



## **Kathleen Hahn, MS, RD, LD**

### **Eat Well Collective / Nutrition writer**

I was diagnosed with elevated cholesterol in my early twenties. This led me to hours of pouring through nutrition books to better understand how I might improve these labs, but I ended up more confused than when I started. This experience spurred me to study nutrition and put me on the path that I am still on today.

As a dietitian, I have worked with a wide variety of medical conditions, but I found that I am mostly drawn towards working with the underlying relationship people have with food and the systemic barriers that impact their food choices. Many of my clients struggle to make changes to their diet and I noticed that when someone has a good relationship with food and their body, they are often able to make changes more readily. In addition, many of my clients face systemic barriers including low income, gender inequity and racial disparities, which greatly impact not only their ability to make nutrition changes, but also their health outcomes.

In addition, I noticed that classic methods of dieting or working on weight loss often backfire and I spent a few years frustrated with my approach to helping clients. I eventually completed my master's degree in systemic issues in the food system and became certified in intuitive eating. This additional education changed not only my approach with clients but also shifted my perspective on nutrition and on my role as a dietitian.

My understanding of intuitive eating deepened through the certification and I came to understand that an intuitive eating approach is far more nuanced than 'eat whatever you want'. Intuitive eating benefits not only people's relationship with food, but also their health.

I find it immensely rewarding to help clients find freedom from a dieting mentality and increase their enjoyment of food. Dieting messages and false ideas about health and body size permeate society and I want to be an empathetic voice with an alternative hope-filled message. I love writing and talking about intuitive eating, systemic barriers, and underlying reasons for people's difficulty with feeding themselves.

In my writing, I desire to use the power of story to make nutrition information accessible and relatable. My one-on-one work with clients is the fuel for my passion for nutrition, but I hope to use my voice as a writer to reach a broader audience to share a message about nutrition that cuts through the noise and helps people feel heard and understood.

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