



## **Diet to Power Exercise**

Many people who embark on a new exercise regime feel extremely motivated to follow the exercise patterns and intensity that have been set out for them because they know exercise works. This is true, exercise does work in getting you the look you want but only if you put it alongside your diet.

When I say diet I don't mean restriction of food I mean the balance of things you put in your mouth for body fuel. The first thing we need to understand is that 'diets' don't work, they are restrictive eating plans weather it be 'low carbs', 'grapefruit', 'cabbage soup' they all see food as the enemy and not as the valuable tool that it is in achieving your goals. What we want to achieve here are long term solutions not a quick fix. If you 'diet' you will lose weight, most of that weight being water and muscle but no more fat then normal. If you want to take your health, strength and fitness training seriously you will need to eat correctly.

On the other hand this does not mean that now you are increasing your activity that you can eat what you like. Take for example 1lb of fat is 3500Kcal which it can be very easy to eat this amount in a 3 course meal with a few beers. If we burn 800Kcal in a session this does not mean you can go and eat a 1000Kcal pizza the results are obvious for all to see.

The most important thing we need to see is if we put more in than we burn we gain weight, if we eat too little we lose water and muscle.

We need to give our body high quality food for it to function well quality carbohydrate to give you energy and fuel your workouts, quality protein to repair muscle tissue after your weights sessions and plenty of fruit and vegetables to give your body the essential vitamins and minerals required for optimum health.

We need to keep your eating regime simple, by doing this we make it manageable. Sticking to the rigid 3 large meals a day makes you become hungry during the day and also lacking in energy at certain times. We need to look at eating 5 smaller meals in the day and not looking at your evening meal as being a huge plate of meat, rice and veg. By eating smaller meals on 5 occasions this keeps your metabolism going and raises it by 10-15% every time you eat. Do not eat processed foods, these foods will make you malnourished and are classed as hollow calories, they actually take the goodness from your body due to artificial flavours, colours and preservatives.

## **Points**

### **Do not skip meals**

Skipping meals will disturb your blood sugar levels, by doing this it can make you irritable, hungry and lacking in energy for your workout.

### **Do not eat before morning cardio**

By not eating before your morning cardio you will deplete your body of carbohydrates, in doing so forces your body to burn more fat during your cardio session. This cardio will then kick start your metabolism for the day.

### **Eat a carbohydrate breakfast after your morning cardio**

It is essential to refuel after a hard session, by doing so within 2 hours after your morning cardio your body will store the food as energy far more efficiently therefore giving you more energy for your next session.

### **Eat protein/carbohydrate mid morning snack**

By eating low GI carbohydrate mid morning this helps maintain your energy levels for the day, eating protein alongside helps slow down the digestive process so keeping blood sugar levels balanced and also helping the repair process of any muscle tissue.

### **Have a mixed protein/carbohydrate lunch**

Again your protein is here to help repair muscle tissue from any strength training, however too much protein will still be stored as fat. Low Gi carbohydrates here will help prevent any energy slumps post lunch and give you some sustained energy.

### **Carbohydrate snack 1-2 hours before your evening workout.**

Because carbohydrate is the preferred fuel for a strength workout it is essential for your body to optimise your carbohydrate stores for the session ahead.

### **An evening meal after your workout consisting of protein and vegetables**

By restricting starchy carbohydrates in an evening ensures you don't take in any excess calories at this time of the day that will be stored as fat. By depleting your body of the carbohydrates when you get up in the morning you will be set and ready to optimise your fat burning in your morning cardio.

### **Drink 2 litres of water a day**

Our bodies are made up of 75% water, with just a 2% drop in these water levels you can experience a 20% drop in energy levels. You will also need to drink more during your exercise up to an extra litre.

## **Failsafe ways to stick to your new eating regime**

Always buy in advance, it is very easy to run out of fresh produce in the cupboards and get convenience food or takeaways.

Prepare food as simply as possible, grill meat/fish, steam or boil vegetables and grate raw vegetables. Try to avoid adding extra fats in sauces/dressings use a mixture of herbs and spices to add flavour.

Think portion size, one portion is the size of your fist.

Buy the best quality food possible.

Don't let food control your life, you control it.

Keep it as simple as possible.

### **Fat**

Fat is your friend and not your foe if you understand it and use it correctly.

There are two types of fat, GOOD and BAD

Bad fats are normally solid at room temperature and come from animals. If you see any bad fats on your food remove it.

Good fats normally come from plants, nuts or fish source in the form of Omega 3,6,9 and are good for helping burn fat and also keep a healthy heart. By eating oily fish 3 times a week, adding a table spoon of olive oil to cooking or a small amount of extra virgin olive oil to your salad and having a small handful of nuts a day, this is enough for your daily intake.

You must limit the amount of bad fats you eat.

For each day of your new exercise regime you need to make sure your eating patterns are correct. By writing it down it is far easier to see how you have done each day rather than trying to remember what you have eaten, you can quite easily forget one or two things and before you know it you are over your daily intake. You will be asked to complete a food log for each and every day.

Remember food is fuel

Dont eat before your morning cardio

Drink at least 2 litres of water a day

Plan your eating