

# CHALLENGE FAT LOSS

**Bonus:**  
*Nutrition Tips*



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## Challenge Fat Loss Nutrition Tips

Nutrition is a major key to your fat loss success. You can train all day long, but you must remember that abs are made in the kitchen with proper eating.

Following you'll find a nutrition plan for you to get started with. My goal for you is to establish better eating habits and this meal plan and recipes that you can use to mix and match will help.

Realistically you don't want to have to rely on a written out meal plan to live by day by day. Ultimately, you want to learn to make better nutritional choices so that eventually you don't need a meal plan to follow at all. You'll just KNOW what to eat and when to eat it.

But you have to start somewhere and this is a great plan.

Sadly, common sense is not that common where eating is concerned. There's so much 'mis-information' out there that it's easy to be confused. Along with the fact that many try to look for the 'magic bullet' of weight loss. Guess what? There's no magic bullet. Weight loss and maintenance success is just a series of smart decisions that you make one meal at a time.

I want to provide a few guidelines for eating for you. These are guidelines that I follow myself. I'm in my late forties, soon to be fifty. You can be sure that I must be doing something right. I have loads of energy and I can trade clothes with my teenaged daughter. I wear the same size as I did in high school, I've had two children, I workout 40 minutes a day and I eat regular portions of normal food. I'm no super star with a private chef. What I'm saying is that I'm just a normal person and if I can do this, so can you. I won't push hours of training or cardio on you, or try to sell you expensive supplements or magic potions. But I will try to educate you to help you make smart nutritional and lifestyle decisions so you can enjoy better health and performance.

## Carbohydrate Confusion

There are many half truths out there about carbohydrates: carbs are good, carbs are bad, avoid carbs, don't avoid carbs...on and on.

Diabetes is on the rise. As well, there are many people that are 'border line' diabetic and their doctor may be telling them that they need to clean up their diet to prevent them from becoming a diabetic. It's not just those that are in this dire situation that need to pay attention to diet. Everyone should have a general understanding of the processes that are involved with nutrition and learn healthy eating to not only prevent disease, but to promote good health and enhance performance.

Let me remind you a bit about carbohydrates so we can understand further how the body deals with them. Carbs are our primary source of energy, as well:

- They are protein sparing. This means that they will be used for energy before other sources of energy (like muscle). This is important for those that are reducing calories in an effort to lose weight.
- Simple carbohydrates are short chain sugars.
- Complex carbohydrates are long chain sugars.
- All carbohydrates are sugar.
- All carbohydrates illicit an insulin response in order to lower blood sugar.
- Different carbohydrates digest at different rates.
- All carbohydrates are approximately 4 calories per gram.

Your body is a wonderful machine; if you ingest any kind of food, the body goes through a series of processes to break down this food. In particular, when you ingest carbohydrates in any form, the body releases insulin to counter the blood sugar rise that is a result of the carbohydrate meal. Insulin is a powerful hormone that can be manipulated for optimum benefit. It enables the body to use the ingested carbohydrates in three ways: as an immediate energy source, to be stored as muscle glycogen or to be

stored as body fat. Insulin is fat sparing; this means that if there is an abundance of insulin, the body is stimulated to store more body fat. It makes sense then to avoid insulin spikes. How is this done?

You will want to avoid the roller coaster of blood sugar spikes and valleys of low blood sugar. Advertisers try to entice you to eat a chocolate bar to help those mid-afternoon slumps. The result of this indulgence is a blood sugar spike (slightly more energy or alertness), followed by a surge of insulin (a slump in energy, lethargy, sleepiness). Then you will desire either more sugar or caffeine as a 'pick-me-up' to get through to supper. Sound familiar?

To avoid this, you will want to consume more complex carbohydrates, and avoid simple carbohydrates, or sugary foods. One of the most effective ways to lower insulin response is to eat protein or healthy fat with any carbohydrates ingested. Small meals five or six times a day are another effective tool to moderate the insulin release and control appetite. It's so much easier to resist tempting foods when you aren't hungry. Try to eat every 2-3 hours, before you are ravenous. Then choose low glycemic carbohydrates, lean proteins and plenty of fruits and vegetables.

## **A Word About Gluten**

As you may be aware, there's a lot of talk about avoiding gluten for better health. Research shows that eating gluten can promote a variety of 'auto-immune' diseases including psoriasis and thyroid problems and may be the cause of a bloated belly, skin issues and other recurring health issues.

The best solution to finding out if gluten is an issue for you is to eliminate wheat and other sources of gluten including rice and corn from your diet for 14 days to see if you notice a change. You'd be surprised at how easily you can do this.

You can replace foods with gluten with other complex carbohydrates such as sweet potatoes and legumes. The good news with this is that you'll rapidly drop belly fat and increase your energy as well. It's easier than you think.

You'll want to avoid baked goods: pasta, cereals, crackers, and bread. There's hidden gluten in many other things like packaged foods and sauces. For up to the minute information on gluten, I always refer to the leading gluten expert, Dr. Peter Osborne. You can get a series of free reports from Dr. Osborne [here](#).

Most people KNOW what they should be eating; it's the consistent application of sound eating principles that throw us off. By being proactive with your health and you can avoid many of the ailments that abound. A little education will go a long way to keep you lean, healthy and disease free.

## **Protein - The Unsung Hero to Fat Loss**

My best weight loss tip involves a macro-nutrient that many people, especially women, get too little of: protein, the unsung hero of weight loss...

Eating more protein doesn't mean that you'll be more muscular by osmosis. You're not going to put on pounds of muscle by eating more protein. (Women take note.) However, protein is important in the development and repair of muscles and in curbing your appetite.

Getting enough protein in the diet is no easy task. Protein isn't the 'fun' food.

For example, it's hard to pack protein with you when you're on the go. Are you going to pull out a chicken breast or fillet of fish from your purse or gym bag? Not likely. Protein foods generally need some refrigeration and some prep time to make edible. Thus there is the challenge of getting enough in during the day.



My suggestion is to add protein with every meal (actual snack and meal ideas follow). Protein helps stabilize blood sugar by slowing down the rate of break down of carbohydrates. Even high glycemic carbs can be moderated so that you don't get a spike and dip in blood sugar when you eat protein with any carb.

What does this mean? Well, if you don't have a roller coaster of blood sugar, you won't get those highs and lows of energy and those cravings to eat the kitchen sink- or a bag of cookies, Mars bar, chips, whatever is most appealing to you...

This is one of the *best weight loss tips* out there: control blood sugar to control cravings.

First of all, you need to EAT breakfast. If you want to be fat(ter), then skip breakfast. If you want to start to get lean, it starts with breakfast.

Here are a few ideas to help you sneak in more protein whether it's for breakfast, lunch or dinner or for a snack, each has about 20 grams of protein (or approximately 1/5th of your daily protein needs):

- 1 cup Greek yogurt topped with 1/2 cup berries.
- 2 Slices Ezekiel bread topped with nut butter with 1 hard boiled egg.
- 1/2 cup steel cut oats topped with 1/2 cup berries and crushed walnuts and almonds and 1/2 cup Greek yogurt.
- 2 hard boiled eggs with 1 piece of Ezekiel toast.
- 1 full egg and 2 egg whites scrambled with salsa and topped with avocado slices.
- Smoothie with spinach, berries, skim milk and 1/2 scoop whey protein, 1/2 cup Greek yogurt

In case you were curious, here is the protein break down of each of these foods:

- 1 egg = 6 g protein
- 1 cup Greek yogurt (I use plain Liberty brand, watch the fat/carb content) = 24 g protein
- 1 slice sprouted grain Ezekiel bread (I use Silver Hills Squirrely bread) = 5 g protein
- 1/2 scoop protein powder (I use [BioTrust](#)) = 10 g protein

Protein at every meal and snack is imperative to your fat loss goals.

A word on protein powder...

There are a ton of products on the market. Not every product will be top quality or agreeable with your digestion. I highly recommend [BioTrust](#) brand protein and supplements. I personally know the developers of the product and know that what it says on the label is exactly what you'll get in the bottle.

## **Lose the Liquid Calories**

First up, let's talk water.

Next to air, water is the element most necessary for survival. A normal adult body is composed of 60 to 70 percent water. We can go without food for almost two months, but without water we would only last a few days. Yet most people have no idea how much water they should drink. In fact, many live in a dehydrated state, normally you need 6-8 cups a day.

Without water, we'd be poisoned to death by our own waste products. When the kidneys remove uric acid and urea, these must be dissolved in water. If there isn't enough water, wastes are not removed as effectively and may build up as kidney stones. Water is also vital for chemical reactions in digestion and metabolism. It carries

nutrients and oxygen to the cells through the blood and helps to cool the body through perspiration. In addition, water also lubricates our joints.

Having said this, how much water do you drink?

If you knew that it was key to your fat loss, maybe you'd increase your intake.

Scientists did a study on two groups of people...One group drank 2 cups of water before meals, while the other group were told to keep their drinking habits the same. After 12 weeks of this study, the group that was taking the water before eating, lost 36% more weight than the less hydrated group. Their reasoning for this was due to an increase in satiety, that is, subjects had the feeling of being full and so ate less.

Do NOT drink your calories in the form of juices and soda pop. These are not only empty calories with no nutritional value, they do nothing to help satiety and can spike blood sugar so they'll increase your cravings.

Alcohol doesn't have much place in a fat loss plan.

Let's talk about what happens when alcohol passes your lips...

Alcohol is metabolized differently than other foods. Under normal conditions, your body gets its energy from the calories in carbohydrates, fats and proteins that need to be slowly digested in the stomach—but not when alcohol is present. When alcohol is consumed, it gets special privileges and needs no digestion. The alcohol molecules diffuse through the stomach wall as soon as they arrive and can reach the brain and liver in minutes. This reaction is slightly slowed when there is also food in your system, but as soon as the mixed contents enter the small intestine, the alcohol grabs first place and is absorbed quickly. The alcohol then arrives at the liver for processing. The liver places all of its attention on the alcohol. Therefore, the carbohydrates (glucose) and dietary fats ingested are just changed into body fat, waiting to be carried away for permanent fat storage in the body.

Alcohol is a diuretic, meaning that it causes water loss and dehydration. Along with this water loss you lose important minerals, such as magnesium, potassium, calcium and



zinc. These minerals are vital to the maintenance of fluid balance, chemical reactions, and muscle contraction and relaxation.

Alcohol contains 7 calories per gram and offers NO nutritional value. It only adds empty calories to your diet.

Alcohol affects your body in other negative ways. Drinking might help induce sleep, but the sleep you get isn't very deep. Ultimately, as a result, you get less rest.

Alcohol can also increase the amount of acid that your stomach produces, causing your stomach lining to become inflamed.

Alcohol lowers your inhibitions, which can be detrimental to your diet plans. Alcohol stimulates your appetite, so while you're getting calories from booze, it doesn't fill you up so you'll also want to chow down even more calories.

Booze: Lower inhibitions + increased appetite = Runaway train to weight gain

Those are my thoughts on alcohol, if you're serious about your fat loss, you'll put alcohol on the shelf until you meet your fat loss goals.

To me, fat loss is always a work in progress. In fact, I'm not trying to lose weight at all. I'm working to maintain a lean physique that performs the challenges I want to do. In my world, there's little room for alcohol. It's not to say that I never drink, it's just not part of my usual daily routine.

## **Small Steps**

Don't plan on making sweeping changes on 'Monday'. Too many people decide to go on a diet at the start of the week, and by Wednesday, they're ordering a pizza. Rather than taking on too much too soon, consider making one small change a week.

Most of you know what has to be done, you just need to do it. Consistently.

If you're too zealous at the start, you're setting yourself up for failure.

It takes 21 days to form a habit. Choose one thing that you need to do to improve your nutrition and then give yourself some time to get accustomed to that habit before you take on another one. That way, you'll slowly morph your nutrition and lifestyle and you'll never really feel like you're on a diet.

Finally, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

1. **Eat Less than 30g of Sugar per day.** The sugars you don't need to worry about which occur naturally in foods include: fresh fruit, frozen fruit, veggies, and low fat milk. The BAD sugars: soda, cereal, candy, ketchup, syrup, juice, and many more. Check Labels.
2. **Eat Fat.** Fat helps nutrient absorption, nerve transmission, maintaining cell membrane integrity etc. However, when consumed in excess amount, fats contribute to weight gain, heart disease and certain types of cancer. Fats are not created equal. Some fats promote our health positively while others increase our risks of heart disease. The key is to replace bad fats with good fats in our diet.
3. Eat Good Fats: Olive oil, nuts, avocado, coconut, salmon and fish oil
4. Avoid Bad Fats: Trans Fats. Trans fats are invented as scientists began to "hydrogenate" liquid oils so that they can withstand better in food production process and provide a better shelf life. As a result of hydrogenation, trans fatty acids are formed. Trans fatty acids are found in many commercially packaged foods, commercially fried food such as French Fries from some fast food chains, other packaged snacks such as microwaved popcorn as well as in vegetable shortening and hard stick margarine.

5. **Eat Protein.** Protein is key to leanness. Upping your protein intake will help protect your muscles from breakdown when your calories are down. Protein also stimulates glucagon secretion which will help liberate stored energy. I don't mean that you have to sit down to a steak every time you open your mouth, there are plenty of ways to increase protein intake. You can take a look at some of my favorite choices below:
  - Greek yogurt (this is creamy, low fat, low carb goodness!)
  - fish, fish, fish (cold water fish!)
  - egg whites, hard boiled eggs
  - beans and legumes
  - quinoa
  - low fat or no fat dairy, like skim milk
  - skim or low fat cheese
  - high quality, low carb protein powder
  
6. **Snack tip.** Include protein at every meal and snack. This not only helps with muscle repair and recovery, but it helps you stay full for longer because it slows gut emptying.
  
7. **Drink Water.** Dehydration is a killer. It makes you tired mentally and physically. Plus drinking water has a thermogenic effect so you can burn some extra calories while you hydrate.
  
8. **Lose the liquid calories.** Cut out sodas, diet sodas, and alcohol, fruit drinks. Get your calories from food that is more satisfying and nutritionally dense.
  
9. **Out with the bad.** Why tempt yourself and test your will power? Clear all the chips, sugary drinks, ice cream, and other processed physique destroying goodies from your kitchen. If it's not there then you can't eat it.

10. **Supplement with Fish Oil.** There has been some evidence suggesting that fish oil can increase your basal metabolic rate and increase your insulin sensitivity which can help you stay lean and burn fat. Add that onto the boatload of data that shows fish oil decreases your risk of heart disease, helps combat depression and alleviates PMS symptoms, and you have quite a powerful supplement.
11. **No heavily restricted calories.** It may seem logical to only eat a cup of salad a day; in fact anyone would lose weight doing so. But the body hates severe calorie restrictions and will lower metabolism by 30% or more. It basically goes into starvation mode and it will hold onto fat more than ever under starvation conditions.
12. **'Break the fast'.** You need to 'break the fast' of your night with a breakfast that includes protein and complex carbs. The protein helps stabilize blood sugar, as does the complex carbs. You won't feel that crash at mid-morning and want to reach for coffee or sugary snacks if you fuel up on the right foods.
13. **Eat often.** You'll actually raise your metabolism by eating. Your body will be more likely to give up those energy stores (junk in your trunk) when it knows food isn't in short supply. You should aim to eat every 2-3 hours so that you never get to that 'I'll eat road-kill' feeling.
14. **Plan ahead.** Plan your meals and carry snacks. Who knows when you're going to be stuck in traffic or running late and need something to eat? If you have a few snacks with you, you won't be tempted to stop and fill up on junk.
15. **Switch to green tea.** Green tea is full of antioxidants and lower levels of caffeine. BONUS: Studies show green tea helps your body burn more fat when coupled with eating right and exercising. (NOTE- Drink home brewed green tea - not bottled, "green tea", full of sugar or worse...artificial sweeteners)

16. **Limit caffeine.** If you're going to consume coffee or caffeine in general, it's best consumed at times when you're not consuming substantial carbohydrate. Caffeine causes decreased insulin sensitivity and glucose tolerance, this means more insulin, less fat burning, and more fat storage; three things you DON'T want if you're looking to shed those unwanted pounds. My suggestion is to ditch caffeinated coffee with high carb breakfast in favour of decaf. Also avoid energy drinks and other caffeine boosters during workouts in which a carbohydrate recovery beverage is being consumed.
  
17. **Know thyself.** It's important to understand if you turn to food when you're stressed or want comfort. If this is the case, guard against this by finding other outlets to deal with stress.
  
18. **Hormones?** Sometimes the triggers for overeating can be linked to hormones. For example, the hormonal changes of PMS can make women crave sweet or salty foods. By understanding the triggers for cravings it's easier to curb them.
  
19. **What's on your plate?** The main meal of the day should be a plate of food with a protein source such as meat or legumes on a quarter of the plate, a starch such as rice or pasta on a quarter of the plate, and two servings of different-coloured vegetables on the other half of the plate.
  
20. **Portion size.** Watch your portion sizes. Over time, you can gain weight even by eating healthy foods if you take in too much. For example, a serving size of carbohydrate is one fist. If a medium-size apple is bigger than a fist, it's two servings since the smaller the person, the smaller the fist, the smaller the portion.

21. **Step on the scale.** Step on the scale regularly to keep weight in check before it has a chance to creep up. Regular weigh ins help you to learn how your body reacts to food. Pay attention to the foods eaten the day before a weigh in. Sometimes weight gain/loss can be attributed to water gain/loss, but by regularly weighing in you'll learn your body's rhythms.
  
22. **Follow the 80/20 rule.** Remember that you don't have to be perfect *all* the time. The key is moderation. If you practise healthy habits 80 percent of the time, then you can relax 20 percent of the time (but take it easy—one particularly unhealthy meal could undo all the hard work you did for the week).
  
23. **Write it down.** Studies show that food journaling can be very effective in managing a healthy eating plan. If it goes in your mouth, write it down BEFORE you eat it. You're less likely to eat 'junk' when you have to quantify it.
  
24. **Be accountable.** Find someone that you share your goals with and will possibly even review your food journal with you. It doesn't have to be a dietician or nutritionist, just someone that will hold you accountable to your nutritional goals.
  
25. **Go easy at night.** Dinner should be the smallest meal of the day. You should also limit carbohydrate intake later in the day because carbohydrate tolerance is at its lowest point in the evening. This means that your body will store fat more readily later in the day.
  
26. **It's a marathon and not a sprint.** These changes should be implemented slowly over time. Healthy eating habits are geared for the long haul, not something that will stop as a diet does.



27. **Grocery shopping: Make a list and stick to it** – If you know what you need, you're less likely to shop for things you don't need. If an item isn't on your list, it may be because it doesn't fit with your plan.
  
28. **Grocery shopping: Shop outside** – The perimeter that is. All the best foods are on the perimeter of the store, and the less nutritious and more processed foods are on the shelves.
  
29. **Grocery shopping: Don't go hungry!** – Everything looks yummy and tempting on an empty stomach. Avoid this by eating before you go shopping.
  
30. **Mindful eating** - Don't eat in front of the TV or in your car. Be mindful of when you feel satisfied. Stop eating before you're full, and start eating before you're famished. You want to be on this side of hunger, never starving and never stuffed.

These are just a few of the tips I use to help me maintain my weight. They may seem like too much at first, if so, then make small changes, but, DO SOMETHING.

Any change toward healthier eating is a positive one.