

Set Your Metabolism on Fire

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on

FIRE

6 Simple Steps to
Permanent Fat Loss

by Dr. Clay Hyght

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Preface:

Dr Clay's Psychobabble



Thanks

Let me start by thanking you for taking the time to acquire and begin reading this book. It shows that you have some degree of trust and respect for what I have to say... and I sincerely appreciate that.

To be in a position where I can share my passion, knowledge, and experience with you is a blessing. I do what I do because I thoroughly enjoy helping people; and at the risk of sounding too touchy-feely, it's what I feel like I am *supposed* to do. I don't feel that I would've been given this passion and ability if I wasn't meant to share it with others.

When asked to summarize my primary career/life goal I say "to help as many people as possible achieve their health and fitness goals."

But... I cannot help anyone achieve their health and fitness goals if no one is interested in what I have to say (duh!). So thanks for reading this book and giving me a chance to, if even in a small way, help you achieve your goals. After all, if you achieve your fitness goals, then I will be achieving one of mine.

Before moving on I would also like to thank my parents, because without them... never mind, you know how babies are made. Seriously, I'm so fortunate to have been taught the values that my parents instilled in me.

Dad, thanks for raising me to believe in myself and to realize that I can accomplish whatever I put my mind to. I will see you in heaven but hopefully not too soon... I still have some stuff here left to do.

Mom, thanks for allowing me (and even encouraging me) to be myself and for showing me unconditional love... even when "being myself" might have been a bit hard to handle.

Why Is It Free?

You're probably wondering why this book is free, and why I didn't ask you to fork over some money for it. Well, my friend, that's actually a very good question. In fact, most of the people that knew about this project told me that I was an idiot for giving it away.

The two most common comments were something along the lines of... "Why in the world would you write a book and then give it away?" and "How do you expect to make money?" Those are definitely valid concerns, and come to think of it, maybe I am an idiot.

But I prefer to think I just have a different perspective and approach. For starters, although I'm no Mother Teresa, I sincerely want as many people as possible to benefit from my knowledge, experience, and passion. Obviously, if I give a book away as opposed to selling it then more people will get it, read it, and benefit from it.

As for the making money part... like you, I want to make a nice living to be able to live and enjoy a fun, stress-free life. Marketing expert Yanik Silver often talks about how the best way to make more money is to provide more value and benefit to people. That's exactly the way I see it, and it's in line with my personal beliefs.

In a way I'm bribing you...bribing you to give me and my work a chance. I feel that giving you a good quality product for free is a fair trade for you giving me a chance to help educate, motivate, and inspire you to take the right action towards achieving your health and fitness goals.

Down the road, hopefully in the not so distant future, I will have products (i.e. books and videos) for sale. If you enjoy and benefit from my work, then I trust that you will consider buying some of these other products if you have the need. And hey, regarding pretty much anything in life, all we can ask for or expect is a chance.

Share the Love

I do have one small favor to ask, but it's an easy one. Assuming you like this book (and I'm confident you will), please tell others about it. Come to think of it...why wouldn't you? After all it's completely free! And I'm sure they would appreciate you telling them about it.

Simply send them to my website – www.DrClay.com – so they can sign up to receive their free copy. Doing this is better than trying to forward it via email. For one, the file size is too large for most email accounts to handle. Likewise, by getting their copy from my site they will know they are getting the most recent and up-to-date version.

I will let you know when a new version is available by sending you an email (assuming you got your book via my site and I, therefore, have your email address).

Back to the site... DrClay.com has tons of free information that supports this book, with more being added all the time. Question and answers, training routines, exercise how-to's, and nutrition tips are just some examples of what you'll find on there.

Also make sure to check out (and tell others about) my web TV show – The Dr Clay Show (www.TheDrClayShow.com). Although you won't find anything that resembles Hollywood production quality, you will find that the show has lots of tips and information that will help you look and feel your best! You may even be entertained on occasion, although I'm not making any promises in that regard.

How I Do Things

Let me tell you just a little bit about what you can expect from me from a business perspective.

For starters, I promise to provide information that's as accurate as possible, just like I'm giving advice to a friend or family member. Likewise, I'm not afraid to admit it when I don't know something. I won't blow sunshine up your skirt and try to make you think I know everything. But knowing me, if I don't know something, I will probably research the heck out of it until I do. I think that's part of what makes me good at what I do.

Another thing you can count on is for me to provide unbiased information. No amount of money can get me to recommend a product or service that I don't believe in. In fact, I've turned down significant money to endorse products, simply because I wouldn't use them myself or recommend them to my friends or family.

Essentially, if I think something is great, I'll tell you it's great. If something sucks...then I'll tell you that, too. As many of my clients have said, "...you tell it like it is."

Speaking of things that suck... nothing pisses me off more than getting SPAM. Well, come to think of it there are a few things that piss me off even more, but I digress. You can rest assured that I will never send you junk mail, nor would I ever share your email with anyone else, under any circumstances.

The only email you'll get from me will be to let you know about something that I think you might benefit from or enjoy – that's it.

Likewise, I will never "try to sell you something." My dad was a used car salesman for many years, yet I doubt I could sell water to a man in the desert! It's just not my nature. So you won't get any pushy or sneaky sales tactics from me, that's for sure.

In regard to any of my future products that may be for sale, I only want you to buy something that will benefit you. So I'll simply tell you about it – who it's for and who it's not – then you can decide if it's for you.

I think you'll appreciate my open, honest, and rather transparent way of doing things.

Full Disclosure

Just so you never need to wonder if I have a conflict of interest with something, let me go ahead and give you full disclosure. I do not get paid to endorse or recommend any products.

I am a writer, however, and some of the magazines I write for are owned by companies that sell nutrition supplements. That's inevitable. However, no one I write for ever asks for me to recommend (or even mention) any of their products... nor would I if they did. If I do recommend any product it's because I think it's good, and I probably use it myself.

In the event that I do recommend a product and a commission (often called an affiliate commission) is offered, I won't turn it down. For years I refused to do that, but I figure if I'm going to recommend a product anyway, then I may as well collect the small commission, right?

So, if you are going to buy a product that you see on my site and there's a link to it, please use it just in case. You won't pay more (of course), but those couple of dollars will be used to help pay for the site, my web TV show... and for other free stuff like this book.

That's it – there's my full disclosure so to speak. In summary, I'm just a guy who loves fitness and loves teaching people about fitness. So I've decided to make a living doing just that.

In Closing

Please help me by offering your input. Whether you have a question you would like answered, a topic idea for ***The Dr Clay Show***, or an idea for product or service that you think people would benefit from, please let me know. Heck, even if you see a broken link on my website, help me out... I would really appreciate it!

Lastly, please share your success story with me. This is a great, yet easy way to help motivate other people. By seeing your success they will be even more confident they can do it, too!

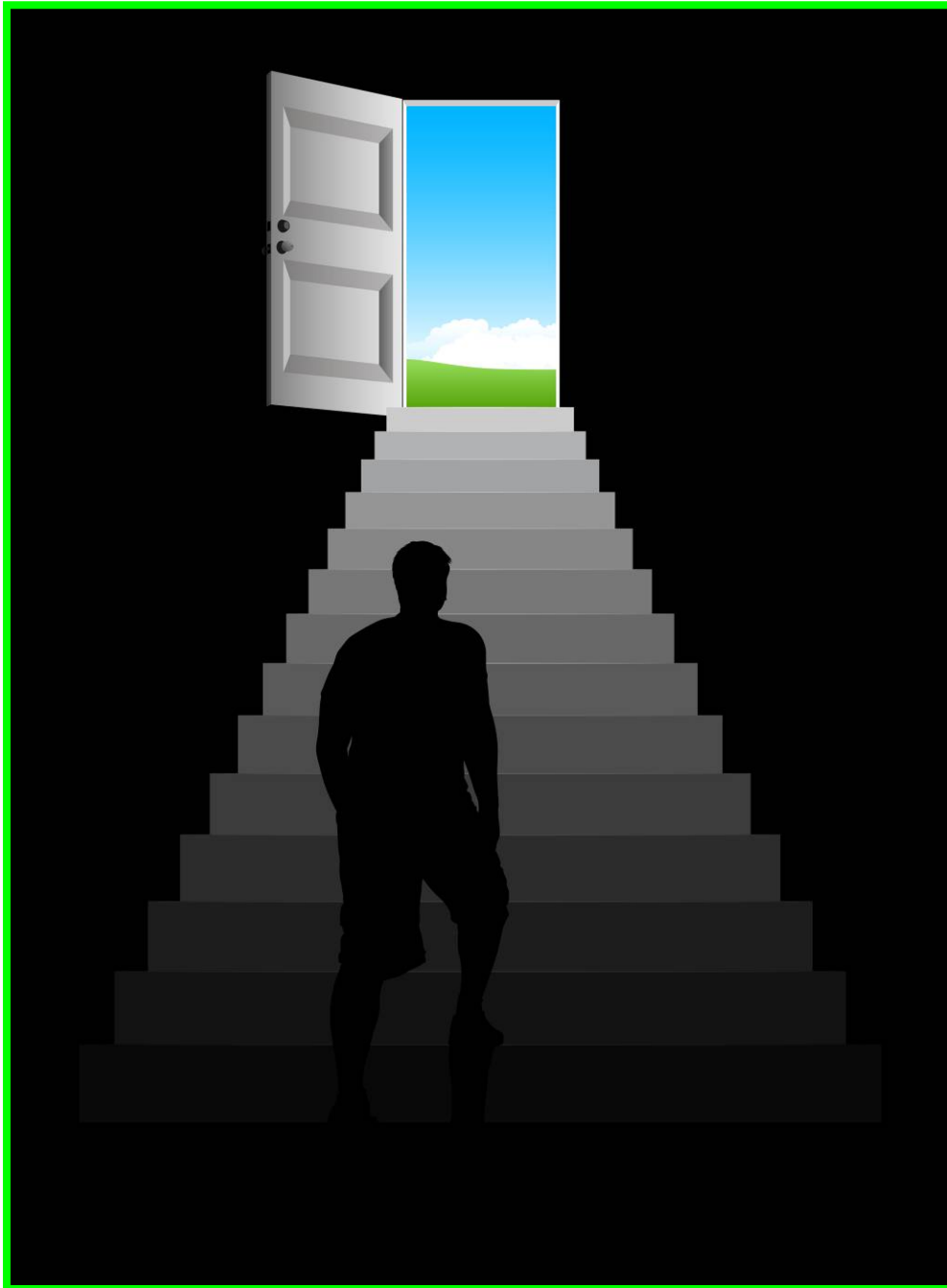
Enough of my psychobabble... go enjoy the book!

Sincerely,

Dr Clay

Chapter 1:

Getting Started



Are You Ready?

Achieving the body of your dreams may – and probably does – seem like a daunting task. It certainly was to me at one point... but it's not any more.

Getting in great shape is as clear-cut and straightforward as driving to the supermarket... assuming you know how to get there, of course. Well, my friend, I know how to get there, and I'm going to show you how to get there, too!

When it comes down to it, there are really just two pieces of the puzzle in terms of achieving any goal... including the body of your dreams.

The first puzzle piece is having the right information.

The right information allows you to follow in the footsteps of others who have already achieved what you want in life. This is the surest, easiest, and least painful path to your own success!

I have spent over 20 years gathering and testing information in the realm of, what I call, physique enhancement. And my persistence has definitely paid off!

Despite having a serious genetic propensity toward being overweight or even obese, I have managed to become a pretty decent bodybuilder and have even been in some fitness magazines. Not bad for a kid that was once too embarrassed to take his shirt off or even wear shorts!

I have been especially fortunate to be able to use my education and experience to help hundreds of other people get into great shape as well. And you may very well be next.

So, rest assured knowing that this book has the time-tested, proven information that you need to get in the best shape of your life!

But, there is another piece to the puzzle, and it's one that, unfortunately, I can't provide for you.

That second piece of the puzzle is motivation.

Motivation takes on different shapes for different people, but it's safe to say that the biggest component of motivation is desire.

You obviously already have the desire to enhance your physique, because you're reading this book. So as long as you maintain that flame of desire and don't let it burn out, then you're set!

The best way to maintain desire and stay motivated is to keep your goal firmly imprinted in the front of your mind. Keep in mind how good it will feel to be in your best shape ever!

Your Plan for Success

Having a plan is like having a roadmap. If it's the right map, it will help you reach your destination in the quickest and most efficient manner.

After all, many before you have used it with great success! Why not you? However, if you have the wrong map, you're pretty much guaranteed to have a hard time.

For example, if you're in California driving to San Diego from San Francisco but you have a map of Alabama, then you have an issue.

What if I help you out by giving you a map of California? Then I bet you and I would agree that you could find your way from San Francisco to San Diego.

What if I highlighted the best route for you and wrote down turn-by-turn directions? Would that help?

Of course it would!

Other than just driving you there myself, about the best way I could help you would be to give you a GPS navigation system with turn-by-turn directions.

That's pretty foolproof, right? It is, unless you simply give up and turn around before you reach San Diego.

And that leads me to the last thing you need to reach a goal: Not only do you need a proven plan, but you must also follow it. After all, how is the plan going to ever work if you don't do it?!

Even with the latest and the greatest GPS navigation system, you still have to make the trip. Unfortunately you can't just beam yourself there a la Star Trek. There's no other way to make the 502-mile trip other than one mile at a time.

So what does all this driving have to do with you and your physique goals? Good question... let me explain.

You WILL Succeed!

Simple Steps Eating is more than just diet and nutrition information. It's a proven, step by step plan for reaching your goal of having a better body. I guess you could say it's your GPS navigation system, and just like a navigation system, it only works if you actually use it!

Although I'm not going to get into the details of goal setting here, I would highly encourage you to write down your specific physique goals, both short term and long term. While you're at it, write down *why* you want to achieve those goals and what your life will be like when you do.

Remember how important desire is? Well, one of the best ways to maintain a burning desire is to remember *why* you desired something in the first place. The *why* is a more powerful motivator than the goal itself.

So, take a moment to write down your goals AND why you want to achieve them. Then, at least twice per day (upon waking and before retiring for the evening), read them over and think about your goals. Remind yourself why you want to achieve them, and what it will be like when you do. This will really do wonders for helping you develop, and maintain, a laser-like focus.

Before we get started, let me give you one more valuable tip: "Always keep on keepin' on." In case you don't speak Southern, what I mean is, "Never give up."

If you hit traffic on a road trip would you just pull over and say "Forget this; I quit."? Or worse yet, would you just turn around and go home? No you wouldn't, because you know the only way to get there is to keep on driving!

Sculpting a physique you can be proud of and totally happy about is just like taking a road trip, my friend. All you need are the directions and the motivation to keep on driving until you reach your destination.

By obtaining this book, you've already taken care of the first puzzle piece of the puzzle – you have your plan. Now it's time to get busy implementing the simple steps inside your plan.

But...do NOT sit around waiting for some magical moment when you suddenly "believe in yourself" or feel super-motivated. Instead, know that you can, and will, achieve the health and happiness that comes with having a body you're proud of – and that looks good in jeans and OUT!

Don't ever underestimate the power of believing in yourself.

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right." – Henry Ford

Trust me on this -- once you start seeing results in the mirror right before your eyes, it will light the fire of motivation inside you like nothing else! Seeing (and even feeling) results will give you the positive feedback you need to keep your motivation sky high.

But just like a road trip, you have to keep on going even when you can't see your destination on the horizon. So, until that point, simply get started knowing that you're following in the footsteps of many before you who have already achieved exactly what you're after.

Chapter 2:

Resistance Training



The 3 Pillars of Fat Loss

Although this book is really more about nutrition, I simply couldn't write a book titled *Set Your Metabolism on Fire* without mentioning exercise.

The fact is that exercise (both cardiovascular and resistance training) plays a critical role in boosting your metabolism, allowing you to lose your fat for good. Getting and keeping your metabolism high without exercising is like running in a swimming pool: it can be done, but there are faster and easier ways to do it!

Essentially, a successful fat loss plan has three components: a proper nutrition plan, resistance training (a.k.a. weight training), and cardiovascular training – or simply “cardio,” as most people call it.

3 Pillars of Fat Loss:

- **Nutrition**
- **Resistance Training**
- **Cardio**

Even though you may not be a mechanic, you probably know that your car must have fuel, wheels, and an engine in order to run. Ignoring any one of these will result in your car either not running properly, or not running at all.

Likewise, ignoring one of the three components of fat loss will result in you losing fat slowly or not at all – so don't do it. Besides, I'm going to make things ridiculously simple for you.

Now let's talk briefly about what this chapter is really about: resistance training.

The Secret: Resistance Training

Wanna know why most bodybuilders find it easy to stay lean? Pay close attention and I'll let you in on the secret.

Ready? They have lots of muscle mass.

In fact, even with my "fat boy" genetics, I find it relatively easy to stay pretty lean these days. That's because I maintain a substantial amount of lean, calorie-consuming muscle tissue.

Muscle is very metabolically active; it requires lots of calories just to stay "alive," so to speak. It's often quoted that it takes 30 to 50 calories to maintain one pound of muscle mass. Although I think these numbers are slightly inflated, the point remains: Muscle is calorically expensive.

So when it comes to long-term fat loss, muscle tissue is your best friend and secret weapon!

In order to build lean, metabolically active muscle tissue, you're gonna need to do resistance training. It doesn't matter whether you use barbells, dumbbells, machines, or your body weight; you have to stimulate your muscles in order to give your body a reason to build more – and to keep what it has, for that matter.

Resistance training not only offers the permanent metabolism-boosting effects of additional muscle mass, it also offers a more simple and immediate benefit: It burns calories while you're performing it AND elevates your metabolism for 24 hours (or more) afterward.

Set Your Metabolism on Fire is definitely not meant to be a book about resistance training. But I do want to go over some guidelines for those of you who aren't sure where to begin.

As a *minimum*, you should train at least twice per week. However, training three days a week would be even better.

Whole Body Workouts

If you're going to train only two or three times per week, then you should opt for whole body workouts to get the most out of your training efforts. These workouts should consist of compound exercises that stimulate multiple muscle groups at one time, like squats and pull-ups.

These movements will help you get maximum results for your time and effort, or as I like to say, the most bang for your buck.

Here are a couple of whole body routines to get you started:

Sample Whole Body Training Routines

Whole Body Training Program A

- 1) BB Squat – 3 x 10-15
- 2) DB Bench Press – 3 x 6-10
- 3) Overhand BB Rows – 3 x 8-12
- 4) Standing BB Shoulder Press – 3 x 8-12
- 5) BB Stiff-legged Deadlift – 3 x 8-12
- 6) Hanging Leg Raises – 3 x AMRAP

Whole Body Training Program B

- 1) Deadlifts – 3 x 6-10
- 2) BB Walking Lunges – 3 x 24-30 total steps
- 3) Standing, Alternating DB Shoulder Press – 3 x 8-12
- 4a) Push-ups – 3 x AMRAP
- 4b) Pull-ups – 3 x AMRAP
- 5) Bicycle Crunches – 3 x AMRAP

Workout Program Notes

- 3 x 10-15 means 3 sets of 10-15 repetitions
- AMRAP = as many reps as possible
- BB = barbell
- DB = dumbbell
- Exercises labeled “a” and “b” should be done as a superset with no rest in between; then rest and repeat.

Rest Intervals

As a general rule, rest as little as 45 seconds but up to three minutes between sets... more on compound exercises like deadlifts and less on isolation exercises like bicycle crunches. When in doubt, go with 90 seconds or let your breathing (respiration rate) be your guide.

Rotating Workouts

First perform workout or training program A. Then, the next time you train, do workout B. Continue alternating each training session to provide your body with a variety of stimuli. This helps avoid stagnation and keeps the progress coming!

Scheduling Your Workout

Now it's time to decide when to train. If you're going to train twice per week then each workout should be spaced out accordingly with three days between one workout and four between the other. Monday and Thursday is a perfect option.

Twice Weekly Weight Training Schedule

Monday: Workout A
Tuesday: Off
Wednesday: Off
Thursday: Workout B
Friday: Off
Saturday: Off
Sunday: Off

If you want to get maximum results yet minimize your time commitment, it would be ideal to train with weights three times per week, using whole body workouts each time.

If that's the case, spread them out evenly with at least one day full day off between workouts. Training on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday is a perfect example as is Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Below is a sample thrice-weekly training schedule that also illustrates properly alternating between the two training programs provided – A and B.

Three Days per Week Training Schedule

Weeks 1, 3, 5, (every other week)

Monday: Workout A
Tuesday: Off
Wednesday: Workout B
Thursday: Off
Friday: Workout A
Saturday: Off
Sunday: Off

Weeks 2, 4, 6, (every other week)

Monday: Workout B
Tuesday: Off
Wednesday: Workout A
Thursday: Off
Friday: Workout B
Saturday: Off
Sunday: Off

Body Part Split Training

If you're like me and prefer to go to the gym four or five times per week, then you'll need to split your body parts into groups so that you only train a portion of your body each time. This will allow each muscle group to recover adequately between workouts.

One of the best body part splits entails training chest, shoulders, and triceps one day, back and biceps another day, and the lower body (or "legs") on another day. This is called a three-way split.

Sample Split Training Routines

Chest, Shoulders, & Triceps Workout

- 1) DB Bench Press – 3 x 6-10
- 2) Incline BB Press – 3 x 8-12
- 3) Seated DB Shoulder Press – 3 x 8-12
- 4) Lateral Raises – 3 x 10-15
- 5) Dips – 3 x 6-10
- 6) V-Bar Cable Pushdowns – 3 x 8-12

Back, Biceps, & Abs Workout

- 1) Pull-ups – 3 x 6-10
- 2) Deadlifts – 3 x 6-10
- 3) One-arm DB Rows – 3 x 8-12
- 4) EZ Bar Curls – 3 x 6-10
- 5) Standing, Alternating DB Curls – 3 x 8-12 (ea side)
- 6) Hanging Leg Raises – 3 x AMRAP

Lower Body Workout

- 1) BB Squats – 3 x 8-12
- 2) DB Stiff-legged Deadlifts – 3 x 8-12
- 3) Walking Lunges – 3 x 24-30 (total steps)
- 4) Standing Calf Raises – 3 x 8-12

As for when to train each muscle group, let's revisit the issue of recovery. It is certainly not optimal to train too many days in a row without taking a day off from resistance training.

For example, if you're going to train four days per week, then you should train two days in row, then take a day off. After that, train two more days in a row, followed by two days off. We bodybuilders call this a "two on, one off, two on, two off" training schedule.

To maximize recovery (and progress) simply rotate between each workout. For example, start by training chest, shoulders, and triceps. The next time you workout train back, biceps, and abs. Obviously, your leg workout would follow.

Regardless of what you trained on a certain day last week, simply train the body parts that are next in this three-way rotation.

Here's an example of two weeks of training with this three-way split, if you were to train four days per week.

Week 1

Monday: Chest, Shoulders, and Triceps

Tuesday: Back, Biceps, and Abs

Wednesday: Off

Thursday: Legs

Friday: Chest, Shoulders, and Triceps

Saturday: Off

Sunday: Off

Week 2

Monday: Back, Biceps, and Abs

Tuesday: Legs

Wednesday: Off

Thursday: Chest, Shoulders, and Triceps

Friday: Back, Biceps, and Abs

Saturday: Off

Sunday: Off

Note: For more training programs, exercise how-to's, and other training information, remember to visit www.DrClay.com.

Wrapping Up

I hope I've made it clear that resistance training on a regular basis is definitely a habit that you want to have. In addition to helping your body look better by building lean muscle, burning calories, and boosting your metabolism, weight training also makes you feel great!

Don't get caught up worrying about which program to do, just pick one and do it! As long as you train consistently and train hard, then you're already 99% of the way there.

Recall the old adage, "Use it or lose it." This is very true when it comes to muscles. If you don't use them regularly, they will, like a plant with no water or sunlight, wither up and die.

On the other hand, by challenging your muscles to work against resistance, your activities of daily living will feel much easier. Plus... weight training will help you look hotter than a \$2 pistol!

Now that we've covered the basics of the first leg of the fitness tripod, resistance training, let's discuss the second leg: cardiovascular exercise.

Chapter 3:

Cardiovascular Exercise



I'm no psychic, but I'm willing to bet that one of your fitness goals is to lose body fat. If that's the case, then doing cardiovascular exercise on a regular basis is pretty much going to be a must.

Now, I realize that may sound intimidating to some of you, but don't worry, my friends: You'll know exactly how to burn the maximum amount of fat in the shortest time possible once I tell you how to boost your metabolism for 24 hours with a single cardio session lasting less than 20 minutes.

Do I have your attention now? Good, let's get started.

High Intensity Interval Training

Looking to burn maximum fat in the shortest amount of time possible? High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) is your best bet. HIIT has been shown to elevate ones metabolism for up to 24 hours in numerous studies.

This means that you'll not only burn calories (and fat) while performing HIIT, but you'll continue burning extra calories for the next 24 hours. That's why interval training offers so much bang for the buck (or fat loss for your time).

I'm sure you can't wait to get to the details, so let's dive in: High Intensity Interval Training is characterized by working as hard as you can for a brief period of time, followed by a cool-down period in which you're working less intensely.

The key to performing interval training properly is in paying special attention to the phrase "... *as hard as you can*..." You should work *hard* to get your heart rate up as high as possible during the "all out" or "on" portion of the interval.

Now, don't get overwhelmed by the fact that you should push yourself as hard as possible. When you're just starting to do HIIT, you may find it difficult to go all-out because your body is simply not used to it. It's a bit "out of shape," if you will.

Nonetheless, the cardio will still work, as long as you do the best you can, knowing that the harder you push yourself, the more calories you'll burn, and the leaner you'll become.

All things being equal, effort equals results when it comes to HIIT.

Because the all-out portion of your cardio session requires maximum effort, this period has to last no longer than 60 seconds. If you can maintain a certain intensity for longer than 60 seconds, then, by definition, it isn't "high intensity" or "all-out" effort.

The cool-down portion (a.k.a. the “off” portion) should be anywhere from two to three times as long as the all-out portion. This allows your heart rate to come down a bit and enables you to perform another all-out segment of the interval.

Though it’s perfectly valid to do intervals that last anywhere from 15 to 60 seconds, I generally recommend doing 30 seconds all out, then cooling down at a slower pace for 60 seconds.

As for the number of intervals in a session, twelve is generally the maximum number of intervals you should perform in a single session. More than this can lead to excessive fatigue and/or injury.

I generally prescribe 20-minute interval sessions to my experienced clients. This allows you to perform a brief warm up, then 12 intervals (30 on, 60 off), followed by a brief cool down. If you’re just starting out or are new to HIIT, then start with about half that.

Due to the high intensity nature of HIIT, it is rather taxing on the central nervous system, much like weight training. For this reason, more is *not* better. Too much will lead to overtraining.

Limit your HIIT to no more than a single session every other day, just to stay on the safe side.

Steady State Cardio

When you think cardio, you probably think of walking, jogging, or pedaling away on an elliptical trainer for 20 or 30 minutes. This is what we exercise science nerds like to call “steady state cardio.”

Steady state simply refers to the fact that you’re working at (approximately) the same intensity throughout your cardio session.

This type of cardio is great in that it’s safe and easy to do. The only drawback is that it really only burns calories while you’re actually doing it; it doesn’t boost your metabolism for very long once you’re done (and if it does, the effects only last for about an hour at best).

For this reason, steady state cardio (SSC) has to be performed for longer durations in order to be effective. So, although it certainly works, it doesn’t offer the bang for the buck that interval training does. Nonetheless, SSC should still be included in your routine.

Since SSC doesn't tax the muscles or central nervous system too much, it can be performed more often than interval training. In fact, your available time will probably be the only limiting factor in how often you can do this type of cardio. Though you're probably not going to do so, you could even perform it daily, even twice daily on occasion.

Each steady state cardio session should last at least 20 or 30 minutes and can last up to one hour.

Types of Cardio

The type of cardio you do isn't that important for the most part. Anything that elevates your heart rate, gets you out of breath, and makes you sweat will work. (For you naughty-minded individuals, no, sex doesn't count as cardio... regardless of the intensity or duration.)

Forms of cardio that use more muscles and larger muscle groups are going to be more effective. For example, one of the best machines you can use is an elliptical that has handles that you move with your arms. This utilizes the chest, back, and arms in addition to the legs.

Likewise, a rowing machine is another great piece of equipment due to the fact that it works your upper and lower body simultaneously. If your gym has one, you should try it. And don't worry, it will be available; virtually no one wants to spend much time on it because it's so dang tough!

Two of the other superior forms of cardio are walking or running stairs (or a StepMill machine) and running sprints. Both of these work the large lower body muscles (glutes, quads, hams, and calves) thoroughly and intensely.

On the other end of the spectrum are exercise bikes. Because your butt (as opposed to working muscles) is supporting your weight, you'll typically burn far fewer calories on an exercise bike than you would with other forms of cardio.

That's not to say that the bike can't be done very intensely. In fact, it's a very good piece of equipment to use for interval training. You just have to use a good amount of resistance and keep the rpm's rather high.

With all this nit-picking and fine-tuning, I feel that I should take a step back and point out that ANY cardio is better than none at all. Don't stress about what type to perform, just focus on *doing* it consistently and pushing yourself to work harder and harder over time.

If you're just starting out on an exercise program, simply walking around your neighborhood a few times per week is a perfect starting point.

Your Cardio Rx

Let me give you three different cardio plans that include, in essence, the minimum, intermediate, and the maximum that you should do. Keep in mind that along with your diet and consistent weight training, how much cardio you do will (within reason) dictate how fast you lose fat.

Cardio Starter Plan

- 1 day per week: 20-minute HIIT
- 2 days per week: 30 minutes steady state cardio

Intermediate Cardio Plan

- 2 days per week: 20-minute HIIT
- 3 days per week: 40 minutes steady state cardio

Maximum Fat Burning Cardio Plan

- 3 days per week: 20-minute HIIT + 10 minutes steady state cardio
- 4 days per week: 60 minutes steady state cardio

Cardio Conclusion

As with resistance training, don't overanalyze things. Just work hard and be consistent. Everything else will fall into place.

We've now discussed two of the three components of fitness, resistance training, and cardiovascular exercise. Now let's get into the heart of what this book is all about — metabolism-boosting, fat-burning, muscle-building *nutrition*.

Chapter 4:

The Six Simple Steps



Why Six Simple Steps?

The Simple Steps Eating plan is designed specifically as a progression of stages (or steps), with one stage building upon the next. Doing so will help you avoid plateaus and ensure steady, ongoing progress.

I've intentionally made Simple Steps Eating very easy to follow and adhere to. This way, you don't have to worry about getting overwhelmed with dozens of rules and guidelines. Simply start with Step 1, then, when you're ready, move on to Step 2, and so on.

Focusing on one change at a time, to the point where it becomes habit, is the best way to ensure steady, life-changing progress.

In fact, entire books (i.e. *The Power of Less*) have been written on the fact it's better to make small, incremental changes when it comes to achieving goals. Doing so gives you a singular focus that is far better than restructuring your entire life around a plethora of changes all at once.

With that being said... if you find that one of the steps is a habit that you already have, then go ahead and move to the next step. But if you have any doubt at all, please start with Step 1. Doing so helps keep things simple, easy to follow, and helps ensure your success.

And for those of you in a serious hurry to lose weight, consider starting with the Rapid Fat Loss Plan...but only on one condition:

If you have NOT been dieting for at least four weeks and HAVE been eating at least three good-sized meals per day, including breakfast, then feel free to start with the Rapid Fat Loss plan.

While not as easy as starting with Step 1, it is the fastest way to lose fat quickly.

If you have been dieting and/or purposely restricting your food intake (i.e. eating just two meals per day), then you should start with Step 4 for at least two weeks before implementing the Rapid Fat Loss plan. Otherwise you're likely to be starting with a slow metabolism, which is NOT the way to achieve permanent fat loss!

Without further ado, let's take a look at the Six Simple Steps.

Step 1: Eat Clean

Choose foods that come from Mother Nature, not from a box.

When someone asks me for quick and dirty diet advice, I share with them Step 1 of *Simple Steps Eating*. I give them this tip because it's simply the single most important change anyone can make to get maximum benefits almost immediately.

In fact, if you were to follow this tip and this tip *only*, you'd be well on your way to having the physique you want, and you'd be far healthier as well!

It seems that Mother Nature knew what she was doing when she "designed" our food supply. Food that comes from the earth is virtually always far better for you than synthetic, man-made food.

Here's one way to look at it: You should eat foods that you could've eaten if you were a caveman back in the day. Foods that were available then (like whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and lean meats) are *far* healthier than the food (a.k.a. crap) that comes in boxes and has 20 ingredients on the label, 18 of which you can't even pronounce.

It seems that Mother Nature knew what she was doing when she "designed" our food supply. Natural foods are high in nutrients but generally low in calories.

For instance, have old-fashioned oatmeal for breakfast as opposed to Pop Tarts. Eat apples instead of drinking apple juice. Eat whole grains instead of processed bread. Eat fresh, natural meat instead of packaged sandwich meat that's loaded with sodium and numerous other chemicals. Eat fresh vegetables instead of the canned version that has added sugar and salt. You get the idea.

Your body will benefit inside and out when you stick to Mother Nature's selection of foods. They're packed with vitamins, minerals, enzymes, various phytonutrients, and even stuff we haven't yet "discovered." Stick with natural foods and you just about can't go wrong.

What to Expect

The purpose of this step is to provide your body with nutrient-rich foods and to get you used to selecting and eating natural foods. Physique competitors call this eating "clean."

Practically everyone finds that, over time, their taste buds adapt to eating clean. By “adapt” I mean that you’ll soon start to prefer and crave natural foods as opposed to sugary, salty, and oily processed foods.

Sweet potatoes will actually taste sweet, and saltine crackers will actually taste salty. This, my friend, is the way it should be and is a very good thing indeed!

You’ll most definitely find that you’ll begin to feel better after implementing Step 1 for a few days. You’ll have more energy and a more stable energy, at that. You’ll also have less hunger and cravings than when you ate sugary junk.

When you do eventually have a cheat meal (more on cheat meals later), you’ll notice that those crappy foods make you feel... well, crappy! Take one of my clients, Steve, as an example. He had been eating clean for about six weeks when, with my approval, he decided to indulge in some pizza.

Steve soon reported back letting me know how lethargic and mentally cloudy he felt the next day, especially when he first woke up after his evening of indulgence. "Man, I can't believe I used to eat that stuff on a regular basis! I won't be doing that again anytime soon," he said.

This lethargic feeling, along with your new & improved body, will make you want to eat clean foods all the time. But don't fret; you'll still get to indulge on a regular basis if you so desire.

Or, you might decide to do like Steve did the next time he “cheated;” he did so with lots of clean, healthy food. That appeased his belly (and appetite) without making him groggy the next day.

Even though you will not be restricting the quantity of food you'll be eating in Step 1, many people find that they still lose weight. That's because the quality of the foods is so much better. Within reason, food *quality* is more important than food *quantity*. That's precisely why eating clean is the first step... because it's the most important!

Natural foods tend to be very nutrient dense. In other words they're high in nutrients while generally being low in calories. This means that by following Step 1, you'll be supplying your body with the nutrients it needs to function optimally, yet you won't be hungry because the volume of food you'll be eating is high.

For example, compare the ample amount of oatmeal you would have to eat to consume 30 grams of carbs, with the paltry amount of cereal it takes to provide the same amount of carbs. There's no comparison!

But it's not just the volume, it's also the satiety, or feeling of fullness and satisfaction that each yields. Oatmeal sticks with you and appeases your appetite for hours, while the cereal will leave you wanting more within minutes.

Likewise, many people lose extra water weight that they've been carrying around from eating processed food that's not only laden with sodium, but also slews of artificial ingredients.

Natural foods are generally low in sodium, yet high in potassium. This is great for both health and cosmetic reasons. Processed foods on the other hand, are just the opposite. They contain higher amounts of sodium, yet are typically devoid of significant amounts of potassium – a recipe for water retention and high blood pressure... neither of which you want.

Guidelines & Tips for Step 1

Do not go hungry

Part of the purpose of Step 1 is to boost your metabolism. This is especially critical if you've recently dieted, or if you tend to not eat much on a daily basis.

You know the kind of person I'm talking about; they skip breakfast, eat a paltry salad for lunch, and then eat dinner. You may even be this type of person. If so, even if you managed to resist the urge to overindulge at night (your body's way of saying "feed me!"), you still wouldn't have the physique you want.

Chronically consuming a low calorie diet can, and will, wreak havoc on your poor metabolism. This is why you can't simply starve yourself lean.

For this reason, you *should* eat plenty of nutrients and plenty of calories in Step 1. Do NOT let yourself get hungry! Eat as soon as you feel like you can comfortably eat again, just prior to getting hungry.

Not only will doing this help to boost your metabolism, but it'll also prevent you from getting ravenously hungry and craving anything and everything you can get your hands on. There's yet another reason starving yourself doesn't work!

Eat a variety of foods

Just because you like chicken breasts and apples doesn't mean that you should eat those two foods all day long, day in day out. Eating a variety of foods is very important, primarily because it helps to ensure that you consume a wide variety of nutrients.

Try to eat many different foods from each category of the clean foods list (to follow). This will not only help you to get plenty of protein, carbs, fiber, and healthy fats; but it'll also help you get ample amounts of the various vitamins, minerals, and other micronutrients. Only then will your body function optimally.

Season sparingly

While you can use approved condiments and/or seasonings to flavor your food, begin to gradually do so as little as possible. In fact, weaning yourself off salty seasonings and artificial sweeteners is the best, most pain-free route to go. This will help you to acquire a taste for healthy foods sooner rather than later.

But don't worry, if you find this really hard to do, you can take your time doing it. You'll still achieve your goals just fine either way. In fact, I weaned myself off of artificial sweeteners and condiments only a couple of months ago, almost 20 years since I started eating right!

Let's take a look at the partial list of approved condiments:

Approved Condiments

- Apple Cider Vinegar
- Fat-free Butter / Margarine
- Fat-free Mayo
- Fat-free / Low-cal Salad Dressing (\leq 15 calories per serving)
- Hot Sauce
- Lite Bar-b-q Sauce
- Mustard
- Reduced Sugar Ketchup
- Salsa
- Soy Sauce

Note: The above condiments (and the meal plans themselves for that matter) do not take into account their sodium content. For example, soy sauce, although very low in calories, has a lot of sodium. If you have sodium-dependent hypertension, or your health care professional has suggested you consume a low sodium diet, then you will need to avoid such condiments.

"Clean" Foods

Let's move on to the food itself. Below you'll find a list of clean foods that you can choose from. Though the list is fairly lengthy, it's only a partial list.

There are some more healthy choices listed in the Clean Foods List in Chapter 7, but there's still no way I could list every healthy food on the planet.

Take pomegranates for example; I didn't put them on the list, but since they're natural, feel free to eat them. I think you get the idea.

Before we jump to the list itself, let me point out that it's divided into four categories: Protein, carbohydrates, vegetables, and fat. You should begin to familiarize yourself with which foods are in which categories.

Being familiar with the nutritional content of the food you're eating in Step 1 will *really* help you make the right food choices on the fly down the road.

Approved "Clean" Foods

<p>Proteins</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chicken Breast• Egg Whites• Lean Beef• Lean Fish• Low-Fat Dairy products• Protein Powder• Turkey Breast	<p>Carbohydrates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Amaranth• Beans• Brown Rice Tortillas• Fruit• Oats• Pasta• Quinoa• Potatoes• Rice
<p>Vegetables</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asparagus• Bell Peppers• Bok Choy• Broccoli• Carrots• Cauliflower• Celery• Cucumbers• Green Beans• Lettuce• Onions• Spinach• Squash• Tomatoes	<p>Fats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avocado• Cheese• Eggs• Hummus• Nuts• Oils• Olives

Step 2: Eat Breakfast

Do not skip the most important meal of the day.

Without a doubt, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. That's exactly why it's absolutely mandatory that you eat it!

Studies have shown time and time again that people who eat breakfast are far more likely to be in shape than those who skip it.

***Trying to lose fat without eating breakfast is like running a marathon...
WITH JUST ONE LEG!***

Because it's been many hours since your last meal or snack, your body is starving for some nutrients when you wake up in the morning. Failing to feed your body at this crucial time causes your metabolism to slow down. That's exactly the *opposite* of what you want!

Additionally, skipping breakfast causes your body to want to overeat in the latter part of the day. Obviously, this isn't good either.

Let me just put it this way: Trying to lose fat without eating breakfast is like running a marathon... WITH JUST ONE LEG! In other words, it's unlikely to happen.

The most common excuse I hear is "I don't have time to eat breakfast." That's an excuse all right – a piss poor excuse! Seriously, how long does it take to put a scoop of protein powder in water and grab an apple? About 60 seconds if you take your time.

Start your day off right by boosting your metabolism with a good, healthy breakfast!

Step 3: Eat Protein

Make lean protein the cornerstone of every meal or snack.

Eating protein is not just for bodybuilders. Even the average person looking to improve their physique should eat ample amounts of this macronutrient. Protein speeds your metabolism, keeps you satisfied longer, and helps prevent diet-induced muscle loss.

Protein helps keep your metabolism revving due to what's called *thermic effect*.

It's been shown in a number of different studies that diets higher in protein are far superior to diets lower in protein in terms of fat loss. This is not only due to the thermic effect, but also to the fact that protein helps suppress appetite and the urge to overeat.

Protein boosts metabolism and suppresses appetite.

Yes, that's right; dieters who eat more protein tend to want to eat less calories overall. How's that for a natural, cheap, and effective appetite suppressant?

If that's not enough, protein also provides only modest rises in blood sugar. This helps keep your energy steady and long-lasting as opposed to the highs and lows that people with poor diets experience.

To say protein is a dieter's friend is an understatement. It'll do much more than just help you build fat incinerating muscle mass, it'll also keep your bones, hair, skin, nails, tendons, ligaments, and even blood and organ tissue strong and healthy!

Virtually every ounce of protein you put into your body will be used as muscle building blocks and as a critical part of the many processes taking place in your body. Because of this, it's highly unlikely that any protein you ingest would be available to create fat, especially because of the inefficiency of this process.

What does all this mean? It means that not only will adequate protein consumption result in an increased metabolic rate, but it's also highly unlikely to cause any fat gain. In other words, eat more protein!

Just like a construction crew can't build a brick house without enough bricks, your body can't build muscle without enough amino acids from protein. So, if building lean, firm, shapely muscle is a goal of yours, you'll certainly need to eat plenty of lean, complete protein.

Note: By “lean,” I mean that the protein has less than (<) five grams of fat per three ounce serving. By “complete,” I’m referring to the fact that it has all the essential amino acids. For the record, most animal sources of protein are complete, while most plant sources (i.e. beans) are incomplete and do not contain all the essential amino acids.

Foods Containing Protein

You have quite a few choices to fulfill your protein quota: Egg whites, chicken breast, turkey breast, lean fish like tilapia and halibut, lean red meats like eye of round, and even low-fat dairy products like cottage cheese, all fit the bill.

Make sure to avoid screwing up an otherwise great protein source by adding hidden calories to it. These hidden calories usually take the form of condiments, oil, butter, etc. – basically stuff that makes food taste “better.”

For example, a basic Caesar salad made with grilled chicken can have over 50 grams of fat and over 1,000 calories! Hello?!

Another way get ample protein is to use a protein powder supplement (protein shake) to quickly and easily meet your protein requirements. As always, be a savvy consumer and read the nutrition label to make sure it doesn’t have much (if any) sugar or fat.

Before we move on to the rest of the 6 Steps, let’s take what you’ve learned and turn it into something more tangible: meal plans. Here are a couple of meal plans that meet the criteria for Steps 1, 2, and 3.

Step 3 Sample Meal Plans

Step 3 Meal Plan A

Breakfast	Eggs Oatmeal Blueberries
Lunch	Tuna Salad Sandwich* Apple
Snack (as desired)	Almonds
Dinner	Chicken Breast Sweet Potatoes Broccoli Olive Oil

* Made with fat-free mayo and put on whole-grain bread.

Step 3 Meal Plan B

Breakfast	Extra Lean Turkey Bacon Reduced or Fat-free Milk Cheerios Strawberries
Lunch	90% Lean Ground Beef Rice & Beans
Snack (as desired)	Mozzarella Cheese Sticks Celery
Dinner	Salmon Red Potatoes Asparagus Salad with veggies

Notes

Although I've yet to mention how much or when to eat, let me give you a couple of general guidelines.

1. If you're hungry, *eat*. Whether it's a meal or a snack, eat something if and when you're hungry. Do not starve yourself. As you'll soon learn (if you haven't yet), starving yourself simply does not work.
2. Don't overeat. Contrary to how we tend to approach food, the purpose of eating is NOT to simply please your palate. Nor is the goal to fill your stomach so full that you couldn't eat another bite. The true purpose of eating is to supply your body with nutrients.

In meal plan B, you'll notice that turkey bacon is an option, even though it's not really natural per se.

It's okay to occasionally eat something that's not completely natural if it has a good macronutrient profile (the right amount and type of protein, carbs, and fat). Since turkey bacon is still low in fat and sugar, it's fine to eat from time to time.

The true purpose of eating is to supply your body with the nutrients it needs to function optimally.

However, processed turkey (and practically all processed meats for that matter) is high in sodium, so if you have high blood pressure, you may want to choose another option.

Use a low-calorie salad dressing to flavor your salad. Look for one that has 15 or less calories per serving. Wishbone makes a variety of tasty spray dressings that have about 1 calorie¹ per squirt. Ten squirts will nicely coat even the largest of salads.

Now that you know to eat natural foods, eat breakfast, and to make lean, complete protein the foundation of each meal, let's move on to the final three steps of *Simple Steps Eating*.

¹ By "calorie" I'm referring to kilocalories (kcal), the most common unit of measurement for the energy content of foods. Technically, the term should be capitalized as in "Calorie." In order to avoid confusion the term will not be capitalized throughout this document. So, for our purposes, Calorie = calorie = kcal.

Step 4: Eat Frequently

Have a meal or snack every three waking hours.

In *Simple Steps Eating*, each step builds upon the next, so continue to implement the three steps that you've learned so far, then simply add the one, easy-to-follow rule in Step 4: Eat every three waking hours.

Eating frequently speeds up your metabolism, much like stoking a fire. Frequent feedings at regular intervals keeps your metabolism revving along and essentially tell your body that it's okay to burn calories, because more food is soon on the way. And in case you need a reminder, burning more calories and having a higher metabolism will make it far easier to get and stay lean.

Every time you eat, your metabolism is sped up due to the *thermic effect of food* (TEF). Along with having ample lean muscle mass, eating small, healthy meals about every three hours is the best way to keep your metabolism revving.

Plus, eating regularly helps keep your blood sugar stable and prevent energy crashes that leave you wanting to eat everything in sight. For these reasons and more, it's a MUST to eat frequently.

Think about this: Have you ever seen anyone starve weight off? I highly doubt it. And even if someone were able to starve weight off by eating only a couple times per day, they would end up losing lots of muscle in the process. That leaves them looking "skinny fat."

***Eating Frequently + Regularly
= Higher Metabolism***

If being thin with no muscle and a high body fat percentage is the look you're going for, then you're reading the wrong book, my friend!

If being thin with no muscle is not bad enough, those (rare) individuals who are able to lose weight on a starvation diet always end up gaining it back when they stop eating like a bird. This happens because their metabolism is shot. It has slowed to a snails pace in order to adapt to the low calorie and inadequate nutrient intake.

Your body is amazingly smart, and it will try its best to protect you from yourself when you do something dumb, like eating only twice per day. That's why you simply cannot starve weight off; your body is too smart for that!

I completely understand that this fact probably goes against what you've been (erroneously) told about losing fat. You've been told that you have to eat less to lose more, but that's just not the case!

But hey, it's not your fault that you were given wrong information. Besides, you now know the truth! I hope you'll share this *accurate* information with others so that we can kill the "eat less to lose more" myth that has persisted for way too long.

Let's do a real world comparison of how the fattest people get fat, and how the leanest people get lean.

How NOT to Get Fat like a Sumo Wrestler

The fattest group of people I know of is sumo wrestlers. They actually want to be fat in order to be well-respected among their peers. After all, how popular do you think a thin sumo wrestler would be? Probably not very.

Over years and years of trial and error, they've discovered a method of eating that enables them to pack on as much fat as possible.

So what is the "sumo wrestler way of eating"? They eat *one large meal per day*.

Yep, you read that right. They eat once per day. As surprised as I'm sure more of you will be, physiologically this actually makes perfect sense, and here's why.

By, in essence, fasting for 23 hours, they cause their body to sense starvation. This results in their metabolisms slowing down and tells the body to store food as opposed to burning it. As you know, excess food is stored as body fat.

To top that off, when sumo wrestlers do eat, they eat way too much! They consume far more calories than they could ever burn in the following few hours. In fact, they eat more than a days' worth of calories in their one meal of the day.

This combination of eating too much and not eating often enough works perfectly to pack on fat, and *quickly!*

Now let's look at the other end of the spectrum: lean people.

How to Get Lean like a Physique Competitor

The leanest group of people I can think of is physique competitors – bodybuilders, fitness, and figure competitors. And as your good luck would have it, I happen to specialize in working with this group of people. So let's look at how they get (and stay) so lean.

Essentially, the diet of a physique competitor is just the opposite of that of a sumo wrestler. It consists of small but frequent meals.

Bodybuilders, fitness, and figure athletes eat about six times per day. Sumo wrestlers, on the other hand, eat one time per day. Would you rather look like a figure competitor or a sumo wrestler?

To lose fat, physique competitors eat slightly less calories than they will burn over the course of the next three hours or so until their next meal. It is important not to overlook the word "slightly" in the previous sentence.

Let me illustrate this point by giving you some sample numbers.

Let's say you will burn 300 calories in the next three hours. Therefore, you should eat roughly 250 calories in that meal.

This 50 calorie deficit is not so drastic that it will cause your body to sense starvation (thus slowing your metabolism), but it's enough to cause your body to burn some body fat to fulfill the energy deficit.

If losing fat was the simple math that the "calories in vs. calories out" pundits would have you believe, then you would burn more fat if you only ate 150 calories every 3 hours. But it just doesn't work that way, and this is part of the reason why so many well-intentioned people are overweight.

The human body is way too savvy to starve itself, and it'll never go down without a serious fight. Sticking with the above example, if you were to eat just 150 calories when you're going to burn 300 calories until your next meal, your body would essentially say "screw this; let's just slow things down so we only burn 150 calories every 3 hours."

So, ironically, your discipline to eat less could backfire and result in you not losing any weight at all!

If your body works like most of ours, it'll be *much* easier for it to slow your metabolism down rather than burn significant amounts of fat. That's why most people have to "outsmart" their body to get lean.

But don't worry, even if you genetically have a less than stellar metabolism (like I do), you can still "Set Your Metabolism on Fire" by implementing the metabolism boosting tips and tricks in this book. I know, because I have done so myself and helped hundreds of other people do the same.

I want to point out that I'm referring to calories in and calories out to simplify the point. As I've mentioned, it's not actually quite that simple (from a physiological standpoint). The *type* of calories and *when* you consume them makes a HUGE difference!

In terms of application, however, eating the right food at the right time is actually far simpler than counting calories... as you'll see shortly.

But now that we've touched upon the calories in vs. calories out principle, I think it deserves its own few paragraphs, so let's discuss it a bit further below.

The "Calories in Versus Calories Out" Myth

Most people look at diets through calorie-colored glasses. I know that sounds stupid, but so is the entire calorie paradigm. The old "calories in versus calories out" explanation of weight management is oversimplified to the point of being wrong.

Sure, it's fine if it can help the average person put into perspective how they can manage their weight. However, if you want to have a really good body, that calorie counting crap is *not* going to work. Besides, counting calories is too tedious anyway!

You have to implement a strategy that's far more precise. Yet, ironically, it's not any more difficult to implement... assuming you're smart enough to dress yourself in the morning and have a little discipline.

Instead of trying to figure out how many calories you need (which would be a largely inaccurate estimation anyway) and essentially calculating backwards to see how many grams of protein, carbs, and fat you should consume – get straight to the point!

How many grams of protein, carbs, and fat do you need in each meal? That's the more precise question!

I should point out that the number of calories a food contains is determined by measuring the amount of heat it gives off when it's burned. Of course this is done in a laboratory under the close supervision of a white-lab-coat-wearing nerd... I mean Ph. D.

This is all fine and dandy, but our body isn't a Bunsen burner – it uses different types of food in different ways. For example, recall that most of the protein you eat is used to build things...lots of things! So the majority of it is not going to be available for energy, unlike the soda you drank the other day.

If you don't get anything else out of this book, understand this: **All calories are not created equal!**

So instead of basing a diet on how much heat is given off when you light a food on fire, base it on how much of that energy is actually available to fuel your body so that you can think, train, work, copulate, or whatever else it is you like to do.

300 calories from protein is processed very differently from the way 300 calories of carbs would be. And calories eaten at breakfast will affect you differently than calories eaten just prior to bed.

What you eat and when you eat it is, in my experience, every bit as important as how many calories you take in.

That's why our focus is going to be on eating the right foods, in the right amounts, and at the right time as opposed to counting calories.

Eat by the Clock

I know that eating so often can initially seem difficult, maybe even impossible. However, eating every three hours is simple if you plan ahead. Let me show you how you can successfully implement Step 4 by timing your meals properly.

Let's say you go to bed at 10:30 p.m. and wake up at 6:00 a.m. You should eat breakfast at about 6:30 a.m., or as soon after waking up as possible. Then, at about 9:30 a.m., you should have a mid-morning snack (or small meal). At 12:30 p.m. should be lunch, followed by a mid-afternoon snack (or small meal) at 3:30 p.m.

Dinner time should come at about 6:30 p.m. Then, at 9:30 p.m., it's time for a healthy (of course) snack.

Here's a sample eating schedule for you visual learners, like myself.

Sample Eating Schedule

6:30 a.m.: Breakfast
9:30 a.m.: Mid-morning snack
12:30 p.m.: Lunch
3:30 p.m.: Mid-afternoon snack
6:30 p.m.: Dinner
9:30 p.m.: Evening snack

Keep in mind that you are an active human being, not a snail. Avoid the metabolic slowdown that comes with starvation-type diets and infrequent eating. Feed your body small, but frequent meals and keep your metabolism revving along.

Notice that in this sample eating schedule and in the following meal plans I list six meals and snacks. While this is ideal, some people, especially those starting out, may have a hard time getting in six meals, even though they are smaller. If this is the case with you, four or five feedings will work; but make it your goal to eventually increase that number to six.

Now that you're ready to eat more frequently, here are a couple of sample meal plans that work with Steps 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Step 4 Sample Meal Plans

Step 4 Meal Plan A

Breakfast Omelet with Lean Meat & Veggies
Whole Grain Toast
Sliced Tomatoes

Snack Low-fat Cottage Cheese
Sliced Peaches

Lunch Chicken Breast
Rice
Broccoli
Avocado slices

Snack Almonds

Dinner Salmon
Quinoa
Asparagus

Snack Low-fat (or fat-free) Milk
Fiber One Cereal
Strawberries

Step 4 Meal Plan B

Breakfast	Extra Lean Turkey Bacon Oatmeal Blueberries
Snack	Low-fat Yogurt
Lunch	Lean Ground Beef 2 slices Whole Grain Bread Orange
Snack	Protein Shake
Dinner	Turkey Meatloaf Mashed Cauliflower Salad with Veggies & Black Olives
Snack	Hard Boiled Eggs

Notes

The above meal plan uses a couple of recipes from Chapter 8: Recipes. That's where you can find the Turkey Meatloaf and the Mashed Cauliflower recipes among others.

You probably noticed that a protein shake is a snack option in this meal plan. While there are way too many good protein supplements (shakes) to list them all, I've listed a few of my favorites over at DrClay.com.

Notice that I didn't mention how much to eat. That's because you do NOT want your food to be restricted in this phase. Not eating enough would defeat the purpose of this phase, which is to speed up your metabolism. You can not start a diet with a metabolism that's slower than molasses in January and expect it to work!

As I will elaborate on later, you should avoid eating until you feel stuffed. Besides, if you eat that much in one meal, how in the world are you going to eat every three hours?

So as far as how much to eat, eat enough so that you're not ravenously hungry in three hours, but not so much that you are too full to eat your next meal or snack.

If you'll simply adhere to the one rule of eating every three hours (while not neglecting steps 1, 2 and 3), the rest will take care of itself. Through just a little trial and error, you'll be able to fine-tune your food intake as you go along.

Speaking of how much to eat, let's move to Step 5.

Step 5: Eat Proper Portions

Fine-tune the amount you eat to finely tune your body.

In this phase, you'll start to eat specific portion sizes, giving your body the precise amount of protein, carbohydrates, and fat that it needs each day. This will not only keep your metabolism high, but also ensure that you're burning some serious body fat.

Assuming you want to get the most out of your diet, it's very important that you begin to take a moment to weigh your food. With a digital scale this takes no time at all, but will ensure that you're eating just the right amount.

Yeah, yeah, yeah... I know what you're thinking, something along the lines of "...if you think I'm going to weigh my food every time I eat, you must be crazy Dr Clay! I'm not that hardcore!" I know because I've been hearing the same thing from clients for years.

However, each and every one of them, once I showed them that it actually takes NO extra time, has come back and said, "Yeah, you're right. It is really easy to weigh your food."

To be perfectly honest, eye-balling your lean protein and veggies will (within reason) get the job done. Eating a bit too much of either (or both) of these will not lead to an appreciable amount of fat gain.

However, it's far more important to weigh your carbohydrate and fat portions to make sure that these are just the right size.

Because I'd rather you have an understanding behind this reasoning than just follow it blindly, now would be a good time for us to discuss both of these macronutrients in depth, just as we've already done with protein... starting with carbs.

Carbohydrates: The Fuel

The first thing you should know about carbohydrates, is that contrary to popular belief, they're not the enemy! They can serve as an exceptionally powerful tool in your fat-blasting arsenal, assuming you know how to use them.

First off, eliminating carbohydrates completely has multiple repercussions. Plummeting energy levels will be your body's first way of sending you its "I'm low on fuel" signal. Then there are the vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and other

nutrients you'd be depriving yourself of by discontinuing consumption of naturally occurring carb sources.

Needless to say, if you're to count on your body to go along with your plan of sculpting it into a masterpiece, the least you can do is give it the fuel it needs to power through those "sculpting" sessions, a.k.a. your workouts. This fuel is carbs.

Having said all that about the importance of carbohydrates, I must also say this: You want every single gram of carbs that enters your system to be burned for energy or stored as glycogen. What you do NOT want is for any of this fuel to go into its other possible storage depot: Your fat cells.

That's right; carbohydrates may easily be converted into fat if consumed at the wrong times or in excess amounts. Although we'll talk more about this in step 6, your carb intake should ideally not be spread evenly throughout the day. Since this macronutrient is fuel, you only need it when your body has the ability to utilize this fuel so that it doesn't get stored for later use (as fat).

Another thing to keep in mind is that your optimal carb intake will also be dictated by factors such as your current body composition, insulin sensitivity, metabolic rate, training and cardio volumes, daily activities, dieting history, and current goals.

Fat: Friend or Foe?

While measuring your carbs is pretty important, precisely measuring your dietary fat is of *utmost* importance because this nutrient can actually be converted into body fat far more efficiently than carbohydrates!

When I say "measure," I don't mean "eyeball;" I've been measuring my food portions for 20 years now, yet I can't begin to accurately eyeball a teaspoon of oil as I'm drizzling it on my salad.

When you think about the fact that one teaspoon of oil has about five grams of fat and 40 calories, while one tablespoon of oil has *fifteen* grams of fat and 120 calories, you can see that there's a *big* difference. Because of the caloric density of fat, make sure that you *always* measure it precisely.

It's exactly because of how calorie dense this macronutrient is, that it's gotten a bad rap among some dieters. After all, what would you rather have: A tablespoon of oil drizzled over your salad, or a really big apple?

While most people would go with the second option, doing so is far from a smart move. Sure, fruits are great for you, we went over the benefits of carbs above;

but fats are critical for both your health and body improvement goals for other reasons.

The first thing I'd should mention is that fats actually provide energy, and if you were to eliminate them altogether, you'd start feeling lethargic within just a few days. In addition to being an energy source, fatty acids also support every important process transpiring in your system, from building new cells, to regulating hormone production.

For example: every cell in your body is surrounded by a phospholipid bilayer. That's right, fat (hence the term "...*lipid* bilayer") is integrated into each and every cell membrane. Literally, each and every cell in your body needs the right type of fat to function optimally. Heck, even the Rodney Dangerfield of dietary fat, cholesterol, is used to produce something good... testosterone - even though (like Rodney) it gets no respect.

So, while you definitely need to consume enough fat daily, you want to make sure that any fat you do eat is burned for energy rather than stored as body fat. The only way to accomplish this is by taking a close look at your intake of other macronutrients along with your activity levels, body composition, goals, and other factors.

Then, once you do know how many grams of fat you need to take in at a certain meal, you'll *measure* it to make sure you get just the right amount.

Before we move on to Step 6, let me give you a couple of gender-specific meal plans that include specific portion sizes, thus covering Steps 1 – 5.

Step 5 Sample Meal Plans

Step 5 Meal Plan A for Females

Breakfast	½ cup Egg Whites 1 Whole Omega 3 Egg ½ cup (40g) Oats
Snack	6 oz Fat-Free Cottage Cheese 2 oz Blueberries
Lunch	3-4 oz Chicken Breast 4 oz Sweet Potatoes ≥ 3 oz Veggies
Snack	6 oz Non-fat Yogurt 1 scoop Protein Powder 2 oz Blueberries
Dinner	3-4 oz Lean Ground Turkey ≥ 4 oz Veggies 2 tsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Snack	½ cup Fiber One Cereal Lite Soy Milk on cereal ½ scoop (about 15g) Protein Powder 4-5 Strawberries

Step 5 Meal Plan B for Females

Breakfast	4 slices Extra Lean Turkey Bacon 1 scoop Protein Powder 8 oz Lite Soy Milk 1 slice Whole Grain Bread 4 oz Strawberries
Snack	6 oz Low-fat Yogurt
Lunch	3-4 oz Lean Ground Beef 2 slices Whole Grain Bread 1 Orange Veggies as desired
Snack	1 Protein Shake
Dinner	3-4 oz Lean Turkey Mashed Cauliflower Salad with Veggies and Black Olives
Snack	2 Hard Boiled Omega 3 Eggs

Step 5 Meal Plan A for Males

Breakfast	1 cup Egg Whites 1 Whole Omega 3 Egg ¾ cup (60g) Oats
Snack	9 oz Fat-Free Cottage Cheese 3 oz Blueberries
Lunch	5-6 oz Chicken Breast 6 oz Sweet Potatoes ≥ 5 oz Veggies
Snack	9 oz Non-fat Yogurt 1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 2 oz Blueberries
Dinner	5-6 oz Lean Ground Turkey ≥ 6 oz Veggies 1 tbsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Snack	¾ cup Fiber One Cereal Skim Milk on Cereal 1 scoop (about 25g) Protein Powder 6-8 Strawberries

Step 5 Meal Plan B for Males

Breakfast	6 slices Extra Lean Turkey Bacon 1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 8 oz Reduced Fat Milk 2 slices Whole Grain Bread 6 oz Strawberries
Snack	8 oz Low-fat Yogurt
Lunch	5-6 oz Lean Ground Beef 2 slices Whole Grain Bread 1 Orange Veggies as desired
Snack	1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 5 oz Strawberries 2 tbsp Ground Flax Seeds
Dinner	5-6 oz Lean Turkey Mashed Cauliflower “Potatoes” Salad with Veggies and Black Olives
Snack	3 Hard Boiled Omega 3 Eggs

Notes

The portions listed in the above meal plans are portions that will work great for the vast majority. However, at some point you will probably need to tweak the portions to suit your individual needs precisely.

However, unless you're really advanced or much larger or smaller than average, don't worry about adjusting anything until you've done the above plans for a couple weeks. Then consider tweaking based on your rate of progress, energy levels, and so on.

Now let's talk about some of the foods on the meal plans.

The best whole grain bread I know of is Ezekiel bread. It's made exclusively with sprouted whole grains, which retains most of the nutrients and gives the bread a very low glycemic index, meaning it's digested and absorbed slowly instead of quickly, like sugars.

If you're unable to find Ezekiel or another sprouted whole grain bread product, then opt for another whole grain or whole wheat bread product.

When just starting to consume Fiber One cereal, take a couple of days to work up to eating the amount listed. Otherwise, you may end up spending more time on the toilet than you'd like due to the high fiber content. But by gradually adding more fiber to your diet, your body will have time to adjust.

The typical scoop provided with protein powder is 70cc in size (which is generally listed on the bottom of the scoop). One scoop of protein should weigh about 25g on your digital food scale. If your scoop is smaller and/or doesn't provide that much protein, adjust your serving size of protein powder accordingly.

In case you're not familiar with the mathematical notation " \geq " it simply means "greater than or equal to." Therefore, " \geq 3 oz Veggies" means that you should eat three or more ounces of vegetables. In other words, eat *at least* three ounces of veggies.

Wrapping up Step 5

If you were to stop after step 5 of *Simple Steps Eating*, you'd do just fine. On the other hand, some people aren't satisfied with "just fine."

Certain people want more and are willing to do the work it takes to get more. If that sounds like you, then proceed to step number 6.

Step 6: Eat the Macro-Cycle Way

An Advanced Technique for an Advanced Physique

In this final step of *Simple Steps Eating*, you'll use one of the advanced, extremely effective techniques that I use with my bodybuilding and figure competitors and other advanced clients: *Macro-Cycling*.

How it Came to Be

Years and years ago I began to experiment with various ways of eating in an effort to solve some of the inherent problems with the various types of popular nutrition plans.

For example, low-carb diets undoubtedly promote quick weight loss. But I quickly found that low-carbing and vigorous exercise do not mix.

Since carbs provide the fuel needed for intense exercise like resistance training and high intensity cardio, few carbs meant little energy for these activities. And if your diet keeps you from exercising, then what's the point?

Chronically low carbs and vigorous exercise do NOT mix.

On the other hand, low-fat plans have their flaws as well. For starters, I found that they tend to cause significant fluctuations in blood sugar. Right after you eat you feel fine, but within a couple of hours, you often feel like you've bonked. Then come the sugar cravings.

But the primary reason I decided low-fat diets were less than optimal was because of the emerging research being done on essential fatty acids and other healthy fats. It became clear to me that not consuming enough healthy fat could have serious health consequences.

With influence from the late Dan Duchaine (author of *Body Opus*) and Dr. Barry Sears (author of *The Zone*), along with a healthy dose of my own thinking outside the box, I decided to experiment with a diet more moderate in carbs and fat. Of course I still kept a steady dose of muscle-building, metabolism-boosting protein in my diet.

The results were amazing!

I felt a lot better, had more steady energy and less cravings, yet I still lost fat. Heck I even looked better as my skin and hair both became softer as a result of

correcting the essential fatty acid deficiency that I'd developed from not eating much fat. My clients noticed all the same things, supporting my personal findings.

Then, with some more thinking outside the box and a timely article by (then up and coming) nutritionist John Berardi, I decided to experiment with not eating significant amounts of carbs and fat in the same meal. Each meal would consist of protein along with either carbs or fat, plus fibrous vegetables.

This seemingly odd way of eating worked so well that I was literally amazed at how effective it was, yet easy to implement!

I've been using it ever since.

Soon after the success of that experiment I started to combine my new protein-carb or protein-fat approach with something I'd successfully utilized in the past: *carb cycling*.

Carb cycling is great in that you alternate days of no or low carbs with days of consuming ample carbs. I found this to maximize fat burning while eliminating the ill effects of the typical low-carb diet. In essence, it's the best of both worlds.

The only major drawback to traditional carb cycling, the way most experts recommend it, is that it's very low in fat, even on the low-carb days. I corrected this by consuming more healthy fats on the low-carb days. Not only was this far healthier, but it also made me feel *much* better and even produced better results!

Now all was good, and the birth of my Macro-Cycling Nutrition had taken place.

Although I initially set out to find a diet that would maximize fat loss while preserving muscle mass, I found that Macro-Cycling works equally well to build muscle while minimizing fat gain!

The other great thing about this cyclical way of eating is that it promotes maximum fat burning, yet keeps your metabolism from crashing. This metabolic crash is one of the most common problems with most, if not all, other diets.

For example, let's say you have to consume about 2,000 calories per day to steadily lose weight. At some point (probably sooner rather than later) your body will adapt and your fat loss will slow to a crawl or stop altogether.

A better approach would be to consume 1,800 calories one day and 2,200 calories the next. Even though this averages out to the same 2,000 calories per day, it (oddly) ends up working far better.

This is something I learned from Dr. Scott Connelly, the brains behind the original meal replacement product – Met-Rx. I found it to work so well that I've been staggering or cycling daily calories ever since. But instead of flipping a coin or rolling dice to determine your caloric intake for the day as he (literally) recommended, I've fine-tuned the concept to be far more purposeful and specific as opposed to random.

Sure, I wish I had figured all this out two decades ago when I first started "dieting." But I tend to think things happen how they're supposed to happen. Plus, with over ten years of real world testing showing the effectiveness of Macro-Cycling, how could I be anything less than ecstatic?

Now that you've got the background along with the premise of this proven way to shed fat, let's take a look at the meal planning.

Nutrient Timing

You've already learned all about the roles of all three macronutrients separately, as well as the need to cycle your daily caloric intake, so let's talk about proper nutrient timing and combination – two critical components of Macro-Cycling Nutrition.

We've gone over the importance of the presence of protein in each of your meals, so let's jump straight into the timing of carbs and fats.

Since both carbs and fat provide energy, the consumption of these two nutrients should be inversely proportional as a means to avoid providing your body with too much fuel at once, which would result in some of this energy to be stored as fat.

You'll notice in the meal plans below that carbohydrate consumption is kept lower in the latter part of the day. That's because insulin sensitivity is better in the first part of the day as opposed to the second. This maximizes fat loss without causing you to get tired and hungry.

Carbs consumed in the first part of the day are better assimilated and are less likely to be stored as body fat. The only exception to this rule would occur if you do your resistance training in the latter part of the day or evening. In that case, you'd still consume carbs after your workout, regardless of when that is.

So if you train in the evening, you should have a carb-rich meal soon (within about 60 minutes) after your workout. This will provide you with some carbohydrates after your workout, which will help to replenish energy stores depleted during training.

Macro-Cycling 101

To start using Macro-Cycling Nutrition, begin by having a *Non-Training Day Meal Plan* for days when you don't do any training. On these days, there won't be as much a need for the immediate energy that carbs provide, so fat will be used as a concentrated energy source that provides your body with the fuel it needs for optimal well being without unnecessarily spiking your insulin levels.

Note: *For the record, I, along with most trainers, use the term "training" to refer to resistance training, whether done with your bodyweight, free weights, or with machines. Cardiovascular exercise is simply referred to as "cardio."*

On days when you do train with weights, you'll follow a *Training Day Meal Plan*. This meal plan will provide you with just enough properly timed carbs to help you get through and recuperate from your training session.

Macro-Cycling will start to really ramp up your fat burning, but without slowing down your metabolism.

Before we discuss an even more advanced version of Macro-Cycling, let's go over some sample meal plans that encompass everything you've learned so far in Steps 1 through 6.

Step 6 Sample Meal Plans for Women

Step 6 Female Non-Training Day Meal Plan

Breakfast	4 slices Extra Lean Turkey Bacon 8 oz Fat-free Calorie Countdown Milk 1 whole Omega 3 Egg 1 slice Ezekiel Bread (toast)
Snack	6 oz Fat-free Cottage Cheese 2 oz Strawberries ½ oz (14g) Nuts
Lunch	3-4 oz 96% Lean Ground Beef ≥ 5 oz Veggies 2 tsp Olive Oil
Snack	1 scoop Protein Powder 20g Nuts (almonds or walnuts)
Dinner	4-5 oz Orange Roughy ½ Avocado ≥ 5 oz Veggies
Snack	Omelet made with: ¾ cup Egg Whites 1 whole Omega 3 Egg 1 oz Reduced-fat Shredded Cheese Veggies as desired

Step 6 Female Training Day Meal Plan

Breakfast	¾ cup Egg Whites 1 Whole Omega 3 Egg Veggies as desired 40g Oats
Snack	1 scoop Protein Powder 1 Pear
Lunch	3-4 oz Chicken Breast 4 oz Sweet Potatoes ≥ 3 oz Veggies
Snack	1 scoop Protein Powder 6 oz Low-Fat Yogurt 2 oz Strawberries
Dinner	3-4 oz Top Sirloin Salad with Veggies 2 tsp Olive Oil
Snack	6 oz Low-fat Cottage Cheese 2 oz Blueberries 1 tsp Flax Oil

Step 6 Sample Meal Plans for Men

Step 6 Male Non-Training Day Meal Plan

Breakfast 6 slices Extra Lean Turkey Bacon
8 oz Fat-free Calorie Countdown Milk
2 whole Omega 3 Eggs
1 slice Ezekiel Bread (toast)

Snack 8 oz Fat-free Cottage Cheese
4 oz Strawberries
1 oz (28g) Nuts

Lunch 1 ½ scoops Protein Powder
1 tbsp Flax Oil

Snack 6oz Chicken Breast
3 oz Beans (black or red)
≥ 5 oz Veggies
2 tsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Dinner 6 oz Lean Ground Turkey
≥ 5 oz Veggies
½ Avocado

Snack ¾ cup Fiber One Cereal
8 oz Fat-free Calorie Countdown milk
1 scoop Protein Powder
5 oz Strawberries

Step 6 Male Training Day Meal Plan

Breakfast	1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 3 slices Ezekiel Bread (toast)
Snack	8 oz Fat-free Cottage Cheese 3 oz Blueberries 1 oz (28g) Nuts
Lunch	6 oz Chicken Breast 3 oz Rice 2 oz Beans (black or red)
Snack	1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 1 Apple
Dinner	6 oz Lean Ground Turkey 4 oz Sweet Potatoes ≥ 3 oz Veggies
Snack	Omelet made with: 1 cup Egg Whites 2 whole Omega 3 Eggs 1 slice Low-Fat Cheese Veggies as desired

Advanced Macro-Cycling

Since you've made it this far, I know that you're serious about improving your physique and about learning the most advanced techniques and strategies available in physique enhancement nutrition today.

So now it's time to take off the gloves and pull no punches! We're going all out, baby!

I'm going to assume that you're a tad more nutritionally advanced than the average person. Therefore I'm going to use some slightly more advanced terms and concepts. But don't worry; I'll still keep things as simple as possible.

Low Days

When I say "low days" I'm not talking about your mood or the NASDAQ, I'm talking about low-carb / low-calorie days.

One of the fundamental facts that Macro-Cycling is built upon is that energy demands are lower on days you don't train with weights. In particular, less carbs are needed on non-training days.

Let's back up just a tad. Practically any fat-loss "expert" worth their weight in salt agrees that THE key to losing fat is to manage insulin levels. Insulin blunts fat-burning. That's why low-carb diets work – they keep insulin levels low which allows the body to burn more fat.

As we've discussed, low-carb diets are great for fat burning, but they flat out suck as a permanent solution, especially if you want to build muscle. That's because insulin is very anabolic. It helps shuttle nutrients into muscle cells, thus working its' anabolic magic.

But, you definitely don't want high insulin levels day in and day out, otherwise you'll end up looking more like the Michelin man than a Greek god or goddess.

That's where low days come in.

For anyone looking to gain muscle, low days are great in that they minimize or eliminate the accumulation of body fat. No longer do you need to pack on excess body fat just to gain some muscle.

Likewise, if you're looking to get leaner, then low days are your new best friend. By significantly lowering carbs and calories on certain days (i.e. non-training days), you'll maximize fat burning without compromising recuperation.

Let's discuss your macronutrient intake on low days. Since your carb intake is going to be lower on these days, your fat intake will therefore be higher. This keeps the energy providing macronutrients (carbs and fat) from getting too low while still promoting fat loss.

As a general rule of thumb, replace some, but not all, of the calories that you took away in the form of carbs with quality sources of dietary fat.

For example, if your normal carb intake is 200 grams per day, but your low day intake is 50 grams, then you've taken away 600 calories in the form of carbs (150g carbs x 4 calories per gram). Aim to replace about 450 of those calories in the form of fat. Since fat has 9 calories per gram, it'd take 50 grams of fat ($9 \times 50 = 450$) to replace these 450 calories.

Here's another tip/trick for you - if your carbs and calories are getting really low then it's a good idea to increase protein intake on low carb days. This will help protect your hard earned muscle from potentially being burned to meet energy requirements.

So, if your standard protein intake is 40g per meal, consider bumping that up to 45 or 50g protein per meal, or about 270-300g per day.

Your exact carb intake is going to depend upon your current physique goals and how you've responded to your most recent nutrition plan. You could say that (all things being equal) carb intake and fat loss are inversely proportional. So if you want to lose more fat, eat less carbs.

Although it may very well be warranted for a pre-contest bodybuilder to consume practically no carbs on a low day, this is generally unnecessary. Instead, men should opt for about 70 grams of starchy carbs on low days... about 35g each at meals one and two, when your body needs them most and can use them best.

Women should consume roughly 20g of carbs in each of your first two meals.

For the record, I don't count the carbs in fibrous vegetables, because, as you'll recall, I like to keep things simple. And worrying about 5 grams of available (non-fiber) carbs in broccoli is not simple if you ask me.

Besides, it's not like you're ever going to take vegetables out of your diet anyway. So that minute carb intake is a variable that will stay the same, regardless.

The last macro we need to fine tune is your intake of fat. Again, the proper amount would be highly individualized. But a good starting point would be for women to consume 10g of added fat in low-carb meals three, four, and five and about five grams in your final meal of the day.

You men should obviously bump that up a bit... about 15 grams of fat in meals 3 – 5 and about half that in your last meal.

It may seem that this amount of fat is pretty low for a daily total, especially when carbs are low. However, the total is not as low as it seems, because I'm not counting the trivial amounts of naturally occurring fat like the fat found in lean meats like chicken or in starches like oats. That's why I used the term "added fat."

Likewise, I tend to not count fatty acid supplements like fish oil capsules, assuming the intake of them is reasonable, as it should be. Therefore, the actual amount of fat you'll consume is a bit higher than it may initially appear.

Let's look at some sample numbers to further illustrate the details of a typical low day eating plan.

Sample Low Day for Men

Meal 1 45g Protein
 35g Starchy Carbs
 ≤ 5g Added Fat

Meal 2 45g Protein
 35g Starchy Carbs
 ≤ 5g Added Fat

Meal 3 45g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 15g Added Fat

Meal 4 45g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 15g Added Fat

Meal 5 45g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 15g Added Fat

Meal 6 45g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 7g Added Fat

Sample Low Day for Women

Meal 1 25g Protein
 20g Starchy Carbs
 ≤ 5g Added Fat

Meal 2 25g Protein
 20g Starchy Carbs
 ≤ 5g Added Fat

Meal 3 25g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 10g Added Fat

Meal 4 25g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 10g Added Fat

Meal 5 25g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 10g Added Fat

Meal 6 25g Protein
 0g Starchy Carbs
 5g Added Fat

Medium Days

Your protein, carb, and fat intake on Medium days is about what you would consume if you are doing a standard, noncyclical diet as in Step 5. So even though I love talking about the intricacies and nuances of nutrition, we really don't have a lot to go over in regards to medium days.

The main thing to keep in mind is that, due to enhanced insulin sensitivity at these times, your first meal of the day and your post-workout meals should be slightly higher in carbs than your other meals.

Also, keep in mind that in addition to adjusting the amount of carbs in each meal, you can tweak this plan by changing the number of carb-containing meals. For example, although the meal plan guidelines below call for four meals with carbs, you could increase that to five as needed.

Medium days could even have just three or as many as six carb meals, but that would be bordering on what's typically reserved for low and high days respectively.

Below are some medium day guidelines for both men and women.

Sample Medium Day for Men

Meal 1	40g Protein 50g Starchy Carbs <5g Added Fat
Meal 2	40g Protein 40g Starchy Carbs 5g Added Fat
Meal 3	40g Protein 0g Starchy Carbs 15g Added Fat
Meal 4 (Pre-workout)	40g Protein 40g Starchy Carbs 5g Added Fat
Meal 5 (Post-workout)	40g Protein 50g Carbs 0g Added Fat
Meal 6	40g Protein 0g Starchy Carbs 7g Added Fat

Sample Medium Day for Women

Meal 1	25g Protein 30g Starchy Carbs ≤ 5g Added Fat
Meal 2	40g Protein 25g Starchy Carbs ≤ 5g Added Fat
Meal 3	40g Protein 0g Starchy Carbs 10g Added Fat
Meal 4 (Pre-workout)	40g Protein 25g Starchy Carbs 5g Added Fat
Meal 5 (Post-workout)	25g Protein 30g Carbs 0g Added Fat
Meal 6	25g Protein 0g Starchy Carbs 5g Added Fat

High Days

In order to top off glycogen stores and give your metabolism a nice boost, you should occasionally consume higher amounts of carbs and overall calories. This is one of the single best ways to keep your metabolism high and keep your body (and mind) from suffering the various ravages of dieting.

The increased carb intake also serves as a potent anabolic and anti-catabolic stimulus by increasing insulin secretion. This helps deposit nutrients (glucose for example) in the muscle tissue, which not only helps you build muscle, but also improves how you look by “filling out” your muscles (as we bodybuilders call it).

Although high days do wonders for building muscle in the off-season, they’re just as beneficial when you’re in more of a “cutting” or “leaning out” phase. They’re great for preventing that “stringy” look that most low-carb dieters have.

A properly-timed high day will top off muscle glycogen stores that have become low as a result of dieting. In and of itself this is great for your performance in the gym, but it also serves to boost T-3 (active thyroid) output and keep your metabolism revving.

Resist the “over-achiever urge” to skip high days in hopes of making progress more quickly. It doesn’t work like that, I assure you... I’ve tried! Rest assured that all the nutrients in a proper high day will be used or stored with none left to build fat.

As with the other days, tweak your high days as needed. If you’re looking to speed up muscle gains, then you may consider increasing the amount of carbs in each meal or the frequency with which you have a high day.

As a reminder, make sure to keep your fat intake low on high days. High carbs and high fat don’t make for a lean body. So provide your body with the fat it needs to function optimally but no more. Some fish oil capsules and a teaspoon of olive oil here and a few almonds there will suffice.

Likewise, you could lower your protein intake a bit on high carb days, since carbs are protein sparring.

Without further ado, here are some meal-by-meal guidelines for both you guys and gals.

Sample High Day for Men

Meal 1 40g Protein
 75g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 2 40g Protein
 50g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 3 40g Protein
 50g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 4 40g Protein
 50g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 5 (Post-workout) 40g Protein
 75g Carbs
 0g Added Fat

Meal 6 40g Protein
 35g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Sample High Day for Women

Meal 1 25g Protein
 40g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 2 25g Protein
 25g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 3 25g Protein
 25g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 4 25g Protein
 25g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Meal 5 (Post-workout) 25g Protein
 40g Carbs
 0g Added Fat

Meal 6 25g Protein
 25g Starchy Carbs
 <5g Added Fat

Using Your Macro Cycle Diet

Now that you have some sample Macro Cycle Diets and understand how to build your own, you need to know how to optimally and precisely implement these plans.

As I mentioned earlier, you should typically make non-training days correspond with your low day meal plans. However, there are always exceptions... If your primary goal is gaining muscle, then you should probably only have one low day per week, even though you'll probably be training four or five days per week.

On the other hand, if you're aiming to lose fat ASAP, then you may end up making one of your training days be a low day. If this is the case, make sure to strategically place this low day on a day you train a smaller muscle group, or one that is already a dominant muscle for you.

Conversely, place high days on days you train a larger body part like back or legs (if you're doing a body part split). The reason is simple – more fuel (glycogen) is used when training a larger body part, thus more is needed to replenish glycogen and maximize recuperation.

Here's a really advanced trick for you: consider aligning one of your high days with a day you train your weakest body part.

For example, let's say your arms are a weak point. Even though not as much fuel is used when training arms, you can maximize the delivery of nutrients to them before and after you thrash them in the gym by making arm day a high day on your MCD.

As for the other days, simply make them medium days.

Reevaluate for Ongoing Progress

It doesn't matter whether or not your first MCD is perfect. I've been doing this for a long time, but I don't always get it exactly right the first time. In fact, just a few weeks ago I got a new client (who we'll call "Brett" since that's his name) whose goal is to gain muscle. But after two weeks on his initial meal plans, he had actually lost a pound.

Although that's certainly not what I was expecting, it doesn't matter. After finding this out, I increased his calories (primarily in the form of carbs) by about 10%.

After two weeks on the more finely-tuned plans, he had gained three pounds of nothing but lean muscle! (For the record, after two more “tweaks,” he’s up another three pounds... again, all muscle.)

Is he progressing so well because I’m a genius or something? Well, although they do tell me I’m pretty smart, that’s not why he’s getting the results he is. It’s simply because I have taken the feedback his body is giving and adjusted his meal plans accordingly. You can do the same thing yourself.

Let’s say your fat loss is slower than desired... simply decrease the frequency of high days, increase the frequency of the low days, or tweak the diets themselves.

To speed fat loss, the primary modification to the diets themselves would be to lower the number of carbs in each meal and/or the number of carb-containing meals themselves.

On the other hand, if you’re like Brett and gaining muscle is your goal, but it’s not happening as quickly as you like, then increase the number of high days and decrease the number of low days. Another option is to increase the amount of carbs in the medium days and/or high days.

How to Evaluate

Although most people think of using the scale to measure their progress or lack thereof, it should only be one of the tools you use to assess your progress.

My preferred method of evaluation is measuring body fat via skin fold calipers. This, along with scale weight, gives you a good indication of how your body is responding.

However, many people don’t have access to someone skilled in taking body fat measurements. In that case, opt for measuring your waist. I actually have lots of distance-based clients do this, and it works fine since your waist size will tend to go up if you gain fat and go down when you lose fat.

It’s also a GREAT idea to take pictures as well. Although you’ll HATE taking before pictures, you’ll LOVE seeing the after pictures... especially alongside pics of the former (fatter) you.

Chapter 5:

Tips... To Help You Succeed



Consume Workout Drinks.

This book is about shifting your metabolism into overdrive, and since at this point you're well aware of the effects of muscle mass on your metabolism, you realize the importance of building lean muscle. It's an integral variable in this equation if you have any hope of ever seeing that six pack!

One of the simplest, yet most effective ways to maximize your mass-building efforts is by consuming a workout drink, or even two, around the time of your workout.

The primary ingredient in the workout drink is an easy to assimilate protein source. Whey protein fits the bill perfectly.

In fact, studies have shown that consuming as little as 15 grams of whey protein prior to and/or after weight training significantly improves recuperation and, subsequently, the effectiveness of the workout.

The fast surge of whey provides the body with the essential amino acids it needs to begin the restoration and muscle building process.

If you're lactose intolerant, opt for whey protein isolate, which has been further refined and purified to remove excess carbs (including lactose) and fat. Whey protein concentrate, while being cheaper, still contains a decent amount of lactose.

The other primary yet optional ingredient in a workout shake is carbohydrates. I'm specifically referring to powdered carbs, like Gatorade, glucose (a.k.a. dextrose), glucose polymers (a.k.a. maltodextrin), or a high molecular weight carbohydrate, like waxy maize starch. The latter is my personal favorite, but even Gatorade will work.

Whether or not you should include carbs in your workout drink depends upon whether you need the additional carbs or "fuel," and that'll be dictated by a variety of factors, including your current body composition, your physique goals, and your sensitivity to carbs.

If fat loss (as opposed to muscle gain) is your primary goal, I'd opt to leave added carbs out of your workout drink in order to fully maximize fat burning.

Now, let's say you definitely need to build some lean muscle tissue but are pretty close to where you want to be in terms of body fat. In this case I would recommend consuming two workout drinks -- one before/during your workout and one immediately after your workout.

Women, in this scenario you should add about 20g of carbs (and about the same amount of protein) to each of your two workout drinks. Men, you should add a bit more – about 35g of both carbs and protein.

You may very well fall somewhere in between the above two scenarios. If so, you probably want to build some lean muscle tissue while losing some more fat, as well.

To accomplish that goal I'd recommend that you ladies consume one drink during your workout. Twenty grams of carbs and about the same amount of protein fits the bill perfectly. For you men, I'd again go for about 35g of carbs along with about 35g of protein in your single workout drink.

Workout Drink Rx

Primary Goal:	Fat Loss
Rx for Women:	15-25g whey protein during workout
Rx for Men:	30-40g whey protein during workout
Primary Goal:	Moderate Fat Loss, Moderate Muscle Gain
Rx for Women:	15-25g whey protein + 20g carbs during workout
Rx for Men:	30-40g whey protein + 35g carbs during workout
Primary Goal:	Lean Muscle Gain
Rx for Women:	15g whey protein + 20g carbs before/during workout 15g whey protein + 20g carbs immediately after workout
Rx for Men:	30g whey protein + 35g carbs before/during workout 30g whey protein + 35g carbs immediately after workout

I certainly don't want to make you feel as if you absolutely must consume workout drinks. That's not the case, and you *can* make progress without them. In fact, up until just a few short years ago, practically no one, including professional physique competitors, consumed workout drinks. Yet they were still obviously able to develop incredible bodies.

But if you do want to take advantage of one of the latest advances in sports nutrition, then I would consider implementing a workout drink (or two) into your nutrition plan. Think of it as insurance that you'll recuperate from and maximally benefit from your workouts.

Adding a workout shake to your meal plan would, obviously, add one feeding to your daily total. For that reason, feel free to substitute a workout shake for one of your other meals or snacks. If you opt for two workout shakes, I'd still plan to consume five other meals.

Consider the workout shakes a substitution for one meal, not two.

Prepare Your Meals in Advance.

When you consider the fact that the frequency with which Americans eat out is rising at the same rate as the occurrence of obesity, it becomes obvious that eating out is not a viable solution to weight loss.

Don't put yourself at the mercy of what's available to eat at restaurants or in snack machines or quick marts. Be in control of what you eat by doing the bulk of your shopping and cooking on Sunday.

Then, each night before bed, simply portion out your meals and snacks for the next day. Put them in plastic bags or containers so they're ready to go when you head out in the morning. This way you're ready to hit the ground running!

Most people find it convenient to use a personal-sized cooler or cooler bag to store their food. This will enable you to transport your food easily while keeping it cool if need be.

Another tip that will come in handy is to get a small pill box to transport your daily supplements. This will prevent you from having to carry multiple bottles with you, and it makes it easy to keep up with what supplements you should be taking and when.

To finish off your portable kitchen, make sure to keep a fork, spoon, and knife in your cooler.

If you fail to prepare your meals ahead of time, you'll be at the mercy of fast food restaurants, and they are *not* interested in providing healthy food. They're interested in cooking food that *tastes* good and fills you up. This keeps people coming back for more, regardless of the health consequences.

On the other hand, if you prepare your food at home, you'll know what you're putting in your body and will be in control of your own health and fitness. This is the only way to feed your precious body the fuel it deserves.

Avoid Calorie Containing Beverages.

This tip is, in essence, a continuation of Step 1 in the Simple Steps Eating plan, but drinking sodas and juices is such a common dietary blunder that it warrants its own headline.

Researchers have found that *drinking* calories (in the form of sodas and juices) does NOT turn off hunger like *eating* calories does. So, although drinking a 12-ounce soda will provide you with close to 200 calories (all from sugar), it will do virtually nothing to appease your appetite.

If that's not bad enough, drinking sugary beverages may actually lead to you being even hungrier! When you ingest sugar, your body rapidly absorbs the sugar and it quickly enters your bloodstream. Then insulin quickly scoops up that excess blood sugar and takes it to be used or stored – and it's likely some will be stored as fat.

Unfortunately, now you're left with low blood sugar and low energy levels yet again. So you turn to either another sugary drink or a high carb meal to "pick you up." This is a vicious cycle that leads to fat gain and rapid energy fluctuations.

To get off this terrible merry-go-round, you must avoid calorie-containing drinks like sodas, juices, and sugary energy drinks.

Many people assume that juices are good for them since they're "natural." I beg to differ! Juices are NOT natural. To make juice, all of the fiber and most of the good nutrients are taken out of the fruit. About the only thing left in the juice from the fruit is the fruit's sugar and some of its flavor. All the good stuff is removed!

Why wouldn't you want to consume the nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and phyto-nutrients found in *whole* fruit? For dieters, you especially want the hunger-suppressing fiber that's in fruit.

Unless you're talking about the diet version (which is okay to indulge in here and there), you want to stay *far* away from sodas like Coke and Pepsi. These are

especially bad because they are sweetened with high fructose corn syrup (HFCS).

HFCS is clearly far worse for us than even other types of sugar. Unless you want to be obese and have high triglycerides, avoid HFCS altogether.

Water should, by far, make up the majority of your fluid intake. Another beverage that you can partake in is green tea. In fact, you can drink lots of green tea. Not only has it been shown to reduce the risk of certain cancers, but it also contains something called EGCG, or if you prefer the fancy term, epigallocatechingallate.

EGCG seems to promote fat loss by speeding up your metabolism. So drink lots of green tea; just make sure it has no sugar!

To summarize, unless you're drinking a protein shake or possibly some low-fat milk, you should stay away from drinks that contain calories. If you want to indulge in the occasional diet soda, Crystal Lite, or another drink that has 15 or fewer calories per 8 ounces, then go for it, although I wouldn't make those the cornerstone of your fluid intake.

That role goes to water. Speaking of which, let's move on to the next tip:

Drink Ample Water!

Although you know you should drink "enough" water, I'm willing to bet that you're not fully aware of how just *how* important it is to stay properly hydrated.

Even slight dehydration decreases performance tremendously. This makes sense when you consider that muscle tissue is about 75% water, and blood is over 90% water!

Though I won't get into all the details now, proper hydration helps you burn fat, build muscle, and feel better via a number of different mechanisms. Let's just say that attempting to improve your physique without consuming enough water is like walking with a big monkey on your back!

Though there are no definitive guidelines for water intake, I like the general rule of drinking about 0.6 ounces of water for every pound of bodyweight. This would equate to a 130 pound female drinking 78 ounces or 2.3 liters per day. Likewise, a 200 pound male would need to drink 120 ounces, or 3.5 liters per day.

On days you don't exercise you could probably get away with drinking a bit less, yet you should probably drink a bit more if you exercise in a hot climate.

One common misconception regarding water intake is that as long as you get in it sometime during the day then you're OK. Wrong! You can't simply drink your daily allotment in the span of a couple of hours and expect to stay properly hydrated.

As with food, it doesn't work like that – timing is important. So spread your water intake evenly throughout the day, drinking some with and some between meals.

One word of caution – for the most part you should stop drinking water about 90 minutes to two hours before bedtime to avoid having your sleep interrupted due to your need to urinate (tinkle, pee, piss... whatever) during the middle of the night.

Do Not Eat until You Get Full.

If you eat till you're full, then you've probably eaten too much. This is especially true since it takes about 20 minutes to decrease your appetite once you've eaten. The truth is, if you're still eating when you start to feel full, you've probably been eating about 20 minutes too long!

Much like your car, your body can only take and utilize so much fuel at any given time. If you give your car too much fuel, the excess spills onto the pavement. Likewise, if you give your body too much fuel, the excess "spills over" into body fat. That's NOT what you want to have happen when you eat.

You should feed your body energy as it needs it. This will not only allow you to feel better by having sustained energy, but will also keep your body from having to store excess energy as body fat.

Let's say you need 1,800 calories per day. If you ate 350 calories in each of your three meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) and 250 calories in each of your three snacks (morning, afternoon, and evening), then you'd end up eating exactly 1,800 calories per day.

Dividing your caloric intake across six feedings (meals/snacks) is *far* better than skipping breakfast and eating 900 calories at lunch and 900 calories at dinner. Though the calories consumed are the same, the end result isn't.

Not only does eating too much at once lead to fat storage, but it also fills you up to the point that you don't want to eat again in three hours because you're still full. Now you're back to square one... not eating every three hours!

But, by eating small, frequent meals, you'll keep your metabolism revving and be ready for that next metabolism-boosting meal. The only time you should be *full* is if you just drank lots of water.

Do Not Diet.

Right about now you're thinking, "Where's the catch, or has Dr. Clay simply lost his mind?" Luckily (knock on wood), I've yet to lose my mind; so let me explain what I mean when I say, "Don't diet."

People who yo-yo up and down in weight are in a perpetual state of "going on a diet." Then, in no time at all, they're back "off" their diet. As you could imagine (or have experienced), this leads to the dieter's weight going down a bit, then back up again, often higher than the starting weight.

People who succeed in the long run don't go on or stay on a diet; they simply eat the right foods at the right times. In order for you to lose fat and keep it off, you're going to have to make lifestyle changes.

If you want to lose lots of fat and then gain it all back, then go straight to the Quick Loss portion of this book. Then, as soon as you lose the weight you want, go right back to eating the way you were before. Then, in no time flat, you'll be right back to where you started.

Sound fun? I didn't think so!

I'm not here to teach you how to simply lose weight; my goal is to teach you how to improve your appearance and your health, *for the rest of your life*.

I sure hope that sounds appealing to you. If not, then stop reading this right now, go to your local nutrition store, and ask for a pill to help you lose weight without eating right or exercising.

I'm sure they'll sell you something, and I'm sure it will help you lose weight... right from your pocket book!

"Success leaves clues" is a phrase I've heard quite a few times, and it is *very* true. So, instead of trying to reinvent the wheel, why don't you simply pay attention to the "clues" left by those who've achieved and maintained a great body?

You can never go wrong by making smart nutrition choices and regular exercise a part of your life.

Have No More Than One Cheat Meal per Week.

Some experts will tell you to have one cheat *day* per week. I've found that a whole cheat *day* can more than offset the progress you've made during the week.

By devoting an entire day to eating whatever you want, it's very possible to gain more fat in that one day than you burned off during the entire previous week. Talk about spinning your wheels!

For that reason I recommend, if anything, a cheat *meal*. It's just enough to give you a mental break and let you make it through the week, but not enough to sabotage your fat loss efforts. So stick with one cheat meal per week.

I should mention that by "meal," I mean any amount of food you want to have in one sitting. Although anything goes in that one sitting, don't drag it out. Eat your food, your dessert, and an alcoholic beverage or two if you so desire, but don't let your cheat meal take longer than one hour.

If you want to get really serious, space your cheat meals further apart. Try having just one cheat meal every other week. You'll likely see quite a bit of difference in your rate of fat loss.

Before we leave this topic, let me give you some guidelines regarding a cheat meal. Don't worry, there aren't many.

Cheat Meal Guidelines

A cheat meal is just that, a meal. It's not a whole DAY of cheating. So, you're essentially free to eat whatever you want for up to one hour. If you've been craving pizza and ice cream, now's the time to have both.

Don't do like many people do and stuff yourself so full with your first food (i.e. pizza) that you're too full to eat any ice cream. If you do, you'll eat far too long (more than one hour), or you'll end up not eating any ice cream.

While I hesitate to "recommend" eating ice cream, if you've really been craving it, then go ahead and have it during your Hour of Devour. Otherwise, visions of chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream will still be dancing in your head.

If you can't get all your cravings into one hour, then you're craving too much stuff! Sorry, I couldn't resist. Seriously, in that case simply have what you can in one hour and save the rest for next week's cheat meal. After all, it's only a week away.

The keys to properly using cheat meals are:

1. Only have planned cheats.
2. Be reasonable with your cheat meal. Remember it's not an eating contest; it's simply a treat or reward for you and your taste buds.

In Closing

If you implement the six proven stages of the Simple Steps Eating plan, there's practically no way for you to not succeed in your quest to build an incredible body. These steps are built on sound principles, not fads.

As you implement the nutrition plan, keep the above tips in mind. This will further ensure your success.

Train hard, eat right, expect success, and you shall get it!

Chapter 6:

Rapid Fat Loss Plan



If you want to get lean quickly, and I mean like *yesterday*, then you may want to start with the *Rapid Fat Loss* option of *Simple Steps Eating*.

I'd be a slacker of a coach if I failed to tell you that if you do plan to start here, you should already have decent experience with the six steps outlined above. I would definitely not recommend going from a see-food diet (if you see food, you eat it), straight to the Rapid Fat Loss stage. This, for many people, would prove to be too overwhelming and too difficult.

With that being said, let's go over the Rapid Fat Loss (RFL) plan.

When trying to lose weight quickly, it's hard to argue against the effectiveness of a low-carb diet. So, the RFL plan does, to an extent, use a low-carb approach.

In order to maximize fat burning, you're going to consume a fairly low-carbohydrate diet, but one that's still moderate in healthy fats and contains plenty of health-promoting vegetables. And of course it's still going to have ample amounts of lean, metabolism-boosting protein.

Though most people know about the fat burning benefit of low-carb diets, most people don't know the drawbacks.

One drawback is that if it's done day in and day out, week in and week out, it does the opposite of what you're learning in this book; it'll cause your metabolism to *decrease*. This is part of the reason why so many people regain weight quickly after they stop a low-carb diet and resume eating carbs.

Another drawback to eating low-carb on a long-term basis is that your energy levels may start to plummet, especially during resistance training or high intensity interval training. That's because vigorous exercise prefers carbohydrates for fuel.

Resistance training gets its fuel from stored carbohydrates called glycogen. However, glycogen stores become really low after a few consecutive days of carb restriction, especially if you're exercising.

To maximize your energy when training, it's important to provide just enough carbohydrates to get your body through your resistance training workouts. Otherwise you'll be dragging like a bag of wet hammers, unable to get a decent workout; and if you don't have the energy for a great workout, then how in the world are you supposed to sculpt the hot physique you're after?

As the name implies, the purpose of the Rapid Fat Loss plan is to lose fat... *fast!* Part of the way you'll accomplish this is by keeping your carbohydrate intake low on days when you don't train with weights. Therefore, your body will burn loads

of fat, but without the metabolic slowdown and low energy that chronic low-carbers tend to experience.

Following the Rapid Fat Loss plan is actually rather simple. Just like in Step 6, you're going to consume a training day meal plan on days you do resistance training. This will help give you energy to get through your workout and will help to replenish your muscles after your weight training session.

Likewise you're going to follow a non-training day meal plan on days you do not train with weights. Even if you do cardio on those days, you'll consume a meal plan that is lower in carbohydrates and more moderate in healthy fat. This works amazingly well!

The difference between this Rapid Fat Loss plan and Step 6 of the Simple Steps Eating is that the RFL plan is even lower in overall carbohydrates and calories. With that being said, let me give you a bit of a warning and tip wrapped into one – and don't worry, you'll enjoy this!

If you truly stick to the Rapid Fat Loss plan, and I hope you do, you will need to eat *more* from time to time. We sports nutritionists often call this "re-feeding." This re-feeding serves to replenish depleted energy stores as well as give your metabolism a boost and your mind a break.

In other words it keeps the progress coming. While eating more seems like one step back, it turns into two steps forward.

To properly implement the re-feed, take one day every two weeks and eat all you want. Stick to clean foods, but eat all the starches (carbs) and healthy fat you desire. It's a bit like going back to Step 1 of the Simple Steps Diet, but you should still eat about every three hours and have protein with each meal.

Likewise, feel free to have one cheat meal on your re-feed day.

Although the Rapid Fat Loss plan is rather simple and very easy to implement, it is very, very effective. I've found that Macro-Cycling, the foundation of the RFL plan, is the single best dieting method for burning fat, preserving, or even building lean muscle mass, while keeping you healthy and energetic.

So that I know you're squared away and ready to implement the Rapid Fat Loss plan, I've provided you with a couple of sample meal plans.

Rapid Fat Loss Sample Meal Plans

RFL Non-Training Day Meal Plan for Women

Breakfast	3/4 cup Egg Whites 1 whole Omega 3 Egg Spinach & Tomatoes
Snack	4 oz Chicken Breast ≥ 5 oz Veggies 20g Almonds
Lunch	4 oz 96% Lean Ground Beef ≥ 5 oz Veggies 1/2 Avocado
Snack	1 scoop Protein Powder 20g Walnuts
Dinner	5 oz Salmon ≥ 5 oz Veggies
Snack	3/4 cup Egg Whites 1 whole Omega 3 Egg Veggies as desired 1/2 cup Fiber One Fat-free, Light Soy Milk

RFL Training Day Meal Plan for Women

Breakfast	1 scoop Whey Protein 2 slices Ezekiel Bread (toast)
Snack	6 oz Fat-free Cottage Cheese 1 ½ oz (42g) Blueberries ½ oz (14g) Nuts
Lunch	4 oz Chicken Breast ≥ 5 oz Veggies 1 tsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Snack (post-workout)	1 scoop Protein Powder 1 Apple
Dinner	4 oz Lean Ground Turkey ≥ 5 oz Veggies ½ Avocado
Snack	Omelet made with: ¾ cup Egg Whites 1 whole Omega 3 Egg 1 slice Low-Fat Cheese Veggies as desired

RFL Non-Training Day Meal Plan for Men

Breakfast	1 ¼ cup Egg Whites 2 Whole Omega 3 Eggs Spinach & Tomatoes
Snack	1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 28g (1oz) Almonds ≥ 5 oz Veggies
Lunch	6 oz Chicken Breast 1 tbsp Olive Oil ≥ 5 oz Veggies
Snack	1 ½ scoops Protein Powder 4 oz Strawberries 2 tsp Flax Oil
Dinner	6 oz Eye of Round ≥ 5 oz Veggies ½ Avocado
Snack	Omelet Made with: 1 ¼ cup Egg Whites 2 whole Omega 3 Eggs 2 oz low-fat Shredded Cheese Veggies as desired

RFL Training Day Meal Plan for Men

Breakfast 1 cup Egg Whites
1 Whole Omega 3 Egg
60g Oats

Snack (post-workout)
1 ½ scoops Protein Powder
6 oz Potatoes

Lunch 6 oz Chicken Breast
≥ 5 oz Veggies
1 tbsp Olive Oil

Snack 1 ½ scoops Protein Powder
4 oz Strawberries
2 tsp Flax Oil

Dinner 6 oz Eye of Round
≥ 5 oz Veggies
½ Avocado

Snack 1 ½ scoops Protein Powder
6 oz Fat-free Milk
½ cup Fiber One Cereal

Notes

Because all of your meals on non-training days are low in carbs, you can switch them around as you like.

Notice that the training day meal plans each have two meals that have a full serving of carbs. One of these carb meals should be your first meal of the day, while the other should come right after your workout, so adjust your meals and meal times accordingly.

Here's another tip: Some people find that they get a better workout if they consume a carb meal about an hour prior to training as opposed to immediately after.

Experiment to see if that's the case for you. If it is, adjust your meals and/or meal times accordingly.

RFL Wrap-up

In conclusion, you should consider it a privilege to use the Rapid Fat Loss plan. The way to earn that privilege is to avoid abusing the RFL method... otherwise it won't work properly. Remember to begin this plan in an "un-dieted" state.

Likewise make sure to implement the periodic "re-feed" or "anti-diet days" on a regular basis. And to fully get the benefits of the RFL plan, do not implement it for more than 6 weeks without taking a two week break. This will help to ensure that your metabolism keeps revving, burning body fat in the process.

The final component, as you now well know, is the exercise component. Trying to lose fat with the RFL plan without exercising is like swimming upstream. Sure, you can do it, but it damn sure isn't the smartest, most efficient way!

Make sure to implement metabolism-boosting exercise to your schedule in order to turbo charge the results!

Chapter 7:

Food Substitution Guide



When you think of a meal, you should think in terms of protein, carbs, and fat - the three macronutrients. We could add fiber to that list, too, but if you're eating the right foods and plenty of veggies, the fiber will take care of itself. So let's focus primarily on protein, carbs, and fat.

There are two opposing things to consider when it comes to your meal plan: Being consistent, and eating a variety of foods.

My experience, both with myself and my clients, shows that consistently eating about the same meals each day is the simplest and most successful way to eat. This totally removes the "What should I eat?" question from your mind. When you have *no* choices, you can't make *wrong* choices.

In fact, studies have shown that people who eat fewer foods tend to eat less and lose more fat.

On the other hand, it's optimal to eat a variety of foods because each food has different nutrients, vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and so on.

I design meal plans that balance consistency with variety while taking into account the food preferences of the client.

However, you may simply get tired of eating one of the meals on your plan. No worries, you can switch the foods so that you eat something different that still fits the precise amount of protein, carbs, and fat you need at that time.

You can do this by substituting one protein source for another, one carb source for another approved source of carbs, and one fat source for another.

Keep in mind, however, that while each meal does have protein, each may not necessarily have carbs and fat. So do not add a carb (a.k.a. starch) to your meal unless it already had one. The same goes for fat.

Substituting the Right Foods

Here is a list of, what I like to call, *clean foods*. These are foods that, assuming they're prepared properly, are approved (and ideal) for you to eat. In fact, these foods should form the bulk of your diet.

Though this list is fairly lengthy, it's by no means complete. There's simply no way I could list (or even be familiar with) every clean food on the planet. Nevertheless, eating all the foods on this list should keep you busy for a while.

Clean Foods List

Protein Sources

- Chicken Breast
- Egg Whites
- Fish (lean)
 - Bass
 - Cod
 - Grouper
 - Halibut
 - Orange Roughy
 - Tilapia
 - Tuna
 - Whiting
- Fish (fatty)
 - Herring
 - Mackerel
 - Salmon
 - Sardines
 - Tuna (albacore)
- Lean Beef
 - 90% (or leaner) Lean Ground Beef
 - Eye of Round
 - Top Sirloin
- Low-Fat Dairy products
 - cottage cheese
 - milk
 - yogurt
- Protein Powder
 - Casein
 - Milk Protein Isolate
 - Soy
 - Whey
- Turkey Breast
- Whole Eggs

Notes

I should point out that whole eggs, salmon, and other fatty fish do also contain fat; so they're really a source of protein *and* healthy fat, especially if you opt for omega 3 enriched eggs and "wild" fish as opposed to farm-raised.

Likewise, low-fat dairy products typically contain a decent amount of carbs. So to be precise, you'd probably need to reduce your carbs elsewhere just a bit.

Now let's move on to clean carbs.

Carbohydrate Sources

- Oats
 - Old-fashioned
 - Steel Cut
- Potatoes
 - Sweet Potatoes
 - Red Potatoes
 - White Potatoes
- Rice
 - Basmati
 - Brown
 - Long Grain
- Quinoa
- Pasta – that you make, not oily restaurant junk
- Whole Grain and/or High-fiber Cereals
 - Cheerios (regular)
 - Ezekiel cereal
 - Fiber One
- Whole Grain Bread
 - Ezekiel bread
 - Other sprouted grain breads
 - Whole grain breads
- Fruit
 - Apples
 - Bananas
 - Blueberries
 - Cantaloupe
 - Kiwi
 - Mango
 - Oranges
 - Pears
 - Raspberries
 - Strawberries
- Beans
 - Black
 - Red
 - Pinto
 - Lima
 - Navy

Notes

Although quinoa and oats have a couple of grams of fat per serving, you probably don't even need to be concerned with this. Focus on more important things, and don't get caught up in minutiae.

On a similar note, beans do have some protein, but since they lack significant amounts of methionine, I would keep things simple and not even concern yourself with the protein content. Instead, just stick with your standard portion of protein... generally 3-4 oz lean meat for women and 5-6 oz for men.

Now let's take a look at healthy sources of dietary fat.

Fat Sources

- Oils
 - Fish
 - Flax
 - Olive (extra virgin)
- Nuts
 - Almonds
 - Walnuts
 - Pistachios
- Olives
- Butter
 - Natural Peanut
 - Natural Almond
 - Butter alternatives (i.e. Smart Balance)
- Ground Flax (linseed)
- Avocado
- Cheese
- Hummus
- Egg Yolks (whole eggs) – choose omega 3 eggs

Notes

Hummus, because it's made with chickpeas, also has a pretty significant amount of carbs; so adjust your meal plan accordingly.

Although natural peanut butter is an option, do not make it your staple fat source. In fact, almond butter is a better option.

Free Foods are Your Friend!

Since they are so physique-friendly, let's revisit the topic of fibrous carbs (aka vegetables) just a bit.

In an ideal world we would always eat raw, organic vegetables. However, we don't live in ideal world, and I realize that.

One of the most convenient, yet still very healthy ways to get your veggies in is to buy frozen vegetables. Bags of mixed, frozen vegetables are great because they have different types of vegetables in one serving. This allows you to get a wide variety of nutrients (including vitamins, minerals, enzymes, flavonoids, etc.) in a very convenient manner.



Opt for one of the varieties of mixed vegetables that's not laden with carrots. Some carrots or fine, but eating too many will cause the carbs to start adding up.

When preparing your frozen veggies, try to cook them as little as possible. The more you cook them, the higher the chance that the nutrients in them will be damaged and rendered useless. Likewise, cooking them in water causes more nutrients to be leached out. If you do cook them, lightly steaming them is best.

One of my favorite ways to consume veggies is to simply pour a serving of the mixed frozen veggies into a container, add a tablespoon of salad vinegar and a tablespoon of fat-free Italian dressing on top, stir, and allow them to thaw for a few hours. Then they're ready to eat and taste great.

Of course, you may cook your veggies here and there and you may even opt for canned vegetables (with no added sugar) from time to time. Just try to make these the exception rather than the rule.

Below you will find a list of non-starchy vegetables that you are free to eat as much as you like – hence the term “free foods”. Therefore, if you're hungry just eat more of these nutrient-dense free foods.

The only limits to the “eat all the veggies you want” rule are: 2 ounces of beets, 1 carrot, and 1 tomato. This means that although you're free to have these (and I encourage you to eat them because they are packed with nutrients), don't have more than one serving at a time, or the carb and calorie content will approach that of a starch.

Note: The amount of veggies that I list on your meal plan is typically a minimum amount that you should consume for that serving. For example, if your meal plan

says > 3 oz Veggies, that means eat *at least* 3 oz of veggies (free foods). By 3 oz I'm referring to scale weight, not fluid ounces.

So, unless otherwise indicated, feel free to eat more. In fact, you really don't need to weigh your veggies if you are certain that you're getting plenty. Though I would occasionally weigh them just to make sure your "eyeballing it" is still fairly accurate.

Veggies "Free Foods" List

Arugula	Asparagus	Bamboo Shoots
Bean Sprouts	Beets (2oz) & Beet Greens	Bell Peppers
Borage	Broccoli	Brussels Sprouts
Butterbur	Cabbage	Carrot (1 Lg.; about 3oz)
Cauliflower	Celery	Chives
Collard Greens	Cucumber	Eggplant
Fennel	Garlic	Ginger Root
Gourd	Green Beans	Horseradish
Jalapeno Peppers	Kale	Lettuce
Mushrooms	Mustard Greens	Onions
Parsley	Peppers	Radishes
Spinach	Summer Squash	Tomato (1 Lg.; about 6oz)
Turnips & Turnip Greens	Watercress	Zucchini Squash

Substituting the Right Amount

While it's of utmost importance to eat the right "clean" foods, it's also *very* important to eat the right amount, especially when it comes to carbs and fat.

Of course you have many sample meal plans to get you going, but I want to make sure that you know how to substitute foods so that you can build your own meal plans. So I guess you could say this book is not only "giving you the fish" but it's also "teaching you how to fish" as the saying goes.

First we'll revisit the proper amounts (grams) of each macro (protein, carbs, & fat) you should have. But what kind of book would this be if I just told you to eat a certain amount of protein but didn't tell you **WHAT** foods and **HOW MUCH** of those foods to eat? Not a very good one in my opinion. And that's not how I roll, my friend.

That's why you'll also find exact portions of a variety of foods that will give your body just what it needs – for both you men and women, of course. So unless you're so advanced that you need to be ultra precise, you put your calculator and your thinking cap away. I've got you covered!

Protein

As a reminder, when it comes to protein you can fudge a little here and there, especially if you err on the side of having too much as opposed to not enough.

As long as you ladies are getting about 25g per meal and you men are getting about 40g per meal, you'll be fine.

In general a lean meat has about 30g of protein per 4oz portion (cooked). Therefore, you estrogen dominant creatures should typically have 3 – 4oz of lean meat per meal. You testosterone fueled creatures should consume 5 – 6oz or so per meal, depending on your size. Of course a larger male would need a bit more.

When someone says "meat," many people immediately think red meat or beef. But the literal definition of meat includes all animals. So that's why I use the term meat to include fish and poultry (i.e. chicken and turkey), etc.

Because I want to make this as user-friendly for you as possible... here are some foods and portions that contain about 25g and 40g of protein, respectively.

25g Protein

3 oz Chicken Breast
3 oz Turkey Breast
3 oz Eye of Round
3 ½ oz Fish
3 ½ oz Lean Ground Beef
1 cup Egg Whites
8 oz Low-fat Cottage Cheese
1 scoop Protein Powder

40g Protein

4 ½ oz Chicken Breast
4 ½ oz Turkey Breast
5 oz Eye of Round
5 oz Fish
5 oz Lean Ground Beef
1 ½ cup Egg Whites
11 oz Low-fat Cottage Cheese
1 ½ - 2 scoops Protein Powder

The above servings of meat are for cooked weight. The egg whites are listed by volume, not weight (of course, since it says “cup”).

The cottage cheese portion is, like the meat, listed in weight. Coincidentally, however, that portion also happens to be the same in liquid oz (volume) as well. So you could measure cottage cheese with a measuring cup, but I find it far easier to simply weigh it with a digital scale, because you’ll end up performing one less step and dirtying one less dish.

Keep in mind that cottage cheese does have some carbs, unlike the other foods listed.

Let’s move on to carbs and discuss their proper portions.

Carbohydrates

A good rule of thumb for cooked starches is this: 4 ounces by weight typically provides 25 grams of carbohydrates. Likewise, one piece of fruit usually has about 25 grams of carbs as well.

Now keep in mind that you should only substitute a carb source in your meal if it already has one. For example, if one of your meals has chicken, veggies, and olive oil, then you should never put a starchy carb in that meal.

This sample meal is designed to contain protein (from the chicken), fiber (from the veggies), and healthy fat (from the olive oil). Putting a starch (i.e. rice) in that meal would be an *addition*, not a substitution.

Here are some foods and their serving size that contain about 25g and 40g of carbs respectively.

25g Carbs

40g Oats
40g Quinoa
35g Cheerios
4 oz Sweet Potatoes
4 ½ oz Red Potatoes
4 oz Beans (most varieties)
2 slices Ezekiel Bread
1 Medium Apple
1 Medium Pear

40g Carbs

60g Oats
60g Quinoa
55g Cheerios
6 ½ oz Sweet Potatoes
7 oz Red Potatoes
6 ½ oz Beans (most varieties)
3 slices Ezekiel Bread

The potatoes and beans are listed by their cooked weight, while oats and quinoa are listed by their dry, uncooked weight. Obviously the Cheerios (plain, not honey-nut) are listed by their dry weight as well.

If you do prefer to cook quinoa in bulk (as I now do), the 40-gram dry weight portion is the same as 4 ounces cooked. That works out conveniently, right?

Here are some carb choices and portions that contain about 15 grams of carbs. Feel free to mix and match your sources of carbs to help ensure you consume a variety of nutrients.

15g Carbs

4 oz Blueberries
1 medium Orange
1 medium Peach
1 slice Ezekiel Bread

For the record, strawberries are pretty low in carbs for the amount you get to eat. Four ounces (4 oz) of strawberries contain only nine grams (8.6g to be exact) of carbs.

There's no set amount of carbs that you should have per meal. This depends on your size, your goal, your metabolism, carb tolerance, etc. However, you can rest assured that the meal plans I have laid out for you are pretty dang precise when it comes to how many carbs you should eat at any given meal.

To make substitutions without compromising the effectiveness of your meal plan(s), simply look at the carb source and portion size in a particular meal. Then substitute with another approved carb source that has about the same amount of carbs.

For example, if your meal plan calls for 40 grams of oats at breakfast, feel free to substitute another good carb (like quinoa) for the oats. As you can see on the list, 4 ounces of cooked quinoa would fit the bill perfectly. Likewise, 2 slices of Ezekiel bread would work fine as well, even though that would actually have closer to 30 grams of carbs.

Let's say your meal plan has you eating 7 ounces of sweet potatoes at lunch. You could have 7 ounces of rice, or you could have 5 ounces of rice and 2 ounces of beans. The latter would actually be a little better because the beans have lots of soluble fiber.

The point is, feel free to mix and match carbohydrate sources, as long as you stick with approved carbs in proper amounts.

Now let's discuss dietary fat, including the right foods and proper portions.

Fat

Because fat is *very* calorie-dense, it's of **utmost** importance to precisely measure your fat consumption. For example, just one tablespoon (tbsp) of oil has almost 15 grams of fat! Even if it's healthy fat like olive oil, too much can still lead to weight gain, so be precise.

The following fat sources and portions contain about 5 grams of fat.

5g Fat

1 teaspoon of Oil
1 Egg Yolk
3 ½ tablespoon Hummus

Here are some foods and portions that have about 7 ½ grams of fat.

7 ½ g Fat

1 oz Cheese
¼ Avocado
½ oz (14g) Almonds
11g Walnuts
70g (2 ½ oz) Black Olives

Let's say one of your meals called for 1 tablespoon of Extra Virgin Olive Oil. You could certainly have 1 tablespoon of Flax Oil, or you could get wild and crazy and have ¼ of an avocado and 70 grams of black olives. This would provide you with virtually the exact same amount of fat, but would allow you to eat completely different foods.

In Closing

I hope it's clear that you do *not* have to eat the exact same things week in week out, month in month out. As long as you make intelligent substitutions within your meal plan, you can eat a wide variety of foods and still achieve your goals.

Chapter 8:

Recipes



Turkey Meatloaf

Here's a recipe that I practically never get tired of eating. It's a great way to prepare your "protein" so that it's moist and tasty even when it's reheated.

The carb and fat content of this recipe is really low. However, if you're really fine-tuning your macronutrient intake (like a pre-contest physique competitor), make sure to account for all the ingredients.

Ingredients

- 1 package (about 1.2 lbs.) of 99% lean ground turkey
- 4 egg whites
- 1 cup salsa
- ½ cup (40g) dry oats or TVP (Textured Vegetable Protein)
- 2 small cans (2.25oz) of sliced black olives
- Feel free to add seasonings or vegetables as desired. Onions and bell peppers go well in this recipe.

Directions

- Mix all ingredients in a large bowl.
- Put mixed ingredients into a pan sprayed with non-stick cooking spray.
- Top with cinnamon if desired.
- Bake at 350 degrees for one hour. (Cooking time is approximate.)

Notes

- Weigh out your portion, top with low-carb catsup.
- You can also do this same recipe with Lean Ground Beef. Choose the leanest variety possible (96-97% lean).
- Another tip is to make the recipe with ½ lean beef and ½ lean turkey.

Pecan Crusted Chicken Tenders

If you're trying to impress your friends with your ability to cook tasty yet healthy food, this is a great recipe for you.

It's also perfect for times when you want a little something out of the ordinary, but don't want to blow your diet.

Ingredients

- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 1/3 to 2 pounds chicken tenders
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 cup oatmeal, processed in food processor to finely chop
- 2 eggs, beaten with a splash of water
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup pecans, processed in food processor to finely chop
- 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg, freshly grated or ground
- 1 orange, zested

Directions

- Heat oven to 400 degrees.
- Season chicken tenders with salt and pepper.
- Set out 3 shallow dishes. Place flour in 1 dish, eggs beaten with water or milk in a second. In the third dish, combine finely chopped oats with ground pecans, nutmeg and orange zest.
- Coat tenders in batches in flour, then egg, then chopped oat mixture.
- Place tenders on a baking sheet.
- Spray tenders with olive oil cooking spray.
- Bake tenders 15-20 minutes (until cooked through).

Note

- These chicken tenders are GREAT on a salad made with baby spinach leaves!

Chicken Quesadillas

One of my clients came up with this recipe years ago, and I fell in love with it!

These quesadillas are incredibly tasty (I really like them as much as “regular” quesadillas), but they’re still good enough for you to consume on a regular basis.

So when you need to get your “fix” of Mexican food but don’t want to simultaneously expand your waistline, this is the recipe for you!

Ingredients

- 2 Low-Carb Tortillas
- 2 Small Chicken Breasts (7-8oz total)
- 2 Slices (or 2 oz) of Fat-Free Cheese
- Salsa
- Spinach
- Guacamole (optional)

Directions

- Thoroughly cook the chicken breast and chop into small pieces.
- Place one low-carb (high fiber) tortilla on a George Foreman Grill or non-stick pan.
- Place the FF Cheese on one-half of the Tortilla
- Dab about 1 1/2 tbsp of Salsa on one-half of the Tortilla.
- Place one breast worth (about 3 1/2 oz) of chopped chicken on half the tortilla.
- Add baby spinach leaves (or chopped spinach) on top of the chicken.
- Add about 1 tbsp guacamole - if you like the taste and need the extra fat (which comes primarily from healthy, monounsaturated fat).
- Fold the half of the tortilla with nothing on it over on top of the other half with all of the above on it.
- Close the top of the grill and let it cook until the outside is browned to your liking - usually about 2 minutes or so.

Notes

- After taking this off the grill, let it cook for a few minutes before eating.
- The ingredients above will make two of these quesadillas. A larger person would certainly need two while a smaller person should probably eat just one.

Lemon Pepper & Garlic Roast

Eye of round is one of the leanest cuts of beef available. In fact, it's almost as low in fat as skinless chicken breast.

This is the best way I've come across to prepare eye of round so that it's moist and delicious. It's even quite tender when reheated a couple days later.

Ingredients

- Eye of Round Roast
- Garlic Salt
- Lemon Pepper
- 9 x 13 baking pan (not exactly an ingredient, but something you'll need)

Directions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Trim off all visible fat.
- Coat the entire roast thoroughly in Lemon Pepper seasoning.
- Coat the entire roast thoroughly in Garlic Salt.
- Bake at 350 degrees for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours (more or less depending on your preference).
- Remove from oven and let cool for 5 to 10 minutes before slicing.

Notes

- Although this roast recipe does reheat pretty well, it's definitely at its best when consumed fresh, right out of the oven after cooling.

Taco Style Ground Beef

Here's another recipe I never get tired of eating. In addition to its great taste, this recipe rocks for two other reasons: it can appease your craving for Mexican food and it tastes good reheated.

If you enjoy it as much as I do, you'll probably want to add this to your Sunday cooking ritual.

Men: notice that this is our kind of recipe... only three ingredients! 😊

Ingredients

- Lean Ground Beef (at least 90% lean)
- Salsa
- Taco Seasoning (McCormick reduced-sodium variety if available)

Directions

- Sauté appropriate amount of beef and strain
- With cooked, strained beef in warm skillet, add Salsa and Taco Seasoning as desired
- Mix together and enjoy! (I put this on top of my spinach leaves to make a taco-style salad.)

Notes

- This recipe can also be made with lean ground turkey.
- For a taco styled salad, add this recipe on top of a baby spinach leaf salad with diced tomatoes and reduced-fat cheddar cheese.

My Ex Girlfriend's Chicken Salad

You know how it is... when you and your girlfriend (or boyfriend) break up you usually get nothing but heartache, regret, and maybe even ill feelings.

Luckily for me (and you actually), I had one breakup a couple years ago that resulted in something cool... this awesome recipe! Even though she wasn't Ms Right, that girl could cook!

She modeled this recipe after the chicken salad at a local restaurant in Birmingham. It's a bit hard to describe the taste so you'll just have to try it. But I can tell you this... it's GOOD!

As an added bonus it also keeps really well in the fridge and is a perfect protein recipe to use every day of the week if you're so inclined.

Ingredients

- 3-4 boneless, cooked chicken breasts (I boil the chicken)
- 1 small package slivered almonds toasted
- 2 cups red seedless grapes, sliced into quarters
- Lawry's seasoning salt to taste
- 8 oz fat-free mayonnaise

Instructions

- Boil chicken until done.
- Put chicken in food processor. (If you don't have a food processor you can grate the chicken with a handheld grater).
- Toast almonds in 350 degree oven until lightly browned.
- Combine chopped chicken with mayo, almonds, and seasoning salt.
- Start with about a tablespoon of seasoning salt.
- Fold in grapes.
- Taste and add more salt or mayo as needed.
- This should have a smoky sweet flavor.

Note

- To have some fun, refuse to call this recipe anything except "my ex-girlfriend's chicken salad." It'll make for some interesting and very entertaining discussions... especially if you're a heterosexual female!

Mini Frittatas

Looking for a different way to eat egg whites? Enter this mini frittata recipe! It's so good and the texture is so different that you won't even realize you're eating egg whites.

You can also make this same recipe in a regular baking dish instead of in a muffin tin.

Feel free to get creative with this recipe by adding different vegetables and seasonings. I particularly like using garlic salt instead of black pepper. Give it a whirl!

Ingredients

- 4-5 slices fat-free or low-fat cheese, finely chopped (or 4 oz reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese)
- 6 slices (about 6 oz) turkey, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons chives
- A few grinds black pepper
- 2 cups Egg Beaters (or egg whites)
- Salt to taste

Directions

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
- Mix together the chopped cheese, turkey and chives and season with a few grinds of pepper.
- In a bowl, beat the eggs.
- Spray the muffin tins with non-stick cooking spray or olive oil.
- Using a teaspoon, fill the muffin cups halfway with the cheese mixture.
- Using a ladle, fill the cups to just below the edge with the beaten eggs.
- Bake until golden, (15 - 20 minutes for normal sized muffin tin – about 12 minutes for mini-muffin tin).
- Remove and let cool to handle; then serve.

Notes

- For a different taste, try using different vegetables and/or lean meat.
- This recipe can easily be made into smaller batches.

Low-Fat Chili

Chili typically has to go in the “cheat food” category, but that’s not the case with this recipe. It’s nutritious and delicious!

Just keep in mind that it provides significant amounts of both carbs (from the beans) and protein (from the beef), so you probably wouldn’t need to consume more carbs with it.

Ingredients

- 1 lb extra-lean ground beef
- 1 can stewed tomatoes
- 1 can tomato sauce
- 1 pkg. chili seasoning
- ½ can dark red kidney beans
- ½ can black beans

Instructions

- Brown ground beef.
- Add all other seasonings.
- Bring to a boil and simmer for 15 minutes.
- Serve with a garnish of low-fat or fat-free shredded cheddar cheese if you desire.

Notes

- This recipe is essentially a protein and a carb serving. So do not eat this recipe for a meal in which you should have low-carbs.
- To reduce the sodium content of this recipe, opt for low-sodium tomato sauce and chili seasoning.

Strawberry Egg 'n Oat Pancakes

If I had to choose my favorite recipe... this is it! At one point I (a bit embarrassingly) I had this for breakfast every day for over a year! I only stopped then because I needed to lower my breakfast carbs to get ready for a photo shoot. It's that good (at least when you keep in mind that it's practically perfect, nutritionally).

Don't get too hung up on this exact recipe, though. Play around with variations like making it with blueberries (my favorite), leaving out the cottage cheese and yogurt, etc.

Ingredients

- 40g oats
- 1 cup egg whites
- 3 tbsp FF cottage cheese
- 1 tbsp FF plain yogurt
- 3 packets Splenda
- Dash of lite salt or salt substitute
- 70g strawberries

Directions

- For a smoother texture, blend oats in coffee grinder or blender until smooth like flour.
- Chop each strawberry into quarters.
- Add all ingredients into large bowl and stir until thoroughly mixed.
- Simply cook like regular pancakes, using nonstick skillet and Pam or generic equivalent.
- Top with light syrup (as desired) and enjoy!

Notes

- For a different taste, try using other fruits. Blueberries work great!
- You can leave out the dairy ingredients and the recipe will work just fine, it will just be a tad less moist.
- As opposed to reduced calorie syrup, try using fat-free spray butter and Splenda. This adds virtually no calories.
- To increase the protein content, try adding a scoop of your favorite protein powder. Blended (whey/casein) protein works better than pure whey.

Yam Puree

Here's another one of my absolute favorite recipes: one, because it's easy to make; two because it tastes as if you're eating something you shouldn't. Not only is it delicious, but yams (sweet potatoes) are also one of the best carbohydrate sources available. Dig in!

Ingredients

- Yams
- Splenda
- Liquid no-fat butter
- Cinnamon

Directions

- Bake 3 (or more) yams.
- Mash thoroughly in large bowl. (An electric beater or food processor works well).
- Add Splenda packets to flavor (5 packets per yam is what I use).
- Squirt Fat-free butter to flavor. (Butter-flavored powder works fine, too.)
- Add Cinnamon to flavor
- Mix all ingredients until thoroughly blended.
- Weigh out your portion and enjoy!

Notes

- Top with chopped walnuts as desired, but make sure that the additional fat works into your meal plan.

Baked New Potatoes

If you like French fries, this recipe may appease your craving for them. But even if you're like me and don't care for fries much, I bet you'll dig this recipe just like I do.

You can certainly use regular white potatoes with this recipe, but I would typically opt for "new" potatoes or "red" potatoes since they have a lower glycemic index. This small size of these potatoes enables them to cook faster, which is a plus in my book.

Assuming you do enjoy this recipe, you may want to make it part of your weekly bulk cooking ritual since they taste just fine reheated.

Ingredients

- 2-3 large new potatoes per person that you will be serving. (They shrink when baked.)
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- McCormick's Grill Creations – Montreal Steak Seasoning

Directions

- Clean potatoes and cube so that each piece has skin on the outside.
- Put potatoes in a single layer into a baking pan.
- It is OK for the potatoes to overlap a little since they will shrink a bit.
- Coat lightly with olive oil and toss while shaking grill seasoning liberally over potatoes.
- Bake at 375 degrees, stirring occasionally, until crispy. (35-50 minutes)

Note

- Using an olive oil spray is best as it allows you to evenly coat the potatoes using as little oil as possible.

Chapter 9:

Questions & Answers



Eating Late

Question: Is it true that you shouldn't eat after 7 p.m.?

Answer: No, that is not true at all! This "don't eat after (insert an arbitrary time here)" myth is but one of many old wives tales that continues to confuse well-intentioned people like yourself.

The truth is, you should actually eat within an hour or so before going to bed. The key however, is to avoid eating the wrong things at this time.

Because it doesn't take much energy to sleep, you do not need to consume significant amounts of the energy providing macronutrients -- carbs and fat. Eating lots of carbs and fat before bed is like begging your body to lay down some new body fat. Not something you want to wake up to, that's for sure!

However, eating protein before bed is a great option. This will help provide your body with a steady stream of muscle building blocks -- amino acids -- throughout the night. This is just what you need to support your training efforts in the gym.

Lastly, it's a great idea to consume ample amounts of fibrous carbs or "free foods" with your pre-bed meal. Not only does this help you meet your daily fiber quota, but the veggies (and protein for that matter) really help to keep you from waking up hungry in the middle of the night ready-to-eat anything that's not tied down.

Weight Training Versus Cardio

Question: Since muscle burns more fat, should I be focusing my efforts on doing more weight training than cardio?

Answer: Absolutely! You should definitely focus your exercise efforts on weight training a bit more so than cardiovascular exercise. The fact is... with weight training, you get three major benefits: you burn calories while you're doing it, boost your metabolism for about 24 hours, and you build lean, strong, sexy, muscle!



On the other hand, cardiovascular exercise only burns calories. If, and only if, it's high-intensity in nature, will it elevate your metabolism afterwards. Regardless, cardiovascular exercise does not build any significant muscle.

So, although cardio is great, it doesn't help sculpt and/or shape your body by building muscle. Nor do you get the metabolic boost that comes with new muscle either.

However, since resistance training gives you all of these benefits, it only makes sense that it forms the cornerstone of your exercise program.

Put it this way, if I only had 40 minutes or so three times a week to exercise, I would undoubtedly dedicate that to three weight-training sessions.

This approach would have you looking and feeling FAR better than if you chose to only do cardio like so many "cardio bunnies" do.

Calories

Question: In terms of losing fat, is it really calories that matter the most?

Answer: I certainly wouldn't go so far as to say that calories don't matter, but I would go so far as to say that what you eat and when you eat it matters just as much... maybe even more.

Simply put, all calories are not created equal. Eating 1,000 calories from protein would have a much different effect on your physique than would eating 1,000 calories of carbs, especially sugary carbs.

Let me tell you an interesting (true) story that illustrates how important what, when, and how often you eat is. It also shows that losing weight is not simply "calories in vs. calories out" as most have been brainwashed to believe.

I once had a middle-aged, overweight female come to me looking for nutrition guidance. After gathering some information and doing some calculations, I realized that she was eating only about 800 calories per day! Most of those calories came in one meal while the remainder came in a snack.

The initial eating plan that I put her on had about 1,000 calories that were spread across four small meals. After going over this with her she was literally furious saying "How am I going to lose weight eating more?"

Long story short, she didn't "fire me" like she initially wanted to and, instead, decided to give it a shot for two weeks at which point we would evaluate her progress.

She lost 5 pounds.

If it were calories that mattered most (as this client was convinced), she would have actually **GAINED** weight! Instead, she ate twice as many meals, 25% more calories, had **WAY** more energy, and still lost 5 pounds.

Eating More

Question: I've been following a starvation diet for months, is fat gain unavoidable as I begin to increase my caloric intake in hopes of speeding up my metabolism?

Answer: This is a very good question and shows that you now understand the importance that good nutrition habits play on your metabolism. There are essentially two ways to get from the land of slow metabolisms to the more desirable land of speedy metabolisms.

The fastest way is to immediately and significantly increase your macronutrient intake (calories if you prefer) so that your body will begin to get used to the increased food intake and subsequently elevate your metabolism.

This would be comparable to going back to step 4 of Simple Steps Eating where the focus is on consuming copious amounts of clean foods at regular intervals.

The potential drawback to doing this more rapid method of boosting your metabolism is that you may actually gain a little fat during the lag time in which your metabolism is catching up. In my experience, a little over half of the people who use this approach do gain some body fat, but the amount is fairly insignificant.

On the other hand, you could opt for an approach that is a bit slower, but practically guaranteed to not cause you to gain any body fat. You can accomplish this by slowly and steadily increasing your meal frequency and the amount of each macronutrient that you consume.

For example, if you're currently eating 3 meals, then simply bump that up to 4 meals per day for a week or so, then 5 meals, and so on.

Fruit

Question: I love fruit, but many people say that you shouldn't eat fruit due to the sugar content. What do you think about consuming fruit as part of my diet?

Answer: Fruit does have sugar, but getting sugar from fruit and getting sugar from something like a soda is WAY different.

For starters, fruit has fiber which slows the digestion of the carbs, makes you feel fuller and for a longer period of time. Likewise, fruit has lots of great nutrients like vitamins, minerals, and various phytonutrients that make it very nutrient dense. By "nutrient dense" I mean it has lots of nutrients for the amount of calories that it contains.

Fructose, often called "fruit sugar," is one of the predominant types of carbs in fruit. Fructose is great in that it has a low glycemic index and doesn't cause rapid, high spikes in blood sugar. The only drawback to fructose is that it is first metabolized by the liver and therefore has a tendency to replenish liver glycogen as opposed to muscle glycogen. Therefore when you consume too much fructose the liver works to turn it into fatty acids and/or triglycerides.

If you're still awake after my brief biochemistry tangent, here's my fruit recommendation. Eat fruit...but do so in moderation. I generally recommend that people consume up to about two pieces of fruit per day, especially in the form of low glycemic fruits like apples and pears.

To be a tad more specific, let fruit comprise up to about 25% of your daily carb intake, while the rest should come from complex starches like sweet potatoes and oats.

Picky Eating

Question: Would it be okay to eat nothing but cheese for fats? I don't really like nuts or oil.

Answer: Although there are far worse things you can do, consuming practically all of your fat calories in the form of cheese (or any single food source for that matter) is definitely not a good idea.

Without getting bogged down in too many details, the fatty acid profile of cheese is OK but far from ideal. Feel free to have an ounce or two of cheese per day, but I wouldn't generally consume more than that.



Instead, focus on finding ways to make it more palatable or user friendly for you to consume other types of fat.

Olive oil, for example, can be easily incorporated into your diet by adding the proper amount to salads and/or vegetables. If you were to put one tablespoon of olive oil on a decent sized salad and with a low-cal dressing of your choice, I doubt you'd notice it's even there.

Another good way to easily "disguise" healthy oils like flax is to simply add them to a protein smoothie. Again, I doubt you'd even be able to taste a tablespoon of oil added to a 24 ounce smoothie, but it will help ensure that you consume the right type and variety of fatty acids to maximize your health and your physique.

Glycemic Index

Question: Should I be concerned with the glycemic index of carbs?

Answer: Much focus has been placed on the glycemic index of carbohydrates. Although I think it's silly to base an entire diet book on glycemic index alone, it is still something that should be considered.

To get everyone up to speed, the glycemic index (G.I.) is a measure of how quickly a carbohydrate ends up as glucose in the bloodstream. Simple (typically more sugary) carbs are digested very rapidly and have a high G.I. This results in significant amounts of glucose flooding the bloodstream at once.

Complex carbs, on the other hand, are in essence time released and are characterized as having a low G.I. This is much better as it results in fewer ups and downs in both energy and appetite.

However, consuming carbohydrates with other foods like protein, fibrous carbs, and fat slows the digestion of the carbs in that meal. Therefore, the glycemic index of the carbohydrate itself becomes slightly less important.



Although the glycemic index is something that you should keep in the back of your mind, eating natural, unprocessed carbs is a far more important consideration.

Bananas and white potatoes, for example, have a fairly high glycemic index but are still good nutrient dense foods that are perfectly fine to consume on a fairly regular basis, especially if you consume them with protein and fibrous carbs (vegetables) as you should be doing anyway.

Let me put it this way: if the worst thing you do is eat carrots, bananas, and potatoes... you will do just fine!

Carb Sensitive

Question: I believe I'm extremely carb-sensitive, and I'd like to gain muscle without gaining fat. Got any tips?

Answer: Sure, I've got some tips, but let me first point something out. Many people who think they're "carb sensitive" actually aren't. They just don't manage their carb intake properly, thus making it appear as if they're carb sensitive or have insulin resistance.

One of my clients, JD, was convinced he was carb sensitive, so he consumed a low-carb diet day in and day out. Once I began working with him and put him on a customized macro-cycling nutrition plan, he gained muscle like he hadn't in years... all while getting leaner than he'd ever been!

He soon realized his fear of carbs had been holding him back for quite some time.

Whether you're actually carb sensitive or not, the key is to making carbs work for you instead of against you is to consume the right type of carbs, at the right time, and in the right amount.

Stick with carbs that have a low glycemic index like oats, quinoa, sweet potatoes, etc. This will minimize the insulin response because carbs from low GI foods don't flood the bloodstream with tons of glucose (blood sugar) at one time.

Likewise, make sure to consume the majority of your carbs when insulin sensitivity is best – the first part of the day (especially breakfast) and after training.

If you really are a bit insulin resistant, then you may need to slightly decrease the amount of carbs you consume in each meal. For example, if a sample meal plan calls for having 50 grams of carbs at breakfast, you might do better with just 35 grams or so.

Though nutritional supplements are beyond the scope of this book, there are some that can help to improve insulin sensitivity. Chromium and alpha lipoic acid are two that may help. The DHA and EPA found in fish oil will probably help as well.

Lastly, consider having your doctor administer a glucose tolerance test to determine whether you really are insulin resistant (carb sensitive) or not.

Vegetarian

Question: I'm a vegetarian. How do you feel about soy protein sources, like tofu and soy milk?

Answer: Soy is one of the most controversial foods around. To this day experts still can't agree whether or not it's "good for you" or "bad for you." The disagreement is fairly understandable, however, when you realize that studies are yet to give consistent findings.

After researching the topic fairly extensively, here's my conclusion: soy is fine in moderation, but I wouldn't recommend making it your primary source of protein.

The primary problem with soy protein is that it's "incomplete," meaning it does not contain all of the essential amino acids that are unable to be synthesized by the body.

Well, even that is debatable, actually. Soy is technically complete and does contain all the essential amino acids, but it has rather low amounts of the amino acid methionine as compared to animal sources of protein. So in and of itself, it's an inferior source of protein.

Another thing that keeps me from being a big fan of soy is that it contains more carbs than protein, making it practically impossible to lower the carbs in a soy-containing meal. One way around this, however, is to consume a soy protein isolate supplement in which most of the carbs have been removed.

If I were a vegetarian (which will not happen unless hell freezes over), I would consume high quality protein supplements like whey and casein in addition to some soy protein here and there.

Some vegetarians choose to avoid these as well since they are derived from milk. In that case you could opt for some of the new protein supplements derived from plant sources like rice protein and pea protein (not pee protein). Though the taste of these is typically less than fantastic, they are getting better.

Cool Resources

Here are some websites and/or resources that I think you'll enjoy, starting with my own.

DrClay.com – my “home” on the web. You'll find all sorts of information related to the two general topics of physique enhancement and health and human performance. Although I'm biased, I think it's a pretty dang good resource for accurate, unbiased information.

TheDrClayShow.com – the home of The Dr Clay Show which is an almost-daily web TV show hosted by yours truly. It's high in informative content and low to moderate in entertainment value... though I'm working on the latter.

Yes, there are some great websites other than mine... here are some of my favorites:

Bodybuilding.com – this is where I purchase practically all of my nutritional supplements. They practically always have the best prices, low shipping prices, and the best service in the industry. Although they do have a huge forum and article database, I couldn't whole-heartedly recommend those. There are too many wanna-be experts posting inaccurate information, especially in the forums.

PerformBetter.com – as their slogan says, they are “the experts in functional training and rehabilitation”. It's literally like an athletic super-store! But, I don't just recommend them because of their incredible selection and service. They also do a lot to support the fitness industry and the dissemination of good, quality training and rehab information.

T-Nation.com – in my opinion this is the best website in the world for good, accurate training and nutrition information. I was a huge fan long before I ever wrote for T-Nation... and I'm still a “fan” today!

For more up-to-date information on other great resources that I dig, check out DrClay.com and The Dr Clay Show on a regular basis.

About the Author

Clay Hyght, DC, CSCS resides in the East Bay area of Northern California, east of San Francisco. But he considers Birmingham, AL home since his family lives there.

In addition to traveling and being a voracious reader of practically any nonfiction, Dr Clay enjoys pontificating the meaning of life and other meaningless, but intellectually stimulating activities. He also enjoys watching practically anything on the Discovery Channel and even slightly less cerebral activities like watching Mixed Martial Arts (MMA).

Dr Clay began training seriously in 1989 and began training others in 1993, one year after competing in his first bodybuilding contest. He now coaches some of the sport's elite bodybuilding and figure competitors among others.

His work has been published in numerous publications including Muscle & Fitness, Muscle Media, and T-Nation.com.

As a model Dr Clay appeared on the cover of Muscle Media's Training Guide and within other publications.

To read more about Dr Clay, visit www.DrClay.com. You can also find Dr Clay on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

