

A Helpful Guide to Diet and Fat Loss

The fastest way to lose weight is through proper diet.

That is not an overstatement or any kind of fluffy hype. Many trainers try to sell people on instant fat loss workouts, but they don't back it up with supportive nutrition.

In reality, diet accounts for easily more than half - though probably more like 80% - of your fat loss success.

But there is one major problem most people have: knowing what to eat.

I'm here to let you in on a little secret... **HEALTHY EATING IS EASY.**

It's easy, but just because it's easy doesn't mean everyone can do it. It takes effort and a desire to change your behaviors for good.

It will not require overly restrictive diets. It does not require loyalty to a specific brand of weight loss supplement. There are no pills or magic potions.

In all honesty, fat loss and clean eating both start with common sense. People too often want to be fed a quick fix, but you already know what it takes to eat right.

You need protein, for one, and you need fruits and vegetables. Just add water, and you're almost there.

Of course, getting yourself to the point where you can take diet recommendations and incorporate them into your everyday life is a little harder than that.

That's where this guide comes in. You will read about what foods you should eat, which ones you should avoid, and how to take steps to reach your goals and change your lifestyle. We will even provide you with some sample recipes for good measure.

Just remember that fat loss and healthy eating doesn't start with this book. What you will find here is supportive information and useful tips. Fat loss and clean eating start with... wait for it... YOU!

Just by virtue of the fact that you're reading this sentence, I can promise you that you are on the right path. You are seeking out information that will help you change your life. So congratulations to you... but remember there's still much left to do!

General Diets vs. Specific Diets: The Case for Being a Generalist

Healthy eating starts with supportive nutrition. This means clean eating: choosing foods that provide you with essential nutrients, including healthy fats (like Omega-3), antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and especially protein.

Most diets want you to commit to a highly restrictive number of specific allowable foods.

This is insanity. These diets do not work because they severely limit your freedom to choose. It is easy to give into temptation when you don't really know why you're eating certain foods and instead just have a list of "allowed" foods.

Every time you eat, you make a choice. Healthy eating is about consistently trying to make the right choice. It's not about sticking to one specific list of foods or only drinking a liquid diet or anything of that nature.

Keep it simple. Adjust accordingly.

With this in mind, you are now ready to embark upon a lifestyle change that is more than just a diet. Clean eating is something you can do for life, not just for a couple weeks until you get burned out.

Yes, what you are about to read will include lists of healthy and unhealthy foods, but they are not exhaustive. Let common sense be your guide.

*****Quick Hitter: An Ode to the Avocado*****

Avocados are so green
They will make you nice and lean

SO EAT THEM!

(But seriously: Avocados are loaded with fiber and healthy fats, and they have been proven time and again to be one of the best foods out there for fat loss. They go great with meats and beans.)

Top 10 Habits of Highly Effective Eaters

Clean eating is all about forming lifelong habits that will get you to LOSE FAT and KEEP IT OFF.

Here are 10 of the most significant habits you will need to develop in order to be a healthy eater

1. Breakfast: Every Morning!

-Breakfast sets the tone for the rest of your day. If you're not eating breakfast, start making it a point to do so every day. You will be less hungry throughout the rest of the day and less likely to binge on snacks or overeat at other meals.

2. Eat Throughout the Day (Every 3 or 4 Hours)

-The timing of when you eat is highly important. You shouldn't eat based solely on hunger. If you eat small meals throughout the day and have

healthy snacks (Greek yogurt, nuts, etc.), you will be less likely to give into the temptation of splurging on pizza, fries, and other junk food.

3. All Calories are NOT the Same

-Calorie counting is not the most important thing in the world. Eating 500 calories of grass-fed beef or wild caught salmon is not the same as eating 500 calories of potato chips. The former is rich in essential nutrients and protein, the latter has no nutritional benefit and will leave you still hungry an hour later.

4. Real, Whole Foods vs. Processed Foods

-We will talk throughout this guide about what foods to eat; just know that it's typically better to eat something that was once a living, breathing animal or plant rather than something you will find sealed in a bag or can.

5. Protein, Produce, Protein, Produce...

-It's time to trim the inessential carbs. Protein is a major muscle building source, and foods that are high in protein leave you satisfied for longer than high carb foods. Eating protein will help boost your metabolism.

As for produce, well, you have always been told to eat fruits and vegetables and that hasn't changed. Produce is essential for feeling full, meeting your daily requirements of vitamins and nutrients, and for burning fat for good.

6. Cut Out the Sugar!

-Sugar is the biggest source of weight gain for most people. Whether it's in your breakfast cereal, candy, soft drinks, or added to your coffee, sugar will mess with your insulin levels, slow your metabolism, and cause you to pack on the pounds. **AVOID IT!**

7. Omega 3

-Omega 3 has a host of benefits for fat loss. You can find it in grass-fed beef and poultry, wild caught seafood, walnuts, flax, and other foods. You

can also take fish oil supplements, but only in addition to healthy food sources, not as a replacement.

8. Eat or Drink after Workouts

-When you do resistance and weight training, you need to eat and/or drink soon after a workout. Getting your body the fuel it needs is essential to having a good metabolism and building lean muscle mass.

9. Write it Down

-Keep a food log. Know what you eat. If you can chart your progress, you can know where you're going wrong, where you're doing well, and how you can make adjustments to be more successful.

10. Consistency is Key

-Don't sweat the details at the expense of putting forth the effort. Too many restrictive diets suck all the joy out of eating. They only leave you craving more, and you wind up binge eating. Make a consistent effort to incorporate clean eating into your lifestyle, and don't get bogged down counting calories, watching points, or any of the other fluff diet nonsense that can sidetrack you.

*****Quick Hitter: Top 5 Proteins*****

1. Grass Fed Beef
2. Organic Poultry
3. Wild Caught Fish
4. Eggs
5. Dairy (NOT the sugar filled, fat-free kind) (esp. Greek Yogurt)

The Top 13 Fat-Burning Foods

The truth about healthy eating is that not all foods are created equal. When it comes to eating for fat-loss, this is especially true.

One of the hidden properties of healthy eating that rarely gets much discussion in the mainstream press is the “thermic property” of foods. Yet, it is this very property which accounts for why not all foods are created equal.

To sum up briefly, every individual has a resting metabolic rate. This is the rate at which your body burns calories in the absence of all other activities besides merely existing.

The thermic effect of eating refers to the energy you expend (aka the calories you burn) beyond your resting metabolic rate due simply to digesting and storing the food you have eaten.

Certain foods help you shed the pounds by burning calories through this thermic effect more so than others.

Other foods are great for fat loss, but for other reasons. They may be filling without having many calories, or they may pack a big punch nutritionally without packing on the pounds as well.

So without further ado, here are **THE TOP 15 FOODS** that will burn calories for you!

1. Nuts (esp. almonds and walnuts)

- Nuts make for a great snack, and each type of nut offers its own nutritional benefits. Walnuts, for example, offer beneficial Omega-3 fatty acids. Almonds, meanwhile, are a great source of Vitamin E, which has been linked to healthy skin.

2. Chili peppers

- Remember the thermic effect? Chili peppers contain capsaicin, which is a powerful metabolite. Capsaicin heats the body, and works effectively to decrease appetite so that you feel full after eating.

3. Eggs

- Eggs are an incredible, low-calorie source of protein. In addition to protein, eggs provide large amounts of several other important nutrients. I recommend organic, cage-free eggs fortified with Omega-3.

4. Whole Grains (Examples: quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat)

- I keep stressing this point, but I'll hammer it home again one more time: whole foods are better than processed foods. One reason is that your body breaks down twice as many calories processing whole foods as opposed to processed ones. Examples: quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat

5. Greek Yogurt

- A lot of dairy products aren't great for people trying to burn fat. Sugar-filled "fruity" yogurts are a great example. Greek yogurt, however, bucks this trend. Loaded with protein and low in sugar, Greek yogurt is a great option at snack time. (Try mixing in berries and nuts to make it extra tasty and for added nutrition)

6. Grass Fed and Lean Meats

- As a rule of thumb, grass-fed meats are better than farm-raised ones. Lean meats, like turkey, provide an outstanding amount of protein but are not loaded with fat. Protein has a high thermic effect, and you can burn up to 30% of these types of calories through digestion alone.

7. Berries

- You know that berries taste great, but did you also know that they are low in calories, high in fiber, and that each type of berry contains a great mix of vitamins and minerals? Raspberries, blueberries, and blackberries all taste great mixed in Greek yogurt or even on a salad.

8. Nut Butter

- In moderation, nut butter can be a great snack-time food, packing a lot of protein. The best nut butters are organic ones without hydrogenated oils. Try Trader Joe's all natural almond or cashew butter mixed with flax seeds for that extra Omega-3 boost.

9. Green Tea

- Green tea is one drink that has a very high thermogenic effect. It contains EGCG, an antioxidant which has been shown to boost metabolism in the period after drinking it.

10. Spinach

- Where to begin? Spinach is loaded with fiber, cancer-fighting flavonoids, and a host of antioxidants that help with everything from vision to blood pressure. They also help build strong bones by providing over 100% the daily value of Vitamin K.

11. Grapefruit

- Because of the thermic effect, people have called grapefruit a "negative calorie" food. While not literally true, grapefruit is a wonderful, low-calorie breakfast food that helps burn fat. It is high in

enzymes and water content, so it doesn't have many calories. This is one of the absolute best fat-fighting foods.

12. Coffee

- Okay, now don't use this as an excuse to go wild at Starbucks. I'm not talking about coffee loaded with sugar, whipped cream, and all that other junk. Studies have shown that not only does drinking coffee help you burn more calories at rest, but it helps you burn more calories while working out. Thank everyone's wonderful metabolism booster: caffeine.

13. Fatty Fish (i.e. tuna, sardines, salmon)

- Leptin, a hormone in your body, regulates your metabolism. Studies have shown that lower levels of leptin make for higher metabolisms. Fatty fish like salmon are great for fat loss because they boost metabolism and help keep leptin levels low.

*****Quick Hitter: Top 5 Proteins for Vegetarians*****

1. Quinoa
2. Buckwheat
3. Chia
4. Hempseed
5. Nuts

The 5 Do-Not-Eats

1. Processed Foods

- Processed foods are loaded with preservatives, sodium, and other harmful ingredients. Sodium, for one, has been linked to hypertension. It is best to “buy fresh.”

2. Sugar and Sweeteners

- Sugars and artificial sweeteners are added to lots of drinks and foods. See a so-called “healthy” yogurt in a 100 calorie pack? Read the label! Chances are it is so loaded with added sugar that it’s like eating a 100 calorie candy bar. **TOTALLY EMPTY!**

As for artificial sweeteners, studies show that people who drink diet sodas with artificial sweeteners simply crave sugar more often and end up eating more sugar as well.

3. Bread, Cereal, Pasta

- These are hard foods to stop eating for most people. They are essentially just carbohydrates and little else. You should focus your energy on getting carbs from fruits and vegetables, especially in the form of fiber. Fiber is harder to break down by the body, and it requires more energy expenditure to digest. Simple carbs like those found in bread, cereal, and pasta do not have much fiber and actually cause insulin spikes.

An added note: most children’s cereals (i.e. Cap’n Crunch, Reese’s Cereal, etc. are basically like eating candy for breakfast. **DO NOT EAT THEM!**)

4. Simple Starches

- Simple starches include potatoes, potato chips, corn, French fries, and other foods that are loaded with empty calories. These foods are doubly worse because they are not very satisfying and will leave you hungry shortly after eating them.

5. Alcohol

- Alcohol, like soft drinks, is an example of a high carb, low nutrient drink. You want to get most of your calories from healthy foods, not from unhealthy drinks. Ever hear of a beer belly? I thought so. Alcohol consumption will undermine you if you let it... so don't let it!

*****Quick Hitter: Omega-3*****

Omega-3 fatty acids can be found in wild salmon, grass fed meats, leafy greens, nuts, flax, and more. They are, essentially, the good fat.

Omega-3 has been shown to protect against inflammation of the arteries, lower levels of triglycerides and lower blood pressure.

Some work even suggests they may be beneficial in protecting against rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, ADHD, and dementia.

You can find them in:

Canned salmon and tuna (albacore tuna is best)

Walnuts

Grass fed meats

Trout, mackerel, and other fish

Supplements

Olive Oil

Flax Seeds

Why Am I Still Hungry?

Cravings. You know the word, and worse yet, you know the feeling. Maybe you just ate a full meal, but now it's a half hour later and you're hungry again.

Or maybe, you went downstairs for a midnight snack... but then you found yourself unexpectedly polishing off a box of Oreos because you had no idea how hungry you actually were.

The truth is, you might be so hungry because of the very types of foods you're eating (or not eating) at other times of the day.

The real culprit behind these phenomena is one of your body's most important hormones: insulin. When you eat infrequently or have a diet heavy in sugar, your body will experience drastic spikes in insulin. This is bad.

Insulin spikes are not desirable because fluctuations in blood sugar are not conducive to fat loss or to putting on muscle mass. In the long term, insulin spikes are going to increase insulin resistance.

So how can you stay satisfied throughout the day without having to give into cravings?

Eat Frequently

This might seem like a bad thing if you are trying to lose weight. You might ask yourself, "How can I lose weight if I am eating more often?" The answer, though, is quite simple: eat more often, but eat less at each meal.

Importantly, eating frequently normalizes blood sugar levels and controls those pesky insulin spikes.

In addition, frequent eating typically results in an overall decrease in caloric intake. Rather than eating 1, 2, or 3 very big meals each day, you can monitor your hunger level throughout the day. Eating more often decreases the likelihood of overeating.

By eating small meals and snacks throughout the day, you will accomplish the high desirable feat of never being hungry while also never being full.

Drink Water

Have you ever found yourself eating and eating and still never being satisfied? Have you ever come home from a long day of work and chugged a soda or sports drink, and you weren't sure why?

Well, the answer is that you were probably dehydrated and didn't even realize it. It is crucially important to drink enough water throughout the day.

The body often mistakes thirst for hunger, so if you find yourself eating a full meal and still craving more, try reaching for a glass of water before re-filling your plate.

Eat Breakfast

You have heard it before, and most likely you heard it from your mom when you were a child but ignored it: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Eating a sufficiently fulfilling breakfast prepares you for the day. In addition, it reduces those pesky insulin spikes throughout the rest of your day.

Eat More Fruits and Veggies

Fruits and vegetables, though low in calories, are much more filling than (for example) a bag of potato chips, which can have hundreds more calories. Green, leafy vegetables are also rich in Vitamin K, which helps regulate insulin.

Eating salads before meals will help you eat less during the meal, while still ensuring that you are satisfied and get all of the nutrients you need.

In between bigger meals, try snacking on fruit like apples, oranges, or berries Alternatively, baby carrots and celery sticks make for great snacking, too.

Focus on the Real Problem: Boredom

Nearly everyone knows what it feels like to start eating simply because there is nothing else to do. Perhaps you are enjoying a lazy Sunday without having to go to work or carry out any other of your usual responsibilities. Out of sheer boredom, you probably start to snack... but just because you don't have anything else to do.

While this type of eating can be hard to stop, the best way to deal with it is to think before you eat. Before you eat anything, you should always take a moment and think to yourself about a) what you're eating and b) why you're eating. If you realize that you're not actually hungry, try doing something active instead.

*****Quick Hitter: Essential Supplements*****

1. Fish Oil (Omega-3)
2. Daily Multi-Vitamin
3. Vitamin D (in addition to Daily Multi-Vitamin)

A Guide to Dining Out

By choosing to have a healthy diet and engaging in clean eating, you are making a serious effort to take control over the foods you put into your body. I have made a point throughout this healthy eating guide of consistency. Consistency is the single most important factor in maintaining a healthy diet and achieving lasting fat loss. Ultimately, every meal and/or snack comes down to a choice. At any given point, you are forced to choose what to eat.

However, no one can completely avoid being in certain circumstances in which it is difficult to know how to decide what to eat. When you are dining out of the home, you are faced with a menu of foods with which you may not be familiar.

While it might seem like this is a bad thing, it doesn't have to be. As a matter of fact, your decision to enjoy clean eating is not just a restrictive diet, but rather a lifestyle change. For it to really work, you have to learn how to eat in any environment, be it in the home, at work, during the holidays, or at a restaurant.

Nevertheless, you may have some questions about how to ensure that you make the right food choices when you are not the one preparing your own meals. As such, here are some helpful guidelines for eating out:

“No Bread for Me, Thank You”

Most restaurants offer some kind of empty-calorie filler for the table before they bring you the actual main course. At pizza joints, waiters often suggest some sort of fried appetizer for the group before the pizza. In other types of restaurants (especially Italian), there is an even greater temptation to indulge because they provide you with free bread. Mexican restaurants are usually no better, as they make chips and salsa plentifully available.

Just as bad as this, though, is the fact that many fine dining establishments incorporate bread, tortillas, and other empty carbohydrates into their main courses. How do you handle the situation?

The answer is simple: politely ask that they not bring you bread. If you order a hamburger, try getting it wrapped in lettuce rather than on a bun. Going to Chipotle? Try the burrito bowl instead of the regular burrito.

Do Your Homework

Most restaurants have an online presence. A simple search using one of the popular internet databases will help you find the restaurant's menu online. If you cannot find the nutrition facts on the company's website, try searching "[Restaurant Name] Nutrition Facts" and see what you can find on a third party website.

"What's on that?"

Do not be afraid to ask your waiter what comes with a meal or what kinds of ingredients are used to prepare it. If you are ordering seafood, ask if the fish is farm-raised or wild-caught. There is a HUGE difference. Wild salmon, tuna, and other fish are rich in Omega-3, whereas farm raised animals are often fed with low-quality foods. The animal's diet fundamentally changes their nutritional content.

Make sure you find out what sides come with the entrée. Instead of French fries, try to substitute vegetables, salad, or another healthy option if it is available.

Cook Most of Your Meals

While you cannot avoid eating out every once in a while, it is in your best interest to still cook most of your meals yourself. By preparing your own

meals, you are in control of what goes into the cooking process. You control the ingredients and the types of meat or fish.

Changing Your Lifestyle: The Importance of Performance and Habit-Based Goals

With all this diet and healthy eating talk, it can be easy to overlook something very important. You aren't just making simple decisions about what to eat, you are changing your lifestyle. In order to change your lifestyle, in any way, you must set out your goals beforehand.

Any person who has ever gone on a diet, started an exercise regimen, or otherwise tried to lose fat knows what it is like to set goals. The problem, though, starts with what type of goals you are setting for yourself.

Yes, indeed, there are multiple different types of goals out there. You have to know how to set the right ones for you, so you can be as successful as possible in achieving your ultimate overarching goal, which is to burn fat.

But let me backtrack. "Losing fat" might be your general goal, but it is far too ambiguous. The kinds of goals you need to set for yourself are far more narrow than that.

I will now introduce a new concept to you: the three different kinds of fat loss goals.

A goal such as "losing fat" is what could be called an outcome-based goal. You will want one outcome-based goal as your guide, but it should be specific. Rather than "I want to lose fat," you should say, "I want to lose 10 pounds of fat." This is a measurable and specific marker. You will need to write down your goal and refer to it later.

But how do you reach this goal? This is where I will refer you to two other types of short-term goals. Performance-based goals are numbers based.

For example, “I will eat 5 small meals throughout the day, rather than 2 large ones.” These goals work on a day-to-day basis.

The other type of goal, habit-based, is possibly the most important when it comes to defining your eating patterns. You want clean eating to become the norm, not the exception. The only way to do this is to repeatedly set out goals that will turn actions into habits.

For example, “I will substitute blueberries and Greek yogurt for pancakes” is a definable habit forming goal.

By setting out these types of simple goals on a daily and weekly basis, over time clean eating ought to become second nature to you.

Sample Breakfasts

Breakfast A:

1 cup greek yogurt

1 cup blueberries

¼ - ½ cup granola

Breakfast B:

2 whole eggs

3 spears asparagus

2 oz shredded cheddar

1 cup blueberries/strawberries

Breakfast C:

2 whole eggs

½ red bell pepper
1 Portobello mushroom
2 oz shredded mozzarella
1 pink grapefruit

Breakfast D:

2 whole eggs
½ yellow squash
¼ cup broccoli
¼ cup onions
2 oz horseradish cheddar cheese
1 banana

Sample Lunches

Lunch A:

1 sprouted grain tortilla
6 oz halibut, grilled
1 TBS hummus
1 TBS salsa
1 banana

Lunch B:

4 cups mixed greens

½ cup strawberries

2 TBS vinaigrette

2 TBS Hempseed

¼ cup mushrooms

½ cup coleslaw

Lunch C:

2 TBS BBQ sauce

Sprouted grain tortilla

5 oz grilled chicken

1 cup loose leaf lettuce

1 cup cantaloupe

Lunch D:

½ cup quinoa

½ cup canned salmon

¼ cup salsa

1 TBS vinaigrette

1 grapefruit

Sample Dinners

Dinner A:

1 cup mixed greens

¼ cup gouda cheese
1 tsp vinaigrette
3-4 oz turkey breast
1 tsp mozzarella cheese shredded
4-6 asparagus stalks, steamed

Dinner B:

4 cups spinach
1-2 TB vinaigrette dressing
1 cup mixed veggies
3-4 oz grilled chicken
2 TB hummus

Dinner C:

4 oz flank steak
Sprouted grain tortilla
1 cup grilled broccoli florets
½ Vidalia onion
½ avocado
3 TBS salsa

Dinner D:

3-4 oz salmon

¼ cup salsa

¼ avocado

1 large orange

Sample Snacks

Snack A:

1 cup cottage cheese

1 cup cantaloupe

1 oz pistachios

Snack B:

1 oz raw pecans

1 cup blueberries

¼ shredded coconut

Snack C:

2 nectarines, sliced

1 TBS almond butter

Snack D:

1 Cup Greek yogurt

1 oz walnuts

1 cup blackberries