

N|T

# THE LEAN BODY FORMULA

A 10-week weight loss plan to transforming your body 'from the inside out'



by

**NIK TOTH**

[www.theleanbodycoach.com](http://www.theleanbodycoach.com)

# Contents

- Disclaimer **2**
- Welcome **3**
- About the author **5**
- All about weight loss **10**
- Creating new habits **12**
- Be consistent **15**
- Ditch the scale **15**
- Nik's food philosophy **16**
- What is real food? **17**
- Digestion **17**
- Eat more, weigh less **17**
- Speeding up your metabolism **18**
- The power of the mind **19**
- Train your body **20**
- The best forms of exercise **20**
- Cardio **22**
- Pre- and post-workout nutrition **23**
- Pre-workout nutrition **25**
- Post-workout nutrition **26**
- Protein supplements **27**
- Meal preparation **28**
- Plan B – take away **29**
- Lean Body Guidelines **30**
- Portions – size does matter **32**
- Portion guide **33**
- Shopping guide **34**
- Guide to organic shopping **35**
- Reading food labels **37**
- Foods to avoid **39**
- Foods to enjoy **40**
- Sugar **41**
- Artificial sweeteners **46**
- Macro and micronutrients **48**
- The four basic nutrients **48**
- Water **49**
- Protein **51**
- Carbohydrates **53**
- Carb timing **55**
- Carbs 101 **56**
- Fruit and veg **58**
- Gluten **60**
- Fats **61**
- Low-fat foods **61**
- Cooking with oils **64**
- Essential fatty acids **65**
- Nuts and seeds **66**
- Food swaps **67**
- Stress and weight loss **68**
- Change your breath, change your body **72**
- Caffeine **73**
- Digestion **75**
- Poop **78**
- Transit time table **79**
- Beating the bloat **80**
- Gut intensive protocol **82**
- Fermenting **84**
- Emotional eating **86**
- Eating out of boredom **89**
- I know it's not good for me, but why can't I stop? **90**
- Practice gratitude **93**
- Find freedom from food **94**
- Use positive lingo **96**
- Find your passion **100**
- Be a bit selfish **101**
- Get on the 'no train' **101**
- Fake it 'til you make it **102**
- Tips to curb cravings **104**
- Sleep hygiene **108**
- Eating out made easy **109**
- The best foods by cuisine **110**
- Eating out do's and don'ts **111**
- What it takes to burn off common treats **112**
- How to handle slip-ups **113**
- What about cheat meals? **114**
- Alcohol **115**
- Your new meal structure **116**
- Meat and nut breakfast **117**
- Eating for fat loss and muscle tone **122**
- Late night snacking **123**
- Summary **125**
- Professional bio **128**
- References **129**

## **DISCLAIMER**

This book and its content are based on my clinical experience and my personal health journey. I am sharing this knowledge for educational purposes only.

The information provided in this guide does not constitute medical advice and should not be used as a substitute for diagnosis or treatment.

Consult your health care provider to ensure that this is the right plan for you before commencing this program. If you decide to follow these recommendations without obtaining the consent of a health care professional, then you are agreeing to accept full responsibility for your actions.

This nutrition program is not suitable for diabetics or individuals with chronic medical conditions. If you have known allergies or food intolerance, please consult your health care professional to ensure that this program is suitable for you.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process, or copied for public use without the prior written permission of the author.

Copyright © Nikolett Toth, 2014

# Welcome...

Thank you so much for purchasing my book, **The Lean Body Formula**, and making this amazing investment in your wellbeing. You have taken the first big step towards a healthier you!

Did you know that it is possible to lose weight without dieting, deprivation, calorie counting, or sweating for countless hours at the gym? Did you know that losing weight and creating an amazing body can actually be loads of fun?

Shortly, I am going to provide a step-by-step guide to creating the lean, toned body you have been longing for your whole life. I have created this special recipe myself. It has worked for me, as well as for hundreds of satisfied clients whom I have led on similar journeys.

This guide will help you create the body of your dreams, while revamping your health to a whole new level.

Forget about feeling hungry, eating the same bland, boring food every day,  
or dreading the malevolent scale each week.  
Instead, get ready to step outside your comfort zone.  
The excitement is about to begin.

Before we get started, take a few minutes to check in with yourself. Push everything else aside and decide if you are committed to following the entire program. You may be tempted to skip the bulk of the reading. Sure, you could jump straight to the eating plan. However, you should know that if you only put in half the work, you will only get half of the results. Instead, you can choose to put your phone away. Turn off the TV, and separate yourself from any other distractions. Give this opportunity your full attention.

Make a commitment to read at least half of the guide today. Highlight the parts that resonate with you and make some notes.

I look forward to assisting you on this voyage. At the final destination, you will find better health and the best shape of your life. Together, we will create a body that you absolutely love, both inside and out.

Keep an eye out for my weekly newsletters. I will be sending **FREE** tools to help you get the most out of this guide and best results possible.

I want to remind you that this guide is **NOT** a quick fix. Nor is it a short-term solution. It is a recipe for success. I can promise that, if you do follow these steps and incorporate the changes into your daily life, you will see and feel the remarkable benefits in no time.

My greatest hope is that the skills you acquire from this guide will last a lifetime. I want to improve the quality of your life, as well as the lives of everyone around you.

I would wish you luck, but all you really need is dedication!



## About the Author

### Nik Toth – Lean Body Coach

Adv. Dip Nut. Med.

Holistic Nutritionist, Personal Trainer, Director of The Lean Body Formula

My emotional attachment to food started at an early age. I remember my dear parents rewarding me with sweets when I was a little girl. Sometimes they would offer lollies to keep me quiet; I was quite a chatterbox. I recall the first time I used food to comfort myself. I can clearly evoke those same feelings, the ones which arose when I used food as a way of coping with stress. This was particularly prevalent during my teens, when classmates or boys would pick on me. As a young adult, I started caring even more about what people thought of me. As I became more conscious of my own body, my body image became an increasingly predominant issue. I always had a sweet tooth, likely from growing up on a high-sugar and high-carb Hungarian diet. My sweet habits had caught up with me by the time I reached my mid-teens. The result was a not-so-lean figure that I loathed. When I looked in the mirror, the body that stared back was nothing like the bodies I saw on magazine covers or TV shows. It wasn't the type of body that modern society idolised. I wanted so badly to be skinny. I thought that was all I needed to be happy. Little did I know...

By my late teens, I had already been through a number of failed diet attempts. By my early twenties, I was a 'serial dieter'. I jumped from one fad diet to another, often skipping meals. I would go from cutting out fats to eating nothing but a sour grapefruit and a hard-boiled egg. Despite of these enormous efforts, I was not any closer to reaching my goals. My sole purpose was to be skinny, end of story. With this constant thought plaguing the back of my mind, I never allowed myself to be fully present. I could not focus on the truly important things, such as my health. I constantly felt stressed. I reached for sweets as a way of dulling my worries. After all, this was the coping mechanism I had learned as a child. It was only natural for me to reach for food when I became anxious.

Slowly but surely, the constant dieting began to damage my digestion and metabolism. Due to the inconsistent food intake, I would go from nearly starving myself, to all-out bingeing. My digestion suffered a great deal. I was uncomfortably bloated, felt heavy after meals, and had low energy. I was also craving sugar like never before.

This combination spiraled out of control. I gained more weight. I experienced even more stress and anxiety. In final desperation, just when I thought I had tried everything, I sought help from a nutritionist who was recommended by a concerned friend.

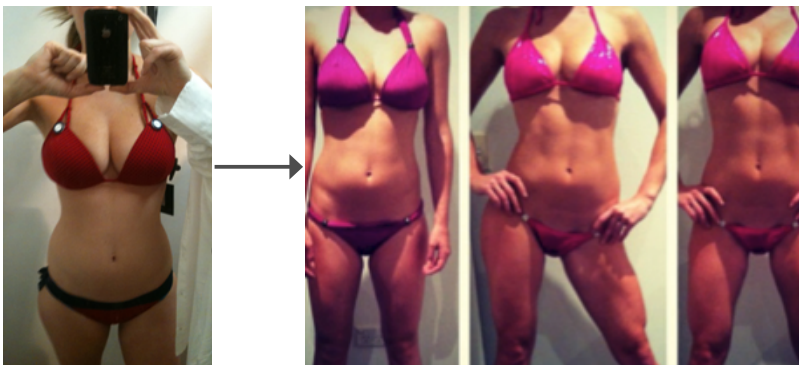
This is where my real healthy journey began. This is where my life changed forever. From that moment on, I never looked at food the same way again.

My focus shifted from losing weight to improving my health. All of a sudden, everything seemed to fall into place. I finally experienced what it was like to have a flat stomach, abundant energy, and glowing skin. I genuinely started to enjoy exercising. What was most surprising, was that while I was eating more than before, the excess weight continued to melt away.

Going through this life-changing experience made me realise that I wanted to help others feel the same way. As a result, I went on to study nutrition. During my studies, I recognised that resistance training was not only essential for maintaining health, but vital to achieving a lean, toned figure.

I found the information given by nutritionists and personal trainers to be contradictory and confusing. To bridge the gap, I decided to complete my group and personal training qualifications. Then I started a PT business called iGotPT. At the same time, I started blogging about my journey. I also began speaking on the radio weekly, spreading revolutionary ideas about weight-loss.

I was healthy and happy. Yet I realised that, despite everything, I still hadn't found the ultimate recipe for the lean, fit body I desired. I decided to sign up to compete in a natural body building competition. Motivated by the competition, I finally created the body of my dreams. I wanted to prove to myself and to everyone around me that with the right mindset anything is possible. I had no athletic background and I was never big on weight training, but I was determined. Despite juggling full-time studies, two part-time jobs, PT clients and running a household, I completed my training and got stage-ready in just under 8 weeks.



Transforming my body from the inside out was one of the wildest things I have ever done. It was also the most rewarding experience of my life. This endeavor taught me that anything is possible.

Through my training, I learned the best food and exercise combinations. This helped me create a recipe for true body transformation. Today, I call that recipe **The Lean Body Formula**.

This was a huge milestone for me. It taught me invaluable lessons, not just about nutrition and training but also about myself. I learned what I could achieve if I was determined.

Today I use these principles to help my clients transform their lives and bodies every day. I feel blessed to have this ability. I want to share this powerful knowledge with you.

You too can transform your health and create the body you deserve to have!

## *Eat your way to a leaner body*

Enjoy your journey,

*Nik x*



### **Acknowledgements**

My biggest thanks to Luke J. Greenwood for encouraging me to follow my passion for nutrition and being part of my journey. Thanks to all my amazing clients and followers for their encouragement and continuous support.



A black and white photograph of a woman with long hair, wearing a tank top and leggings, in a yoga tree pose (Vrikshasana) on a grassy field. Her hands are pressed together in a prayer position (Anjali Mudra) at chest level. The background shows a horizon line under a cloudy sky. The text 'Breathe Relax Release Repeat' is overlaid on the image. 'Repeat' is highlighted in red.

Breathe


Relax


Release

Repeat

## Word of Advice


These guidelines were designed to be followed for a minimum of 10-12 weeks, or until you achieve your ultimate goal and lean body. I recommend that you read this guide entirely and highlight the parts that resonate with you. Don't stop there. Keep revisiting these chapters and work through the exercises one-by-one. There will be times when you want to give up. I'm not telling you that it is going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it! Remind yourself that you deserve this. This is your time to end the vicious cycle once and for all, and transform your body from the inside out.

For extra support, head to Facebook and  the **Lean Body Facebook** page which I constantly updated with helpful articles, posts, and encouragement, to help you on your journey.

My **@leanbodycoach** Instagram page is also full of healthy recipes and daily inspiration. Come join me here, so you never miss a beat. **FOLLOW ME** 

*Remember that you are not alone!*

Come back to this guide at any time throughout your health journey. My hope is that you learn and embrace this powerful knowledge. It can transform your entire life!



**DON'T GIVE UP  
ON WHAT YOU  
WANT MOST,  
FOR WHAT YOU  
WANT NOW**

# All About Weight Loss

For many people, losing weight seems like one of the most challenging tasks of all time. In Western countries, weight loss has become a multi-billion dollar industry. The problem is that most weight loss programs and products don't address the underlying cause of excess weight. Millions of people are unable to shed unwanted kilos. Some of the culprits include poor digestive function, lack of essential nutrients, toxic overload and hormonal chaos. Not to mention one of the biggest contributors of all is emotional eating.

Due to the enormous amounts of refined carbohydrates and chemically enhanced, processed foods that most people consume on a daily basis, our delicate bodies are simply clogged up. When I say this, I speak from personal experience. I used to spend countless hours at the gym, and excess money on weight loss supplements.

Yet, I failed to acknowledge that the food choices I personally made were negatively affecting my body and the way I was feeling. When I reached my mid-twenties, I realised that my poor dietary and lifestyle choices were the reason that I ended up with excess baggage very quickly. My chubby bits made me feel uncomfortable and self-conscious. Socialising around comfort food and alcohol didn't help. It destroyed my digestion and made my liver suffer, which caused my body to start storing excess body fat.

At the time, I was working in Las Vegas in VIP services, looking after the most important and wealthiest clients of the casinos. My job required me to be a size six because that was the 'standard' in the entertainment and hospitality industry. They even weighed us at work once a month to make sure we were presentable and didn't gain weight. Having to step on the scale periodically and constantly having to worry about my weight caused me more stress and anxiety than I ever realised. I started to engage in negative self-talk, telling myself I wasn't good enough if I wasn't skinny. Combine that with poor eating habits, party lifestyle fuelled by alcohol, and repeated yo-yo dieting, I created a downward spiral and a vicious cycle of self-hate. I started finding comfort in junk food, and in response to that when I gained weight, I felt like even more of a failure.

The real shift only happened when I started to concentrate on my health and wellbeing, not when I found the next 'it' diet. When I changed my focus from getting skinny to becoming healthy, it was the only thing that ever worked and produced lasting results. This is when I experienced the biggest breakthrough, and started to feel the most confident in my own body. What I am trying to say is that if you have been struggling to lose weight, it is important that you understand why. You will get better results if you recognise your biggest challenge from the start. Is it poor dietary choices, or a lack of knowledge about food? Is it too much sugar or alcohol? Is it because you reach for food when you are stressed?

First and foremost, if you want to lose weight then you have to understand your own body enough to determine what you need to work on. What most people don't realise is that feeling like a failure is a part of the natural process of success. **It means that you are taking action. You are moving forward in a direction that will help you become something bigger and better.** If you have felt like a failure, or if you are feeling like one now, give yourself a pat on the back. You are in the right place at the right time!

Feeling like a failure is human nature. We all have to experience it in order to appreciate success. After all success in weight loss, or in anything for that matter, requires dedication and persistence.

As you read this book, I recommend that you remember the words of a very inspiring woman named Marie Forleo. I had the great opportunity to learn this line from her: **"Feeling like a failure means that you are moments away from your**

**biggest success!"**

1. Remember that the results are always  
worth it in the end.
2. The key to happiness is transforming your thoughts. Be happy **NOW**, not  
when you lose the weight. Embrace the present moment.  
Change your way of thinking, and  
your body will follow.
3. Stop comparing yourself to others. No matter how good you are, there is  
always going to be someone fitter, faster, richer or stronger than you.

**Accept and love yourself for who you are!**

There is not another you in this world.  
You are the only one in this world who can  
do what you do!

## Creating New Habits

Science has repeatedly proven that, if you stick with your fitness and nutrition commitments for long enough, nothing can stop you from attaining the amazing reward of looking great. When your body feels tight and strong, you look fabulous. Your confidence will naturally start soaring. It is an amazing feeling!

Now that you are here, you have the right guidance to transform your body. It does not matter how old you are, or how low you believe your fitness level is. All it takes is time, dedication, and knowledge. In fact, you will only have to commit roughly 8% of your day for a mere 10-12 weeks.

I hour of exercise is only 4 % of your day  
I hour of food prep is 4 % of your day

While people tend to focus on the physical aspects of getting fit, the mental aspect is what will begin to transform your life. Looking good is one thing, but the real proof is in how you feel. You should feel amazing!

Another aspect of fitness that tends to be neglected, is the need to maintain your figure. When the bulk of the hard work is behind you, it is okay to loosen up those reins. However, I do suggest that you follow some rules in order to maintain your new body and avoid falling back into old bad habits.

### Stick to each new habit for at least 21 days

Why 21 days? According to Dr. Maxwell Maltz, the author of the best-selling book *Psycho-Cybernetics*, it takes 21 days to form a new habit. Dr. Maxwell studied human behaviour. He observed that both in himself and his patients, it took an average of 21 days to adjust to a new situation and develop a habit.

I'm not suggesting that if you stick it out for 21 days you can't fall off the wagon. However, I am certain that it becomes easier to continue good habits once you have committed to them for at least 21 straight days.

Before we dig deep and discover how to becoming a lean, fat-burning machine for life, please hop onto my brand new [Lean Body Facebook page](#). There you will find recipes, Q&A's and inspiration to help you stay on track and on top of your new habits. You can also ask me questions regarding this guide. Let's get started!

## Example Nutritional Habits

Take fish oil and a multivitamin	Eat lean protein with each meal	Sleep at least 7 hours today
Slow down your eating	Eat fewer carbohydrates	Drink 2L of water today
Stop eating at 80% full	Eat around 4 times today	Drink BCAA recovery drink
Eat at least 5 servings of veg	Record what you eat today	Eat mostly whole foods

## Be Consistent

Losing a couple of kilos just to look good for beach season and then letting yourself go again, is not the way to keep a healthy and lean body.

**Committing to clean and healthy eating on a consistent basis requires a healthy lifestyle.** This doesn't mean that you have to track all of your calories in an app or food journal. Once you learn to listen to your body and know what works for you, eating healthy becomes second nature. Individuality means that we respond to changes and food intake differently. What works for you may not work for your partner, sister or your friend. I'll take it a step further. What works for you today may not work for you two years from now. Our lives are constantly changing.

Thanks to the stress of a busy, modern life, we can easily fall behind on our health goals. That is why it is important to prioritise.

**Treat your body like a precious gift,  
so it never gives up on you.**

IT TAKES 4 WEEKS FOR YOU  
TO SEE YOUR BODY CHANGE

IT TAKES 8 WEEKS FOR  
FRIENDS AND FAMILY

IT TAKES 12 WEEKS FOR  
THE REST OF THE WORLD

KEEP GOING...



## Ditch the Scale

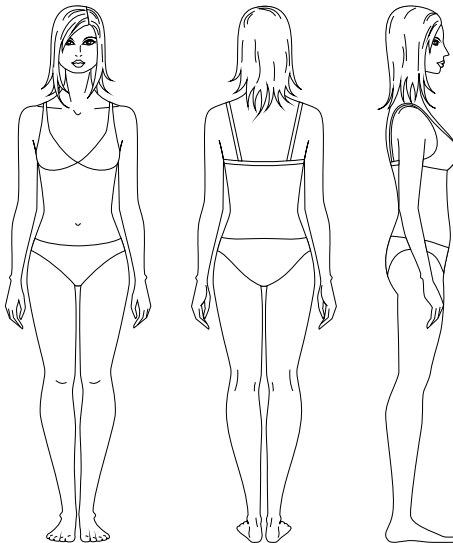
Before we get into the juicy stuff, I'd like you to ditch your bathroom scale, at least for the time that you are under my guidance. Body weight can fluctuate on a daily basis, along with our hormone levels. This is especially true for us ladies. What we eat, how we work out, and how much water we drink also affects this variation.

**I don't want to let this discourage you!**

Muscle weighs more than fat. When you start doing resistance training, your lean muscle mass will increase. Therefore, the numbers on the scale might not decrease by much. This is totally fine! Muscle tone and definition are not things you can measure on the scale. They are measured by how your clothes fit and how you look naked. Yes, that's right! We all want to look good naked, don't we?

## It's Selfie Time

Start by taking some good photos of yourself from the front, the side and the back. You can repeat this fortnightly. This will be a much better way to track your progress. You will be proud beyond belief to compare these with your after photos. If you have a smartphone, then you can download the free app called Photo Collage. This app helps you link your photos together for comparing your before and after shots.





## NIK'S FOOD PHILOSOPHY

*Put your health before your weight*

There is an undeniable connection between the food you eat and the way you look or feel. I would even say that it contributes to what you achieve and attract in your life. This guide is not just another diet book. It is the journal of my own health journey. It is also a comprehensive tool to help you achieve wellness from the inside out. While teaching you good nutrition and lifestyle habits, it will help you create the ultimate lean body of your dreams. I do not promote any specific diet. I believe in eating **REAL** whole foods, listening to your body, and nourishing yourself with each bite.

### Forget counting calories and deprivation forever!

Learn which foods aid your digestion while providing the essential nutrients. Discover foods that energise your body so it learns to stop craving processed foods and sugars. When you start eating more nutritionally and exercising smarter, losing body fat will become effortless.

When you appreciate your body the way it is, it will become easier to maintain. Weight loss will become effortless, when you start recognising the beauty inside. Don't put your happiness on hold because you are not in your ideal shape.

Losing weight alone won't necessarily give you more confidence. However, self-confidence can lead to weight loss and a strong body. What we eat has an enormous effect, not only on how we look, but also on how we feel. Food can either support or destroy our mental health and emotional well being. I have experienced this first hand.

With all of my heart, I want to discourage  
you from counting calories!

First, I find that people get more anxious about food when they count calories. Anxiety, as explained later, can lead to weight gain.

Second, you simply won't need to count calories if you follow the outline of my plan. By following the meal plan, you will save yourself time and energy.

Spend your time doing the things you love!

## What is REAL food?

Throughout this book I use the term 'real' food. To me, eating real food means avoiding foods that are heavily processed; instead choosing nutrient-rich foods as close to their natural state as possible.

Real foods or whole foods can be found at your local grocers and farmer's markets. They include foods that have not been altered from their natural state, such as fresh fruits, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts and legumes. One of my favourite sayings is: If your granny wouldn't recognise it, you shouldn't eat it!

The longer the food's shelf life is, the shorter yours is!

## Digestion

Digestion is the cornerstone of health. Hence, creating a lean and healthy body starts with addressing digestive wellness. High amounts of processed foods, sugar, alcohol and coffee, which many people consume in our rushing world, throw the digestive system out of balance. A few of the consequences include bloating, constipation, allergies, food intolerance, fatigue, acne and excess weight gain.

That is why digestion is the very first thing to address when it comes to losing weight. I dedicate a whole chapter to digestive health. When you implement the recommended changes, you will begin to improve your digestive health and transform your body!

## Eat More Weigh Less

Eating food more frequently is my second most important principle. I generally find this to be the most challenging concept for people to accept. It does not make logical sense to eat more when you are trying to lose weight. Switch your mentality from 'eat less, move more' to 'eat more, weigh less'. Eating more than the recommended three main meals per day has many benefits.

Eating smaller, more frequent meals keeps your blood sugar levels stable throughout the day. Avoid overloading the digestive system with too much food at one time. When you consume smaller, more frequent meals, each containing some form of protein, you can stabilise energy levels, and minimise insulin production. This can help you avoid fat storage.

It is also important to consume adequate calories and nutrients. Let's be honest, it is difficult to obtain all of the essential nutrients from a 1000-1200 calorie meal plan, which many weight loss programs recommend. Not getting the necessary nutrients can lead to deficiency, cravings, weight gain and even chronic disease.

**The key is to reduce the 'empty calories' coming from processed foods and increase the calories from whole foods.**

Most weight management programs will recommend that you adapt a low calorie diet. In fact, this does exactly the opposite of what you want to achieve. Reducing your calories too much can slow down your metabolism. While it may result in weight loss initially, long term it will damage your metabolism. Your body adapts to function with such a low energy intake. It will work against you to preserve energy instead of spending it. In simple terms, it will hold onto body fat instead of tapping into its fat stores. So how do we speed up the metabolism?

## Speeding up your Metabolism

Some people can eat anything they like without gaining a kilo, while others just need to look at a muffin and put on weight. The difference between those people is their metabolism. You cannot change your genetics, but there are things that you can do to boost a sluggish metabolism.

**Exercise daily** – focus on weight training instead of cardio, because lean muscle will increase your metabolic rate.

**Drink plenty of water** – Get at least 30ml per kilogram (or 0.5oz/lbs) of body weight, plus 1 litre for each hour of exercise. Dehydration will make your muscles cramp. It will also make fat loss and detoxification impossible.

**Eat smaller meals more frequently** – About every 3 hrs.

**Eat more protein** – Protein raises your metabolic rate by 30% because the body has to work harder to digest it.

**Do not overeat** – Overeating can slow your metabolism and make you feel sluggish.

## THE POWER OF THE MIND

*You are beautiful inside and out*

Each and every one of us is blessed with a unique shape, size and genetic makeup. Whilst you can work hard to transform your body on the outside, if you don't love and accept yourself on the inside, you will never be fulfilled, no matter how great you look. If you are after a real transformation, the makeover has to start from the inside by accepting and unconditionally loving who you are.

The more you relax and accept that you are exactly where you need to be at this exact moment, the more enjoyable this journey will become. When you surrender and stop worrying about your weight, you will see that your body will also let go and stop holding onto the extra kilos.

***Enjoying the learning process is what's going to help you keep going and sustain results.***

It's not about the destination  
It's all about the journey

If you struggle with acceptance, then I recommend that you explore different relaxation techniques. Look for something that helps you become more present and appreciative. Yoga, meditation, deep belly breathing and gratitude journaling can all help you create a more positive outlook and attitude towards life.

Guided meditation that is geared towards the area of your struggles can also be helpful. It reinforces positive affirmations. Meditation is a fantastic skill to master, I speak from personal experience. Learning to mediate has certainly made a positive impact on my life.

**My favourite meditation sites are: please click the links**

The Meditation Podcast

The Stillness Project

Omvana

Headspace

With all that being said, I am not suggesting that you accept being overweight or out of shape and carry on with life. In fact, I recommend quite the opposite! If you don't like your current situation, I encourage you to change and take action.

You need to change the way you think in order to achieve a different outcome. Instead of focusing on where you are stuck, concentrate on where you want to go. Think and behave as if you are fit, healthy, and sexy. You will soon be actually feeling that way.

## Ditch negative self-talk!

Trust your abilities and let this book guide you through the journey of well-being and help you create a beautiful body you can be proud of.

### Train Your Body

What you eat will determine your size, and what you do for exercise will determine your shape. Training is essential to creating the body of your dreams. It is also the best stress-management tool. Let's be honest. We are facing an epidemic of stress. Our stress levels are much higher than our ancestors ever had to face. We have to juggle high demand jobs and careers with family, managing a household, sometimes even studying too. It all adds up.

Any form of exercise that switches you off is a great stress management tool. Yoga has been shown to reduce stress levels more than any other sport, because it focuses on quieting the mind.

### The Best Form of Exercise

The **Lean Body Training Guide (coming soon)** will include the perfect exercises to increase definition and reduce body fat. These workouts are designed to be no longer than 45 minutes. You can be in and out of the gym in one hour.

I personally prefer exercising first thing in the morning. It energises me and sets my intention for the day. This way I begin my day with an accomplishment, which is a great way to start!



If you leave exercise for the end of your working day, you become more likely to talk yourself out of it. Therefore, I suggest that you get it out of your way first thing in the morning. Schedule it in if you have to! Get a training buddy and hold each other accountable. Working out together can be so much fun.

When it comes to keeping fit and looking young, weight training is your best bet. The human body was designed to lift and throw heavy things or sprint for short bursts if being chased. We were certainly not designed to pedal along the cross trainer for hours on end, while watching TV. You will never get a Lean Body like that.

As we age, our lean body mass naturally decreases. To stay young and beautiful, stop wasting your money on anti-ageing serums. Begin eating nutritious foods and start lifting weights. By increasing muscle you can slow the ageing process. I am not talking about bodybuilding or bulking up. I'm simply suggesting the practice of keeping your muscles hard and toned, so they don't give in to gravity. Losing muscle is much easier than you think. It is also something that you never want to allow.

**Remember the more muscle you have, the more calories you burn even at rest, because it increases your metabolic rate.**

Weight training, functional training and CrossFit are all great ways to keep fit. They apply resistance to the muscles. Weight training also improves bone health. It decreases your risk of fractures when you grow older. This may not concern you now, but you will be grateful for strong bones later.

## Cardio

If you want to have a rocking, young-looking body, focus on weight training and high intensity cardiovascular (HIIT) exercises. Doing cardio in the morning on empty stomach is an effective way of burning more body fat.

# PRE AND POST WORKOUT

## *Nutrition is Key*

There is a lot of confusion about pre and post-workout nutrition, but what you eat is significantly going to affect the desired outcome. I find that most women eat nothing or grab a protein bar, not knowing that their heavily processed protein treat is only sabotaging their goals.

Firstly, the key is to stay hydrated during your workout, especially if you are exercising in the heat and sweating a lot. A minimum of 500ml of water for each hour of exercise is recommended. But the more, the better!

If your goal is to get lean and toned, and minimise post-workout muscle soreness, it is crucial that you consume protein before AND after training. It is also important to have quality food that fuels your workout. Not eating a proper meal before a workout is kind of like trying to drive a car without any fuel in it. You can expect the engine to break down. Your muscles are no different.

Muscles are made of proteins, which are made of amino acids. When you complete an intense workout, you can expect the tearing of the muscle fibres. This is why you are sore the next day. These muscles require 24-72 hours to repair. During the recovery process your body is constantly burning calories.

### **This is great news!**

This is why weight training is more effective in creating weight loss than cardio alone. While cardio burns calories on the spot, weight training extends the calorie expenditure for up to three days post exercise. No complaints here right?

Muscles use glycogen (sugar stored in the muscles and liver) as fuel when they perform. When trying to decrease body fat, the goal is to deplete as much glycogen as possible, so the body is forced to tap into its fat reserves for fuel.

### **This is what we want!**

Your body makes glycogen from food. It does so especially well from carbohydrates because they are converted into glucose very efficiently. This is why you want to limit carb intake if you want to burn body fat. That being said, you still need to eat some carbs. The key is to eat enough to support your daily activities, without storing the excess as body fat.

**As you can see, protein and carbohydrates are equally important. You must consume both in the right amounts to create a lean and toned body.**

**Now let's break this down!**



Many people ask me whether exercising on empty stomach is effective. As mentioned earlier, the goal is to deplete as much glycogen as possible during exercise.

Those who prefer exercising first thing in the morning will be pleased to know that training, after essentially fasting for 8 hours, is actually more effective in depleting glycogen than in a non-fasting state. The reason being is that intense exercise while fasting depletes glycogen faster than the body can replenish.

**In short, yes it is completely fine to exercise on an empty stomach, as long as the training doesn't last for more than 60 minutes.**

I personally like to sip on a BCAA drink, which is water mixed with a serve of **Branch Chain Amino Acids**. BCAAs are amino acids that prevent muscle breakdown and increase protein synthesis. I recommend this to anyone who really want to see results fast.

Please refer to the **Lean Body Supplement Buyer's Guide** for my favourite brands and flavours.

Note that this BCAA drink is not a caffeine and artificial junk-filled preworkout

supplement you get at most gyms. This is a quality add-on that fuels your muscles and can help you get lean faster and improve your recovery.

## Pre-Workout Nutrition

Many people get this wrong and consume energy bars, fruit smoothies and sports drinks before training, which is completely counter-productive.

Pre-workout meals that are high in simple carbs destroy your ability to deplete energy and inhibit fat burning.

To get the best results, it is best to eat a proper meal with protein, healthy fats and non-starchy green veggies 2 hours before training. This allows the body enough of time for digestion and provides fuel for training.

### *1. 2 hours before training*

**Palm size protein (chicken)**

**1 handful of green vegetables**

**1 teaspoon of Olive Oil**

If having no carbs prior to exercise leaves you feeling fatigued, it is acceptable to add 1 cupped handful of good carbs such as pumpkin or sweet potato to the pre-workout meal.

If you don't have time for a proper meal, you can have a protein shake mixed with water 30 minutes prior to exercising. The amino acids in the protein will do the same as the BCAA drink; help prevent muscle breakdown and aid recovery.

### *2. 0-1 hour before training*

**Protein powder**

**1-2 cups water**

## Post-Workout Nutrition

Eating protein post-workout is crucial, as it prevents muscle breakdown and stimulates the growth of lean muscle tissue. **Hello definition!**

For this reason, you should always refuel your body with a meal containing protein and carbohydrates within 1-2 hours. Including carbohydrates post-workout can actually help minimise cortisol production, which is the hormone blamed for stubborn belly fat!

This is why the post-workout protein smoothie below with a serving of fruit is a great option. Not only does it reduce cortisol levels, but it also helps to restore liver glycogen and improve performance the next day.

### *1. 0-2 hours post training*

- 1 palm size protein (fish or chicken)**
- 1 cupped handful of carbs (sweet potato)**
- 2 handful green vegetables (broccoli)**

### *2. 0-2 hours post training*

- Strawberricious Protein Smoothie**
- 1 scoop vanilla protein powder**
  - ½ cup strawberries**
  - ½ cup spinach leaves (optional)**
  - ½ cup unsweetened almond milk**
  - 1 cup water & ice**

If you don't have a chance to eat a meal or make a smoothie after training, you could have protein powder with water straight after the session. Then, 1-2 hours later a full meal described above, including carbs, protein and veggies.

**Hot Tip** Before leaving my house in the morning, I prepare a post-workout smoothie and store it in a thermos container. It keeps my smoothie chilled for 4-5 hours, providing the perfect post-workout snack.

## Protein Supplements

Although not necessary, a good quality protein powder is suggested to complement your Lean Body Training. I highly recommend it because it delivers the amino acids required for tone and definition.

Ideally, you should consume your protein shake within 30 minutes after your workout. To get results fast avoid mixing it with milk, soymilk, or any nut milks. Simply blend it with water and ice or add 1 tablespoon of chia seeds for extra fibre. You can choose a natural low-carb whey protein isolate. Or, if you prefer, you can also opt for a plant-based vegan option. The best vegan formulas combine brown rice and pea protein. Your protein powder should always be low-carb and natural. It should be free of artificial colours, flavours and sweeteners. It is okay to have natural sweeteners such as stevia or xylitol. **AVOID SOY** protein please!

Refer to the **Lean Body Supplement Buyer's Guide** for my favourite picks!



## Meal Preparation

**“Fail to prepare, prepare to fail”** is the golden truth when it comes to getting real results! Preparing your meals in advance only takes 4% commitment each day, but it can make or break your overall results.

When your food is not prepared, it is too easy to grab a few biscuits or a cup of coffee instead of a proper meal. That will definitely not assist your goal of becoming a Lean Body babe.

Food prep is an essential part of this process, so start mastering your skills in the kitchen! You don't have to be a master chef to prepare your meals. My recipes are simple, quick and contain minimal ingredients to make your life easy.

**Not being a good cook is no excuse. If you can read the recipe, you can**



**cook them!**

## Plan B – Takeout

### ***Always have a plan B!***

As much as I try, even I can't always prepare my food in advance. For these occasions I have a few places in mind where I know I can easily grab a healthy snack or meal.

My favourite picks are

**Salad bars** – You can easily put a healthy option together. They always have protein: chicken or tuna; good carbs: pumpkin, rice, lentils, chickpeas; and plenty of green salad options.

**Fish shops** – A lot of them grill fresh fish and serve salads.

**BBQ chicken** – Good old rotisserie chicken (without the skin) is a good option if there is nothing else around. Grab a packet of salad greens with it, or a head of broccoli, and blanch it with hot water. Add 1/3 avocado and lemon dressing.

**Thai food** – Stir-fries are low-carb, high-protein and full of veggies. Ask for extra vegetables instead of rice!

**Japanese** – Sashimi is best, with a miso soup and seaweed salad. Sushi is a decent option too, especially if it is made with brown rice. Order the fresh rolls with no mayo, creamy sauce, cream cheese or tempura (deep fried) ingredients.

**Supermarket** – a last resort. Grab a can of tuna, minute brown rice, raw nuts and some spinach leaves. Squeeze fresh lemon on top.

Think in advance!

Find out what's near your home or work so you don't go hungry, or make bad choices when haven't packed any food. Lastly, always have a can of tuna and a fork in your bag. One of the most convenient snacks you can always have on the go is my minute-made sushi featured in the Lean Body Meal Plan.

## Lean Body Guidelines

- **Start each day with lemon water.** Squeeze half of a fresh lemon into 400ml of water. Drink it first thing upon rising, just after you brush your teeth. Make sure you rinse your mouth with clean water to protect your tooth enamel and prevent sensitivity. By adopting this healthy habit you can hydrate and alkalisise your body first thing in the morning. This will also kick-start your digestion and liver detoxification processes, which is going to be very crucial for fat loss!
- **Drink at least ¼ of your water intake first thing in the morning.** This will help you hydrate, and flush out toxins early in the day.
- **Eat mostly whole foods** – Wholefoods, by definition, are foods that have been processed as little as possible. They are free from additives and artificial substances. These include fresh fruits and vegetables as close as possible to their natural state. They will improve your overall wellbeing, and make weight loss a piece of cake.
- **Cut the C.R.A.A.P. out of your diet! – Avoid refined Carbohydrates, Refined sugar, Alcohol, Artificial Sweeteners and Processed foods.** These are the foods that will make you feel like crap, because they are acidic and unhealthy. They will also make you age faster. If caring for your health is not good enough of a reason to avoid them, then do it for the sake of preserving your beauty. Artificial sweeteners have actually been shown to make you long for more sugar, therefore contributing to more weight gain. Then there are the endless side effects thanks to all of those nasty chemicals. ***Yuck!***
- **Focus on nourishment** – Eat foods that nourish you, as opposed to foods that you know will make you feel sluggish or unwell. For example, if you know wheat causes tiredness or a foggy feeling, then it's best to cut it out. At this stage your body may not be able to tolerate it well. It doesn't mean you can never have it again, but at least ditch it for now for the length of this program.
- Make sure your meals contains **healthy fats, carbohydrates and protein.** These in combination are essential for optimal body function and weight loss. Believe it or not, fats are an essential part of weight loss. This is especially true for omega-3 fatty acids, which come from fish, walnuts, flax and chia seeds. I don't like to recommend too many supplements, but a good quality fish oil is a must!
- Eat your carbohydrates within **3 hours after your workout!** This is very important for body composition. Your body will use these carbs for recovery instead of storing them as fat. If you train after work in the evening, it is fine to have carbs for dinner instead of lunch.

- **Eat the veggie portion of your meal first.** Then eat the carbs and protein. Let the salads and veggies fill you up so you are less likely to stuff yourself with the rest.
- **Stop before you are full.** There is no need to clear your whole plate. You are not a child anymore. You don't have to sit at the table until you have finished the last bite. **Eat only as much as you need** for your size, and learn the appropriate portion for your body.





## Portion Size Does Matter

Did you know that your stomach is roughly the size of your fist?

Now make a fist and take a good look. Imagine an amount of food that is equivalent to the size of your fist. It isn't much at all.

Although your stomach can stretch up to 10 times its original size and accommodate significantly more food than required, it is highly unnecessary. This puts enormous pressure on the digestive system. It can literally cause 'injury' to your intestines. It is best to eat small, more frequent portions, as opposed to large meals that are easy for your body to break down.

The best way to measure your portions, without a kitchen scale, is by using your own hand as a guide. Your palm is the perfect indication of how much meat, carbs and veggies you should eat.

Whilst I don't encourage weighing all of your food, I do recommend buying a small kitchen scale. This will help you gauge your portions. Once you get some practice, you can ditch those scales too.

## Portion Guide (per serve/meal)

Carbs should be about 1 cupped handful.

This guide is based on a 65 kg female and 85 kg male.

FOOD	FEMALE	MALE
Eggs	2 full eggs + 1 egg whites	2 full eggs + up to 2-3 egg whites
Chicken / Turkey	90 – 110g	140 – 160g
Beef / Pork / Lamb	80 – 100g	150g
Fish	140 – 160g	180 – 200g
Breakfast Grain (oats / buckweat) measure raw	60g	80-100g
Lunch Carbs (rice / quinoa) measure cooked	50 – 70g	80-100g
Starches & Legumes (sweet potato / lentils) measure cooked	100g	120 – 140g
Non-Startchy Veggies and Salad	2 – 3 cups	3 cups
Fats (oils) / meal	1 tbsp	1tbsp

## Lean Body Babe Shopping Guide

Keeping a healthy pantry is essential if you want to see changes in your body and in the way you feel. If you keep junk food in the house, you will end up eating junk food. However, if your cupboards and fridge are full of fresh and healthy foods, you are much more likely to eat those.

### **These tips will provide a good outline for healthy shopping:**

**Buy and eat whole foods** – Choose foods that are as close as possible to their natural state. For example, substitute ready-made muesli bars with a homemade trail mix with nuts, seeds and shredded coconut.

**Make a meal plan each week** – Create a shopping guide based on a meal plan. It will save you loads of time and money, and prevent you from buying food you don't need.

**Don't go shopping hungry** – Seriously!

This can lead to buying unnecessary items, which won't serve your purpose.

**Stay out of the inner aisles of the supermarket** – Those aisles are full of processed and packaged foods. Instead, stick to the outer aisles. These areas are packed with fresh produce, fruit, veggies, nuts, seeds and meat

**Choose organic where possible** – We are exposed to about 100 different chemicals a day from the environment and the food we eat. These substances can accumulate in the body, potentially causing toxic overload, liver congestion and inability to lose body fat. You can reduce the toxic burden by choosing organic food, which is free of pesticides and chemicals. If organic produce is not available to you, please refer to the 'veggie wash' procedure described on page 36.

**Read food labels** – Continue reading to learn how!

# Guide to Organic Shopping

Organic produce is better for your health than conventional options. They are free of pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, antibiotics and growth hormones. These chemicals are hard on our bodies. When they are not eliminated properly, these chemicals accumulate in our system. This can cause all sorts of issues including hormonal imbalance, allergies, decreased immune function, and liver problems.

Organic produce may cost a little more, but there is no better investment than your health. Did you know that a head of conventional broccoli is sprayed 27 times before it ends up on the shelves? Whilst it is nearly impossible to eat 100% organic all of the time, at least aim to buy organic versions of fruits and vegetables that you cannot peel.

**Broccoli** – It is impossible to clean completely, as pesticides accumulate in the tiny florets.

**Apples** – The wax coating on the apple traps the pesticides so you cannot wash them off.

**Celery** – It is sprayed 26 times and you can't peel celery.

**Strawberries** – These berries contain up to 36 types of pesticides.

**Spinach and lettuce** – These leafy greens contain some of the most potent pesticides.

**Root vegetables - Carrots, beetroot, potatoes** – Pesticides are sprayed on the ground and accumulate in the soil, where they are absorbed by these edible roots.

**Chicken** – Not only are they fed pesticide-riddled food, but the chooks are treated with antibiotics and hormones so they don't get sick in their confined living spaces.

**Dairy** – Dairy cows are treated with antibiotics and growth hormones. These end up in milk and cheese products. Synthetic hormones wreak havoc on our fragile hormone systems. This can cause weight gain, mood swings, bad PMS, migraines, early onset of puberty and more.

## Veggie Wash

It is not always possible to buy or afford organic food. While you can peel a lot of fruits and vegetables to reduce the pesticides, you then lose the most valuable part of the plant. The bulk of the fibre and nutrients are found in the skin. Washing with water is not effective because most produce such as apples or cucumbers are coated with wax. This seals in the pesticides. However, there is another method you can use to reduce contaminant and pesticide residue called the **VEGGIE WASH**.



Make sure your sink is clean.

Fill a sink halfway with lukewarm water.

Add 1/2 - 1 cup of Apple Cider Vinegar and mix.  
(Depending on the size of your sink).

Add your fruits and veggies.

Soak for about 10 - 15 minutes.

Rinse your produce well and store as usual.

## Reading Food Labels

To make products more appealing, food manufacturers make nutrition claims such as **'low fat'** or **'high fibre,'** when in fact they aren't actually better for you. Instead of relying on misleading claims, check out the ingredients first. They are always listed in order of weight. When the first or second ingredient is sugar, you already know that's not the kind of food you want to put in your body.

The nutrition panel provides information on calories and the nutrient breakdown of the food. It tells you how much protein, carbohydrates and fats the food has. It also shows the amounts of sodium, sugar, salt, fibre and additives. Stay away from food containing additives and colours, especially blue, red and yellow.

Food additives, preservatives and chemicals have to be processed and eliminated by your liver. Your liver, being your second largest organ, acts as a traffic controller. It delegates whether substances in the body get used or stored as body fat. When the liver is working overtime eliminating such chemicals, fat loss is not going to take priority.

**Avoid additives at all cost.  
Eat fresh whole foods!**

The nutrition information is provided per 100g and per serving. If you have ever looked at the recommended portion of chocolate, for example, it is literally just 3-4 tiny squares. Yet, people tend to ignore those portion guides. If you are trying to compare two products, look at the energy they contain per 100g to determine which one is a healthier choice.

## Choose

Food with less than 5g total fat per 100g or 5-10g total fat per 100g

Food with less than 300mg sodium per 100g

Food with less than 6g of sugar per 100g

Food with more than 5g dietary fibre per 100g

## What it means

**Reduced fat** – means at least 25% less fat than the original product. It still does not mean that it is healthy! Find out why in the 'Fats' chapter.

**Low-fat** – means the food must have no more than 3 grams of fat per serving.

BUYERS BEWARE!  
**LOW-FAT = EXTRA SUGAR**

## FOODS TO AVOID

### **Refined sugar**

Cordials, soft drinks, bottled juices, and artificial sweeteners

### **Processed foods**

Anything that comes in a package and has a long list of ingredients or a long shelf life. e.g. chips and biscuits

### **Wheat**

Pasta, bread, and baked goods

### **Oils**

Oily, deep-fried, fast foods and foods with trans fats  
e.g. margarine, biscuits, hot chips/fries

### **Condiments**

Mayo, tomato and BBQ sauce, sweet chilli sauce etc.

### **Gluten**

As a cheap filler, gluten is everywhere from processed foods to cosmetics. Stay away!



## FOODS TO ENJOY

### **Protein**

Free range/organic chicken, turkey, lamb, pork, beef, rabbit, kangaroo, seafood, eggs (both yolk and white), raw nuts and seeds, cottage cheese, Greek yogurt.

### **Vegetables**

Eat mostly raw or lightly cooked.

### **Fruit**

One piece per day. See the list of recommended low GI/low-fructose fruits.

### **Gluten-free whole grains in moderation**

Quinoa, wild rice, brown rice, oats, amaranth, millet

### **Raw nuts and seeds**

E.g. hazelnuts, walnut, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds. Limit peanuts. Peanuts are not actually a nut, but belong to the legume family.

### **Vinegars**

Apple cider vinegar, red wine vinegar or balsamic.

### **Coconut oil**

It is a saturated fat, but a good kind offering many health benefits. Using coconut oil can actually promote weight loss.

### **Cold pressed oils on salads**

Extra virgin olive oil, sesame oil, almond oil, macadamia nut oil, flax seed oil, hemp seed oil, avocado oil, grape seed oil

# SUGAR

## *The bittersweet Truth*

One of the first questions everyone always wants to ask is how much sugar is safe to have? I could lie and say that I think it is fine to have some. However, I would prefer if you just said no to sugar, especially fructose. Let me explain why I prefer that you avoid sugar.

First, let's take a look at history and human physiology. We were not designed to eat sugar regularly. We evolved without it. Back in the caveman days, we only ate sugar in the form of seasonal fruit and occasional honey. Nowadays, we have options every which way we turn. This means easy access to a quick sugar fix. I'm not just talking about chocolate and lollies or the sugar you add to your coffee or tea.

### Sugar is hidden everywhere from salad dressings and cereals, to marinades and spices!

There are different types of sugar in food, but it's fructose that has the biggest impact on our waistlines and health. Our bodies can't metabolise fructose very well. When we eat fructose, it goes straight to our liver, which immediately stores it as body fat. At the same time, it increases our triglycerides and bad cholesterol (think fatty liver).

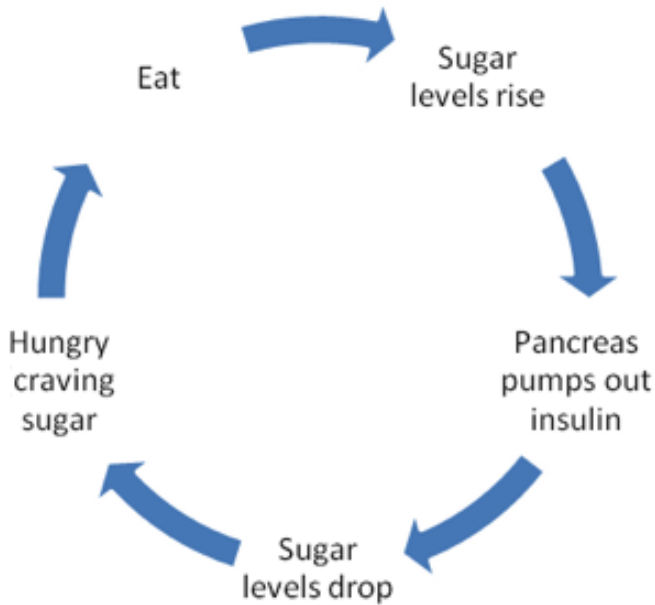
Just to give you an idea, table sugar is about 50% fructose, 50% glucose. Honey is 40% fructose. High fructose corn syrup (HFCS), the main ingredients for soft drinks, baked goods, jams, frozen desserts, lunch meats (yes!), yogurt and condiments is about 55% fructose. Meanwhile, agave syrup, which has gained huge popularity recently and is used in many so-called 'health foods', can be 70-97% fructose!!

Fructose not only increases our fat levels, but also messes with our hunger hormones. The troublesome result is an inability to tell whether we are hungry or full. Unlike with proteins or fats, where our brain tells us to stop eating, fructose flies under the radar. We never get a signal to stop. That's why it is so easy to overindulge in sweet treats or polish off an entire cake without realising it.

Many people also make the mistake of reaching for sugary snacks when they are low on energy. But did you know that sugar doesn't actually energise you? In fact, it has the opposite effect. It makes you crash - and crash hard.

Let me explain what happens every time you eat sugar. First, your blood sugar levels rise. Then your pancreas has to dump insulin into the blood supply to bring the sugar levels back to normal, so the high blood sugar levels don't cause havoc on your entire system. After this happens, you experience the 'crash' and often a craving for even more sugar because your blood sugar levels just lowered.

Each person is only supplied with a limited amount of insulin over a lifetime. Guess what happens when you run out? Say hello to type 2 diabetes and insulin injections – not something fun to look forward to.



## For long-term fat loss

With high levels of insulin circulating in your blood, it is nearly impossible to burn body fat because insulin is a storage hormone. Avoid creating the above sugar-insulin cycle by cutting sugar and processed foods from your diet.

# Facts About Sugar

**1.** Our digestive tract houses nearly 2 kilograms of bacteria, ideally with a balance of good and bad. Sugar feeds the bad bacteria, creating a perfect breeding ground for bacteria, pathogens and fungus. Yes, that's right - fungus! For many women that means reoccurring yeast infections. The cause isn't just your sweaty yoga pants, but rather the overpopulation of bad bacteria in your gut.

Once your gut bacteria goes out of balance and the bad guys take over, you can experience poor digestive function, bloating, gas, yeast infections and not-to-mention a strong urge for sugar.

If this rings a bell, then you need to fix up your gut first. Once you heal the gut and restore good bacteria in the digestive tract, your symptoms should go away for good, and losing body fat will become a whole lot easier.

The gut is our second brain. What goes on inside the gut has a direct effect on how we look, feel and think. These bad guys have the ability to send signals to your brain, telling you to eat more sugar so that they can survive. Clever, huh?

**2.** Another reason why sugar is not our friend, is because it makes us age faster. According to research conducted by the University of Montreal, sugar can make you age faster, whilst a low sugar diet can actually lengthen your lifespan. In this study, it was observed that the cells lived longer when glucose was decreased from the diet.

**3.** Sugar is addictive: According to research neuroscientist and nutrition expert Dr. Nicole Avena (1), sugar acts like a drug. It activates the brain's 'reward system', causing you to crave more and more of it.

Find out more by watching this [VIDEO](#)

**4.** Sugar is a major cause of high cholesterol. Sugar causes damage to the walls of the arteries. The body's protection mechanism kicks in and produces cholesterol to patch up the damage. Before you know it, your cholesterol and triglyceride levels can rise through the roof, even if you have a 'healthy diet'.

High sugar = excess body fat

The difference you can make by removing this addictive 'sweet poison' from your diet is remarkable. In just a few weeks, you will start to notice a difference in your energy level, your mood and how you feel in general.

If you want to get a lean, toned, healthy body, then make a commitment to break up with sugar once and for all. You might be thinking that this is easier said than done. That is fair enough. It will be challenging at first; sugar is physically addictive.

When you start out it is important to:

Increase your consumption of vegetables (especially leafy greens). Fuel your body with alkalising nutrients and probiotic containing foods that change the pH balance of your gut. This will shift the balance of your gut flora from bad to good. You will soon see the difference. When you provide your body with all of the good nutrients it needs, it will stop longing for comfort foods.

Have you ever really thought about the amount of sugar you consume in a day? Let's look at an average person's sweet habits.

## Case Study

**Wake up** – Coffee with sugar

**Breakfast** – Cereal with sultanas & milk (both the cereal and the dried fruit are loaded with sugar. Milk contains a fair bit as well).

**Morning tea** – A couple of bikkies and a piece of fruit (The fruit contains fructose while the bikkies provide both sugar and trans fats).

**Lunch** – Hot chips and a burger with BBQ sauce (there are hidden sugars in both the sauce and the burger bun.)

**Afternoon snack** – Another coffee or a can of soda (a can of soft drink has nearly 10 teaspoons of sugar. It is made with evil high-fructose corn syrup).

**Dinner** – Meat and veggies with a glass of white wine (wine = liquid sugar).

**Dessert** – Low-fat ice cream to top off the day, because you deserve something sweet. Remember low-fat means extra sugar!

**Considering that 4g of sugar equals 1 teaspoon, this person would have consumed nearly 45 teaspoons of sugar. Wow!!**

Let's compare that to the World Health Organisation's recommendation of 6 teaspoons per day. Also recall that cave men ate virtually no sugar at all.

**How much sugar is healthy?**

Names which hide sugar

**Glucose, fructose, sucrose, maltose, lactose, dextrose, starch, HFCS (high-fructose corn syrup), fruit juice, raw sugar, maple syrup, honey, rice malt syrup.**

## *Sugar Summed Up*

Unnecessary!

When sugar is not used for immediate energy, it gets stored as body fat.

It contributes to obesity, abnormal lipid profiles and chronic illnesses such as diabetes.

It wears out our insulin stores over time.

Highly addictive.

It damages the arteries and raises cholesterol levels.

## Artificial Sweeteners

Artificial sweeteners are not much better than sugar itself. They are a definite NO in my book. They are **A-R-T-I-F-I-C-I-A-L** chemical compounds. Our bodies cannot detect these compounds. They fly under the radar of the body's calorie counter, tricking your body into thinking you are getting your sugar fix. Therefore, you continue to look for it elsewhere.

Artificial sweeteners do not aid in weight loss. In fact, they do the opposite. They can stimulate your appetite, increase carb cravings and promote fat storage. (2)

A trial reported in the Huffington Post showed that Splenda, one of the most common artificial sweeteners, increased the insulin levels of obese adults by 20%. (3)

### Remember high insulin levels = fat storage

There are more sugar-free products on the shelves than ever before. Yet obesity is still on the rise. Artificial sweeteners can be found in foods labeled sugar-free including mints, gum, diet sodas, snacks, protein powders, workout supplements and foods labeled 'light'. They hide behind names like Equal, Aspartame, Nutrasweet, Splenda, Sugarine, sucralose and so forth.

They are incredibly toxic and dangerous to the body. Although we are told that they are 'safe', I strongly discourage you from using them. There is a huge difference between trialing them on lab rats, and watching the effects on a large number of humans over a lifetime.

According to Dr. Liz Lipski (4) Aspartame was originally developed as an ant poison, but it made more money as a sweetener. While it is used for sweetening diet soft drinks and chewing gum, it has the same neuro-toxic effect on our brains as it does to the nervous system of bugs. Common side effects include seizures, headaches, mood disturbances, and reduced mental performance. It can also affect short-term memory. Some studies suggest consumption may even be a link to the big C... cancer and tumours.

Limit foods labelled sugar-free to avoid these artificial sweeteners and always read the label. Unfortunately, a majority of the mass-produced protein powders are loaded with artificial sweeteners to make them taste better. This is why I only recommend natural protein powders that are sweetened with stevia or xylitol.

Eliminating sugar from your diet does not mean that life has to be boring. You can sweeten things up in a non-refined, healthy way. Use sweet spices, which will be beneficial to your health as well as your figure.

Instead of sugar, try the following sweeteners in beverages, baking and cooking:

**Sweet veggies** – pumpkin, carrots, sweet potato. (check out the recipe for Sweet potato protein bar yum!)

**Sweet spices** – powdered cinnamon, vanilla, licorice and nutmeg.

**Stevia** – derived from a plant, this sweet herb not only tastes good, but also offers health benefits such as balancing blood sugar levels. This inhibits the growth of bad bacteria and improves digestion.

**Xylitol** – a naturally occurring sugar alcohol found in fruits and veggies. It contains 40% less calories than sugar, does not cause a blood sugar spike and prevents dental cavities. It gets my tick!





## Macronutrients and Micronutrients

Based on the amount required by our bodies, nutrients fall into two categories: macronutrients and micronutrients. They are both essential as they are required for all body functions. Macronutrients are required in large amounts and include protein, carbohydrates, fats and water. On the other hand, micronutrients are required in small amounts; they include minerals, vitamins and trace elements. These little guys enable chemical processes to occur in our bodies and they are very important.

### The four basic nutrients

The four essential nutrients, which are the foundation of a balanced diet:

#### Water, Protein, Carbohydrates and Fats.

Carbohydrates supply energy. They are primarily found in plant foods and grains such as fruits, root vegetables, oats, rice, beans and lentils. Carbohydrates are converted into glucose, providing energy for the body. They are also stored for future use in the liver, or if eaten in **excess = body fat**.

Fats are the most concentrated source of energy. They are needed for various body functions, including healthy hormone production. Although they are necessary for the body, consuming excessive amounts of fat can contribute to obesity and other health problems.

Proteins are the building blocks for muscles, skin, and organs. When consumed, protein is broken down into amino acids to provide the body with energy. Good sources of protein include meat, fish, seafood, eggs, beans, nuts and seeds.

Health problems can arise when you consume too much or too little of a nutrient. This is why I recommend eating a **WELL-BALANCED** diet of whole foods.

# Water

Let's start with one of the most important nutrients, water! 70% of your beautiful body is made up of water. So it is no wonder that you experience headaches, cravings, and low energy when you don't drink enough. Water is essential for regulating body temperature and detoxification. It also keeps your skin looking bouncy, fresh and beautiful. On top of this, water enhances your capacity to burn more body fat. It is by far the best weight loss supplement on the market. And the best news is that it's free.

## How much should you drink?

At least 2.5-3 Litres of water is required each day for successful fat loss and overall health. If you want to get really scientific, then the bare minimum you need to maintain health is 30ml per kilogram of body weight. So, if you weigh 50 kilos then you need at least 1.5L just to be square. If you want to get LEAN, you need more!

For each exercise session, add 500ml to replace the water lost through sweat. This total amount excludes coffee or tea. They have a diuretic effect, which means they remove water from your body.

## When you should NOT drink water.

It is really important to avoid drinking water when you eat. Following this rule will prevent you from diluting the enzymes necessary for digestion and food absorption. Make sure you drink 30 minutes away from meals, not with meals!

One of the best habits I picked up during my training for fitness competitions was drinking one quarter of my daily water intake first thing in the morning with some fresh lemon. You will hear me raving about this all the time. It helps to activate your digestive system, alkalisise your body and kick-start your liver detox early in the day.

## ACTION STEP

Start this tomorrow. Drink 400-500ml (1 large glass) of warm water with ½ of a fresh lemon squeezed into it upon rising and brushing your teeth.

*Hot Tip* Rinse your mouth with fresh water to avoid tooth sensitivity.

If plain water is too boring for you, you must try one of my Infused Detox Water recipes. I guarantee these will rock your world. Soak slices of fresh fruits, veggies or spices in water for a few hours to reap the benefits of the antioxidants and aid detoxification. This will also allow you to enjoy a sensational variety of flavours.

### *Infused Detox Water variations:*

Apple + Cinnamon stick (great for sugar cravings)

Mint + Cucumber

Lime + Basil

Lemon + Lime

Orange + Pineapple

Blueberry + Lemon

Lemon + Cucumber

# Protein

Protein is another important nutrient needed to lose fat and increase muscle definition. Each meal you eat should contain some form of protein. This will ensure stable blood sugar levels, prevent cravings and increase lean muscle.

It is important to vary your protein sources. We were not designed to eat the same foods every single day. Our bodies prefer a variety of foods to obtain the widest range of nutrients possible. This also satisfies our taste buds. Feel free to step outside of your comfort zone and experiment with plant-based protein sources or different types of game meat like kangaroo or venison. They are the leanest, cleanest sources of protein. Change up the seasoning by using fresh herbs to provide new flavours. Having such a variety will prevent you from feeling like you are constantly on a diet.

## Plant Based Protein

### Legumes

(chickpeas, lentils, dried or canned beans)

### Organic tempeh

(fermented soy)

### Grains

(quinoa, amaranth, brown rice)

### Organic tofu

(in moderation)

### Nuts

### Seeds

## Animal Based Protein

### Beef

### Chicken

(breast and thighs)

### Ham

### Lamb

### Turkey

### Veal

### Pork tenderloin

### Egg

### Egg White

### Eye Fillet or sirloin steak

### Kangaroo

### Rabbit

### Venison

### Fish

### Seafood

(crab, lobster, oysters, scallops, prawns)

*Hot Tip* Instead of processed seasonings, which are full of additives and sit on the shelves for years, use flavoured salts to give your meals new, exciting flavour. You can buy these or easily make your own. You most likely already have the ingredients in your cupboard.

*My favourites include:*

Rosemary citrus – for chicken

Lemon – for fish

Shitake mushroom – for chicken, turkey or steak

Roast garlic – for chicken

Espresso-paprika – for pork

(Refer to the **Lean Body Meal Guide** for the recipes).

# Carbohydrates

**Before you read any further, engrave this in your brain:**

## Carbs are your friend!

Carbohydrates are nutrients that the body converts into glucose and uses as for fuel. They are necessary. The key is to eat the right amount at the right time!

Carbs have been getting a bad rap in regards to weight management. It is important to establish that you should **NOT** cut them out completely. The Australian and American government's dietary guidelines recommend that complex carbohydrates make up the bulk of your diet. These include breads, cereals, fruits, grains, beans and nuts. The trouble is that these recommendations are not in line with the general population's activity levels. It's fine to load up on these foods if you are physically active or do a lot of physical labour. However, modern conveniences and technologies have led most people into sedentary lifestyles.

The amount of carbohydrates you should consume depends on your activity levels, metabolism and age. A secretary with a desk job, who sits during the day will require less carbs than someone who works in hospitality and is on their feet all day.

In many cases, when people are just embarking on their weight loss journeys, they tend to be very eager to lose weight quickly, so they cut out carbs altogether. It is a bad idea. Let me tell you why.

Keeping carbs too low for too long can have serious health consequences, especially if you are active. On the other hand, if you are sedentary then your need for carbs will be much lower. But, they still shouldn't be cut out completely.

Cutting out carbs can slow your metabolism. And it doesn't stop there! It can also lead to reduced thyroid function and increased stress hormone levels. Cortisol is the name of this stress hormone, and it is know as the hormone that can cause stubborn belly fat.

Carbohydrate deficiency can reduce your muscle-building capacity as well. This is bad news if you want to become a **Lean Body Babe!**

Very low-carb diets can make you drop weight instantly, but they are not sustainable long term. Many people find themselves putting on more weight when coming off a low-carb diet. This is because their bodies have been depleted. Now they want to store every bit of food they eat.

Many women try to eat low-carb, not realising that it can significantly disrupt their hormone production. It can cause:

- Irregular menstrual cycle
- Lowered fertility
- Blood sugar swings
- Increased body fat (especially belly fat)
- Loss of bone density
- Anxiety & depression
- Chronic inflammation
- Chronic pain
- Chronic fatigue

What you need to avoid is bad, processed and refined carbs. They are detrimental to your health, and can cause chronic diseases such as diabetes. What you should include in your diet are vegetable sources of carbs, whole grains and minimally processed carbohydrates. Good examples include starchy vegetables like sweet potato or pumpkin, fruits and gluten-free grains like amaranth, millet, quinoa or buckwheat.

Remember that you need carbs, because they are the preferred source of fuel for your body. Consuming carbohydrates can help you perform better at the gym, and will also improve brain function and better your mood. Not having carbs in your diet can make you cranky, moody, miserable and tired all the time. Not someone who is pleasant to be around.

Low-carb diets can produce immediate results, because carbs hold water. So, when you cut them out, it seems like you have lost weight, but in reality all you have lost is fluid. Staying on a low-carb diet long term will cause you to plateau, which can be very frustrating.

On the other hand, including healthy carbs in your diet will help you build beautiful, lean muscles, which will burn body fat for you even while you are asleep.

## Carb Timing

An important factor to consider in regards to carb consumption is timing. Carbs are best tolerated within 3 hours post-workout. Why? Because your body will use those carbs for recovery as opposed to storing them as body fat. The timing of your training will determine when it is the best time for you to eat your carbs. So if you train in the evening after work, it is completely fine, in fact even better to have carbohydrates for dinner, than to have them for breakfast.

## The Ideal Food Pyramid





**What is wrong with eating too many carbs? From a fat-burning perspective, three things:**

Excess carbohydrates (especially the processed kind) can feed the bad bugs in your gut

Excess insulin – too many carbs can lead to high blood sugar levels and the overproduction of insulin. Insulin promotes fat storage.

Excess glycogen – if carbs are eaten in excess and glycogen is constantly produced, the body never has a chance to tap into its fat stores.

## Carbs |O|

No wonder people are so confused about carbs. I was one of them for a long time. You might be surprised to hear that table sugar, bread, lollies, apples and potatoes are all considered carbs. They just belong to different families.

There are two main types of carbs: simple and complex. Simple carbs include sugars, fruit, lollies and baked goods. Complex carbs are starches found in root vegetables, beans, nuts and wholegrains. To get a lean and toned body, focus on consuming complex carbs. Eliminate simple carbs, which tend to be high in calories and additives, as well as low in nutrients.

Carbs such as lentils, beans, and oats are good sources of B vitamins. These vitamins are essential for abundant energy. Nonetheless, these carbs should be limited because our digestive systems can't process high amounts of these grains.

Now this is where it gets a bit tricky! Vegetables can be fibrous or starchy. Fibrous veggies have a low-carb and high fibre content. These aid digestion. They also make it easier for you to go to the bathroom, because they help move things through the digestive tract. Starches are made of many sugar molecules bound together. They should be consumed in moderation.

To burn more body fat, include as many fibrous, non-starchy, green vegetables in your diet as possible. Consume moderate amounts of starchy vegetables and small amounts of whole grains like oats.

In general, the less fibre a food contains, the worse it is for you. That is why you should always choose whole grain over white bread, if you decide to eat bread at all. I strongly advise against it.

During the processing of white flour, most of the fibre and nutrients are removed from the grain. This creates a much higher glycaemic load. That means the body converts this food to glucose (sugar) much faster, because no fibre gets in the way.

These foods are much more likely to be stored as fat.

To become a **Lean Body Babe**, you need to eat enough carbs have abundant energy, but not too many. That way your body will still tap into its fat reserves.

## *Carbs you should avoid:*

Table sugar (white or brown)

Soft drinks

Bottled fruit juices

Lollies, candies, processed chocolates

Honey, syrups and Jams

Baked goods made with white flour

Packaged cereals

## *Carbs you should include*

Fresh fruits (1 piece per day)

Fibrous vegetables

spinach, lettuce, kale, rocket, collard greens (6 cups per day)

Starchy vegetables

(one fist-size portion for two meals during the day)

Legumes

eg. beans, lentils (in moderation)

Gluten-free grains

buckwheat, quinoa, amaranth, rice, millet and gluten-free oats  
(small amounts)

## Fruit and Veg

Although a wide array of fruits and veg are available in the supermarkets all year round, I encourage you to eat with the season. It is better for the environment if you buy local seasonal produce. It also allows for natural diversity in your diet. Enjoy my favourite picks and choose according to the season. The great thing about most of these veggies is that your body uses more calories to metabolise them than what they actually contain! I call them 'negative calorie' foods.

*Enjoy one serving of my preferred Veggies each day:*

Alfalfa sprouts, artichoke, asparagus,  
broccoli, brussels sprouts,  
cabbage, celery, cauliflower, cucumber,  
eggplant, endive, green beans  
leek, lettuce, mushrooms, onions,  
peppers/capsicum  
(green and red)  
rocket, salad greens, spinach,  
squash, tomato, turnip, zucchini.

*Enjoy one serving of my preferred fruits each day:*

Apricots (fresh) x 3,

Berries- blackberries, blueberries, boysenberries, cranberries,  
Raspberries, strawberries x 1/2 cup,

Cherries x 1 cup,

Grapefruit, Green apples and Kiwi fruit x 1,

Oranges, Mangos and Nectarines x 1,

Papaya x 1/2,

Tangerines, Peach and Pear x 1,

Pineapple x 1 cup,

Rockmelon x 1/2 cup,

**Lemons/limes – unlimited!**

# Gluten

Gluten is a protein found in wheat. It is an irritating substance to the body. High amounts can lead to digestive issues, decreased nutrient absorption and systemic inflammation.

People choose to avoid gluten for different reasons. Some have an intolerance to it. Others, even if they can tolerate it, feel bloated or foggy in the head after eating it. There is an autoimmune disorder caused by gluten intolerance that many people suffer from without even knowing. It is called coeliac disease. If you suspect that you may suffer from this condition, contact your GP to arrange a test. Common symptoms of gluten intolerance include (according to Dr. Amy Myers, functional medicine practitioner):

Gas, bloating, constipation/diarhoea

Fatigue, brain fog

Migraines

Joint pain (knees, hips, back or fingers)

Chicken skin (red and bumpy on the back of the arms)

PCOS and hormonal imbalance

Nowadays, eating gluten-free has never been easier. There are many gluten-free products available. With that being said, just because something is labeled 'gluten-free' does not mean it's healthy. Always choose fresh foods over processed ones. In cooking or baking, you can easily substitute wheat flour with:

Rice bran

Psyllium husk

Oatmeal

Rye

Almond meal

LSA mix (linseed, almond and sunflower blend)

Coconut flour

## Fats

Let's get something straight before we move on: fats are not your enemy, even if you are trying to lose weight. Low-fat diets are generally not a great choice long term. Diets that are low in fat also lack essential fatty acids (EFAs). EFAs are imperative to our health and for fat loss.

### **If you don't consume fats, you can easily:**

Trigger the starvation response.

Cause hormonal imbalances and cravings.

Slow your metabolic rate.

**Keep this in mind:** If you don't provide your body with fats, it will make fat on its own. Those fats will be stored exactly where you do not want them! The key is to choose good fats over bad ones. Fats, which you should avoid, include trans fats and hydrogenated oils. These increase bad cholesterol and your risk of heart disease. Read the nutrition information on products. Make sure it says "0" next to the line of trans fats. Keeping vegetable oils to a minimum is also a good idea. They can easily become trans fats during cooking. (5)

## Low Fat Foods

We hear a lot of dietary guides suggesting you choose low-fat products over full fat alternatives. However, they are actually not better for you.

Consider this: when saturated fat is taken out of a product, it has to be replaced with something to make it taste good. Most of the time that something is sugar or artificial sweeteners.

Low-fat = extra sugar!

Saturated fats are the building blocks for our cell membranes. They form important parts of our hormones. They are also the preferred energy for our hearts. A healthy body is perfectly capable of metabolizing saturated fats in reasonable amounts. In fact, studies show that the saturated fats found in full-fat dairy, when consumed in moderation, can protect you from diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

**Eating fats with your meals not only keeps you full longer, but also increases the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K.**

This means that if you are having a salad with vegetables containing these vitamins, you will absorb more of them if you consume some fats within the same meal. (6)

## *Enjoy a variety of healthy fats from this list:*

The serving size for liquid fats is roughly 1 tablespoon.

Nuts and seeds (20-30g or 8-10 pieces/day)

Avocado (1/3 fruit/day)

Full fat Greek yogurt (100g /day)

Organic eggs (2/day)

Cacao butter (1 tsp)

Coconut oil (1-2 tsp)

### Cooking oils:

Coconut oil (virgin or refined)

Grape seed oil

Organic ghee (clarified butter)

Olive oil (only cook at very low temperatures)

### Use for salad dressings only:

Extra virgin olive oil

Sesame oil

Flax seed oil

Almond oil

Macadamia nut oil

Avocado oil

Hemp seed oil

Grape seed oil

Walnut oil

### **Big NO-NOs!!!**

Margarine

Canola oil

Vegetable oil

Fat-free dairy



## Cooking with Oils

Choosing the perfect oil can be confusing. There is a lot of contradictory information about them. Olive oil is widely recommended for cooking, however this beautiful and healthy oil becomes unhealthy when heated to a high temperature.

Raw cold pressed oils, such as olive oil, which is essential part of the Mediterranean diet, should be used cold by drizzling it on salads and other foods. According to Dr. Mercola, olive oil is very unstable and when overheated it easily becomes oxidised. Foods become oxidised when they come in contact with oxygen, heat and light. As a result, toxic interactions are created with other foods inside our bodies.

For cooking, coconut oil is best as it is very stable. It is a saturated fat, but don't let that scare you away. It is a good kind, offering many health benefits. These include antiviral and antibacterial properties. The body is able to use it for energy, as opposed to storing it as fat. If you don't like the taste then you can buy refined coconut oil, which has a neutral taste.

Avoid cooking with vegetable oils like canola, sunflower, corn, safflower or soybean oil. They are the root cause of many diseases and inflammation in the body. Such inflammation can be caused by eating too much Omega-6 fatty acids, and not enough Omega-3's. These oils contain exactly that; high levels of Omega-6's and none of the healthy Omega-3's.

They are also very susceptible to heat damage, meaning they can easily turn into trans fats, which cause clogging in the arteries. Corn and canola are also the most genetically modified (GMO) grains, of which the health consequences are unknown.

It is worth mentioning that fast foods, such as doughnuts, hot chips, Vietnamese egg rolls and any other deep fried foods, are fried in these oils.

## Essential Fatty Acids

EFA's, or omega-3 fatty acids, are an integral part of our diet. They are required for general health, as well as fat loss. Unlike other types of fats, our bodies can't make these from scratch. We must obtain them from our diet. They are essential for healthy brain and hormone function. They are also very important for weight loss because they have the ability to improve your sensitivity to insulin. Due to being an integral part of our cell membranes, they can repair cells and reduce inflammation in the body. Hence, they are able to speed up post-workout recovery. Omega-3 fats are an excellent supplement for those who exercise regularly or want to lose body fat. (8) (9)

### THE BEST SOURCES INCLUDE:

**Cold water oily fish:** salmon, trout, mackerel, sardines

**Raw nuts:** walnuts, pecans

**Seeds:** flax, hemp, chia seeds

**Leafy vegetables:** lettuce, broccoli, kale, purslane, spinach

**Fruit:** citrus fruits, cherries, melons

*Try This Recipe:* Walnut pesto

Warning! As a 'side effect' you may experience:

Mental clarity

Better sleep

Improved skin

Weight loss

Reduced joint pain

Increased energy

Stronger hair and nails

(recipe in Lean Body Meal Plan)

## Nuts and Seeds

The beauty of nuts is that they contain all of the essential macronutrients your body needs. Although they are mostly made of healthy fats, they also contain protein, carbohydrates and fibre. Including nuts in your diet can increase your levels of omega-3 and omega-6 fats, reduce your chances of heart disease, balance your hormones, and reduce inflammation. Nuts make a convenient snack, but the key is to avoid overeating them! One serving (8-10) pieces is plenty for one day. The nature of these fats is that they are fragile and can easily go rancid.

Have you tasted nuts that tasted 'off'? That funny taste means the fat has oxidised and it is now rancid. They should be thrown away immediately, because ingesting an oxidized substance is harmful to your health.

### Soaking your nuts

I know what you are thinking, but I'm totally serious. Nuts (and grains) contain high amounts of phytic acid, tannins and enzyme inhibitors. These chemicals protect them while they are growing. Humans cannot digest phytate as well as animals can, so it binds to and blocks the absorption of important minerals, such as iron and zinc. We cannot use these minerals if they are bound. You can activate these minerals by soaking the nuts. This also encourages the production of enzymes that aid their digestion. (10)

### *ACTION STEP*

Try activating a serving of nuts by placing them in a jar with filtered water for 7-12 hours. At the end, you will notice brown discolouration of the water. Drain it, rinse the nuts with clean water and dry them paper towels. Store the nuts in an airtight container and keep them the fridge for up to 3 days.

## Food Swaps

Even though we know some foods are bad for us, we still love them and don't want to cut them out of our diets. To avoid feeling deprived, you can use my 'food swap' technique. If you want to create a lean, toned, and healthy body, learn healthier substitutes for the most common comfort foods.

SWAP	ALTERNATIVE
Mayo / tomato sauce Condiments	Salsa / Guacamole
White bread	Sprouted Seeds, whole grain, soy, linseed or rye bread
White wrap / tortilla	Mountain Bread / Gluten-free wraps
Quick oats	Wholegrain rolled oats, steel cut oats or quinoa flakes
White rice	Brown / wild rice
Mashed potato with butter	Cauliflower mash with olive oil
White potato	Sweet potato / Pumpkin
Trail mix	Mix of raw nuts, flax seeds, goji berries, coconut flakes & raw cacao nibs
Thickshake	Vanilla berry protein smoothie
Potato chips	Air-popped organic popcorn with seasalt or baked veggie chips
Toast with vegemite & butter	Toasted seed bread with avocado & olive oil
Peanut & Jelly sandwich	Brown rice cakes with almond butter & fresh berries or banana & cinnamon
Chocolate	Cacao bliss balls
Cheesecake	Raw macadamia nut vegan 'cheezecake'
Nutella or chocolate spreads	Cashew or hazlenut butter mixed with ca- cao powder & stevia
Coffee with sugar	Chai latte with almond milk & Stevia
Soft drinks	Coconut water or infused water
Fruity cocktails	Vodka soda with lime or an orange slice

## Stress and Weight Loss

You may wonder what stress has to do with weight loss. Mental stress in fact puts a tremendous burden on your immune system. Hence why your levels of stress can determine whether your body stores or burns body fat. If you are constantly under the pump, regardless of whether you actually feel stressed, your body produces an excess amount of stress hormone, called cortisol.

Having high cortisol communicates to your body that you are under threat. Therefore, your body gets into fat storage mode, preserving every bit of food that you eat. Predominantly in your tummy area.

Why there? Because your body is very clever. When it feels threatened, it wants to ensure that there is enough energy stored around vital organs to keep you going, even if you are in starvation. Smart isn't it?

If you are the kind of person who is generally skinny, but still struggles with stubborn belly fat, the chances are high that you have elevated cortisol levels.

Besides stubborn belly fat, one of the biggest giveaway signs of high cortisol is the inability to lose body fat despite performing high intensity exercise. If you are currently doing a lot of cardio or intense training while eating a healthy diet and you can't figure out why you are not getting anywhere, I've got news for you!

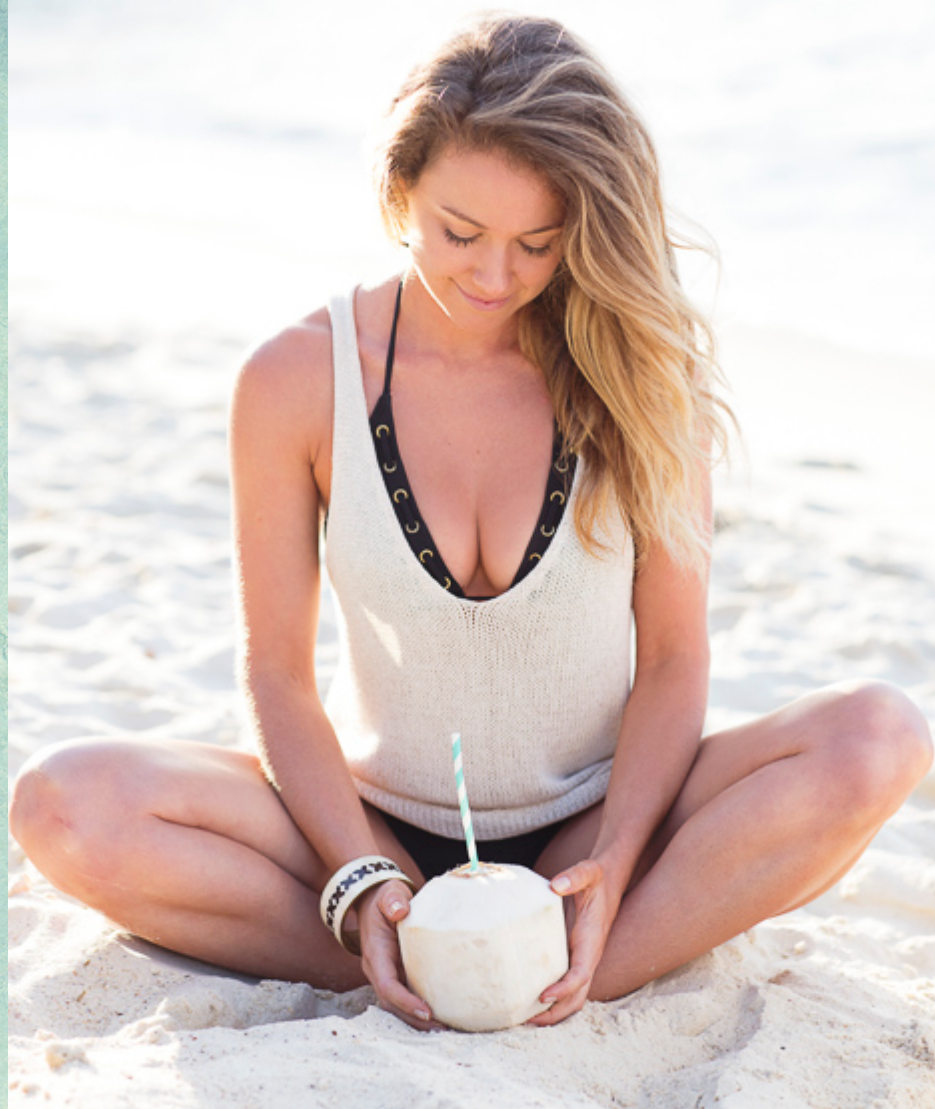
You need to change your approach. Get off the treadmill, put the cardio aside and incorporate more resistance training into your exercise routine.

Also try yoga, meditation or deep belly breathing. You will be amazed at how, simply by reducing your stress and making your body feel 'safe', you can enhance your ability to burn fat instead of storing it.

With clients who feel overwhelmed, moody, stressed or tend to eat for emotional reasons, I use a product called **Stress Less**. This supplement combines Magnolia bark and Holy Basil, which are used in traditional Chinese medicine as the 'anti-stress' herbs, for physiological and psychological burnout. Clinical trials (20) have shown that it helped reducing cortisol levels, anxiety whilst also improved sleep.

Check out your **Lean Body Buyer's Guide** for more information.

You'll be amazed at how, simply by reducing your stress and making your body feel 'safe,' you can enhance your ability to burn fat instead of storing it.



## Case Study

I had a beautiful lady, let's call her Vanessa, in her early 30s come see me for nutrition advice while I was still studying and working as a PT. She had put on 5 kilos since moving to Australia from the UK, which she could not lose, no matter what she tried. While her diet did not change at all, she had taken on a stressful job with a lot of responsibility, on top of the pressure of moving to a new country and leaving her friends and family behind. I looked at her food diary and it was the cleanest, most perfect food diary I have seen. She had all her meals prepared in advance, measured to the nearest gram. On top of that, she exercised twice a day, circuit training in the morning and high intensity cardio in the evening. On paper she was doing all the right things, but she couldn't shift the weight.

To her surprise, I recommended that she cut her exercise in half, take it easy and rest more. I told her to stop doing high intensity training. Instead, I recommended taking on yoga and meditation in addition to a few weight-training sessions. I also advised her to quit measuring her food and start listening to her body. She was hesitant, but she said she would give it a go. Soon after, I left the gym and never had a chance to ask how she went on.

However, a year and a half later she came to one of my workshops and happily reported that she had lost those 5 kilos doing what I recommended. I couldn't have been happier for her. I wanted to share this story with you because it is such a great example of how high stress levels can influence your body's fat burning or storing potential.

In addition to the physiological changes, to reduce excess stress hormone production there are some vital nutrients that are needed for supporting the nervous system, including magnesium and vitamin C. Magnesium dosage for females is 320mg per day, for males 420mg per day. (11)

However, I suggest doubling the magnesium amount to really reap the health benefits. Vitamin C dose should be at least 3,000mg per day, divided into three 1,000mg doses.

Another critical thing to mention is that most stressed individuals are not producing enough stomach acid or hydrochloric (HCL) required for proper digestion and breaking down proteins. Underproduction of this acid is a common problem for the general population, but when someone is constantly stressed, it can further accelerate the matter.

If you are suffering from indigestion, heartburn, feeling heavy or gassy after meals, there is a good chance you are not producing enough stomach acid.

In the **Digestion** chapter you will find a protocol that outlines how to increase your hydrochloric acid production and improve your digestion. **Please note that if you suffer from ulcers, do not supplement with HCL.**

## More on the body-mind connection

I would like to emphasise that while you can't always choose how many stressors you have in your life, you can decide how you manage them.

**Remember: It's not the experience, but the meaning we attach to it that causes us to feel stressed in many cases.**

If you can manage to view these incidents as challenges to learn from and opportunities to grow, you will open yourself up to the potential of being fulfilled. Lacking fulfilment is what drives so many women to become emotional eaters and use food as a way of coping.



## Change your breath, change your body

One of the most effective ways to control stress and anxiety is by changing the way you breathe. Breathing deeply into your belly, instead of your chest, is called diaphragmatic or deep belly breathing. This is one of the most inexpensive and underused methods. It can help you balance your nervous system.

According to Dr. Libby Weaver, internationally acclaimed biochemist, when you breathe deep into your belly, as opposed to your chest, you activate the 'rest and digest' part of the nervous system, which brings about relaxation.

When you are in this calm state, your brain releases chemicals into the blood stream such as oxytocin, DHEA, dopamine and serotonin. These chemicals make it impossible for you to feel anxious or stressed.

### *ACTION STEP*

Try this exercise today. Start by lying on your back. Close your eyes, and rest one hand on your chest and place another hand on your tummy. Keep your mouth closed the whole time, only breathe through your nose.

Take a long, deep breath in through your nose, deep into your belly. Feel your belly expand as your hand elevates. Fill up your belly with air.

Inhale for a count of three, pause for one and then slowly exhale through your nose for a count of 4.

**Repeat for 15 breaths. Observe how calm it makes you feel.**

Practice this 2-3 times per day for at least 21 days. Make a habit of it. Do it first thing when you wake up, then at lunchtime and again at the end of your day. It is important to avoid consuming caffeine around the time of this practice. Caffeine won't allow you to relax properly.

You do this exercise by lying down, standing up or even sitting up in a chair. It is even better if you can find a quiet room to be by yourself. For me, the most comfortable position is lying on my back, with my legs resting on a chair at 90 degrees. I feel completely at peace when positioning myself this way.

# Caffeine

Caffeine is a stimulant. I advise against it during this program to help you awaken your body's potential for natural energy and vitality.

Although coffee itself contains antioxidants, the downsides outweigh the benefits for most people. If you need coffee to wake up in the morning, then that is a sign that you should probably cut it out, at least for the time being.

The best way to determine whether coffee is right for you in the first place, is to observe how you are react to it. Getting anxious and shaky, or beginning to sweat, are warning signs that you and coffee are not a match.

Drinking coffee produces the stress hormones adrenaline and cortisol, which were described earlier. With all that is said about cortisol, please don't think it's always the bad guy. Cortisol is what helps you get out of bed in the morning and also acts as an anti-inflammatory agent in your body during exercise. The key is for cortisol levels to only be high at these times.

Cortisol peaks early in the morning around 8am to help you bounce out of bed. If you are getting your cortisol hit from coffee at the same time, your natural cortisol is at its peak. Over time, your body will stop producing as much. You are then going need more and more of a caffeine hit to get going. There is a fair chance that eventually you won't even be able to get going without it. If this rings a bell, follow the instructions below.

## *ACTION STEP*

Eliminate coffee completely for 10 days. If the thought of doing this makes you say "no freaking way", then that is a definite indication that you need to do this. Expect headaches, tiredness and moodiness for the first 4-5 days whilst going through withdrawals. After this period, reassess how you feel. You can drink 1-2 cups of green tea instead, or better yet, keep yourself busy with green juices and herbal teas.

If you can go without it for 30 days, you just became a superstar in my eyes! After about 4-5 days, you will start to feel naturally energetic again without any caffeine. It will be amazing!

If you miss the social aspect or the comfort of a warm beverage, a good-quality loose-leaf chai latte made with almond milk, cinnamon and stevia can give you much of the same satisfaction. You can also try green tea instead, with one-quarter of the amount of caffeine and loads more antioxidants. It is important to note that

coffee also triggers the release of insulin, mentioned in the earlier chapter regarding the sugar-insulin cycle.

Remember: High insulin = Fat storage

## Case Study

My client, Yvette (29), came to me for advice on fat-burning supplements to reduce belly fat. She ran 5 days a week, swam 3 days and ate really well. She could not understand why she couldn't get rid of her belly when she worked so hard. She drank two coffees a day, (black with no sugar). She worked long hours as a producer, in what she described as a very stressful work environment.

After assessing her case, I didn't change anything about her diet, but cut out the coffee and incorporated the above breathing exercise into her daily routine. I also suggested reducing her training to 4-5 days and incorporating resistance training instead of running.

She was not happy with me for the first 5 days as she suffered from caffeine and running withdrawals, but I told her to trust me. After the first week she started to feel more energised and her work clothes got looser.

When I saw her in 3 weeks later for her follow-up, she gladly informed me that she had lost centimetres off her waistline and that she was feeling much more balanced and relaxed.

This is another instance to show that when the body is over-stressed, it can hold onto body fat.

# Digestion

Digestion is the foundation of health. In many cases, a person's inability to reach their health goals lies in poor gut function and the inability to absorb nutrients.

One of the reasons why so many people are unable to digest their food properly, is low levels of hydrochloric acid (HCL) in the stomach. HCL is the primary digestive juice that helps to break down protein. It also acts as a protective shield, killing harmful micro-organisms in our food.

If you have very low levels of HCL, you can eat all the goodness you want, but there is a good chance that you are not getting the full benefits because you are not fully absorbing the nutrients. Nearly 80% of the population in Western countries suffer from low levels of stomach acid.

The possible causes include:

**Eating food too quickly**

**Not chewing food properly**

**Stress**

**Lack of fibre in diet**

**Chloride and fluoride in drinking water (which reduces HCL)**

There are several ways to increase the production of stomach acid. You can purchase digestive tablets from the chemist containing HCL and Pepsin and take it with your main meals to aid digestion. This is one of the most fundamental protocols I use with clients if they come to me with digestive complaints and it works almost 90 percent of the time.

When using Betaine HCL with pepsin for the first few days, be sure to follow the directions carefully. Make sure you always take it at the start of the meal! If taken without food, you may experience stomach burning.

## **Directions For Use of Betaine HCL:**

**1.** At the start of the meal, take one capsule of Betaine HCL, and see how your stomach feels during and after eating. Should any burning or heaviness occur, or if burning has been present previously and is now worsened with the use of the Betaine HCL, do not continue using this supplement! This is an indication that your stomach is overproducing acid, or that your stomach lining may be damaged.

**2.** If the first dose of Betaine HCL produced no noticeable stomach discomfort, try taking two capsules at the start of your next meal, again monitor for burning and/or heaviness during and after eating. If taking two capsules produces some discomfort, but one capsule does not, restrict yourself to one capsule at the start of each meal. If the two capsule dose produced no discomfort, try three capsules at the start of your next meal.

**3.** If all goes well when taking three capsules at the start of each meal, stay with that dosage. Most individuals will not require increasing the dosage to four capsules.

You may wonder how long you will need to take tablets to aid your digestion. The good news is that regular use of supplemental hydrochloric acid will in most cases re-train the stomach to produce higher concentrations of acid on its own. This process may take anywhere from several weeks to several months, depending on the individual. The most significant indication that acid production is improving is that Betaine HCL supplementation can no longer be comfortably tolerated.

## CASE STUDY:

After having used the Betaine HCL for eleven weeks (at a dosage of two capsules per meal without any discomfort), Susie now notices that she feels a burning sensation when taking the two capsules. She therefore reduces her dosage to one capsule at mealtime. After several more weeks, even one capsule per meal produces burning and Susie discontinues altogether. This is a sign that the stomach has been re-trained to produce adequate concentrations of hydrochloric acid without the further need for supplementation.

**INTERACTIONS / CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Betaine HCL & Pepsin should not be used concurrently with H2-blocking drugs and proton pump inhibitors, because these drugs are intended to block the production of stomach HCL.

### **HCL supplement should not be taken if you have stomach ulcers.**

If you prefer to go down a more natural route, instead of supplementing with HCL you can take 1 tsp of lemon juice or raw apple cider vinegar (ACV) mixed with a 30mls of water 10 minutes before meals. Both lemon juice and ACV encourage the production of hydrochloric acid in the stomach therefore aid digestion.

I have tried both methods, and personally I have found that the tablets worked much better and were easier to comply with.

Normalising digestive function is one of the most common treatments I do for my clients. It changes their lives, as well as their bodies. When we begin working on the gut, they find not only that their clothes get looser, but they also experience relief from bloating, sugar cravings, acne allergies and low energy.

Here are just a few examples which I have achieved in my practice by normalising my clients' digestive functions:

A 28-year-old woman who constantly suffered from constipation, bloating, gas, and sugar cravings found relief when we cleared out the overgrowth of yeast in her digestive tract.

A 12-year-old boy with diarrhoea, food allergies and behavioural problems in school was assisted in restoring healthy bacteria in his gut. In just 2 weeks the dark circles under his eyes disappeared and his bowel movements and behavioural problems were resolved.

A 35-year old woman with many years of ongoing IBS (Irritable Bowel Syndrome) symptoms such as diarrhea, constipation, cramping, bloating and intolerance to foods reported an incredible progress just 6 days after the consult when we began addressing her small intestinal bacterial overgrowth.

It's amazing what the human body can do when you give it what it needs to heal itself. When we bring the body back to optimal health and improve the digestive and restore healthy liver function, weight loss becomes easy.

If you feel that you need more particular advice, you can apply to work with me in my **10-week Lean Body Accelerator** where I focus on you specifically, and create a treatment plan unique to your own biochemistry. **[APPLY HERE](#)**

# Poop

The thing no one likes to talk about!

You can call it going to the bathroom, pooping, taking a number two, pinching a loaf, laying a cable or taking a dump. No one likes to talk about it, but we all do this task daily. Well, hopefully anyway!

Emptying your bowels daily is vital for optimal fat burning and healthy weight maintenance. It removes waste and toxins from your body.

Constipation is one of the most common conditions I see in my practice. It affects nearly 75% of my clients. The medical dictionary defines constipation as not having a bowel movement for three days or more. However, to me you are constipated if you don't go at least once a day.

## **Let me explain what happens if you don't go to the bathroom daily:**

Normal transit time should be between 12-24 hours. Food starts to ferment if it sits in your digestive tract any longer. Now, we all know what happens when something ferments. In case you don't, let me enlighten you. Bacteria starts to produce, creating air bubbles and an unpleasant smell. What does that mean to your digestive tract? Welcome to gas and bloating!

A bloated tummy can be disheartening. It causes discomfort and can also trick you into feeling fat and yuk, even if you are in good shape. There is nothing like someone asking, "how far along are you?", if you know what I mean.

If you are unsure, try tracking your transit time to see how long food sits in your gut. If you find that food passes through you in less than 12 hours, chances are high that you are not digesting your food, hence not absorbing your nutrients.

If it takes more than 30 hours for food to make its way out, then you are constipated. Therefore, the chances of toxins being reabsorbed into your system have increased. If you don't have any issues in this area and you go to the bathroom daily, feel free to skip this exercise.

## ACTION STEP

Track your transit time:

Ingest a marker food (after your first bowel movement of the day) such as corn or beetroot.

Observe your next stools to see if this food is visible and record when it appears.

Repeat this process two more times. Space each test out a few days for the best accuracy.

Make note of your diet and exercise details for those days.

**Here is a table to help you:**

Transit Time	1st marker	2nd Marker	3rd Marker
MARKER USED			
DATE/TIME INGESTED			
DATE/TIME MARKER FIRST APPEARED			
DIET DETAILS			
EXERCISE DETAILS			
WATER INTAKE			



# Beating the Bloat

Bloating can be caused by several things including food intolerance, allergies, and poor digestion. Another cause I commonly see in my practice is dysbiosis, or the overpopulation of bad bacteria in the gut. Your digestive tract houses nearly 1.3 kilograms (3 pounds) of bacteria. These guys form a pretty cool ecosystem, where both good and bad bacteria live in harmony.

It is not common knowledge that 70% of our immune system is located in our gut. Our immune response is controlled by the balance of this bacterial system. When there is a healthy distribution of bacteria, everything is 'hunky dory' and we are healthy. However, when the bad guys overtake, the situation can quickly go pear-shaped and we can end up sick.

## **What causes this imbalance?**

- High sugar consumption
- Processed foods
- Antibiotic treatments not followed by probiotic supplementation
- Regular alcohol consumption
- Constipation
- Lack of fibre in the diet
- Not enough fresh fruits & vegetables

## **Symptoms include:**

- Bloating
- Weight gain
- Digestive disturbances (gas, pain, discomfort)
- Diarrhoea
- Constipation
- Inflammation of the gut
- Yeast infection (thrush)
- Mental disorders
- Asthma
- Diabetes

These bad guys love processed and sugary foods, because these provide the perfect feed:

Sugar/alcohol

Processed foods

Cheese

Grains and refined carbs

If you experience bloating on a regular basis, consider adhering to the following intensive gut protocol on the next page and see if your symptoms cease.



# Gut Intensive Protocol

Start each day with **lemon water** and have lemon juice before each main meal.

Introduce **fermented foods** into your diet. Eat 3-5 tablespoons with each main meal to help grow good bacteria and improve digestive function. Did I mention this reduces cravings as well?

**Examples include:** sauerkraut, pickles, kimchi, kombucha (fermented tea), coconut yogurt, kefir and miso. Look below for my cultured vegetables recipe! This recipe is a traditional Syrian recipe, which has been passed onto me by my gorgeous friend's, Layla Dannoun.

Take a **probiotic** capsule daily. Buy one that is multi-strain and broad spectrum containing various types of bacteria, not just one or two (ask the chemist for help).

Eat **prebiotic foods** often. This is the soluble fibre part of fresh fruits and vegetables. It feeds the good bacteria in the stomach, therefore helping with the recolonisation of the good guys. Examples are: raw dandelion greens, leek, garlic, asparagus, onions, chikory root, and slippery elm.

Use **slippery elm powder**. Slippery elm is a tree bark and also a form of prebiotic. If used consistently, it has the ability to protect the gut lining from damage. It also helps prevent food particles from escaping into the blood stream. Mix 1 teaspoon with 150ml of water. Drink this first thing in the morning on an empty stomach, and last thing before going to bed at night. Do this for 8-12 weeks, depending on the severity of your symptoms.

**Add L-Glutamine.** This is an amino acid, which has been shown to assist in healing the gut and reducing bacteria. Take 3g twice daily, mix with water or juice. You can mix this with the slippery elm to encourage healing in the gut lining.

Take **zinc** tablets. Zinc is a mineral required for a healthy immune system, as well as for healing the lining of the gut. Follow the recommended dosage on the bottle.

Take **digestive enzyme or HCL tablets** with each main meal to improve your digestion (follow the recommended dosage displayed on the bottle).

Add **aloe vera juice** to your morning routine. It contains a large variety of amino acids, enzymes, vitamins and minerals, which help with healing and detoxifying the intestines. Follow the recommended dosage on the bottle.

Cook with **coconut oil**. Coconut oil has the magic healing power to inhibit the growth of yeast and viruses, and it acts as an antibacterial agent.

The beauty is that all of these supplements are completely natural and can be purchased over the counter at any pharmacy. Always follow the recommended dosage.



**Disclaimer:** The information provided in this guide does not constitute as medical advice and should not be used as a substitute for diagnosis or treatment. Always consult your health care provider to ensure this plan is right for you. As with any medical condition, a pain in the abdomen should be referred to a medical practitioner in the first instance. (12) (13)

# Fermenting

As previously mentioned, fermented vegetables are a great and inexpensive source of probiotics. You can purchase cultured vegetables such as sauerkraut. However, store-bought sauerkraut is typically pasteurized, and the heat kills the probiotics.

Making a home-made version is much healthier. You can use a culture starter powder you can buy at health food stores or simply use salt. It is easier than you think! Try a small batch first and see how it goes. I must warn you that fermenting can be addictive. It is as rewarding as watching a plant grow, except you get to eat the final product. How yummy! I usually have two to three ongoing jars, including one fermenting on the counter and one ready for snacking in the fridge.

## *Recipe* Layla's traditional pickled vegetables

Ingredients for 1.2 kg jar (organic where possible)

500ml filtered water

1 heaped tablespoon Celtic or Himalayan salt

1/4 cup organic apple cider vinegar (Bragg's)

Approx. 300-500g mixed vegetables, chopped or sliced to desired shape & sizes (smaller, thinner pieces will ferment and soften faster).

1 teaspoon turmeric powder (optional)

## *Method*

1. Dissolve the salt in water. Then, add the turmeric (optional) and mix well. Set this aside; it is your brine.
2. Wash the jar with warm soapy water and rinse it well with warm to hot water. Also wash your hands really well.
3. Stack the jar with your choice of vegetables and push them down firmly as you go. Fill it to the rim.
4. Pour the brine into the jar. Then, add the ACV. Close the lid firmly and give it a slow shake to mix the brine. Open the jar and test the brine to see how it tastes. This will help future top ups.

5. Place the jar on a plate in a warm area of the kitchen. When the vegetables start to ferment, bubbling may occur and brine may spill out of the jar.
6. After approx. 24 hours, open the jar and press down the vegetables with a clean spoon. Taste the brine (it should taste a little salty), if needed, add a sprinkle of salt and top the jar with water or ACV to the cover veggies (if the vegetables are exposed without brine covering, there is a chance of bacteria forming). Seal the jar firmly and give it a slow shake to mix brine. Place the jar in a warm area again.
7. Allow 5-7 days for fermentation. Always use clean utensils when taking vegetables out of the jar. Never use your fingers.
8. As the vegetables decrease, push them to one side of jar and add more fresh vegetables (this is easier when using a larger jar). There may still be enough brine to do this. As the brine starts to decrease, top up the jar with more brine mixture as in step 6.



**Note** Adding vinegar to your brine means your fermentation is an acetic one, not a lactobacilli. Whilst it's not as probiotically beneficial as doing it with a culture starter, it is still a great way of

# DON'T EAT YOUR HEART OUT

## *Emotional Eating*

I find emotional eating to be a common concern for many clients. This is particularly true of the women who come see me for weight loss advice. Many of these women are not even necessarily overweight. This issue is often overlooked by health professionals. Yet it is one of the most important things to address. This is what prevents most individuals from reaching their health goals. I've witnessed many women being told by their trainers 'to stop stuffing your face, toughen up and have some will power'.

Since I have been in these shoes myself, I can honestly say it is easier said than done. Although willpower does play a role, the lack of it isn't what prevents most people from succeeding. Emotional eating is a very complex problem. It has nothing to do with food, and yet at the end of the day it has everything to do food. Let me explain why.

By definition, emotional eating is ingesting food without the physiological need to satisfy hunger. This can take place for various reasons. It is done to suppress emotions such as stress, anger, fear, sadness, and loneliness, or to avoid dealing with a bigger problem one doesn't feel capable of resolving. The unwillingness to experience an emotion, rather than the emotion itself, can often lead to eat comfort foods.

Emotional eating is often coupled with other disorderly eating behaviours such as overeating or binge eating. This is a compulsive behaviour characterized by excessive food consumption. These types of behaviours negatively affect the person's mental health. They also come with physical struggles. Binge eating can overload the digestive system, literally causing 'injury' to the intestines. It also reinforces the imbalance of bad bacteria in the gut, causing the person's inability to digest foods properly.

Overeating also messes with healthy hormone levels. It increases the levels of leptin in the body, which works with the thyroid gland to control hunger. Leptin is produced by fat tissue. It can tell the body to be hungry, store fat or tap into fat stores.

The more fat a person has, the more leptin they produce. In response to overeating, leptin receptors get worn out, making it possible for this hormone to fly under the radar.

The good news is that, when a person loses body fat, the cells become more receptive to leptin. This makes it easier to stop eating when they have had enough.

## *ACTION STEP*

Answer these questions to determine whether you are an emotional eater:

Do you often find yourself staring at the fridge searching for a snack after a full meal?

Do you feel powerless around certain foods? If yes, what are they?

Do you reward yourself with food? If yes, when?

Do you eat food to make yourself feel better when you are down? If yes, what events triggers this?

Do you eat until you are completely stuffed? If yes, how often?

Does eating certain foods give you a sense of comfort?  
If yes, which foods?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, you likely eat for emotional reasons. Under normal circumstances, food should be a source of nourishment for the body, not for the soul.

The reality is that the most common cause for these negative behaviours is a lack of confidence and an inability to practice self-love.

A lot of clients I see with this behaviour are magnificently strong women. They are perfectionists who like to please others, but struggle to unconditionally love and accept themselves. They find pleasure in putting restrictions on themselves, such as the kinds of foods they eat.

You hear about these women being on a different restricted diet regime each month. They are strict on themselves for periods of time. Nonetheless, when they become stressed and things fall out of control, they turn to food. They have learned to control their feelings this way. Depriving may offer temporary relief, but it is not a long-term solution.

As a matter of fact, Baumesiter and Tierney (authors of the New York Times Bestseller called Willpower) state that if we don't eat enough, our brains can lack enough glucose to possess the willpower to make healthy choices. (14)

The problem is that, when we eat to suppress emotions, we can't learn what the emotion is telling us. Then we can't react appropriately to the situation.



By placing such restrictions on ourselves, we limit the amount of love we allow ourselves to give and receive. We do this because deep down we don't truly believe that we deserve to be loved.

Instead of going on restrictive plans, allow yourself to notice the way you feel and accept it. Where you are now is exactly where you need to be at this very moment, and it is perfect! Embrace it. Acknowledge that you have to go through these motions to give yourself a reference point in your life; something you can learn from and reflect on.

### *Complete This Exercise:*

Next time you feel stressed or overwhelmed and you catch yourself turning to food, bring your awareness to your feelings. Grab a notebook and write down the emotion you are experiencing. You also might want to think about what you refuse to experience. Putting it into writing will provide a helpful perspective on how your emotions and your eating habits intersect.

## Eating Out of Boredom

When I ask my clients why they eat the things they know are bad and prevent them from achieving their goals, the answer is often “because it’s delicious and it gives me pleasure”.

This type of response tells me that the underlying issue isn’t with their taste buds. It may be a lack of passion in your life. The unmet need for passion can lead you to seek pleasure in food. The problem is that food only provides a temporary high, not a long-term solution.

It does not address the underlying issue. Instead, it feeds into a vicious cycle of overindulgence and guilt. This will only make you feel worse in the end.

### ***ACTION STEP***

Complete this exercise:

Next time you experience this type of craving, instead of indulging, grab a notebook and write down what you are experiencing. Put in writing whatever comes to mind.

First, notice what emotion you are having. Note its intensity on a scale of 1 to 10. (1= barely, 10= extreme.)

Then think about the event or person that triggered the situation. Write it down.

What feelings and sensations do you notice in your body? Write these down. Labeling an emotion can help you control it.

This way of suppressing your emotions long term can be draining and harmful. It can sabotage your weight loss efforts, and lessen your self-confidence. It damages your ability to love yourself unconditionally.

Credit goes to Jennifer Taitz, author of End Emotional Eating for this exercise. (15)

# I KNOW IT'S NOT GOOD FOR ME, BUT...

## *Why can't I stop?*

As you discovered, keeping your hands out of the cookie jar is not just the matter of willpower. To be able to fully understand the complexity of this topic, let's have a look at how the foods you turn to affect you physically.

When it comes to indulging, most 'offenders' choose simple carbohydrates. These can be sugary or salty high-carb foods like cookies, chocolate, chips or ice cream. I have witnessed many 'foodies' or 'health nuts' stuff themselves with healthy foods such as nuts, granola bars, vegan brownies, dark chocolate or sweet potato chips. Even though it's not full of refined sugar, eating a bucket-load will still hold you back from reaching your goals. At the end of the day, if you can't stop at one serving, then we have an issue.

What you may not know is that these foods can actually act like drugs in the body. They immediately make you feel calm and happy. They give you an instant high, because they trigger the release of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter. When it is released, it gives you a calm and happy feeling. The reason you find it so difficult to put that block of chocolate down is because your brain is literally high on serotonin. These foods trigger the reward centre of your brain to send a charge of uplifting compounds. You feel fantastic in that moment. However, this joy is only short lived. These foods don't stimulate ongoing production of serotonin, which is really what you need.

For many people, this way of rewarding themselves is a way of relieving stress and sometimes validating themselves after a long day of work. You may say to yourself, "I worked so hard today, I deserve this".

For many, this type of reaction stems from childhood. If you are a sensitive person and were raised in an environment where your parents didn't teach you how to cope with feelings, or where you were punished for showing emotions, you may have learned to control feelings with food. I can clearly remember my dear grandmother giving me lollies when I was hurt, or if I was an exceptionally good girl. I made this emotional connection to food early in my life. It became an easily accessible comfort tool later on.

Society also reinforces a similar reward system. Think of the celebration of successful business deals, birthdays, and awards. Consider the thoughtful box of chocolates given to you by a satisfied client. They all involve food. It is not always easy to escape the trap.

I have fought my own battle with emotional eating for a long time. I still face challenges today. I constantly have to remind myself that I am good enough, I am at the perfect place at the right time and I need to be present to enjoy the moment.

The first step to healing, is recognition. Once you realise there is a problem, you can seek help. Once you channel your energy towards it, you will attract the people or programs that give you the right guidance.

We all face challenges. It's not about what we have to deal with, it's about the 'how'.

## Case Study

When I first started doing personal training, I was given clients; I didn't get to choose who I wanted to work with. I particularly recall one lady, lets call her Caroline. She was highly obese and told me from the get-go that she had tried every diet and weight loss program, but nothing worked for her. She kept saying that her weight had nothing to do with nutrition because she was barely eating anything.

She told me to just train her hard, because unless I gave her sweat and tears, she didn't feel like she got her money's worth. I didn't know any better, so I did as she asked and kept quiet. She was closed off and I could sense a lot of anger and resentment in her. As the months went by, we got a little closer. I worked up the courage to finally ask about her food intake.

She admitted that each night she and her flatmate shared a whole block of chocolate and a hot cocoa while watching their favourite TV series. She called this 'bonding' and she said to not even think about taking this away from her.

That is what was causing her obesity, PCOS and other health issues. The moment I tried to shine light on her problematic food intake, she became angry and closed off. She kept saying that her evening chocolate regime was the only pleasure she had.

I realised that she was still in denial and I couldn't help her until she was ready to face the beast. The point I'm trying to make by telling you this story, is that as long as someone is in denial, there is nothing anyone can do to help.

To overcome emotional eating and find what is blocking you, you may need additional help in the form of therapy or counselling. It is always best to seek help from a qualified professional who can give you appropriate guidance.

I have found that yoga, meditation, and deep belly breathing exercises are all helpful for becoming more aware and confronting these problems.

Besides these practices, I have found EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) to work well in reducing stress and anxiety about food. I often recommend it to clients with tremendous success.

Integrative health care professionals, such as Dr. Joseph Mercola and Dr. Dawson Church, Ph.D., founder of the National Institute for Integrative Healthcare, both endorse and support this powerful technique. Studies show that EFT can offer relief from both psychological and physiological conditions including anxiety, depression, weight loss, food cravings, post-traumatic stress disorder and academic or athletic performance. (16)

### **FIND OUT MORE**

### ***ACTION STEP:***

Try this next time you find yourself looking for a snack after a meal, or desiring something that you know isn't good for you. Grab a piece of paper and write down the first feeling that comes to mind. Also write down where you are and what you are doing at the time.

What do you tell yourself when you are trying to resist eating this food? Keep a diary. After a few days of journaling, take a look at what you have written. You should be able to see some sort of a pattern. This will give you a better idea of what emotion you are trying to avoid or suppress.

Remind yourself every day that it is okay to be you. Where you are is perfect and everything you are going through is happening to you because it is what serves you best at that very moment. It is your time to experience and make the most out of that situation. You are here to learn.

## Practice Gratitude

Practicing gratitude means saying thank you by acknowledging the good things in our lives that make us happy. This habit can serve as a reminder of how lucky you are each and every day, even for just being alive. It can help you develop a more positive attitude towards life, while also improving your relationships and helping you cope with stress. We often forget how fortunate we are to be living in a place where food is abundant, there is no war and we get to breathe fresh air.

### *ACTION STEP*

Rather than dwelling on the negative things by loading off to your partner or house mate at the end of the day, buy a notebook and start a gratitude journal. Take a moment to write down five things you are grateful for in your life before you go to sleep each night. They can be the simplest things like fresh air, your best friend, a beautiful dish, or being healthy. The more positivity you put out, the more you will attract into your life.

## Find Freedom From Food

Sometimes to break a negative pattern you need to get out of your comfort zone and make some radical changes. A lot of women decide to wait to make changes to their lives, relationships, travel plans, wardrobe or even their hair style after they lose weight. They wait until they are happy with themselves. The problem is that many women don't manage to reach that stage at all. This is why it should be the other way around!

If you are waiting for these things to happen, that means you are currently missing out. You are most likely dissatisfied, unhappy, and uncomfortable.

It's time to face your reality. If you keep doing what you have always done, you will get what you have always gotten.

It is time to try something new! Instead of waiting to be happy when.... start being happy now. Stop thinking about your weight and start living the life you want to live today! Let me show you how.

When you make your fantasy life your reality and start doing more of the things you love on a daily basis, you won't need to use food as a band-aid. As I mentioned earlier, you are exactly where you need to be right now.

### ***ACTION STEP***

Sit down and list all of the things that you are currently **NOT** doing because of your weight. List smaller and bigger things, the more the better!

Here are a few examples from real women just like you:

I would go on a holiday to a tropical island

I would go to my high school reunion

I would ask for a raise

I would exercise more

I would quit my job and study counseling

I would buy new clothes

I would put on a bikini, go to the beach and walk around confidently

I would have passionate sex with my husband

I would talk to the hot guy I see at the coffee shop every day









Think of someone you deeply love and care for. Consider how you'd talk to them and encourage them to do something. Now use the same tone when talking to yourself. This might feel weird at first, but it will change your life I promise!

**Look in the mirror and repeat 3 times over:**

"Even though, I may not be exactly where I want to be just yet, I love and accept myself unconditionally. I cherish my beautiful body and I treat it with respect."

Feel free to make up your own personal mantra. A mantra is a word, sound or phrase that has spiritual and psychological power and is repeated often.

**Here are a few of my favourites that always bring me happiness and peace.**

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone."

"That which doesn't challenge you, doesn't change you."

"Some of the best lessons are learned at the worst times."

"This is it, and it is perfect. I am exactly where I need to be, and experiencing exactly what I need to experience, in order to grow and get ahead."

Although you are welcome to borrow mine, it is time to make up your own. Find and write down a mantra that makes you feel good and positive!

Fill out the cards on this page and cut them out and stick them somewhere where you can read them daily!



## Find Your Passion

Think of the things you love doing, that fire you up, that you used to love or would have loved doing. It may be painting, singing, horse riding, cooking, sewing, soaking up the sun, doing yoga or reading a book.

### *ACTION STEPS*

Start doing at least one of these tomorrow.

Let go of the excuses that come up, such as the cost or time constraints. It doesn't have to cost money. There are meet-up groups that organise social events and all sorts of activities for free, just for the fun of it. If you have a smart phone, try out the app Meet-Up!

Don't have the time? Make time. It is as simple as that. You have to learn to dedicate time for the things you love doing. Otherwise, what's the point of being? Don't get caught up in the hamster wheel.

When you start doing the things you love, it will energise and inspire you. It will reduce your stress levels, improve your relationships and fuel your fire!

## Be A Bit Selfish

For once, put yourself first. Yes, you deserve some down time and yes you deserve some fun. If it's only you with no kids or a family to take care of then you have no excuse. If you are a mum and have babies to look after and a household to run, you still need to dedicate some time to yourself, even if it's only one hour a day. You will see that when you do, you will have much more to offer to those around you.

## Get On The **NO** Train

Thanks to Marie Forleo for these thoughts.

It is easy to overcommit and end up with a never-ending to-do list because you like to please everyone. As harsh as it may sound, the sooner you 'get on the no train' the sooner you will realise that you will actually have time to do the things you need to do to achieve your goals, such as getting your fitness on.

### ***ACTION STEP***

Say **NO** to at least two requests today.

Be nice about it and be honest. Just tell them you don't want to overcommit.

## Fake It Till You Make It

Start looking and acting like who you aspire to be. Sure, you may not look and feel like a supermodel just yet. Things can feel chaotic both inside and out but you can certainly tidy things up on the surface.

If your undies have lost elasticity, your sweat pants have holes, and you can't remember the last time you did your hair or makeup, then you can't be inspired by your own image. How can you expect others to be? It's time to get a few things in order. Start looking and feeling fabulous in both your skin and your clothes.

### *ACTION STEP*

Invest in a new, flattering workout gear. Let's be honest, you are not going to want to go near the gym wearing your boyfriend's sweat pants.

Freshen up your wardrobe with a few pieces that make you feel great. Don't wait until you 'lose weight', do this now. If you put it off and keep walking around in clothes that make you look like your granny, then you will feel like it too. You won't be motivated to lose the weight.

Make an effort to dress up every day, even if you work from home. Honour your body by putting on clothes that emphasise your best body parts.

Commit to doing your hair and make up daily . You will notice how much better you feel if you highlight your beauty with a few simple tools. Not good with makeup? Retailers at department stores can show you how to use their products if you purchase a few items. Take advantage of their expertise by learning what colours and pallets suit your skin tone

## Find Support

Surrounding yourself with like-minded people who support your goals is invaluable. It is even better if you can have someone do the program with you. Anyone can benefit from following this guide, not just those who are trying to lose weight. Friends, family, partners or social groups of objective, like-minded individuals can all provide support.

There is nothing worse than trying to stick to a new eating plan while someone at the dinner table is dangling a slice of pizza in front of you. I find that this is a big issue with some of my clients and their partners.

## Case Study

My client, Yasmin, was dedicated to making a lifestyle change, eating healthy, becoming lean, and finally losing the baby weight after her second child. She wanted it so much. However, her partner was unsupportive when it came to the diet and lifestyle change. He refused to eat the foods she cooked and made fun of her new regime. It was very difficult for her to follow a plan and create habits, not only because she was lacking encouragement, but also because she had to cook differently for him.

What she didn't realise was that her partner was sabotaging her for a reason. He wanted to control her. He was afraid that when she finally got in shape and had more self worth, she would be better than him and other men would want to be with her.

If you want to avoid your partner feeling that way, then I suggest you involve him or her in every part of your new lifestyle. Share your excitement. Have them help you with your fortnightly pictures and measurements. Cook together and exercise together. Let them taste your delicious meals. Get them fired up about your new body and paint the picture of how proud they will be to walk down the street with the new you.

Don't be afraid to dangle the carrot in front of them! If they feel as if they are part of your journey, they will be a lot more supportive. Or, you could even have them do it with you. So many of my clients end up with hot bodies as well as hot partners. After their partners see the benefits, they start eating cleaner and getting fitter themselves. Take them on the journey with you and watch your relationship grow.



## Tips To Curb Cravings

Cravings can be psychological as discussed above. They can also indicate a nutrient deficiency. Before you give into your craving, always ensure you are not mistaking hunger for thirst. When you are dehydrated, your body signals your brain to eat to obtain hydrating nutrients. These signals can easily be misinterpreted.

Here is an indication of what your body might be lacking when you crave certain foods:

CRAVING	WHAT YOU NEED	EAT INSTEAD
Chocolate	Magnesium	Nuts, seeds, raw cacao nibs, & leafy greens
Sugary Foods*	Chromium Thyptophan	Broccoli, chicken, oats, turkey, sweet potato
Salty foods**	Chloride Silicon	Fatty fish, cashews, & seeds
Carbonated Drinks	Calcium	Tahini, sesame seeds, broccoli, bok choy & leafy greens
PMS Carvings	Zinc	Pumpkin seeds, shell fish
Bread/pasta	Nitrogen	Chia seeds, beef, chicken, turkey & seafood

\*Craving sugar can also be a sign of blood sugar fluctuations. When your blood sugar drops, your body looks for instant energy to stabilise your glucose levels and keep going. That is why it's so important to include protein with every meal.

\*\*Craving salty foods can indicate that your stress hormones may be out of balance. You could benefit from stress management techniques such as the deep belly breathing exercise in the Stress chapter. Take a break to breathe deeply into your abdomen 15-20 times before you reach for a salty snack.

## ACTION STEP

Next time you experience cravings, check with yourself:

**Am I thirsty?** Sometimes when your body is thirsty, it can actually trick you into feeling hungry when it is really after hydration.

**Am I bored?** What is missing in your day? Think about what you are passionate about. What makes life sweet or spicy for you? Include more of it in your weekly routine!

**Am I sad?** Food can be a band-aid for many people. However, the satisfaction is usually short-lived and followed by guilt: "why the hell did I just eat that?" The result is a vicious cycle of overeating.

**Am I happy?** Being rewarded with food can carry on from childhood to adulthood. If you were rewarded with candy when you got good grades or won a soccer game, there is a good chance that you are going to be after similar rewards as an adult

**Am I trying to avoid doing something?** Eating when you procrastinate is very common. Write down what it is that you are avoiding. Be really honest with yourself. Maybe the talk with your partner? Or the application to a new job?

**Are you deficient in any nutrients?** Refer to the table above.

## Case Study

Let me tell you a story about my client, Esther. Esther ate a balanced meal every 3-4 hours, and had no processed foods or coffee. She also didn't like red meat. She had good digestive function and she exercised daily. Despite her discipline and dedication to a healthy lifestyle, she described strong cravings, difficulty concentrating, and low energy in the afternoon as well as fatigue during exercise.

I suggested that she ask her GP for a blood test to see if anything was out of the ordinary. Her blood results came back 'normal' as per the doctor. However, when I took a closer look at her results, I noticed that her iron levels were low. They were just a few digits away from being outside the normal range.

Her cravings for energy made sense. Iron is necessary for energy production and cellular metabolism. Esther's body was longing after carbohydrates, the body's preferred source of energy. After a few months of supplementation, her iron levels were back to normal and her cravings disappeared.

## Iron

Iron deficiency is one of the most common nutrient deficiencies, particularly amongst women of childbearing age. Many times it goes unnoticed. (17)

If you experience the symptoms of low energy and fatigue, with or without heavy periods, get checked out by your GP. Never self-prescribe iron supplements! This needs to be done by a health professional to avoid overdose which can result in liver damage, diarrhea or heart problems.

Serum ferritin is the best measure to determine iron levels and it should be above 50ng/ml for you to feel energised, according to Dr. John Briffa BSc, MB, BS, practicing doctor and international speaker. (18)

### *Foods high in iron are:*

Red meat (beef, lamb, kangaroo)

Liver

Oysters and mussels

Parsley

Nuts (cashews, almonds, pine nuts, hazelnuts)

Raw cocoa

Pumpkin seeds

You can easily curb your craving by:

**Including protein** with each meal. Protein contains tryptophan, the amino acid that converts to serotonin in the brain. Tryptophan works best when consumed in conjunction with a small amount of carbohydrate, such as a scoop of brown rice, sweet potato, or a handful of nuts. These complex carbohydrates are essential to helping your brain properly convert these chemicals.

**Exercising daily!** Exercise increases serotonin production. Our bodies thrive on physical activity and it positively affects our brain chemistry.

**Including healthy fats in your diet.** Fats are essential for our brain and hormonal health. It is essential to include them in the form of salmon, eggs, nuts, seeds, avocado, extra virgin olive oil or coconut oil.

**Taking fish oils.** Fish oils support brain function, increase fat burning enzymes, and help regulate bowel movements.

**Avoiding stimulants** like coffee, sugar, energy drinks or alcohol. These only provide a temporary lift, but long term they can deplete your adrenals and lead to more health issues.

**Getting the essential minerals.** Cravings can also indicate deficiency of the mineral, chromium. Taking chromium daily can eliminate cravings very quickly, if the underlying issue is mineral deficiency. Consult a health professional to assess whether you need supplementation.

There is a fantastic supplement called **Glucose Balance**, which I've been using in my practice for many years with clients who struggle with sugar cravings. This product contains chromium, cinnamon and gymnema, which are powerful herbs that support carbohydrate metabolism and promote healthy blood sugar levels.

Please refer to your **Lean Body Buyer's Guide For Supplements** for more information.

## Sleep Hygiene

Quality sleep is integral for sculpting a lean body. A restful night of sleep allows for higher energy levels, lean muscle growth, decreased stress levels and wait for it... less cravings! That's right.

Sleeping chemically rebalances your brain and your hunger hormones, allowing them to carry the message to burn fat as opposed to storing it. Every hour before midnight counts for at least 2 hours after midnight, so being asleep by 10pm would be the ideal.

Turn your electronic devices such as phones or iPads off at least 1-2 hours prior to retiring. The light they project is very stimulating and won't allow the release of melatonin. Melatonin is a naturally occurring sleep hormone controlled by light exposure that helps regulate your sleep-wake cycle. It is best to read a book instead.

If you are still having trouble falling asleep, you can also try guided meditation to lead you into a more restful sleep. Just like everything else, meditation takes practice. You won't just become good at it overnight. Don't give up after just one try!

This **meditation podcast** offers free episodes of guided meditation specifically for falling asleep.

If you are having trouble staying asleep, then you may benefit from a magnesium supplement. Magnesium, a mineral that is responsible for over 300 biochemical processes in the body, is lacking in our diets. It acts as a muscle relaxer, helping your entire body calm down and rest well.

## Eating Out Made Easy

Have you been wondering how to look at a restaurant menu and order the best option? Dining out can cause a problem if you are following a plan. Even if you are committed to preparing your own meals most of the time, there will be times when you just can't avoid eating out such as birthday celebrations, and social get-togethers.

There is always a healthy option, but sometimes you have to ask for it. If you are out on a business lunch or dinner with friends, don't be afraid to ask for food that suits your needs. Most places are accommodating if you ask nicely, after all you are paying the bill. Gluten intolerance and allergies are on the rise. Restaurants have to adjust and be prepared to accommodate those with special needs, so many places now offer gluten-free dishes.

SWAP	ORDER
Fried / battered / crumbed	Grilled, stir fried, oven baked, boiled, poached, blanched
Cream sauce	Marinara, red sauce
Bread	Wrapped in lettuce leaves, wholemeal wrap, flat bread
Creamy soups	Clear broths
Sauces / condiments	Avocado, lemon juice, balsamic, vinaigrette

## The Best Foods by Cuisine

### THAI and VIETNAMESE

**Choose:** Thai beef salad, papaya salad, steamed fish, or stir-fries with veggies without rice.

**Avoid:** *curries, satay and deep fried dishes.*

### CHINESE

**Choose:** steamed rice over fried rice, steamed dumplings, steamed greens, and lean chicken, beef, fish and seafood.

**Avoid:** *deep-fried spring rolls, dumplings, pork belly and noodles.*

### JAPANESE

**Choose:** sashimi, miso soup, tempeh, tofu, seaweed salads and miso glazed fish.

**Avoid:** *creamy sauces, cream cheese tempura, teriyaki and noodles such as udon.*

### MEXICAN

**Choose:** fajitas, taco salads, pulled chicken, beans, beef chilli con carne, salsa or guacamole without the tortilla. Dress with lime and hot sauce.

**Avoid:** *nachos soaked in cheese, burritos filled with rice and corn chips.*

### FRENCH

**Choose:** Provençal-style vegetables, chicken, seafood or lean beef dishes.

**Avoid:** *buttery and creamy sauces like Hollandaise or Béarnaise and stay away from duck confit, which is full of fat.*

### ITALIAN

**Choose:** lemon chicken, seafood, fish with capers, steak, salads, olives, or dishes with Neapolitan (tomato) sauce.

**Avoid:** *pasta, lasagne, bread, cheese, Bolognese, risotto, and polenta*

### GREEK and LEBANESE

**Choose:** salads, pickles, hummus, and tabouleh. Order a chicken kebab without cheese in a takeaway container instead of a wrap.

**Avoid:** *cheese or wraps.*

### PUB FOO

**Choose:** house salad with lemon or balsamic dressing, grilled salmon, chicken, prawns, steak and veggies.

**Avoid:** *Caesar salad, creamy dressings, BBQ and tomato sauce, hot chips/fries, pizza, rolls, pork belly, pasta dishes.*

## Eating out Do's and Don'ts

Don't starve yourself before you go to dinner. Have a small bite to eat before you leave the house.

Avoid buffets, they almost guarantee over-indulgence.

Order two entrees (appetisers) instead of an entree and a main meal.

Don't touch the bread. Order a small appetiser to dampen your hunger instead.

Choose a tomato-based sauce in place of white, cream-based sauces.

Order vegetables or salad on the side. Eat it before you get your main dish.

Skip the alcohol and choose water. There is no grey area here. Alcohol will slow down your metabolism for the following 72 hours!

Always ask for dressing on the side, or a fresh lemon wedge.

If you don't want to offend your host, take only a small portion. Personally, I have no problem saying no. Be honest and tell them you are on a plan, most people will respect your dedication.

If you must have dessert, choose fresh fruit over cake.



## What it takes to burn off common treats

When you go out, especially on weekends, it is easy to talk yourself into “I deserve a treat”. You may reach for naughty foods you know you shouldn’t eat. Refer to the table below which shows the **approximate amount of exercise it takes (in minutes)** to burn off some of the most common treats. (19)

FOOD	WALK 5KPH	JOG 10KPH	CYCLE 20KPH	SWIM	WEIGHT TRAIN
Ice Cream x 2 scoops	61	21	24	22	26
Meat Pie 175g	162	56	65	57	68
Choc Biscuit	34	12	14	12	14
Cream Biscuit	34	12	14	12	14
Donut Plain 70g	85	30	34	30	36
Lamington 50g	58	20	23	21	24
Cheesecake 60g	68	24	27	24	29
Choc Cake 60g	77	27	31	27	32
Mud Cake 100g	119	41	48	42	50
Muffin 60g	58	20	23	21	24
Chocolate 30g	55	19	22	19	23
Choc Bar 60g	90	31	36	32	38
Corn Chips 100g	167	58	67	59	70
Potato Chips 50g	85	30	34	30	36
Hot Chips 150g	102	36	41	36	43
French Fries (Medium)	113	39	45	40	47
Hamburger	136	47	54	48	57
Hotdog	95	33	38	34	40
Pizza x 2 Slices	235	82	94	83	99
Cola x 1 Can	53	18	21	19	22

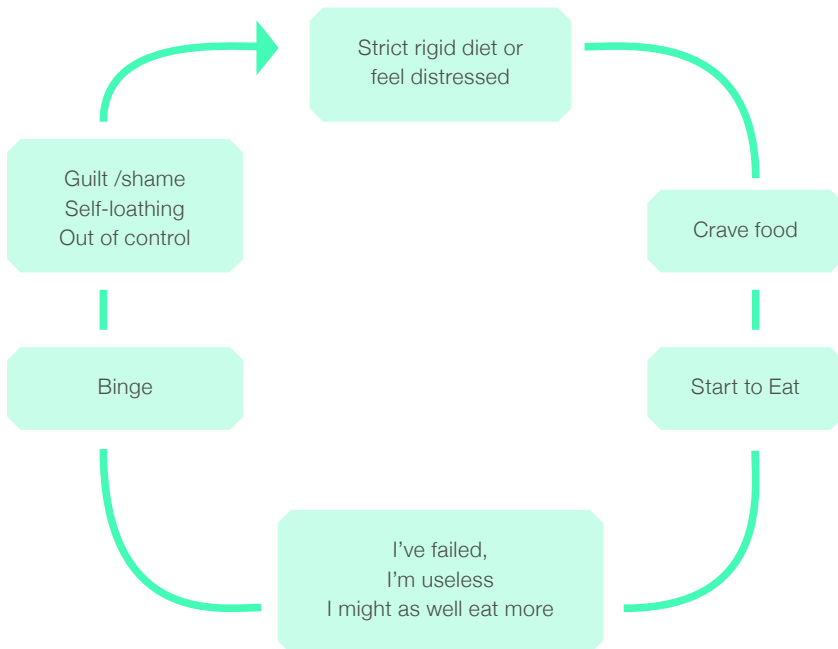
## How To Handle Slip-Ups

We are human. We all have slip-ups every now and again. My advice is to avoid beating yourself up. Feeling guilty about food can begin a vicious cycle. This can increase negative emotions and stress, and increase the production of the stress hormone cortisol, which you already learned increases belly fat. If you have a slip-up, acknowledge that it happened and make sure it doesn't become a habit.

Forget the 'I've already ruined it, I may as well eat the rest of it' mentality. It will only make you feel worse in the end. Stop telling yourself that you are useless. Instead, engage in something positive and productive, which will make you feel good about yourself.

Remember the chapter on Emotional Eating, talk kindly to yourself, as you would to someone you love.

The most important thing is to avoid this vicious cycle:



If you do have a slip up, the best way to lessen the ‘damage’ is by doing fasted cardio exercise the next morning, like going for a run. You should also get back to clean eating immediately. Drink plenty of water to help your liver clear the toxins more efficiently. Combat carb cravings with healthy options instead of processed food, such as wholegrains and root vegetables.

**Banana protein pancakes, wholegrain soba noodles or cauliflower pizza can hit the spot. These make great substitutes.**

## What About Cheat Meals?

Cheat meals are not a necessary part of this plan, because this is not a diet. The Lean Body Guide is a healthy lifestyle program designed to teach you good habits and how to nourish your body with food. When you clean up your diet, you may initially miss the foods you are used to eating. However, when your body starts to thrive on more nutritious foods, your taste buds will change. You will find processed food less and less appealing.

I encourage you to steer away from weekly cheat meals. They reinforce the mindset of indulging in something bad. Instead, invest time learning to make the dishes you crave cleaner and with less sugar, fat, flour or additives. You can make a healthy version of almost anything!

**The Lean Body Meal Plan provides plenty of  
guilt-free recipes you can enjoy!**

If you decide that cheat meals are essential for you, you must make sure that it is a single meal, and it doesn't turn into a cheat day! A cheat meal is not a binge from 6-midnight, which will hinder your results. It will prevent you from achieving a lean body.

# Alcohol

Drinking alcohol whilst trying to lose weight is like eating a box of doughnuts after you just got off the treadmill. Sounds pretty counter-productive, doesn't it?

Alcohol contains no nutrients and it takes a lot of nutrients away from your body, such as the B vitamins required for energy production. It completely shuts down the fat burning process because it increases insulin production. As mentioned earlier, insulin is a storage hormone, which tells your body to store fat!

Alcohol is considered an 'empty calorie food'. It is high in calories while providing zero nutrients, not to mention the juices, energy drinks and syrups it is mixed with in common drinks.

**Alcohol is toxic to the body. When consumed, the liver's first priority is to eliminate it. Everything else loses priority; fat burning falls to the bottom of the list.**

Your metabolism slows down for 72 hours after consuming alcohol. Is it really worth it? For best results, cut it out completely at least until you reach your ideal figure.

## Your New Meal Structure

Eating smaller, more frequent meals will help your body function optimally by stabilising your blood sugar levels and giving you a steady supply of energy. The goal is to have five small meals per day, instead of three large meals. Structuring your meals like this help you burn more fat and it will also prevent you from falling into a post-meal food coma.

When it comes to increasing muscle tone and losing body fat, three square meals a day just won't cut it. That being said, your meals need to be small enough to get you hungry about every 3 hours. If you aren't hungry in 3 hours, your portion sizes are too big. Reduce them slightly.

Also bear in mind that you should stop eating at least 3 hours before going to bed. This will allow for proper digestion and a restful sleep.

### Before breakfast

Always start each day by drinking 400ml water -preferably warm- with ½ of a fresh lemon squeezed in it. It wakes up your digestion and enhances your body's natural detoxification process. This is very important for hormonal balance and weight management. **Do not skip this!**

If you want to score some bonus points, add 1 teaspoon of fresh, grated ginger and a pinch of cayenne pepper for a metabolic boost. This is something I do every single day.

### ***ACTION STEP***

For 21 days, start your day with lemon water in the morning. **Do this religiously.** Observe the changes in your digestion, bowel movements and overall health.

If you want to further improve digestion, have between one teaspoon and one tablespoon of lemon juice 5-10 minutes before each meal. This can help prevent indigestion and aid nutrient absorption.

## Breakfast

If you want to burn fat more efficiently during the day, include protein and healthy fats with your breakfast. This is also the secret to eliminating sugar cravings and ensuring sustained energy levels. It will even help you avoid the 3pm afternoon energy slump.

If you can't eat a full breakfast first thing in the morning, opt for a smoothie instead. High-carbohydrate, low-protein breakfasts, like cereals, muesli, or porridge, can leave you feeling hungry soon after the meal if not combined with adequate protein.

Studies show that consuming carbohydrates first thing in the morning can decrease your body's ability to burn fat for the rest of the day because it creates an insulin surge.

It is best to eat a savoury breakfast most days of the week rather than a sweet one. When you start the day with something sweet and high-carb like cereal, you will more likely experience cravings.

Having a savoury breakfast provides a fantastic opportunity to include a serving of veggies early on in the day. Since we are aiming for 5-6 cups, I encourage you to take advantage of this.

If you want to maximise your fat burning capacity, I recommend that you try the meat and nut breakky. This is a popular breakfast for many fitness models. There is nothing like a piece of juicy steak and eggs in the morning, right?

## Meat and nut breakfast

The benefits of having this breakfast are unbelievable. Having a healthy fat and protein-based breakfast can increase your energy, help you burn fat and keep cravings at bay all day long. Why? Because it fuels your body with the protein needed to maintain and build lean muscle. It also provides healthy fats, which help keep your blood sugar levels stable while decreasing insulin production.

High insulin = Fat storage



## You should try:

Steak slices with macadamia nuts and broccoli

For dessert: blueberries coated with cinnamon!

Slow cooked spiced lamb with Brazil nuts

Slow cooked shredded beef with nut butter spread – grilled for 5 min

Kangaroo kebabs with cashews and raspberries

Grilled chicken tenders with sliced avocado and a side of greens

Poached chicken with walnut pesto

Turkey mince with zucchini

Bacon & eggs (no toast), add green veggies

If you are pressed for time in the mornings, start having this type of breakfast on the weekends. Cook the meat fresh. It really does not take long to sizzle up a small steak. The leathery texture of reheated beef can quickly ruin your appetite. As you get better you can start to incorporate it into your weekdays. It's all about planning and preparation.

**Hot Tip** One of my best-kept secrets to enjoying this breakfast on a daily basis, is slow cooking a big piece of beef or lamb on the weekend, shred it, and freeze individual servings.

Then in the morning, instead of letting it defrost or heat it up in the microwave, I put it under the grill in the oven with 1 teaspoon of nut butter on top. The nut butter melts on the meat and it becomes nice and crispy. I love this method, it makes me look forward to breakfast every day!

## Eggs

Eggs are a great source of protein, and are full of nutrients, especially egg yolks. Each egg yolk contains about 10g of fat, so two per day is enough.

It is important to buy only organic eggs, because the hens are fed a natural diet and are not pumped full of **growth hormones**.

### You should try:

Fried eggs with short cut bacon and sautéed spinach

Eggs with a handful of cashews and ½ grapefruit

Egg muffins with minced flax seeds and fresh herbs

Thin egg white crepe with Greek yogurt, shredded apple and cinnamon

Corn and zucchini fritters

Hard-boiled egg with a scoop of beetroot dip

## *ACTION STEP*

Try the meat and nut breakky at least once a week for the next 21 days. Observe your energy levels and cravings on that day.

Choose savoury breakfasts most days of the week.

Include a portion of vegetables with your breakfast – in the form of a side dish or green smoothie.

Instead of toast, start adding healthy fats to your breakky such as nuts, seeds or avocado. Fats keep you full longer and are more beneficial to the body.

If you really want your porridge or oats, instead of breakfast, make it a post-workout meal.



## If you choose GRAINS try:

Quinoa porridge in water with ginger and grated apple

Oat porridge with almond butter, raspberries and cinnamon

Buckwheat porridge with almond milk, vanilla protein, green apple and cinnamon/nutmeg/ginger spice mix

Barley with almonds and peaches

Quinoa flakes with almond milk and blueberries

Choc-rice pudding: Boil rice into a mushy state. Drain it before adding stevia and chocolate whey protein. Whip it up in a blender. Pour the mixture into a muffin tray or silicone cup and bake it in the oven until golden brown.

## Morning snack

Your AM snack should be very small. You only need enough to get you through until lunch. As with any meal, it still needs to have protein.

### *Good examples*

10 almonds

100g Greek yogurt with 1 tbsp chia seeds, stir in 1 tbsp flavoured protein powder

Veggie sticks and hummus

Handful of edamame

## Afternoon snack

Your PM snack should be more like a mini-meal. It needs to contain adequate protein to get you through your afternoon and prevent your body from being starved by the time you get home from work or to the gym. Try having a small version of your lunch for convenience.

### *Good examples*

- Turkey muffins
- Minute-made sushi
- Sang choy bow

## Lunch options

Lunch should consist of protein, veggies and some healthy carbs to provide energy throughout the day.

### *Good examples*

- Chicken salad with sweet potato wedges
- Turkey breast with brown rice, zucchini and green peas
- Salmon salad with quinoa
- Steak with pumpkin mash and salad

## Dinner options

Your dinner should consist of protein, healthy fats and green vegetables.

### *Good examples*

- Beef stir fry with Asian veggies
- Grilled salmon with roasted asparagus
- Baked chicken breast with garden salad and pine nuts
- Turkey burger with cauliflower mash

## Eating for fat loss and muscle tone

	<b>MON</b>	<b>TUE</b>	<b>WED</b>	<b>THUR</b>	<b>FRID</b>	<b>SAT</b>	<b>SUN</b>
Wake-up	Lemon Water	Lemon Water	Lemon Water	Lemon Water	Lemon Water	Lemon Water	Lemon Water
Meal 1	Breaky	Breaky	Breaky	Breaky	Breaky	Breaky	Breaky
Meal 2	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack	Snack
Meal 3	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Meal 4	Protein Snack	Protein Snack	Protein Snack	Protein Snack	Protein Snack	Protein Snack	Protein Snack
Meal 5	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
Post Training	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake	Protein-Shake

\*PWS – is a Post Workout Shake.

You can choose a whey protein isolate a plant-based protein.

## Late-night snacking

If you want become a real Lean Body Babe and if you want to burn body fat instead of storing it, I suggest you avoid snacking after dinner altogether. It is a bad habit and it can ruin all your efforts by adding unnecessary calories to your day that you can't burn off because you are going straight to bed.

If you often find yourself longing for a sweet treat after dinner, you may want to re-evaluate those dinners.

***ACTION STEP*** Ask yourself the following questions:

**Does my meal contain enough good fats and protein? What are they?  
List them:**

**How do I eat my dinner? For example in front of the TV, standing up in the kitchen or sitting down with family?**

**Am I eating while playing with my phone or browsing on the Internet?**

**Am I allowing my taste buds to actually enjoy the food or scoffing down each bite?**

**Am I eating by myself or sharing my meal and having a meaningful conversation with friends/family?**

**Do I eat in a nice, calm manner or do I rush through my meal?**

**Is the food tasty?**

*Hot Tip* Create a new habit! After dinner, make yourself a hot tea immediately, and sip on it while reading a book for 30 minutes. It will keep you busy and help reduce your sweet cravings. Wanting something sweet after dinner is just a bad habit, and as any habit it can be changed or better yet, replaced. My favourite dessert teas include licorice, cinnamon-orange or hibiscus fruit mix.

Experiment, find what works for you and watch your waistline shrink after just a few weeks!

## SUMMARY

### *Becoming a Lean Body Babe*

To increase your body's fat-burning capacity and improve your ability to absorb nutrients:

Cut out sugar, and reduce even your natural sugar intake. Allow one piece of fruit per day and consume the whole fruit.

Chew your food properly. Digestion starts in your mouth, not your stomach! Chew each bite at least 20 times.

Eat a small meal containing protein every 3 hours to speed up your metabolism and avoid cravings.

Eat in a calm state. Eating while you are cooking, cleaning or straightening your hair is really bad for your digestion. Rushing while you eat prevents your body from secreting the enzymes necessary for digestion. Also, your brain doesn't process that you have eaten, so you won't feel satisfied and there is a good chance you will be looking for that sweet snack after meals.

Keep blood sugar levels stable to help avoid insulin production (storage hormone). Consume an equal amount of protein with the carbs you eat. By doing so, you minimise insulin production, increase insulin sensitivity and also prevent energy slumps throughout the day. Combinations for example: ½ cup of potatoes with at least ½ cup of chicken breast, or a piece of fruit with at least a handful of nuts or turkey breast.

Stop eating carbohydrates after 4pm. Carbohydrates cause a release of insulin. Insulin can be beneficial after a heavy workout, but not so much when you are getting ready for a snooze.

Drink water away from meals, not with meals. Drinking liquids with meals interferes with digestion and nutrient absorption. It dilutes the enzymes needed to break down food. If you drink, wait 20 minutes to eat.

Have your last meal at least 2-3 hours before bed time. This allows for proper digestion and more restful sleep.

Sleep 8 hours. Sleeping rebalances the chemicals in your brain and suppresses hunger hormones.

Surround yourself with positive, like-minded people who support your journey. **Connect with the Lean Body Tribe HERE**

At the end of each day, write down three things you are grateful for. This will serve as a reminder of how blessed you are and can help you stay on track.

## Daily CHECKLIST!

- 8 hours sleep
- Lemon-water in the morning
- Healthy breakfast with protein & good fats
- Meals prepared for the day
- Exercise
- Practice gratitude

# CONGRATULATIONS

I am absolutely certain that if you follow the steps and strategies outlined in this guide, you will begin to see and feel amazing transformations in your body in just a matter of weeks.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, that's fantastic news. It means something wonderful is about to happen! After all what doesn't challenge you, doesn't change you.

Just know that it is completely normal to feel a little overwhelmed. It's all part of the process. Each time you question whether this is really right for you, or if you can really go through with the program, remember to take it one step at a time. Tomorrow you will be one step closer to your goal than you were yesterday.

There is so much more I want to teach you about transforming your body. I want to enable you living your life more fully and confidently.

I hope my book has motivated you to kick-start the new you, and it has provided you with a great insight into transforming your body from the inside out. I truly hope that the **Lean Body Formula** has been as helpful to you as it has been to thousands of others.

## **The Lean Body Accelerator Program**

If you still feel like you are not quite there yet, or you are ready to take it a step further, you can apply to work with me personally in my one-on-one mentoring program the **Lean Body Accelerator**.

If you need help setting your goals, or whether you want to perform better at the gym or become the strongest and leanest you've ever been, I can make sure you get there faster through the Lean Body Accelerator program.

The LBA is a 10-week accelerated program that is tailored to your unique situation, body type and biochemistry based on a detailed assessment and lab analysis. With the scientific proof and our weekly coaching sessions, there is no room for error.

During the program you speak with me each week via skype where I assess your daily nutrition intake, exercise, stress or struggles around food. Having this support can help you overcome any obstacles that have been getting in your way. I ensure that you stay on track!

Fill out an application **[APPLY HERE](#)**



This program has helped hundreds of women and men around the globe to transform their body as well as achieve total wellness. Some of the bad habits clients were able to ditch include:

**Being disciplined during the week, then falling off the wagon Friday through Sunday and having to start fresh on Monday,**

**Sugar and junk-food cravings,**

**Overeating when going out,**

**Making bad choices when eating out,**

**Feeling overwhelmed by various stressor in their lives.**

I want to let you into a little secret. I have several coaches for different areas of my life, including business, training and nutrition. Why? Because the fastest way to success is finding a role model who has done what you want to do, and can help you reach that goal. All the successful people I know and I look up to have mentors. While I used to think I could do everything on my own, I realised sometimes all I needed was a little extra push to help me breakthrough the blocks that I couldn't see. If I could go back in time, I would have sought out these coaches sooner to assist me in my journey, which would have saved me a whole lot of time, money and stress. I would like to encourage you to 'enjoy the journey, not just the destination' and surround yourself with people who can support you along the way.

If you liked this book, and my health and nutrition philosophies resonated with you, you will love my **Lean Body Accelerator**. It's the most fun you will have losing weight and reaching your max potential.

Yours in health,

*Nik x*



## Professional Bio

Nikolett Toth, the Lean Body Coach is a holistic nutritionist, personal trainer, health coach and blogger. She chose this field four years ago after curing herself of chronic infections, digestive issues and excess weight using nutrition alone. She began a journey to help others do the same.

As her passion grew in nutrition, she realised how important exercise was for optimal health. She decided to expand her knowledge in the field of fitness by becoming a personal trainer.

Over the past years, Nik has put herself to the test by competed in an INBA fitness competition, sculpting the body she had once dreamed of.

She has published many health articles and recipes, and regularly contributes to health blogs and magazines. She also presents on a weekly radio talk show. Nik's passion only gets stronger as time goes on, and she knows health and fitness will be an essential part of her career and lifestyle for the rest of her life.

**[Apply to work with Nik HERE](#)**

## References

1. Dr. Avena, N. 2014.  
Available: <http://www.drnicoleavena.com/> (accessed July 2014)
2. Feijo. F.M.F, Cintia, R.B. et al. 2013. Appetite. Saccharin and aspartame, compared with sucrose, induce greater weight gain in adult Wistar rats, at similar total caloric intake levels.  
  
Available: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0195666312004138> (accessed March 2014)
3. The Huffington Post Healthy Living. 2013. Splenda, Sucralose Artificial Sweetener, Could Affect Body's Insulin Response. Available: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/03/splenda-blood-sugar-sucralose-insulin\\_n\\_3362122.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/03/splenda-blood-sugar-sucralose-insulin_n_3362122.html) (accessed June 2014)
4. Dr. Lipski, E. 2011. Digestive Wellness. Strengthen the Immune System and Prevent Disease Through Healthy Digestion. McGraw-Hill Education. USA
5. The British Medical Journal. 2003. Dietary fat intake and risk of stroke: Allegations about dietary fat are unfounded. Available: <http://www.bmj.com/content/327/7427/1348.3#REF1> (Accessed February 2014)
6. Mozaffarian, D. Cao, H. et al. 2010. Harvard Medical School. Trans-palmitoleic acid, metabolic risk factors, and new-onset diabetes in U.S. adults: a cohort study. Available: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21173413>
7. Dr. Mercola, J. 2014. New warning about olive oil. Available: <http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2010/10/30/rudi-moerck-on-cooking-oils.aspx> (Accessed April 2014)
8. Leaf A. 2007. Journal of Cardiovascular Medicine. Prevention of sudden cardiac death by n-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids.(Hagerstown). 1:S27-29.  
  
Available:[http://www.nutritionmd.org/nutrition\\_tips/nutrition\\_tips\\_understand\\_foods/fattyacids\\_omega3.html](http://www.nutritionmd.org/nutrition_tips/nutrition_tips_understand_foods/fattyacids_omega3.html)
9. Harvard school of pub health. 2014. Omega-3 Fatty Acids: An Essential Contribution. Available: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/omega-3-fats/> (Accessed February 2014)
10. Beaty, D., Foutch, S. (2009) Food Matters TV. The benefits of soaking nuts and seeds. Available: <http://foomatters.tv/articles-1/the-benefits-of-soaking-nuts-and-seeds> (Accessed April 2014)
11. Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council. 2013. Nutrient Reference Values. Magnesium. Available: <http://www.nrv.gov.au/nutrients/magnesium>. (Accessed March 2014)

12. The Aloe Vera Information Centre. 2010. Aloe Vera and digestion, irritable bowel and arthritis. Available: <http://www.desertharvest.com/physicians/documents/HB-43.pdf> (Accessed April 2014)
13. Dr. Lipski, E. 2011. Digestive Wellness. Strengthen the Immune System and Prevent Disease Through Healthy Digestion. McGraw-Hill Education. USA
14. Baumeister. Tierney. 2011. Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength)
15. Taitz, J. 2012. End Emotional Eating: Using Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills to Cope with Difficult Emotions and Develop a Healthy Relationship to Food
16. Dr. Church, D. PhD. 2013. Clinical EFT as an Evidence-Based Practice for the Treatment of Psychological and Physiological Conditions. Available: <http://s3.amazonaws.com/eft-academic-articles/Clinical-EFT-as-an-Evidence-Based-Practice-for-the-Treatment-of-Psychological-and-Physiological-Conditions.pdf> (Accessed June 2014)
17. Fretham, S.J.B et al. 2014. Advances in nutrition an international review journal. The role of iron in learning and memory. Available: <http://advances.nutrition.org/content/2/2/112.full> (Accessed April 2014)
18. Dr. Biffa, J. BSc, MB, BS. 2012. Low iron can cause fatigue in women, and reasons why this treatable condition is so often missed Available: <http://www.drbriffa.com/2012/07/11/low-iron-can-cause-fatigue-in-women-and-reasons-why-this-treatable-condition-is-so-often-missed/> (Accessed February 2014)
19. Weightloss Australia. 2012. Available: [www.weightloss.com.au/diet/diet-articles/food-treats-are-they-worth-it.html](http://www.weightloss.com.au/diet/diet-articles/food-treats-are-they-worth-it.html) (Accessed July 2014)
20. Talbott SM, Talbott JA, Pugh M. Effect of Magnolia officianlis and Phellodendron amurense (Relora) on cortisol and psycholological mood state in moderately stressed subjects. J Int Soc Sports Nutr 2013; 10(1):37