



# 11 Rules of a Fat Loss Meal Plan

## Introduction

Fat loss eating is different from a weight loss approach to food. Weight loss places a sole focus on calories. Fat loss focuses on calories too, but puts more focus on hormones.

Fat loss is about eating in a way that controls the natural compensatory nature of your metabolism. Metabolic sensations such as hunger, cravings, and energy are dramatically influenced by hormones. Balance your hormones and these sensations too will stabilize resulting in less food intake without much conscious effort.

There are two criteria required to turn indiscriminate weight loss into focused fat loss. They are a caloric deficit and balanced hormones. On a fat loss diet you eat fat loss foods. No, these foods don't have any magical fat burning properties, but they do balance hunger, energy, and cravings (HEC) and at the same time increase fat loss.

These foods tend to be rich in protein, fiber, and water. They are nutritionally dense, and calorically sparse

## 1 Keep your SHMEC in check

The idea is to eat in a way that controls hunger, energy, and cravings (HEC). These sensations are both biochemical and behavioral and therefore are impacted by more than just food. However, food has a powerful influence over HEC. It is the quality of the food rather than quantity that determines control of HEC. A doughnut and a chicken breast have the same number of calories – 250 each. Which one is going to fill you up quicker, keep you satiated for longer, reduce cravings, and give you more stable energy? Which one is more likely to result in cravings for more sweet or fatty stuff in the hours after you consume it? You don't need a research expert to tell you, do you? It's common sense. Foods that have high water, fiber, and protein content are the best foods to control HEC.

## 2 Spend equal time eating and not eating

Your hormonal biochemistry works best in rhythms. It requires time to build and time to burn. It needs times of increased energy and times of rest and recovery. When you eat, your hormones are optimized to build and store. When you don't eat, those same hormones are optimized to burn. If you want to burn fat, you have to honor this natural rhythm. The easiest way to do this is simply break the day into two time frames: 12 hours of eating and 12 hours of fasting. This is easily accomplished with little impact on hunger, energy, and cravings (HEC) because most of the 12 hours without food come while you are sleeping.

## 3 Find your carbohydrate tipping point

Insulin is a fat storing and fat locking hormone which means when it is around, excess calories will be stored as fat and fat can't be used as energy. What many will not tell you is insulin is also a muscle building hormone and a hunger suppressing hormone. If it is too low you can't build a lean physique and will stay hungry all the time. The major trigger for insulin release is starchy foods and sugar like bread, pasta, potatoes, cookies, crackers, rice, etc. The trick is to use starchy foods to your advantage by finding the amount your body needs to keep your energy high, make sure you

maintain your muscle and balance HEC, but not so high you slow fat loss down. We call this the carbohydrate tipping point, and you can find it by adjusting the type, timing, and amount of starchy carbohydrate to fit your unique metabolism. Don't try to burn fat without it.

**Note:** Ideal total grams for an average female exerciser (less than 45 minutes 5-7 days a week) to lose fat and maintain muscle is 80 – 120 grams/day.

#### 4 Eat fat, but not unlimited amounts

The idea that fat does not store fat is ridiculous, but it is also ridiculous that eating fat automatically makes you fat. Like starchy foods, we each have our unique tolerance to fatty foods. Fat has several unique hormonal effects that you will want to understand. First, fat helps control hunger through the release of hunger hormones like CCK, GIP, and GLP. Fat also has a relatively neutral impact on insulin when it is consumed alone. But insulin is not the only fat storing hormone. Fat intake releases ASP, which is a fat storing hormone. And of course, fat carries a hefty dose of calories. At the same time, very low fat diets decrease testosterone and other important hormones and may therefore slow fat loss and delay muscle gain. The best approach is to eat your fat, but don't overdo it especially when it comes along with starch (see rule 5).

#### 5 Eat the combination of fat and sugar sparingly

Starch and sugar provide the major impact on insulin production. Fat alone has little influence on insulin. But fat and sugar/starch combined together? Watch out! When combined, they create a fat storing atomic bomb of hormonal activity. First, this combination seems to disrupt the ability of the metabolism to self-regulate its metabolic thermostat (more on that here). This combination also is the most likely to generate the perfect recipe for fat gain: caloric excess in the context of hormonal fat storing signals. This combination also causes the fat storing hormonal triumvirate, simultaneous release of insulin, GIP and ASP. Since GIP and ASP themselves stimulate more insulin release you can understand why this combination is one to avoid (more on the hormonal effects of this here). With this rule, there is no need to take it to the extreme. This combination is most detrimental when refined starchy foods are also combined with high fat and you are in a caloric excess. We are not talking here about apples and peanut butter, oats and nuts, or other high fiber foods with fat (although these too, despite being healthy, can slow fat loss in some). What we are talking about are bread and butter, pastries, ice cream, and the like. Another hint on this rule is not to go to extremes. These foods have little negative influence in the context of a low calorie diet.

#### 6 Don't let perfect be the enemy of good

The ridiculous notion that you have to eat organic kale and wild Alaskan salmon from Whole Foods to burn fat is just another form of judgement and extremism. The truth is fat loss can happen anywhere. Don't let perfect be the enemy of good. There are plenty of conveniently packaged protein bars and shakes that may not be ideal, but serve as functional foods that can quickly decrease cravings, stabilize energy, and blunt hunger. While real food is always best, use these as needed to fit your lifestyle.

#### 7 Learn the Metabolic Effect label rule

Packaged foods are difficult to decipher. Will they throw your HEC out of check and make you store fat? If you subtract the fiber and protein from the total carbohydrates on a label, the total should equal ten or less. The lower the number the better. In addition, the fat content should be less than 15. If not, this food will not be effective at helping you

manage your fat loss goals. This is the art of clinical practice at its best and a down and dirty quick trick that works fantastically.

## **8 Stop being the dieter and start being the detective**

Be a detective not a dieter: To find your fat loss formula, you need to know how to read the signals of your body and adjust your approach. Hunger, energy, and cravings give you a reliable source of biofeedback. Correct these sensations first and then you are in a position to see lasting change. Resist the temptation to look for off the shelf “plans”. There is no one way, there is only your way. Work to create a program by you, for you. Stop being the dieter. Stop looking for the “right plan”. Stop relying on food lists, meal plans, and designer supplements. Start being the detective, educate yourself and create the perfect plan for you. It’s the only way it works. Do what works for you.

## **9 Know your buffer and trigger foods**

One of the key understandings in this lifestyle is “trigger foods” and “buffer foods”. Both are important concepts to learn in deciphering the metabolic fat loss formula unique to every individual. Trigger foods are foods that trigger hunger, cravings, or energy fluctuations leading to compensatory eating and/or simply a slow down in fat loss. Buffer foods are foods that can be used periodically through the day or week to help stave off compensatory reactions. Unlike trigger foods, they have the ability to balance the metabolism and work for a person rather than against them. Buffer foods are far more broad and can simply be something that is psychologically pleasing (i.e. having 2 squares of dark chocolate in the afternoon to avoid craving candy or pizza later).

## **10 What you do, or don’t do, impacts what you eat, or don’t eat**

Exercise impacts hunger and cravings. Certain forms of exercise make you more hungry while others have less of an effect. Sleep and stress too. They don’t contain calories and you can’t eat them, but they dramatically impact HEC and fat loss or gain. Living the fat loss lifestyle means being acutely aware of how your actions are impacting your eating. If you are a twenty something male bodybuilder trying to gain muscle then a few doughnuts post-workout may be just fine. A 55 year old post-menopausal female likely needs to do things differently. Understand how your lifestyle intersects with your unique metabolic expression, psychology, and personal preferences.

## **11 The Bonus Rule: DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU**

There really is only one rule we believe in and that is: DO WHAT WORKS FOR YOU!

These rules are guidelines not laws. Their intention is to get you started. They come from our combined experience with thousands of clients from the young, old, obese, fit, and elite athletes. What we can say for sure after spending years in this field is that rules are always going to be broken. And some must be broken to see results. Nothing is hard and fast. The best rules for fat loss are the ones you create yourself through an understanding of your unique metabolic expression, psychological sensitivities, and personal preferences.