

FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

ADVANCED FAT LOSS STRATEGIES

REFEEDS

NUTRIENT TIMING

OPTIMIZED MEALS

EATING DISORDERS



NUTRITION GUIDE

RET

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INTRODUCTION

Nutrition is arguably the most crucial when it comes to achieving the physique that's lean and muscular. However, trying educate yourself on nutrition quickly becomes rabbit whole of conflicting information. With many 'experts' claiming one diet is superior to another. Furthermore, there's many false pre-conceived notions such as carbs are bad, sugar is the devil, keto is superior for fat loss, these certain foods are best for X, avoid this type of food group if you want to achieve Y, and so on and so forth. Video after video, podcast after podcast, article after article and ultimately you're left confused, unsure what to do and likely spinning your wheels when it comes to figuring what to do with your diet.

In this guide you're going to learn all you will ever need to know about nutrition. I've compiled together all that I believe is worth knowing to setup you up with a Bullshit-free foundation of knowledge. Once you've finished reading this, you will be in the very best position to set yourself up with a diet that's optimized for you and your goals.

During our coaching, I strongly advise you do not research on your own accord as the amount of confusing and conflicting information out there is almost endless. As stated, any questions you have, I'm always here to help you sift through the BS.



THE BASICS

Before you go any further, it's best to familiarise yourself with the common terms and basic principles:

Fundamentally, **the reason why we gain or lose weight comes down to Thermodynamics – Energy in vs Energy out.** Food is energy, and depending on how much energy you consume will determine whether or not you gain or lose weight. When we talk about calories, we're actually talking about how much energy is within that food.

Calories = Energy

So, if we consume more food AKA More energy, than our body needs than we will store that food as energy later on in the form of bodyfat. The tipping point in which this process occurs is when we exceed our caloric maintenance level of calories.

Calorie Maintenance – Amount of calories needed to sustain our current weight; Our current homeostasis.

Consuming less calories than our caloric maintenance would by definition mean we're eating at a **calorie deficit.**

Eating more than this would mean we're eating at a **calorie surplus.**

This is how weight gain or weight loss works. Anybody trying to sell you on any other idea is misinformed and breaking the laws of thermodynamics – Energy in vs energy out.

FAD DIETS & WEIGHT LOSS

A fad diet would define a diet that has a person eating in an unorthodox way in hopes of losing weight – Avoiding certain food groups, restricted meal timing in the belief it will improve fat loss, water fasting, juice fasting, detox tea etc. The only reason any of these diets ever work is because they inadvertently have you consuming less calories below your caloric maintenance. However, as you're about to learn, fad diets never work because they're not sustainable. To the person avoiding carbs in hopes of getting leaner, are you simply going to avoid carbs for the rest of your life? And if not, what happens then? You will likely end up worse off than when you started due to the 'pendulum affect' from intense caloric restriction. More on this later.

WHICH DIET IS BEST FOR YOU?

There is no one size fits all when it comes to picking a diet that's best for you and your goals. If we're speaking in terms of fat loss, then the best diet will be one that has you at a slight caloric deficit, but also more importantly has you can see yourself adhering to for ideally the rest of your life, without much deviation. Sustainability is absolutely the most essential factor when it comes to losing and actually keeping the weight off.

So the best way to figure out what diet would be best for you is the answer you don't want to hear but is the truth – You will need to find out by trial & error. To begin, you need to have an understanding of macronutrients & micronutrients. Knowing this and your perspective of nutrition will begin to shift so that you're able build a diet that works for you.

MACRONUTRIENTS

The calories we consume can be categorized down in to three main groups – Protein, carbs and fats. With these three categories in mind, we can begin to become more mindful of what's on our plate and adjust these macronutrients according to our goals.

Protein = 4 calories per gram

Whilst protein is great for keeping you full, aiding in recovery and the development of new tissue. It's often overstated as the king of macronutrients due to protein companies exaggerating your need for protein to build muscle. And whilst this is true to a degree, carbohydrates are not given their credit for helping the prevention of muscle protein breakdown, as well as fats having a significant benefits to your hormonal functions.

Carbs = 4 calories per gram

All carbohydrates are eventually broken down in to glucose for later use, and so with this in mind, it's best to have a wide variety of both complex and simple carbohydrates. Ideally, you should be consuming a large portion of your carbs around your highest level of activities for the day, such as pre and post workout meals. It may be worth saving some carbs for evening meals to help with sleep and recovery due to carbs being a pre-cursor to tryptophan – Allowing you to feel more relaxed due to the release of serotonin in the brain.

Fat = 9 calories per gram

Fat has more calories per gram than both carbs and protein combined. This is why often why I recommend clients to be very precise in tracking their dietary fat. Whilst fat is considerably higher in calories, it's important to know that it's also highly satiating due to being slow digesting and also plays an essential role in hormone production.

NOTE: Dietary fat does not equate to body fat. Whilst their chemical compounds are similar in structure, avoiding foods high in fat but being in a caloric surplus will still result in fat gain. As remember, bodyfat is our body's way of storing energy for later use. Although it is worth noting that dietary fat is more easily converted to body fat whereas the conversation of protein or carbohydrates to fat is an expensive process for the body and so it's best to keep your fat moderated to help prevent any further unnecessary fat gain.

If you're going to overeat, try to make it mostly carbohydrate and protein based.

MICRONUTRIENTS

Having broken down macronutrients in to protein, carbs and fats, you can further break down these macronutrients groups still to the micronutrients – The vitamins and minerals of the food. This aspect of diet is often overlooked since when it comes to a person losing fat or gaining muscle, their only concern is calories, and protein if trying to gain muscle. However, recent research has began to show the important of micronutrients and their affect on gut bacteria, thus affecting our mood, cravings, performance, and our overall health markers.

And so whilst you could absolutely lose weight on eating just snicker bars, as well as besides feeling like death, , you would eventually develop nutrient deficiencies.

BUT WHAT ABOUT A MULTIVITAMIN?

It's also worth noting that hoping to compensate for a lack of micronutrients with a multi-vitamin supplement will not suffice. The bio available in multi-vitamins make it so that most of the nutrients simply pass through the body unless complimented with the appropriate nutrient transporter/food. For example, avocado, a high fat content food, is rich in vitamin K, which is a fat soluble fibre, thus the bioavailability of that vitamin is increased.

In a sense, ensure you focus on micronutrients more than macronutrients. Because if you look after the micronutrients in your diet, then naturally the macronutrients will take care of themselves. As a diet focused on a wide variety of nutritionally rich foods will be foods that are complex carbohydrates, healthy fats and proteins.

SETTING UP YOUR MACROS

Your diet has to be congruent with your goals, be that fat loss, muscle gain or performance. As mentioned, calories will be the determining factor as to whether you gain or lose weight. And so when it comes to losing fat, you want to set your macros up so that you're eating less than you burn but in a manner in which you have energy, maximise muscle retention, and keep health markers up.

Start by figuring out your caloric maintenance. Do this with the convenience of an online calculator. Once you've found your maintenance, you can begin to work out your macros.

For protein, a good starting point is 1g per pound of lean bodyweight. For a male who weighs 170lbs, he would consume around 170 grams of protein per day to ensure maximum protein synthesis and recovery.

Protein generally stays the same year round, whereas for carbs and fats, you can change their ratios depending on your preferences, activity and genetics. Over time, you will naturally find what you prefer to do with these macros.

As a starting point for fats, make it 1 gram per kg of body weight. A male who weighs 77kg would consume around 77grams of fat per day. NOTE: Avoid lowering your fats below 50g for hormonal and overall health reasons.

Now that you've worked out your protein and fat requirements, you can now simply **fill the remaining calories with carbohydrates.**

TRACKING FOOD

I advise all my clients to start out using the MyFitnessPal app when just starting out to track food. It's simple and only takes 5 minutes out of your day to do.

NOTE 1: Use the MyFitnessPal goals section to setup your macros.

If you have never tracked calories before, then the process may take some conscious effort at first, but after a month, you will have ingrained the habit and find that you naturally WANT to track your food. This should not be labelled as obsessive as it's something that will greatly benefit you. For sure, it could be viewed as slightly neurotic, but only when taken to the extreme. In reality, what tends to happen is clients begin to gain natural sense of caloric and macronutrient content of food. So much so that they can begin to develop a skill of 'guestimating' a meal's nutritional profile even when eating out. This skill is only developed through time.

Note 2: When it comes to tracking low calorie vegetables, fruits and condiments. It's fine to simply guestimate as long as you are consistent in the rough estimation.

Note 3: All clients are expected to track calories, and meal plan examples should be used as examples only.

CREATING SUSTAINABILITY

The reason why all diets fail is because of one thing – They're unsustainable. If you can't see yourself eating only potatoes for the rest of your life, then the potato diet is not for you (Or anyone for that matter) and because of that you will not be able to keep the weight off.

The people you see lean year-round are like that due to their ability to stick to their diet consistently; It doesn't feel like they're restricting themselves. When we restrict, we feel deprived, craving goes up and so does hunger. The number one reason people fail on diets is due to hunger. If you weren't hungry, then you'd be able to stick to your goals.

Before creating your own diet that works for you it's important to understand food palatability and it's role in overeating.

FOOD PALATABILITY

The reason we tend to over eat on food is because of its palatability, often known as how 'tasty' a food or meal is. Unless in a severe caloric restricting for a pro-longed time, you will not overeat on a plain boiled potatoes. It's only when beginning to add certain flavours via ingredients or other foods, do we begin to find it hard to put the fork down. For simplicity sake, be mindful about the three variables that affect the tastiness of a food/meal:

- 1) **Sugar** – Sugar is not addictive. If this was the case, then we'd be craving and eating sugar cubes by themselves. In actual fact, it's the combination of sugar and other flavours that is addictive. More on this later. For now, the reason we tend to like sugary foods is because it's an indicator to our brain that this food source is high calories, high in energy and thus ensuring our survival. Food companies know this and hence the reason added sugar is almost every processed food there is today.
- 2) **Fat** – Fat is tasty because similar to sugar, it's high in calories. On it's own, fat is no issue and in fact can be difficult to overeat on fat due to its slow digestion. However, the issue arises when sugar and fat are combined. This combination cannot be found in a single food in nature anywhere. It's either high fat, low sugar or vice versa. It's only when you put these two flavours together do we have issues with over eating. This is why some of the tastiest of foods are both high in sugar and fat.
- 3) **Salt** – If you want to add flavour to your meals, add salt. This is why food companies as well as restaurants often add copious amounts of salt - A tastier product is a better selling product. A product that has a good ratio of all three of the mentioned flavours will be some of the bestselling foods you can eat. Think snickers, think pizza from a takeaway.

DIET ADHERENCE

Now knowing what makes food taste good, we can begin to make informed changes to our diet that will help achieve our goal. As is often the case, we need to be paying extra focus to our nutrition when fat loss is the goal.

A great place to start is by following the 80/20 principle – Have your diet consist of 80% wholefood with the remaining 20% whatever food sources you like. Along as calories are equated for, you can't go far wrong with 80/20 principle in terms of diet adherence, diet enjoyment and nutritional value.

5 WAYS TO SUSTAIN

To close off this chapter, below are 5 ways to ensure your diet remains healthy, but also filling and tasty and thus sustainable.

WATER - It's overstated but drinking water between meals as well as before a meal can help with fullness. Often we mistake hunger for dehydration. So before reaching for your next meal, drink a few cups of water first.

10-15 FRUIT & VEG PER DAY - A part from the obvious health benefits, fruit & veg is extremely satiating due to being high in volume, fibre and usually liquid. Aim to have vegetables with every meal and snack on fruits throughout the day.

SET MEAL TIMES - Having structure to your meal timing will help with adherence. Making it non negotiable to yourself that food cannot be eaten until x hours is great because the hours aren't too far apart but you won't be consuming untracked snacks or be tempted to eat off track.

BALANCED MEALS - You will find that you stay the fullest for longest with a meal that's high in protein, fibre and fat, with some carbs.

FOCUS ON FIBRE - Try to consume at least 15g of fibre per 1000 calories. Not only is it great for staying full but has a plethora of health benefits, particularly with the gut microbiome.

OPTIMIZING YOUR NUTRITION

In the following chapters you're going to learn about optimizing your nutrition. This part is for those who want every percent of gain. If you were to stop reading now, you'd be equipped enough to make yourself a diet that's healthy, effective and sustainable. However, read on if you want to maximise your nutrition.

NUTRIENT TIMING

The intention behind nutrient timing is to help the body recover quicker and also perform better, both in and outside of training. This is done by consuming certain macros ratio based on the time of the day. For example, it's advised to consume the majority of your carbohydrates around your workout to help with performance and recovery. Reason being carbs, specifically high GI carbs such as sugar, will be utilised to fuel the coming workouts, thus allowing us to work at our fullest potential. **Having carbs after workout is encouraged due to the body's increased uptake of GLUT-4, a glucose transporter, which helps with recovery after a strenuous work out.**

MORNING

Nutrient timing goes beyond pre and post workout however, it may be worth trying a high fat, low carb, moderate protein breakfast to help with blood sugar levels throughout the day - preventing a drop in energy.

EVENING

Saving some carbohydrates for later in the day will help with sleep due to the release of tryptophan - which has a calming effect.

OPTIMIZING YOUR MEALS

OPTIMIZING YOUR MEALS

In short, the best way to have your meals optimized is by making sure you have a variety of nutrients and calories from each macronutrient. This will result in meals that are high in satiety whilst also help prevent any potential nutrient deficiency, especially the case when at a pro-longed level of caloric restriction.

**SEE NEXT PAGE FOR OPTIMIZED MEAL PLAN EXAMPLE W/
TRAINING IN AFTERNOON**

Breakfast – High fat, moderate protein, moderate/low carb

2 Eggs, 2 slice of bread,
150g baby tomatoes,
300g mushrooms,
60g avocado.

Snack

Apple w/protein shake

Lunch – Typically high carb, mix of complex and simple carbs training in afternoon, moderate protein, moderate fat

100g Muesli
1 Large banana
Handful berries
200ml Sweetened almond milk

Dinner Very high carb, high protein, low fat

250g Long grain rice
250g Chicken breast
Half spring-onion, half pepper, half broccoli
50g BBQ sauce

Snack

Smoothie – Carrot, banana, kiwi, 1 scoop protein.

Supper – Moderate/high carb, Moderate/high protein, low fat.

2 slices bread
250g Low-fat cottage cheese
150g Pineapple

Notice how there's fruit or veg with every meal, and how protein is sparingly consumed throughout the day – This help with satiety but also maximizing total protein synthesis (The process in which the body repairs muscle). Majority of carbs have been consumed around workout to help with performance and also recovery. The three main meals throughout the day are of considerable size, making sure you remain full between meals.

HOW MANY MEALS A DAY?

There is no definite answer for this as it depends on your schedule and what you prefer. Having smaller meals throughout the day does not stoke the metabolism and is the same as eating 1-2 big meals a day in terms of weight loss. A common myth.

I recommend most of my clients to start with 3 main meals a day with 2-3 snacks in between those meals. I've found this to be a happy medium of not feeling too hungry when dieting but also not too bloated or varying energy levels from huge meals.

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Having distinguished meal timing and meal frequency, a common recurring question on the topic is 'should I do intermittent fasting? What about the health benefits, the autophagy? The superior fat burning?

Answer on next page.

Short answer - Do it if you genuinely prefer it and fits with your lifestyle Again sustainability is key. Yes there are quantifiable health benefits to fasting but the benefits are often over dramatized. Everybody inadvertently fasts when they sleep, so we obtain some of the benefits by default. Whilst there are more benefits to be had with pro-longed fasts - 15+ hours - I would not recommend for most people for the following the reasons:

- 1)** Fasting increases the likelihood of developing an eating disorder, mostly commonly binge eating.
- 2)** Some people do in fact have better energy by having a big breakfast, especially so if their training is in the AM. As for fasted cardio, it's not superior for fat loss. Training fasted, especially at a caloric deficit will results in less energy expended, less calories burned than if you were fuelled up with food. So any potential extra fat burned is negated by the lack of energy.
- 3)** Fat loss is equal to those who don't fast. Everything balances out throughout the week in terms of total body fat lost.
- 4)** For many people, breakfast is a social part of their day. By removing this social aspect, this may potentially have a negative knock on effect to other aspects of their life. Compounded with the restrict-and-binge behaviour that fasting can encourage, later when the person is feeling emotional or stressed, they may be more prone to binging.
- 5)** I myself alternate from breaking my fast whenever I genuinely feel like it. If I'm really hungry in the morning, then I'll eat and not feel guilty for it. Some days, I'll fast till 1pm, it really depends on how I'm feeling and what the structure of my day ahead looks like.

FAT LOSS SPECIFIC TOPICS

Whilst the majority of this guide has spoken about diet within the context of calorie deficit, the remaining few chapters delve deeper in to this aspect with the following topics: Diet fatigue, Diet breaks and reverse dieting.

DIET FATIGUE

We lose weight through controlled starvation – That's what we're doing when we eat a calorie deficit for prolonged periods. As we continue to lose weight, we begin to build up a fatigue to the whole process – Diet fatigue. This is because dieting is stressful on the body and mind. We cannot continue to lose weight indefinitely without making continual changes and even up to a point, your body will begin to fight back with an increase in cravings, strong food focus, mood swings, low energy, insomnia. These can be some of the symptoms of dieting for too long and the way to rid these unwanted affects without putting back on the fat you worked so hard to remove is done with the use a 'diet break'.

DIET BREAK

A diet break is when we consume at or just above calorie maintenance for usually at least 2 weeks. During this time, metabolic adaptations can begin to reverse, neat increases, energy goes up, cortisol is reduced and it's not uncommon for people to lose weight during this time. **Several studies have concluded that those who utilise diet breaks not only get leaner**, but also are more likely to keep the weight off. And whilst those who use diet breaks are dieting for longer, the benefits are worth the extra time.

Typically, it may be advised to utilise a diet break after about 4-6 months of dieting, although it does depend how aggressive as well as other factors that can warrant the need for a diet break. But even after you've achieved your end fat loss goal, the work is not over. Now comes the diet after the diet – The reverse diet.

REVERSE DIETING

The biggest mistake many make when losing fat is gaining it all back after the diet is over. This happens due to them not having a strategy prepared for when they've reached their fat loss goal. You could think of reverse dieting as the diet after the diet, and takes just as much effort, if not in some sense more, than dieting itself for reasons you're about to learn.

Reverse dieting is how you may assume – Instead gradually reducing calories when progress stalls, we do the opposite. Depending on the individual, we may increase calories to a mere 100 calories per week. However, in the beginning of a reverse diet, if the person is extremely lean AKA post-competition, then it's better to get back straight to maintenance calories to ensure a quicker return of healthier, more normal levels of hormone function.

For those not extremely lean, it's best to reverse diet by adding in calories on a weekly basis. Monitoring weight and continuing to add calories up to at least maintenance whilst ensuring only adding calories when weight gain has halted for more than a week. Try aiming for 0.5lb gain per week.

The success for reverse dieting is very low due to not realising that you will continue to feel hunger for several months even after upping the calories. Appetite in fact INCREASES when we reintroduce calories after a diet, due to the body trying to get back to homeostasis. To combat this, it can help to up your protein intake to help with fullness, as well accepting still going to bed hungry and looking no better in the morning for it. It's extremely counterintuitive to execute, but will prevent you from undoing all of those months of dieting. After around 3 months of a consistent caloric maintenance / slight caloric surplus, you can expect appetite to begin to reduce.

In short – Diet for 3 months, 2 week diet break, diet another 3 month. Reverse diet until back at previous maintenance calories without too quick weight, typically can last from 1 – 2 months, then begin a steady offseason for at least the amount of time you dieted in total. In this case, 6 months. During this time, aim to build your metabolism up by adding calories whilst monitoring fat gain. Adjust accordingly

SUPPLEMENTS & CAFFEINE

To close, it's now only worth discussing supplements because like the order of this guide, they should be last on your priority; It's only worth considering supplementation once you've got your diet and training optimized.

The vast majority of supplements are a waste of your money. The claims made even by 'studies' often have little credibility when actually reviewed. To save you time and money. Below are the only supplements ever worth considering:

Whey Protein

Just a high quality standard whey protein will be more than sufficient in helping bump your daily protein up. The marketed 'full blend' proteins with a higher price are not worth it as you should be getting the majority of protein from the foods you eat anyway.

Creatine

Get yourself a basic creatine monohydrate. It's cheap and just as effective as any other creatine. Take 5 grams per day every day. No need to cycle or load it. Effects begin after around 3 week mark.

BCAA/EAA

Amino acids, the over hyped supplement that's marketed as something to give you an edge. However, the only time I would subscribe amino acids to client is when they're deep in to a fat loss phase and want to help mitigate potential muscle loss. It can also be used a way to help increase daily water and protein intake. Other than that, don't waste your money.

Caffeine

Use it only when needed. This is easier said than done, especially with a coffee shop on every corner. However, it's best to limit your caffeine intake to no more than 1 cup per day. You could run up to 400mg of coffee per day, roughly 4 cups, but this is not sustainable and relying on caffeine to just make it through your day indicates you need to attend to something in your daily routine. By limiting your caffeine, you will greatly feel the affects more when truly needed. Opt for decaf options if struggling with coffee addiction.

SUMMARY

Hopefully by now you've gained a better understanding of the confusing world of nutrition. You learned the basics, dispelled some myths along the way and I personally believe this is all you need to know to achieve your goals be that fat loss or muscle gain.

Remember, revert back to this guide whenever you like - It's yours to keep.

If you want your questions answered, just contact me. Cheers!