

Effective Fat Loss Habits



By Josh Hewett

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EFFECTIVE FAT LOSS HABITS

Change Your Eating Habits

I believe a well-designed exercise program is integral to long term fat loss. However, exercise alone won't make you leaner. Nutrition is key. There is a popular saying that I agree with: "You can't out-train a bad diet." You can still gain fat due to poor eating habits. Here are some important nutritional habits you can adopt to help you lose body fat while maintaining your lean muscle tissue:

Portion Control

Controlling portion size is a useful method of reducing your body fat. Try to eat smaller meals throughout the day, with each meal consisting of about a palm sized portion of three main food types: protein, fibrous carbohydrates (ie- vegetables), and starchy carbohydrates. This will help moderate your blood sugar levels, improve digestion, maintain energy levels, control your appetite, and make it easier to keep your calorie intake under control.



Eating more frequently can help you keep your portion sizes smaller. I used to believe, as many trainers did, that eating more often caused your metabolism to increase. However, there is no science to demonstrate this. It appears that whether you eat 3 times daily or 6 times daily, it does not necessarily affect your metabolism.

That being said, there are other benefits to more frequent meals. Eating 4 or 5 *smaller* healthy meals or snacks spread throughout the day may help regulate your blood sugar levels, improve digestion, control hunger, and maintain your energy levels. If you wait too long between meals you may find that energy levels will drop, leading to sugar cravings and fatigue.

A simple way to start reducing portion sizes is to add a high protein snack mid-afternoon, to break up the long stretch between lunch and dinner.

Milk Might Not Do Your Body Good

Although the dairy industry has been heavily marketing milk as an essential part of a healthy diet, too much dairy may interfere with your goals of getting leaner. Dairy does contain plenty of calcium and other important nutrients, but many dairy products have a high Glycemic Load which can affect your insulin and obstruct fat loss. Milk may also lead to water retention and mucus production, which can increase congestion.

In addition, a large number of people have a tough time properly digesting dairy. Much of the milk we drink has been highly processed and had various chemicals added.

Unless you have access to clean, raw organic milk, I would suggest limiting your dairy intake to natural yogurt and kefir as they contain high levels of good digestive bacteria and are typically easier for your body to process.

Goat milk products are also easier to digest than cow's milk. If you frequently suffer from congestion, sinus problems, and ear infections, try avoiding all dairy for a while to see if that makes a difference. Alternative sources of calcium include almonds, salmon, cruciferous vegetables, and calcium supplements.

Consume Smart Fats

Fat is a misunderstood nutrient. Many people still believe that all fats are “bad”, and think that eating fat makes you fat. However, not all fats are created equal and consuming the right type of fat is not only essential for good health, but it will aid in the metabolism of even more body fat. The good fats are called essential fatty acids (EFA's) and include the Omega 3, 6, and 9 oils. Foods containing these healthy fats include fish, nuts, seeds, avocado, olive oil, and safflower oil, among others. Flax seed oil and fish oil are common sources and are popular in supplement form as well.



To ensure you are getting enough EFA's I recommend supplementing your diet with two or three servings of fish oil every day. This will help your body burn more fat and has many other health benefits.

Avoid Refined Starch and Sugar

Sugar is the enemy if your goal is to lose fat! Sugar contains empty calories (minimal nutrient value), which provide a quick release of energy without actually feeding your body, and then a rapid energy slump soon afterwards. Sugar also interferes with fat

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loss, due the resulting spike in insulin. When insulin levels are high your body tends to be in a fat-storing or fat-sparing mode. Your body will also prefer to metabolize the sugar for fuel before getting into using fat stores. By including foods high in protein, fiber, and healthy fats you can control this rapid fluctuation in blood sugar. Foods rich in fiber help control blood glucose and insulin levels. Reduce consumption of most processed, low-fiber breads, cereals, breakfast bars, potatoes, and pasta.

Although reducing your intake of sugar and starchy carbohydrates will help you get leaner, a “no carb” diet is not a good idea. Your body needs some carbohydrates to maintain health, and it is unrealistic to follow such a restrictive eating plan. However, there are some benefits to eating *fewer* carbohydrates and *more* protein and healthy fats. First of all, lower carbohydrate diets also tend to be lower in calories. Secondly, protein has a much higher thermic effect, so it can lead to slightly more fat loss than a high carbohydrate diet with the same calorie count.



In a weight loss study published in the British Journal of Nutrition in 2005, researchers found that the group with the higher protein intake was less likely to regain the weight they lost, and any weight gained in the protein group was from lean tissue. The results were attributed to higher thermic effect and a decrease in appetite.

Finally, another potential benefit of reducing your carb intake is better glycemic (blood sugar) regulation. This means your insulin and blood sugar levels will be more balanced, which may help maintain a healthy body composition and provide health advantages for individuals who are “carbohydrate-intolerant”.

As I mentioned, restricting your carbohydrates over the long term is not recommended. A more balanced method of moderating your carbohydrate intake is called “carbohydrate cycling” or “carbohydrate manipulation”. This method involves decreasing your carb intake significantly for only two or three days in a row each week, followed by a carbohydrate “loading” day. During the low carb days you will need to increase your protein intake to make up the difference in calories. Carb cycling makes low carb diets safer, more effective and easier to follow.

Change Your Lifestyle Habits

In order to maximize fat loss, maintain your lean tissue, elevate your metabolism, and keep your energy levels up, you will need to make some other changes to your lifestyle. In fact, even with a sound diet and exercise plan, fat loss may be minimal if you do not include some of the following guidelines.

Get Enough Rest

Try to get more rest and go to bed early. Sleep deprivation decreases the odds of shedding body fat and keeping it off. Lack of sleep increases your hormone cortisol, which is a stress hormone that stores fat and burns muscle. Also, the probability of succumbing to late night cravings increases exponentially for every hour of the evening that you stay awake.



Researchers found that healthy men who slept for only 4 to 6 hours a night for 6 nights in a row had higher glucose and insulin levels in their blood. This is a very poor state of metabolism for someone trying to lose weight, because surplus insulin boosts body-fat storage.

Aim for 8 hours of sleep each and every night, and try to keep a regular routine where you have the same bedtime and waking hour. Pick the time you have to wake up on most days, and make sure you're in bed at least 8 hours before.

Eat More Slowly

Some animals chow down for about 15 minutes, feel full, and stop eating. But you are a human being. If you eat that fast your full stomach hardly has time to alert your brain to tell your mouth to quit chewing. If you eat more slowly and chew your food better you will not only digest better, but you will be less likely to over-eat. At your next meal, take your time, chew well, and rest between mouthfuls.

Stay Well Hydrated

Water is the most important nutrient, especially when you're trying to lose weight. You need it to flush the waste products your body makes when it breaks down fat for energy, or when it processes protein. You need it to transport nutrients to your muscles. You need it to help digest food and to stimulate your metabolism. Water also helps keep you from overheating during workouts on hot days.

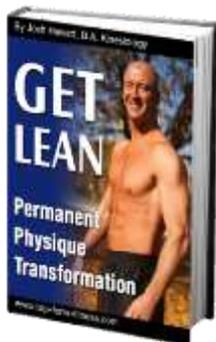


To stay well hydrated, let water and green tea be your main beverages. Fruit juices, sodas and other beverages contain calories and often have added sugar. Therefore, avoid juice, pop, and sports drinks and focus on drinking plain water and green tea instead. A good guideline for water intake is to drink one liter for every fifty pounds of your bodyweight per day. Drinking enough water will also help control your appetite and assist with fat loss.

Chill Out

A high stress lifestyle can lead to adrenal fatigue and can also elevate your cortisol levels, which causes the body to retain fat. Some healthy ways to deal with the stress in your life include exercising, getting more rest, and eating a well balanced diet. Sound familiar? Also try to reduce the stressful activities that you have control over. If you can't eliminate the stress, adopt healthy coping mechanisms such as positive thinking and relaxation techniques. Whatever you do, avoid using alcohol or other drugs to cope with the symptoms of stress... this will not resolve the problem but it will make losing fat even more difficult.

In conclusion, to maximize fat loss and stay lean forever, you need to regulate your calorie intake, elevate your metabolism with a balanced exercise plan, and make some changes to your lifestyle and eating habits. To be successful you also need to be patient and focus on reaching your goals the "right" way, rather than "right away".



For more information on this topic you can download my **free fat loss report** at www.StrongerAndLeaner.com. For a comprehensive training and nutrition plan be sure to check out our fat loss ebook, **Get Lean: Permanent Physique Transformation** at www.GetLeanBook.com for a complete, proven weight loss program.

Stay Fit,
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About The Author:



Josh Hewett, BA Kin, is a certified trainer, public speaker, competitive strength athlete, and the author of “[Get Lean](#)”. He is the owner of www.Top-Form-Fitness.com and the founder of Team Barbarian Strength Athletics (OPA affiliated). His articles have been featured on several popular websites, including EliteFTS.com, DieselCrew.com, StraightToTheBar.com, QFAC.com, and many others. Josh has been working in the fitness and physical conditioning industry for over 20 years, and has helped hundreds of people reach their fitness and performance goals using his proven training system.

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