous vegetables

You can spend money on fibroid treatments while continuing to cook with commercial seasoning cubes three times a day. The treatment and the food will be working against each other. The food has to change first.

PCOS: Two Problems Working Together

Polycystic ovary syndrome involves a disruption of the hormones that control ovulation. Two things drive it: too much insulin from white carbohydrates, and too much estrogen from xenoestrogens and processed food.

High insulin from eating white rice and sweet drinks raises the production of androgens (male hormones) in women. High androgens from PCOS prevent proper ovulation. The cycle becomes irregular or stops entirely.

Reducing white carbohydrates is one of the most effective PCOS interventions available. Not medication. Not surgery. Changing the carbohydrate in the diet.

Heavy and Painful Periods

The uterus sheds a lining every month. When estrogen is too high for too long, it builds a thicker lining than necessary. When that thicker lining sheds, the blood loss is heavier and the pain is greater.

The women with the heaviest, most painful periods are often the women with the highest estrogen load from food. Seasoning cubes at every meal. Processed meat. Alcohol on weekends. Soya milk because they think it is healthy (soya is one of the highest plant sources of phytoestrogens).

The Liver Connection

The liver clears excess estrogen from the blood. When the liver is healthy and not overloaded, it removes estrogen efficiently. When the liver is dealing with too many chemicals from processed food, alcohol,

and seasoning cubes, estrogen clearance slows down. Estrogen stays in the circulation. Conditions worsen.

Supporting the liver is one of the most important hormonal interventions a Nigerian woman can make.

- Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale: contain compounds that specifically help the liver clear estrogen
- Bitter leaf and bitter melon: liver protective, documented in research
- Warm lemon water every morning before food: gentle daily liver activation
- Reduce alcohol to the absolute minimum: every drink pauses estrogen clearance in the liver

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove the estrogen sources from the diet. Seasoning cubes first. Then processed meats. Then alcohol. Add cruciferous vegetables and liver-supporting foods every day.

MOVEMENT: Stress management is a direct hormonal intervention. Chronic stress steals the hormone material that progesterone should be made from. Managing stress is part of treating hormonal imbalance.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Magnesium supports progesterone production. Iron addresses the anaemia that heavy periods cause. B vitamins support liver estrogen clearance. These are the three most relevant supplements for most Nigerian women with hormonal conditions.

MEN: POT BELLY, LOW ENERGY, AND PROSTATE HEALTH

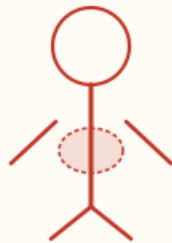
Nigerian men do not talk about this. The belly that will not shift. The energy that is always low. The drive that has gone quiet. These are not just signs of age or stress. They are hormonal. And they are food-related.

POT BELLY

LOW TESTOSTERONE

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

PROSTATE HEALTH



MEN: Key conditions

Pot belly: rising estrogen, falling testosterone
 Low energy and drive: insulin resistance + zinc deficiency
 High blood pressure: salt, processed food, no movement
 Gout: sweet drinks + processed meat + alcohol
 Prostate problems: low zinc, high estrogen load

That belly is not prosperity. It is a warning sign.

The conditions affecting Nigerian men most and the foods connected to each one.

Why the Belly Keeps Growing

Most Nigerian men believe the belly comes from eating too much. Sometimes that is true. But often, a man who is not eating very large amounts still has a growing belly. In these cases, the belly is usually a hormonal story.

When estrogen rises in a man's body, testosterone falls. Estrogen tells the body to store fat around the abdomen and chest. Testosterone tells the body to burn fat and build muscle. When estrogen is winning, the belly grows regardless of how little the man eats.

What raises estrogen in men? Seasoning cubes at every meal. Processed meats and sausages. Alcohol. Reused frying oil. Refined carbohydrates causing insulin resistance, which raises estrogen further. This is the Nigerian male's typical daily diet.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Seasoning cubes, sausages, processed meats, alcohol, reused frying oil, sweet drinks, white rice three times daily

WHAT IT DOES: Rising estrogen, falling testosterone, growing belly fat, low energy, low drive, increasing blood pressure, early type 2 diabetes

REPLACE WITH: Natural seasoning, fresh grilled meat and fish, local unpolished rice, eggs, avocado, vegetables, strength training three times a week

That belly is not prosperity. It is estrogen winning the fight against testosterone. The food is the battlefield.

Low Energy and Low Drive

Zinc is the mineral most directly connected to testosterone production. The prostate contains the highest concentration of zinc of any organ in the body. Zinc is found in pumpkin seeds, eggs, crayfish, oysters, and meat. It is not in white rice, bread, or biscuits.

A Nigerian man whose diet is mainly white carbohydrates, processed food, and sweet drinks, with little of the zinc-rich foods listed above, is producing testosterone on an insufficient supply of its most important raw material. The result is low energy, reduced drive, difficulty building or maintaining muscle, and poor mood.

High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure affects a very large proportion of Nigerian men. It is driven by excess salt from processed food and seasoning cubes, insulin resistance from white carbohydrates, belly fat producing inflammatory chemicals that raise vascular resistance, and lack of potassium from insufficient vegetables.

Potassium is the mineral that directly counteracts the blood-pressure-raising effect of sodium. It is found in avocados, bananas, sweet potatoes, coconut water, and beans. Nigerian men who eat mostly white rice and processed food with very little of these foods are getting high sodium and almost no potassium. Blood pressure follows.

Prostate Health

Prostate problems become more common in Nigerian men after forty. Two nutrients are most directly connected to prostate health: zinc (already discussed above) and lycopene.

Lycopene is a compound found in tomatoes and watermelon. It is one of the most studied nutrients for prostate protection. Nigerian men eat tomatoes regularly in stews and soups. The lycopene from cooked tomatoes is actually more available to the body than from raw tomatoes. This is one area where traditional Nigerian cooking is already doing something right.

- Eat cooked tomatoes regularly: they are in most Nigerian soups and stews already
- Eat pumpkin seeds and crayfish daily: the highest food sources of zinc available
- Reduce alcohol: it raises estrogen and reduces zinc absorption simultaneously
- Walk and use your muscles: testosterone is supported by resistance exercise

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove the estrogen-raising foods from the diet. Add the testosterone-supporting ones. Zinc from crayfish and pumpkin seeds. Healthy fats from eggs and avocado. Protein from fresh fish and chicken.

MOVEMENT: Strength training three times a week is the most direct lifestyle intervention for testosterone support. More muscle means better insulin sensitivity and better hormonal balance.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Zinc is the most important supplement for Nigerian men with low energy and hormonal issues. Vitamin D from daily morning sunlight. Omega-3 from fresh mackerel or local fatty fish or fish oil capsules.

OLDER ADULTS (60 YEARS AND ABOVE)

The conditions that show up at sixty were being built since the forties. But the body repairs at every age. It is never too late for food to start doing better work.

JOINT PAIN

MEMORY

DIABETES

HEART HEALTH



OLDER ADULTS (60+)

Joint pain: years of inflammation from bad oil and sugar
Memory problems: omega-3 deficiency + poor blood sugar
Weakness: protein deficiency common in elderly Nigerians
High BP and diabetes: often decades in the making
It is never too late. The body repairs at every age.

Food is medicine at 65 the same as at 25.

Food is medicine at sixty-five the same as at twenty-five. The body still responds to what it receives.

What Most Older Nigerians Are Eating That Is Hurting Them

DANGEROUS FOOD: White rice, eba, and pounded yam as the majority of meals every day

WHAT IT DOES: Blood sugar instability, worsening of existing diabetes, continued belly fat storage, increased fatigue

REPLACE WITH: Local unpolished rice, cocoyam, unripe plantain, beans. Smaller carbohydrate portions, more protein and vegetables.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Very little protein (common in older Nigerians who avoid meat for cost or digestive reasons)

WHAT IT DOES: Muscle loss (sarcopenia). After sixty, the body loses muscle faster than it builds it unless adequate protein is eaten. Muscle loss causes weakness, falls, slow metabolism.

REPLACE WITH: Eggs every day, beans at most meals, fresh fish regularly, liver once a week. These are affordable and appropriate protein sources.

DANGEROUS FOOD: Little to no fatty fish in the regular diet

WHAT IT DOES: Omega-3 deficiency. Connected to memory decline, poor mood, joint inflammation, and cardiovascular risk in older adults.

REPLACE WITH: Fresh mackerel or any local oily fish twice a week minimum. Walnuts. Chia seeds added to food. Fish oil supplement if diet is insufficient.

Joint Pain and What Is Behind It

Joint pain in older Nigerian adults is widely accepted as a normal part of ageing. It is not purely ageing. It is years of accumulated inflammation from reused frying oil, white carbohydrates, processed food, and insufficient omega-3 fats. The joints are particularly sensitive to the inflammatory chemicals that years of this diet produces.

- Ginger tea twice daily: one of the most effective natural anti-inflammatory compounds. Research shows it works through the same pathway as anti-inflammatory medication.
- Turmeric with black pepper in food: curcumin reduces joint inflammation. Black pepper increases absorption dramatically.
- Fatty fish twice a week: omega-3 directly reduces inflammatory compounds in joint tissue.
- Remove sweet drinks: fructose raises uric acid. High uric acid crystallises in joints. Gout at sixty is almost always a diet that has been building it since forty.

Memory and Brain Health

Memory decline is not simply inevitable. The brain needs specific nutrients to maintain function as it ages. The two most important are omega-3 fats (particularly DHA) and iron. Both are deficient in many older Nigerian adults.

An older Nigerian woman who has been iron deficient since her heavy-period years in her thirties and forties, and who has rarely eaten fatty fish in her life, is arriving at sixty with a brain that has

been under-resourced for decades. The memory problems that develop are not purely age. They are partly nutrition.

It is never too late. The body repairs at every age when given what it needs. The liver regenerates. Joint inflammation can be reduced. Energy returns. Brain function improves. The body is always responding to what you put into it.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Protein at every meal is the first priority for older adults. Muscle loss is the biggest physical risk at this age. Eggs, beans, fresh fish, and liver in small amounts provide affordable protein.

MOVEMENT: Daily gentle movement, walking, stretching, light activity, is medicine for joint health, blood sugar management, and mood. It does not need to be intense. It needs to be consistent.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Omega-3 for joint pain and brain health. Vitamin D for bone and immune function (most older Nigerians are surprisingly deficient despite the sun). Magnesium for sleep quality and muscle function.

WHAT TO ACTUALLY EAT. A FULL WEEK.

Nigerian food. Nigerian markets. Nigerian prices. A full week of eating that gives the body what it needs instead of what is hurting it.

ALL CONDITIONS

PRACTICAL

AFFORDABLE

The One Test

Before you eat anything: can I give this to a baby? Can a plant grow from it? If no to both, that is a food to reduce or remove.

Monday

Breakfast:

- Fortified pap (egg yolk, crayfish, moringa, small palm oil) OR two eggs scrambled with tomato and onion in fresh palm oil

Lunch:

- Local unpolished rice with ugu soup. Season with crayfish, dried fish, garlic, ginger, onion. No seasoning cubes. Add grilled or fresh fish.

Dinner:

- Pepper soup with unripe plantain. No bread on the side.

Tuesday

Breakfast:

- Eggs boiled or scrambled with avocado and fresh tomato

Lunch:

- Beans with palm oil and natural seasoning. Steamed ugu or spinach on the side.

Dinner:

- Grilled fresh mackerel or local fatty fish with vegetable salad dressed in fresh lemon juice. Avocado.

Wednesday**Breakfast:**

- Two eggs any style with avocado and fresh tomato

Lunch:

- Egusi soup with ugu. Smaller portion of cocoyam swallow. Large serving of the soup.

Dinner:

- Chicken pepper soup with bitter leaf

Thursday**Breakfast:**

- Fortified pap OR leftover local rice with boiled egg

Lunch:

- Vegetable stew with fresh fish. Boiled or roasted unripe plantain.

Dinner:

- Moi moi made with natural seasoning. Rich in protein.

Friday**Breakfast:**

- Akara made at home in fresh palm oil. Cucumber and tomato on the side. No sweet drink.

Lunch:

- Local unpolished rice with bitter leaf soup and dried fish. Large portion of vegetables.

Dinner:

- Oven-baked chicken with roasted vegetables

Saturday**Breakfast:**

- Eggs, avocado, fresh tomato

Lunch:

- Ofe onugbu (bitter leaf soup) with fish and small portion of cocoyam. Large portion of greens.

Dinner:

- Suya, grilled not fried, with tomatoes, onion, cucumber. No bread.

Sunday

Breakfast:

- Fortified pap for the family OR eggs and vegetables

Lunch:

- Jollof rice made with local unpolished rice, natural seasoning. Grilled chicken. Large salad.

Dinner:

- Light vegetable soup with fish. Small portion of cocoyam.

Every day: water to sip throughout the day. Warm lemon and ginger water first thing in the morning. A twenty-minute walk. These three habits alone begin to shift things before any other change is made.

The Shopping List

- Local unpolished rice (ofada or abakiliki): 2kg
- Eggs: 2 dozen minimum
- Fresh mackerel or any local oily fish: 4 fish
- Fresh chicken: 1kg
- Beans: 500g
- Unripe plantain: 4 fingers
- Cocoyam: 500g
- Avocado pear: 4
- Ugu, bitter leaf, spinach: 1 bunch each
- Broccoli or cabbage: 1 head

- Tomatoes, onion, garlic, fresh ginger: market quantities
- Crayfish and dried fish: to replace seasoning cubes
- Tiger nuts: 200g dry
- Groundnuts: 200g
- Moringa leaves or moringa powder
- Turmeric, thyme, bay leaves
- Lemons or limes: 6

One Change at a Time

Do not try to do everything at once. Pick the one food in your current diet that is doing the most damage. Remove it this week. Replace it with the alternative in this book. Keep that change for two weeks. Then add one more.

The person who removes seasoning cubes and keeps that change for a month is further ahead than the person who changes everything for three days and gives up.

Healing is not one big decision. It is the small decision made at every meal, over time. Start with one change. Today, not tomorrow.

THE GYM CANNOT FIX THE BIG BELLY

The man who goes to the gym five times a week and still has the same belly after two years is not lazy. He is working on the wrong problem. You cannot out-exercise a hormonal and dietary issue.

BIG BELLY**METABOLIC HEALTH****INSULIN RESISTANCE****CORTISOL**

Why Exercise Alone Does Not Remove Belly Fat

The gym burns calories. It builds muscle. It is genuinely good for the body in many ways. But the belly fat that sits around the internal organs, the firm, round belly that does not move no matter how many sit-ups are done, is not primarily a calorie problem. It is a hormonal problem.

Visceral fat, the fat around the organs, is produced and maintained by two hormones: insulin and cortisol. When insulin is chronically high from eating white carbohydrates at most meals, the body is in permanent fat-storage mode around the abdomen. When cortisol is chronically elevated from stress, poor sleep, and overtraining, the body stores fat specifically around the belly as a survival response.

An intense gym session actually raises cortisol temporarily. For someone already dealing with chronic stress and high cortisol, adding hard gym sessions five times a week without addressing the food, the sleep, and the stress can keep cortisol elevated and make the belly problem worse, not better.

Sit-ups build the muscles under the belly fat. They do not remove the fat above them. Six-pack abs already exist on every body. What hides them is the layer of fat on top. That layer is controlled by food, hormones, and sleep. Not by sit-ups.

What Actually Removes Belly Fat

Reducing the foods that keep insulin chronically high. White rice at every meal, sweet drinks, processed carbohydrates. This is the primary driver of visceral fat storage. Reducing or removing these reduces the hormonal instruction to store fat around the abdomen.

Managing cortisol. Sleep seven to eight hours consistently. Reduce chronic stress. Avoid overtraining. A thirty-minute walk is better for cortisol management and belly fat than a two-hour intense gym session for someone already stressed.

Intermittent fasting, where the eating window is shortened and the body spends more hours in a fasted state, reduces insulin levels for extended periods and directly signals the body to access stored fat for energy. This works specifically on visceral fat.

What the Gym Is Actually Good For

The gym is excellent for building muscle. More muscle means better insulin sensitivity, a faster metabolism, and better blood sugar regulation. Strength training three times a week is valuable not for fat loss directly but for changing the body's metabolic baseline so that fat storage decreases over time.

Walking is the most underrated exercise for belly fat. Thirty minutes of walking daily lowers cortisol, improves insulin sensitivity, supports lymphatic drainage, and does not stress the adrenal system the way intense exercise does. The retired civil servant who walked everywhere and resolved his blood pressure did not do it with a gym membership.

The gym is a tool. It builds muscle and it improves metabolic health over time. But the belly fat is an insulin and cortisol story. Fix the food and the sleep first. The gym works much better on that foundation.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: The belly fat is dietary before it is physical. Reduce the foods driving insulin spikes. Start with white carbohydrates at every meal and sweet drinks.

MOVEMENT: Walking thirty minutes daily is more effective for belly fat reduction and cortisol management than intense gym sessions for most people. Add strength training to build the metabolic foundation.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Magnesium supports both cortisol regulation and insulin sensitivity. These are the two hormones most directly responsible for belly fat storage. Eat more nuts, seeds, and dark green vegetables.

THE PROBLEM WITH SOYA

Soya milk became popular as a healthy alternative. Soya chunks as a protein replacement. Soya formula for babies. But soya is one of the highest sources of plant estrogen available, and in the Nigerian context where estrogen overload is already a widespread problem, adding daily soya is adding more fuel to a fire already burning.

HORMONAL PROBLEMS**FIBROIDS****MEN'S HEALTH****THYROID**

What Soya Contains

Soya contains compounds called phytoestrogens, specifically isoflavones. Phytoestrogens are plant compounds that the body reads as estrogen. They bind to estrogen receptors in the body and behave like estrogen, though generally at a weaker level than the body's own estrogen or the xenoestrogens in commercial seasoning cubes.

For someone already dealing with estrogen dominance, which is the case for most Nigerian women with fibroids, PCOS, heavy periods, or hormonal weight gain, adding regular soya consumption adds to the estrogen load the liver is already struggling to clear.

For men, regular soya consumption contributes to rising estrogen and falling testosterone. The same hormonal pattern that produces belly fat, low energy, and reduced drive. Soya formula given to male babies has been a subject of serious concern in research because of its phytoestrogen content during a critical window of hormonal development.

Soya marketed as a healthy protein alternative is still an estrogen source. For a Nigerian woman with fibroids eating a diet already loaded with xenoestrogens from seasoning cubes and processed food, soya milk on top of all of that is not a health choice.

Soya and the Thyroid

Soya contains compounds called goitrogens that interfere with the thyroid gland's ability to absorb iodine and produce thyroid hormones. The thyroid regulates the entire body's metabolism. When thyroid function is impaired, the result is unexplained weight gain, chronic fatigue, low mood, hair loss, and feeling cold all the time.

Many Nigerian women managing fatigue and weight they cannot explain are also consuming soya regularly through soya milk or soya-based products, while already being in a nutritional environment where iodine from seafood and iodised salt is not always consistent. This combination is particularly problematic.

What About Fermented Soya

This is an important distinction. Traditional fermented soya products, like miso, tempeh, and natto, used in Asian cooking for thousands of years, have a different phytoestrogen profile from commercial processed soya. The fermentation process alters the isoflavones significantly. The concerns around soya relate primarily to commercial processed soya products: soya milk, soya protein isolate, soya chunks, soya flour, and processed soya-based foods.

Iru and dawadawa, the fermented locust bean products used in Nigerian cooking, are not soya and do not carry these concerns. They are beneficial and recommended throughout this book.

What To Use Instead

- Protein: eggs, fresh fish, local chicken, beans, crayfish. All superior protein sources without the hormonal loading.
- Milk alternative: tiger nut milk without added sugar. Genuinely nutritious, no phytoestrogens, feeds gut bacteria.
- Baby formula: where breastfeeding is not possible, consult a qualified practitioner. Soya-based formula for male infants specifically is worth discussing carefully with a healthcare provider.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: Remove soya milk and soya-based protein products from daily use. Replace with tiger nut milk, fresh coconut milk, and protein from eggs, fish, and beans.

MOVEMENT: No specific movement intervention changes the soya situation. The fix is dietary.

SUPPLEMENTATION: If thyroid function is suspected to be impaired from soya or other goitrogens, iodine from seafood, crayfish, and iodised salt is the most direct dietary support. Consult a practitioner before supplementing iodine directly.

INTERMITTENT FASTING AND METABOLIC HEALTH

Our forefathers did not eat three times a day plus snacks. They ate when food was available. The body was designed for periods of feeding and periods of fasting. What modern nutrition calls intermittent fasting, the body calls Tuesday.

METABOLIC HEALTH **BIG BELLY** **DIABETES** **LIVER HEALTH**



Every time food is eaten, insulin rises. The fasted state is the only time insulin falls far enough for the body to access stored fat as fuel.

What Happens During a Fast

Every time food is eaten, insulin rises. The body enters a fed state. It uses the incoming food for energy and stores the excess. While insulin is elevated, the body cannot efficiently access stored fat for fuel. It is in storage mode, not burning mode.

After the last meal, insulin slowly falls. After twelve to fourteen hours without food, insulin drops low enough that the body begins to access stored fat for energy. This is the fat-burning state that exercise tries to create. But exercise raises cortisol to do it. The fasted state achieves it quietly, through hormonal shift alone.

Beyond fat metabolism, extended fasting periods trigger a cellular repair process called autophagy. The body clears out damaged cells, removes accumulated waste, and repairs cellular machinery that has been degraded by years of processed food, environmental toxins, and stress. This is the body's built-in servicing system. It runs primarily during fasting.

How to Apply It Without Making Life Complicated

Intermittent fasting does not require a special programme or expensive guidance. The simplest form: eat within an eight to ten hour window each day and fast for the remaining fourteen to sixteen hours. If the last meal is at 7pm and breakfast is at 9am, that is a fourteen hour fast. The body does most of the work during sleep.

For people who want to go further, a full-day fast once or twice a week, eating only within a four to six hour window on those days, produces significant benefits for insulin sensitivity, liver fat reduction, and metabolic reset. This is not starvation. It is deliberate hormonal signalling.

One or two days a week where eating is compressed into a shorter window gives the insulin system a genuine rest. The belly fat that does not move with exercise often starts to respond to this hormonal rest more than to anything else.

The First Meal Rule

Whatever the eating window, one rule applies without exception: never start the day with bare carbohydrates. Not white rice. Not bread. Not custard. Not fruit juice on an empty stomach.

Breaking a fast with pure carbohydrate produces the sharpest possible insulin spike. The body has been fasted, insulin is at its lowest, and then a large glucose load arrives. The spike and the resulting crash are more pronounced than at any other time of day.

Break the fast with protein and fat first. Eggs. Avocado. Fish. A handful of groundnuts. These foods do not spike insulin significantly. They satisfy hunger, they provide building materials, and they allow the body to continue in a metabolically stable state. Carbohydrates, if eaten, come later and alongside the protein already consumed.

This rule applies regardless of whether someone is formally doing intermittent fasting or just eating regular meals. The first food of the day sets the hormonal tone for the next six hours.

Hydration During Fasting

Our forefathers did not walk around with bottles of water drinking three litres a day whether thirsty or not. The body has a sophisticated

thirst mechanism that signals when hydration is needed. That mechanism is reliable in a healthy body.

During fasting periods, drink water when thirsty. Warm lemon water in the morning activates liver function gently and can reduce early hunger signals. Ginger tea, black coffee without sugar, and plain water are all appropriate during a fast and do not break the insulin benefits.

Infused water, cucumber and lemon in water, coconut water, and fresh lime water are excellent hydration choices throughout the day. They provide minerals, support kidney filtration, and are genuinely pleasant to drink. Drink when thirsty, drink more when sweating, drink infused water instead of sweet drinks. That is the full hydration guidance.

A Weekly Rhythm That Works

- Five days: eat within a ten to twelve hour window. Protein and fat first at every meal. Carbohydrates always paired with protein and vegetables.
- One to two days: compress the eating window to six to eight hours. On these days, the first meal is around noon and the last is by 7pm. This gives the body an extended insulin-rest period.
- First meal every day, regardless of timing: protein and fat. Never bare carbohydrates on an empty stomach.
- Last meal of the day: light. The body handles lighter food better as the day ends.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: The most powerful dietary change for metabolic health is not changing what is eaten but when. Compressing the eating window two days a week produces more measurable change in insulin sensitivity and visceral fat than most dietary swaps.

MOVEMENT: Walking on fasting days is particularly effective for fat burning because the body is already accessing stored fat for fuel. Even a twenty-minute walk in the fasted state in the morning works well for most people.

SUPPLEMENTATION: Electrolytes from coconut water, lemon, and mineral-rich foods like crayfish and green vegetables are important during longer fasting periods to prevent the low energy and headaches that come from mineral loss.

WHAT TO EAT WHEN YOU ARE OUT

Most Nigerian professionals spend a large part of the day outside the home. In traffic. At meetings. On the go. The food available in those environments is mostly designed for convenience, not for health. Knowing what to reach for and what to avoid when away from home is a practical skill that saves the body every single day.

METABOLIC HEALTH **PRACTICAL** **DAILY HABITS**

The First Rule: Never Arrive Hungry

Most bad food decisions happen when hunger is high and options are limited. The person who skips breakfast, arrives at a meeting at 11am with blood sugar crashing, and finds only bread and sweet drinks on the table will eat what is available. The person who started the day with eggs and avocado will still be satisfied at 11am and can make a considered choice.

Preparing for the day outside the home starts at home. A proper first meal with protein and fat means the blood sugar is stable for four to five hours. There is no crisis eating. There is no desperate reaching for whatever is at hand.

Good Snack Options Available Almost Everywhere in Nigeria

These are foods that are available in most Nigerian markets, offices, and public spaces, that do not spike blood sugar significantly, and that provide real nutrition:

- Groundnuts (peanuts): protein, fat, fibre. A small handful satisfies hunger for two hours. Available at almost every roadside.

- Boiled eggs: the most portable complete food available. Boil a few at home and carry them. Nothing else comes close for the ratio of nutrition to cost and convenience.
- Garden egg (African eggplant): low sugar, fibrous, filling. Available in most markets and can be eaten raw.
- Fresh coconut: good fat, minerals, some fibre. The water hydrates, the flesh satisfies.
- Tiger nuts: resistant starch, magnesium, fibre. Eat the rehydrated ones or buy the dry ones to chew slowly.
- Fresh fruit: a whole orange, guava, or banana with the fibre intact is very different from juice. Whole fruit is acceptable. Juice is not.
- Crayfish and groundnut mix: protein, fat, minerals. Filling, portable, available.

What to Order When There Is No Choice But to Eat Out

Nigerian restaurants and food stalls serve food that can be navigated. The goal is not perfection. It is the best available option in the situation.

- Choose protein first: fish, grilled chicken, boiled eggs, beans. Order the protein and eat it. Let the carbohydrate portion be secondary.
- Pepper soup: almost always a good choice. Mostly protein and spice. Low carbohydrate. The broth itself is nutritious.
- Moi moi: beans ground and steamed. High protein, reasonable option, lower glycaemic than rice or eba.
- Grilled suya without bread: the meat is fine. The bread turns it into a carbohydrate meal. Skip the bread.
- Boiled or roasted plantain over fried: same food, different oil situation.
- Vegetable soup without the swallow, or with a smaller swallow than usual: the vegetables and protein in the soup carry the nutrition. The eba is the blood sugar spike.

What to Avoid When Eating Out

- Anything visibly fried in very dark or smoking oil: the oil has been reheated many times. The food absorbed the damaged fat.
- Sweet drinks with food: juice, soft drinks, malt drinks alongside a meal doubles the sugar load. Drink water or ask for zobo without sugar.
- The full canteen plate of white rice, fried chicken, and a soft drink: this is three insulin spikes in one meal. Choose one. Eat the protein, reduce the rice, skip the drink.
- Bread as a side with everything: bread adds bare carbohydrate to every meal it accompanies. Remove it where possible.

Outside the home, the goal is not a perfect meal. It is the best available option. Groundnuts in the pocket, a boiled egg from home, pepper soup instead of rice, water instead of juice. Small choices made consistently are what matter.

Hydration Outside the Home

The hydration options available in most Nigerian public spaces are sweet drinks, packaged water, and sachet water. The packaged and sachet water is fine. The sweet drinks are not hydration, they are glucose delivery.

Carry a bottle of water or infused water from home when possible. Fresh coconut water from a roadside seller is an excellent hydration option with real mineral content. Warm lemon water from a thermos in the morning handles the most important hydration window of the day before leaving the house.

Drink when genuinely thirsty. In the Nigerian heat, that will be regularly. The body's thirst signal is reliable. Follow it with water, not sweet drinks.

THE WEEKLY DETOX RESET

The body was designed to cleanse itself. The liver, kidneys, colon, and lymph system all have roles in clearing what accumulates. But in the modern Nigerian body carrying the load of seasoning cube chemicals, reused frying oil, processed food, and environmental toxins, these systems need deliberate support.

LIVER HEALTH

GUT HEALTH

DETOXIFICATION

METABOLIC RESET



A healthy gut running properly removes accumulated waste. The liver, colon, and kidneys all need specific support from food to do this work effectively.

Why the Body Needs Periodic Support

Every day, the liver processes the chemicals in food, the alcohol consumed, the environmental pollutants breathed in, and the excess hormones produced by the body. Every day, the colon needs to move waste through and out efficiently. Every day, the kidneys filter the blood and remove water-soluble waste through urine.

When these systems are continuously overloaded and never deliberately supported, accumulated waste starts to be stored rather than cleared. Toxins stored in fat tissue contribute to stubborn body fat that does not shift. A colon that is sluggish from low fibre and dehydration holds waste longer than it should. A liver dealing with alcohol, seasoning cube chemicals, and processed food simultaneously falls behind on hormonal clearance.

A structured weekly reset is not a dramatic cleanse or a starvation protocol. It is one or two days where the body is given exactly what its elimination systems need to catch up.

The Cleansing Ritual: One Day a Week

On one day each week, give the body a deliberate rest from processed food, heavy carbohydrates, and the usual daily load. The ritual is simple. One cleansing formula. Detox infused water throughout the day. Eat only when genuinely hungry and only from the approved snack list. That is it.

THE FORMULA: Colon Booster Smoothie

This is the one formula for the ritual. It was selected above all others because it addresses the gut, the colon, the liver, and blood sugar regulation in a single preparation. Every ingredient is available in any Nigerian market.

- 2 medium ripe bananas
 - 2 medium garden eggs, diced
 - 1 lemon or lime, white pith left on, peel removed
 - 1 tablespoon sesame seeds (beniseed) or chia seeds, soaked in 2 tablespoons of water for 30 minutes first
 - 1 cup sliced fresh cabbage
 - A small handful of fresh parsley
 - 1 thumb of fresh ginger or 1 teaspoon ground ginger
 - Optional: a small piece of scotch bonnet or cayenne pepper
-
- Blend all ingredients together with 1.5 cups of water. Drink in the morning. This is the main formula for the ritual day.

WHY THIS FORMULA:

Banana provides potassium and energy without a sharp insulin spike when paired with the other ingredients. Garden egg is fibrous, low sugar, and supports liver function. Cabbage contains compounds that directly help the liver clear estrogen and other toxins. Ginger supports bile flow. Lemon pith activates liver enzymes. Sesame seeds provide magnesium and healthy fat. Together, this single formula stimulates the colon to move, supports liver clearance, and feeds the gut bacteria with real fibre.

DETOX INFUSED WATER: Sip throughout the day when thirsty

- 1 lemon or lime, sliced with the peel on
- 1 medium cucumber, sliced
- 2 sprigs of fresh mint
- Add to a jug of clean water. Infuse overnight or for at least 30 minutes. Sip when thirsty throughout the day.
- If grapefruit is available, add one small grapefruit sliced without the peel. It strengthens the liver enzyme benefit.

MORNING: Start the day with warm lemon and ginger water

- Squeeze half a lemon into a cup of warm water. Add a slice of fresh ginger. Drink on an empty stomach before the formula.
- This activates liver detoxification before any food arrives.

EVENING: Ginger and lemon tea before bed

- 1 thumb of ginger steeped in 2 cups of hot water for 5 minutes. Squeeze in half a lemon. Drink slowly.
- Activates overnight liver detoxification. Ginger supports bile flow, which is how the liver packages and removes waste through the bowel.

WHEN HUNGRY: These snacks only

- Fresh fruit: a whole orange, guava, pawpaw, or banana. Whole fruit only, not juice.
- Raw vegetables: carrot sticks, cucumber slices, garden egg.
- Tiger nuts: a small handful rehydrated. Eat the chaff. The fibre is in the chaff.
- Groundnuts: a small handful. Do not eat more than one small handful across the day.

The ritual is not starvation. It is deliberate rest. One formula in the morning. Infused water throughout

the day. Eat from the snack list only if genuinely hungry. The body does the rest.

What to Expect

What to Expect

On the first reset day, some people experience mild headache, slight nausea, or irritability. This is the body adjusting to the removal of refined carbohydrates and processed food. It passes within twenty-four hours and is a sign the system is responding, not a sign that something is wrong.

Increased bowel movements are expected and normal as fibre intake rises significantly. The colon is doing exactly what it is designed to do.

THE TRIANGLE CONNECTION

DIET: The reset day removes all processed food, refined carbohydrate, and chemical additives for twenty-four hours while flooding the body with fibre, liver-supporting compounds, and easily digestible nutrition.

MOVEMENT: A thirty-minute walk on the reset day supports lymphatic drainage, which carries waste from tissues to the lymph nodes for processing. Movement on this day amplifies the benefit.

SUPPLEMENTATION: B vitamins, magnesium, vitamin C, and zinc are the specific nutrients that support liver detoxification pathways. These are replenished naturally on the reset day through the ingredients used.

A FINAL WORD FROM DAVID

The honey is still working.

Not the honey on my wound from 2015. That healed years ago. But the lesson it taught me is still working in every consultation, every chapter, and every meal plan I write.

A substance that has existed for thousands of years. That costs almost nothing. That our grandmothers knew about. That healed my surgical wound when nothing else could reach it.

Nature works. The body heals. Most people never give either of them the chance.

The big belly is not inevitable. It is built by food. It can be reduced by food.

The liver quietly filling with fat in people who have never had a drink. Not a mystery. White rice and sweet drinks, every day, for years. Changeable.

Fibroids fed by seasoning cubes and processed meats. Not just bad luck. Addressable.

Diabetes building in teenagers from instant noodles and sweet drinks. Preventable.

Memory failing in elders who have been iron and omega-3 deficient for decades. Not purely inevitable. Improvable.

This book was written for every age and every stage because the dangerous foods are in every home, at every life stage, causing damage that builds slowly and quietly until it becomes impossible to ignore.

Now you know what they are. You know what they do. You know what to replace them with.

If you cannot give it to a baby or a plant, don't eat that. That is the whole book in one sentence.

Your body is not broken. It is responding perfectly to what it has been given. Give it something different. Watch what it does.

David Ransom

PaddyPaddy Naturals Ltd

Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (N.D)

Trained by a Research Institute in India (N.D)

Recognised by the Federal Ministry of Health as a Traditional Medicine Practitioner in Nigeria

Licensed by the Lagos State Traditional Medicine Board

Certified by the African Centre of Excellence for Drug Research, Herbal Medicine Development and Regulatory Science (ACEDHARS)

World Bank Funded Research Centre, University of Lagos

Registered Member, Modern Traditional Medicine Practitioners of Nigeria (MTMPN)

Author of multiple books on hormonal health and metabolic medicine

+234 905 407 2711

Instagram and TikTok: @paddypaddynaturals