



Ultimate Health: Fat Adaption

WEEK THREE: MAKING IT STICK.

The journey so far has been one of implementation and change. For most, it will be a week or so before the hunger and the side effects subside. Week three is crunch time. It is the toughest week, but if you have made it this far then there is no reason you can't do this.

Once you get through week 3 the benefits start stacking up, the hunger reduces, and the new routines begin to feel normal. Unfortunately some bail in this week, just on the cusp to achieving a life changing transformation.

It is important to reaffirm your "WHY", that this is a permanent change to the way we eat. It is not a sacrifice of taste, but rather a re-mapping of good food. The great news is that you still get to have the good stuff under the 80/20 rule. The clincher is that your health and vitality will improve significantly.

Diets are based on temporary sacrifice. "What are the things I like which I must give up to lose weight?" If I tell you to not eat cookies, then you will focus on the cookies. Yes, you will have an image of your favourite cookie in your mind right now!

The key is to focus on what you should eat and let your body and mindset adapt to these. Yes, it is transformation, and yes it is hard for a little while, but the thing about transformation is that once done, you can't go back. Is it not worth riding this thing out for one more week? How good will it feel to be in total control of what you eat, and therefore your health?

When coaching clients through this process I expect and welcome calls for support, for confirmation it's worth it, and for advice on how to get through. Drop the ego for this week, seek support if you are waning, use your accountability partner, focus on your "WHY", it's just one more week!



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ASSESS YOUR INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

In week two you will have trailed the recommended starting point as per real food guidelines provided by this calculator.

This is not a “one size fits all” and may well need some adjustment to your individual lifestyle and body make up.

Here are a few considerations and reasons you may need to adjust:

Muscle retention: Should you do significant manual labour requiring strength, or your heritage has a muscular / dense body type (e.g. Pacific Islander), you will need to boost protein intake to avoid muscle loss.

Hormone volatility: Some are susceptible to hormone volatility when changing their way of eating, especially when reducing carbs. This may be expressed through dramatic mood swings, extreme lethargy or a distinct loss of motivation. This is more prevalent in late teens and females with some hormone imbalance history. If this is experienced I do recommend that you reduce carbohydrates gradually to allow a steady adaptation.

Highly active: Endurance athletes and those with a highly active average day may need to increase their carb. It is however unusual to need to increase above 150 grams per day. Be careful to avoid spreading this increase over the entire day, you need to have a part of your day where you are carb depleted and so that your body relearns how to burn fat for fuel.

Weight Loss Goals: For those with weight loss goals, I strongly recommend avoiding using a calorie deficit to shift the weight. For the 3 week period the focus should be on changing to a sustainable and permanent way of eating. Once this way of eating is attained your body will shift the weight naturally and will settle at your natural weight. Yes, this will take time but sustainability is the key. Calorie deficit diets have an immediate impact on metabolism, slowing you down, essentially your body is saving energy. By getting fat adapted you can loose the extra weight, but actually increase metabolism as you have consistent fuel available using fat, protein and carbs.

Broadly the baseline, as a daily average, is:

- 0.8–1.2 grams protein per 1kg lean body weight, more for pregnant females, growing teens, and those requiring high muscle mass (e.g. manual labourers)
- 50 to 150 grams carbohydrates to suit activity levels,
- Fats and vegetables to satiety.

If you find you are struggling, adjust the ratios and test. Maybe increase back to earlier levels and adjust slowly. The priority is to stick to real food, avoid bad foods (Bad oils, grains and processed sugars). If you stick to the real food you are 90% there. In my experience, many who start the real food journey without a focus on ratios frequently end up at the correct ratios after a few months once the false hunger and appetite caused by sugar and grains abates.

Everyone is an individual, however not that different. For this week stick as close to the plan and recommendations as possible.

The key is not to give up due to not being able to be 100% compliant. 90% compliance is better than pulling the pin on your future health and vitality!

ENDURANCE ATHLETES

In the past it was believed that athletes could consume as many carbs as they liked under a energy in / energy out balance. Recent studies now show that this is not the optimal approach and that a periodised carbohydrate approach ensures a healthier sustainable exercise regime with improved performances in the longer term. Studies have shown that consuming more than 150 grams carbs per day average is not required, and can restrict recovery.

Even at this high level it is important to periodise carbs so that your body does use fat for fuel periodically. As a rule endurance athletes should perform aerobic training with no carb intake, unless the duration is greater the 2.5 hours. I personally recommend doing morning sessions fasted (no breakfast) and follow it up with a replenishing meal adhering to the 2:1:2 ratio.



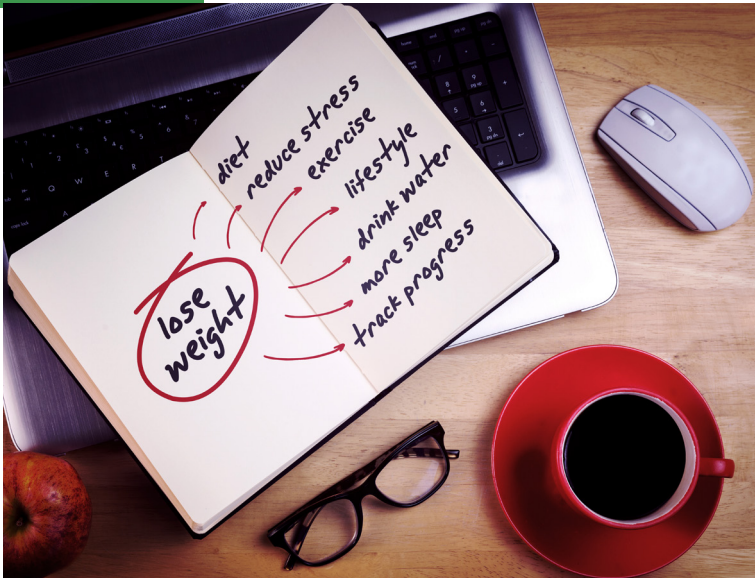
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HIGH INTENSITY EXERCISE

The human body generally has 450 grams of glycogen available when rested. This is sufficient for approximately 2 hours of sustained vigorous exercise and can easily support high intensity exercise for 60 to 90 minutes. Consuming more than the trivial amounts of carbohydrate can inhibit performance and results, as it simply puts more stress on the body through the digestive system that has not benefited from the exercise.

It is beneficial, however to consume a small amount of carbohydrate, preferably in the form of natural fruit (berries or half a banana) as this can create a fight or flight hormone response which enables a higher level of anaerobic performance.

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READ, ABSORB, QUESTION...

There are thousands of resources out there. Books, web sites, Facebook groups, webinars.

Many have different views, many are very specific in what to eat. I believe that you are confident in the real food journey, researching the different opinions, people's successes, struggles and solutions can assist you in achieving success. Yes, you will need to decide what is right, what is misguided, however there are thousands of success stories out there using subtly different tricks, tips and strategies to overcome the initial challenges.

My approach is based on real food first, which leads to lower carbs on modern day standards. This is the basis for the vast majority of ancestral ways of eating like paleo, caveman, primal and Mediterranean. Each have their own idiosyncrasies, but have the same foundations. In my opinion it is best to understand and adhere to the principle of "real food" and not get too caught up in some of the highly specific "rules" like organic only, zero tolerance on grain and hydronated oil consumption. Keep it realistic and sustainable in today's society.

Getting involved in Facebook groups does enable you to share, follow the journey of others, and make you feel less alone during the transformation. As you progress you will also have the opportunity to help others, re-enforcing your progress.

Don't assume everything written by "experts" is correct, that is how we ended up in this obesity and nutrient starved mess! Go back to basics with the ancestral test: "If the food was available before large volume agriculture, it is probably good in the volumes collectable by hunter / gatherers."

REVIEWING YOUR LOGS

During the first three weeks it is important to log, monitor and review your intake of carbs, protein and fats using a tool like MyFitnessPal. These tools allow you to set targets but generally are set to western diet standards. Remember to adjust these to your new calculated ratios.

Once carbohydrates are reduced and you are fat adapted you will find you can stop logging and trust your judgement. This also allows you to build intuition and let your body tell you what you really need. This intuition will sharpen over the following two to three years if you intermittently review your progress and your actual intake.

FASTING

It takes 8 to 12 hours of consuming no macro-nutrients before our bodies turn to body fat as a primary source of fuel. If we eat three evenly spaced meals, plus intermittent snacks, we rarely get to a state where we use our body fat for what it is intended, stored energy.

With this way of eating the intent is not to go into calorie deficit for long periods of time as this simply slows our metabolism as a survival mechanism. Intermittent fasting, once fat adapted, actually increases our metabolism whilst achieving sustained and healthy weight loss. Strangely those who are under-weight can gain using this strategy as it can increase a desire to consume sufficient calories at meal time.

There are numerous other significant benefits which include:

- Balancing of hormones
- Cellular repair
- Damaged cell disposal (autophagy)
- Increased metabolism
- Weight gain
- Weight loss
- Reduced inflammation and oxidative stress

We will delve into intermittent fasting next week but if you feel you are ahead of the game, give it a go and try to delay one or two morning meals to around 11:00 am. Other Reading: [10 benefits of intermittent](#)

STRESS AND MINDSET

Stress is a natural response to uncertainty, fear, shame, or a lack of confidence.

The body cannot tell the difference between physical and psychological stress and responds with fight or flight hormone including cortisol and adrenaline. This fight or flight status makes us ready to react to imminent danger and prevents relaxation and adequate recovery. In the high stress state our systems preferred fuel is carbohydrate, and our ability to burn fat is diminished.

If we live our lives with a “what if” and negative state, stress will inevitably be high making it difficult to control eating habits and relax.

“My life has been full of terrible misfortunes, most of which never happened”
- Michael de Montaigne

We get what we focus on. Mindset is about focusing on the positive and what we want to achieve, receive, and most importantly, give. If our mindset is too focused on what we don't want, or wish to avoid then our stress will inevitably be high.

Our habits, health and stress levels are driven by our mindset. Focus on what you want, have a can do attitude, focus on what you can control and influence!

The past is the past you cannot change it. The future has not happened yet so worrying about what might occur is unproductive. Focus on now and what you can do or influence in the present.

A good exercise is to spend 5 minutes at the beginning of every day considering who you want to be, how you will respond to situations, and how you would likely be fulfilled and happy at the end of the day!



SLEEP, THE SECRET SAUCE TO SUCCESS

Adequate and quality of sleep is one of the pillars of health alongside nutrition and exercise.

When we sleep the following takes place:

- Fat metabolism
- Appetite regulation
- Brain development
- Immunity improvement
- Physical restoration
- Mental processing and absorption

A lack of sleep compromises mental ability, physical ability and progression. Mood swings and lethargy are symptoms of a lack of quality sleep, however the impacts are more significant.

The gold standard is 7.5 to 8 hours sleep per night, with the ability to wake up without an alarm clock. Some appear to get away with 6 hours sleep, however over time there will be significant impact to health and performance. In many cases there are periodic catch-up sleeps on weekends where they crash and burn for 10 hours plus.

The bottom line is that if you are seeking a low stress, healthy and balanced lifestyle, sleep is as important as your way of eating and your exercise regime.

A lack of sleep increases stress. High stress heightens fight or flight hormones which in turn increase our hunger for sweet carbohydrates. Sleep deprivation makes it very difficult to stick to a healthy way of eating.



THE EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

Many find this transformation difficult due to the emotional triggers they have associated with food. It is generally not the cravings or the lethargy that become the main challenge, but remapping the emotional triggers and the consumption of sweet food.

Even as children we were taught that confectionary was the reward for being good. Every celebration, birthdays, morning teas, fundraising has an abundance of sweet offerings. Marketers have learnt that associating sugar drinks and junk food with feeling happy and attracting friends, sells.

We think of sugar rich food as a pick me up when feeling down, or stressed, although the effect last about 30 seconds!

We use sweet food to procrastinate and to hype up before meetings.

All of these emotional drivers are learnt behaviour which will need to be remapped. Seems impossible? For some it is the most difficult adaptation but is necessary to approach head-on to succeed.

A good idea is to have a “go to” compliant snack for each emotion. For me sugar drink was replaced by coffee, lollies became nuts, cake became quality cheese and ice cream became yogurt.

After the initial 3 weeks it is ok to occasionally partake in sugary celebration under the 80/20 rule, but keep to celebrations only.

Have a game plan. Defeating this challenge will make the real food way of eating sustainable.

“The bottom line is that if you are seeking a low stress, healthy and balanced lifestyle, sleep is as important as your way of eating and your exercise regime.”

THIS WEEK'S OBJECTIVE

This week is all about finishing what we started.

It is usually the hardest week and a bit of a roller coaster. There will be times where the ketone are working for you, but others where they just aren't enough so the lethargy returns. Stick with it and trust that by week four, the fat adaption will kick in and it will get a whole lot easier. Your vitality will return and will most likely be higher than before starting this journey.

Remap your emotion food to compliant snacks. When the emotion is triggered, consciously go to the healthy option. You will be amazed how your associations can change in a couple of weeks.

You can still expect some of the side effects while your body completes the adaptation to burning fats, these include the "ketone breath" and "ketone flu".



Keep exercise at a low intensity for this week. If you feel the necessity for some higher intensity, keep it short and don't let it derail the nutrition focus.

Review your logistic, your real food availability, your food preparation timing and schedule, the impacts on family and friends, and the impacts on your social life.

Adjust and refine, but stick to the ratios and strive for 100% compliance for this last week.

Next week we loosen up a little, still striving for 100% compliance, but allowing an 80/20 compliance when social circumstances present.

This is a life changing journey and you are 2/3rds there, be committed, be stubborn and see it through.

Personal message me by SMS on +61488028221 with the subject of "FAHELP:" if you are wavering!

Let's get this done!

WEEK THREE EXERCISE PLAN

Depending on how quickly your body is adapting you may wish to try a shorter high intensity session. Do this only if there is a need to, such as for an upcoming race. If attempted, be resolute that you will not turn to processed carbs for recovery!

The majority of your exercise, if not all, should be in low intensity. Your priority for the first three weeks is to make this way of eating stick which is more important than any training. After 21 days you can get right back into it!

Strenuous exercise, you will create a fight or flight hormonal response causing a hunger for carbohydrates you may not be able to suppress if fat is not available as fuel yet. If this does occur try resolve with real food options of fruit or starchy vegetables like sweet potato.

It is important to recognise that correct nutrition is the key to good health. Although exercise is important, you cannot out exercise a bad diet!

If sport performance is your goal, it may be a good time to focus on technique and efficiency during this phase of your transformation.

WEEK THREE CHECKLIST

Honour hunger

- Eat vegetables and healthy fats to satiety
- If necessary consume healthy whole carbs like fruit and tuber vegetables
- Snack as necessary to keep away from bad foods
- Find healthy snacks to replace your emotional go to sweet crutch

Ensure you drink sufficient water and electrolytes / sodium

Do not consume bad foods

- No grains including breads, pasta, pasties, rice, cereals, pizza bases
- No hydronated oils including margarine, canola & sunflower cooking oils
- No processed sugar including soda drinks, sugary deserts, cookies & cakes

Dial in your macronutrients

- Calculate your protein and carbohydrate needs at www.fitsets.com
- Tailor you meals to meet these requirements as an average
- Log your intake for review in later weeks

Commit and see this through

- Be resolute, don't waiver, this is the last "tough" week

Week 4 Preparation

- Evaluate your learnings and struggles so far and share with peers, coach and forums
- Prepare week 4 bulk meals (Sunday)
- Consider your family and social impacts, we will work on those next week.

Week 3 Sample Meal Plan	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Monday	Fast until 11am	Early Lunch Salad, low carb (not no carb)	2:1:2 meal + Carbs to daily target
Tuesday	Chia Pudding	Wide Spectrum Salad	Un-Sandwich (Ham, pickles, fetta, Dijon dip, Olives, Fermented veg)
Wednesday	Eggs, bacon, vegetable	Nuts & quality cheese	2:1:2 meal + Carbs to daily target (ground beef or chicken)
Thursday	Fast until 11am	Rich salad with ground beef or chicken	Stuffed veg (tomato or Capsicum) some starchy veg.
Friday	Greek Yogurt	Club wrap, Turkey, salad, pickles	Vegetables casserole, starchy veg to tar-get.
Saturday	Fast until 11am	Omelette with left overs filling.	2:1:2 meal + Carbs to daily target
Sunday	Haddock & turmeric scrambled eggs, tomato, mushroom...	Salad, avocado, nuts and seeds, olive oil	Roast (fish, beef, poultry) with carbs to target.



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WEEK FOUR PREPARATION

Week 4 will be about blending your new way of eating into your social, work and family lifestyle.

You will need to work out where the best places to eat out are that suit you and others not on the same journey.

You will need to decide what to do when attending events where compliant food is not available.

You will need an elevator pitch to respond to the inevitable questions from others regarding your way of eating, especially the cynics.

When evaluating your journey so far, categorise your insights as what's not working; what's working well and; what is puzzling you. Work through these address them methodically. Get help in our Facebook group or other forums, generally someone has encountered these before.

Share your journey with like people, they may learn from your experience.

Work on your meal plan for next week using week 1-3 samples, but adjust to what is working for you, but be adventurous and include at least two fast periods of 16 hours (e.g. 8pm to 12 noon)

Don't forget the bulk meal prep, cook once, eat twice saves time!

RESOURCES

There are some awesome resources of information and meal options out there.

Visit your local library and book store, you will be amazed just how much "real food" information is out there.

Here are some of my favourites:

- www.dietdoctor.com/low-carb/20-50-how-much
- thenaturalnutrition-ist.com.au/
- lowcarbdownunder.com.au/