

# From **FAT** to Fit

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*THE COMPREHENSIVE WEIGHT-LOSS GUIDE*



**ON THE GO**

**FITNESS PRO**

## Disclaimer

**'From FAT to Fit – *The Comprehensive Weight-Loss Guide*'**

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## Welcome

Welcome to “From **Fat** to Fit – The Comprehensive Weight-Loss Guide”.

This is no ordinary meal plan or even a quick fix to a slim summer body. This plan is so much more than just looking great- it’s a comprehensive guide to brand new you – with a buzzing confidence, mental peace and a fitter, leaner body that’s the envy of everyone around you!

With this guide you’ll understand exactly what needs to be done to shed those pounds and keep them off on a permanent basis. You will not only learn exactly what and how much to eat and how to move, but you will also discover how to make long-lasting changes to your health for definitive results.

A sustainable guide, From **FAT** to Fit is the complete physical and mental manual for a healthier, better, fitter version of you.

In this book you’ll find:

- A detailed explanation on how to begin your healthy journey
- An elucidation on how to lose your weight with healthy food choices, adequate exercise and movement, as well as the much needed mental peace
- Details about what to eat, when to eat and how much to eat
- Specifics for necessary nutrient supplementation
- Guidelines to a definitive workout plan
- Enlightenment for the mental health and weight-loss mystery
- The importance of a good nights’ rest
- And **so** much more...

And that my friends, is what this guide is, in a nutshell. Inside this book are the not-so-hidden secrets to weight-loss that are simple, easy to understand, and most of all, are one hundred percent effective; tried and tested. So, if you’re ready to finally slip on that bikini and show off the stunning new side of you, let’s embark on this journey to ever-lasting fitness results.

## Getting Started

From Fat to Fit – The Comprehensive Weight-Loss Guide is exactly what the name suggests. It's a multi-dimensional, detailed outlined for weight-loss that allows its readers to bring actionable change into their lives with effective and quite visible results.

Consider this: You've been more than indulgent the past few days, weeks, or months and it's starting to show. You're packing on the pounds and people are starting to notice the changes – and they're not very positive changes, are they? Even you seem to have realized that. However, as conscious as you are of the path you've begun to follow, you've gathered that you're caught in a vicious cycle. You think that you've put on weight, check the scales to confirm as such, make determined plans to cut back on your diet, and even begin to apply the decided changes but all of that barely lasts long, if at all.

A get-together with friends, an official dinner meeting with a client, an emotional upheaval that has you seeking comfort food and you're back to square one before you know it.

How did you feel reading the above mentioned scenario? Do you recognize yourself in it? Does it resonate with you on any level at all?

If yes, let me tell you that you are not alone. A staggering 90 percent of the people who struggle with weigh concerns have found themselves trapped in a similar situation at one point or another of their weight-loss journey.

Now let me tell you why that happens. In a society so driven by aesthetics and physical appearance, people are increasingly conscious of how they look. There are physical standards set by societies that have nothing to do with our health and those are the standards that most of us strive towards. However, when we fail to achieve our unattainable goal, it makes us feel disappointed in our selves and in a self-derogatory manner we fall into the traps of the same cycle of living an unhealthy life. When that happens, we let go of whatever efforts that we might be making towards a positive change, why? Because we feel de-motivated, dejected and unencouraged.

When people are trying to lose weight, they always consider and set physical goals. Whenever there's a conversation about shedding pounds and getting fitter and healthier, we always hear things along the lines of 'I want to fit into a size so and so', 'I want to have a six pack abs, or a thigh gap, or muscular arms' or something similar. Now while physical goals are great objectives to aspire to, they should not form the basis of your weight loss journey.

So first and foremost, before you get started on your Fat to Fit journey, let's have one thing clear, prepare to lose your weight, and get fitter not because you want to appear a certain way, but because it's what is healthy for you – it's what is essential for you to live a long, strong and fulfilling life.

Have you got that down? If, yes, then let's get you started on your successful, and lasting weight loss journey by helping you prepare for success.



In order for you to succeed in your quest to become the healthiest, fittest, leanest version of yourself, there are a few essentials that you need to keep in mind.

We all know that consistency is key to achieving any goal in life, right? Well the same applies for weight-loss. It doesn't matter if you have more than enough knowledge about health care and weight-loss, if you aren't consistent in your efforts; you aren't likely to accomplish what you aim for. Next, you need to know that there's no magic pill that will suddenly transform you into a diva with an enviable body in the blink of an eye. Losing weight requires dedication, sweat and tears and sometimes even your blood (and we're only partially joking here).

Lastly, we need you to know that however far you go in your journey, whatever results you see, all are a direct product of the amount of effort you put in. If you're only going to make half-hearted attempts at bringing about these changes and then place blame on ineffectual guidance or whatever else, then it would be better if you didn't partake in this journey at all.

To ensure that you get off on the right start, we're beginning our book with a basic toolset of weight-loss essentials which will help you accomplish your goal in a timely, effectual manner. You have to put together this toolset at the beginning of each week or month or weight-loss cycle and follow it diligently in order to be able to sustain your efforts.

This toolset, which is to be regularly prepared, includes:

- A regularly calculated BMI based on your weight which marks your progress
- A definitive detailed plan of your weight-loss journey to follow in a step by step manner

- A structured timeline or schedule of your days, and weeks which includes your meals, workout sessions, and sleep durations.
- A meticulous note-book diary that tracks your progress as you proceed day by day into your weight-loss journey.

Use the tools that we provide, give it your all and we guarantee that you will see definitive results – no two ways about it.

## **Calculate Your BMR**

Most of everyone has heard the abbreviation BMI. It sounds familiar doesn't it? Something that you've heard in conjunction with weight loss – but have you heard about BMR?

Are you familiar with both? Do you understand the concept and the significance of their relation to your weight-loss journey? If yes, that's fantastic, you can completely skip this section and move along. If not, don't worry we've got you covered.

The BMI or the Body Mass Index is the indirect calculation of the composition of the body. Basically, by having a measurement of your BMI you find out just how much body fat you have stored. We mention that's it's an indirect measure because with the calculation of the BMI we aren't isolating the amount of fat stored in your body and weighing it on a machine to provide a number. Rather, by using your height and your weight, we get an average determination of whether you are under weight, overweight or if you fall in within the normal weight bracket.

Now the BMI, because it's only a calculated estimation but not a direct measurement of the body fat content, it can only be used as a classification tool, not as a guaranteed diagnostic tool in any way.

What's more, a BMI does not take into consideration the limitations or you might even call them anomalies. For example, a body builder who has a below average height but has more muscle mass will still be classified within the overweight bracket despite having a low body fat composition.

Now let's talk about the BMR.

BMR stands for Basal Metabolic Rate. This is the calculation of the amount of energy your body utilizes in a day to function and perform its daily activities. It takes into account the amount of energy expended due to your movements and activities, the digestion and digestive processes as well as the energy used by the body for the vital body functions which keep us alive.

Now you might be wondering why you would need to regularly track your BMI and your BMR to lose weight. The thing is, you don't.

You only have to calculate your BMI once, because it remains somewhat standard until you've lost a significant amount of weight to change your determining category.

Your BMR on the other hand, can help you effectively drop the stubborn pounds when you never have before. When calculating the BMR, it takes into consideration you weight, height, your age and gender. When calculated, the BMR provides a number of calories, or energy units consumed which are necessary for optimal functionality of your body. This number is essentially the amount of energy you need for you to stay alive and well even if you were to not move from your bed all day.

People who are taller and heavier require more energy because they have larger organs which function to keep them alive. By that standard their BMR is higher. Now here comes the important tidbit of information – when you lose weight your BMR decreases because at a smaller mass you need lesser amount of energy to sustain yourself.

With that respect, it can be said that if you were to provide your body, with less than the noted amount of energy needed by your body to function optimally, you would lose weight.

Consider this: If you calculate your BMR, - and you can easily do so at home on a web-portal or go to an expert for help – and you find it to be somewhere in the 1700 calories range then you know that this is the amount of energy essential for you on a per day basis if you led a completely sedentary life.

Now if you were to consume less than this recommended amount of energy, your body would still require the same amount of energy to function properly. With no external source or intake of it (which is obviously food) in order to compensate the energy, the body will burn the body stores of energy i.e. body fats to provide the necessary amount of it leading you to lose weight.

By tracking your BMR at regular intervals throughout your weight loss journey, you can easily determine, and then subsequently adjust your intake of food based on your progress.

We'll talk more about calories and of creating a caloric deficit for effective weight loss further along in the book.

## **Did You Buy Yourself a Planner? Because It's Time To Make a Plan**

I hope you didn't take a second glance at the chapter title and wonder what in the world does making a plan have anything to do with weight loss. Well, hello, only everything!

For people who have been overweight for a majority of their lives, they know that it's a constant struggle. Being obese is not just a matter of your outwardly appearance; rather it's something that has an adverse effect on your physical and mental health – something that is not conducive to optimal living.

When people struggle with their weight, they do much of everything they possibly can to lose the pounds. You exercise to the point of breaking bones, you starve yourself, and you become disappointed and depressed at the lack of visible progress.

The thing is, in all my experience within the fitness world, I've found the people stay frustrated, trapped within that vicious weight cycle because they go in blind; unprepared. You hear about a diet or an exercise routine that worked for a friend of a friend and you're desperate to lose your weight so you just find out whatever you think is the relevant information and jump right into things. Not even a few days go by and you've lost more than half the momentum you had on day 1. A few more days and you give up completely because it just doesn't work for you.

When there's a mention of making a plan, we're talking fully laid out, carefully detailed, meticulous map of your weight-loss journey that specifically states every single thing.

When we think about beginning a new weight-loss program, starting a new diet or exercise routine, we're making a decision; a complex one. Where ever you are in life, or whatever you are doing, is a

decision. You wake up in the morning and eat a slice of cake for breakfast that is a decision. I'm sure you don't think about that much but the fact is, every decision you make, at every step of the way, it translates into a tangible result.

According to research published by the Harvard Business Review, your steps and your decisions, have the capacity to determine how, when, where and at what pace you progress in life. Decisions in life tend to vary in two basic factors, which are performance and control respectively. Performance essentially puts a measure on success from our personal point of view while control outlines the cause and effect of a decision. Were we, or are we able to influence, to any degree the terms of whatever decision we make and the results we obtain directly due to that particular decision.

Now when you have a long and difficult – yes difficult, weight loss is never easy, know that – journey ahead of you, you have to make a decision which will have direct consequences every single step of the way. If you create a definitive plan that takes into consideration even the tiniest little thing, you will only be facilitating the process for yourself. How, you ask? By having a point of reference every time you're faced with a difficult decision, that's how.

When you have something to revert back to, consult and look towards for guidance purposes, you are fortifying the decision you know you have to take – something that is very beneficial when you're fluctuating between pushing through and giving up. And trust me; you'll be in that position plenty of times over the course of the next few months.

When you begin mapping out your plan, you have to consider your height, weight, BMR, health status, the end goal in terms of weight, the idealistic deadline you wish you accomplish your goal by and the more realistic estimation.

Once you have that, you move on to planning out the steps you wish you could take to drop the pounds, and the steps you will take, all the while keeping into consideration your health status and the health conditions that may or may not affect you.

You'll outline the foods you can eat, the ones you cannot and should not, the food preparation and meal planning you might have to do, as well as the exercise routine you will have to develop.

As you go along in the book, you'll find most of the above mentioned vital information required for a well outlined plan. This will help you map out yours so that you can kick start your weight-loss journey.

## **Find Your Calendar - Create a Schedule**

Evidence suggests that structure and organization allows an individual to have more control over themselves, their actions and their overall surrounding environment. Can you guess where we're going with that?

According to a Dr. Harry A. Olson, Psychotherapist, people respond differently to living an organized life depending on their personality. However, a general observation dictates that structure and organization in time, such that comes from scheduling bring order to one's life, saves a considerable amount of time and is more conducive to productivity. He continues to suggest that when we have some form of order in place, like habit or routine, we're essentially free from any mental clutter that clouds our minds. However, in case where there is a break in the structure, it may lead to us becoming overwhelmed, unfocused and more susceptible to lose our path to productivity.

Now let's apply this to a weight loss journey, shall we?

There's talk about scheduling, organization and discipline for increased productivity in life right? Well, how about we tell you that this same discipline is what will make you get up and exercise for that half hour stretch everyday no matter how tired you feel?

The thing is, effective weight loss is all about consciously doing and not doing certain things with consistency – with consistency being the key word. If you are at least 40 pounds overweight and you watch what you eat, when you eat and exercise just for a single day and then went back to your regular mismatched, unchecked eating habits and lack of physical activity, you aren't really going to make a difference, are you?

But if you were to do the same thing, check what you ate, when you ate it and continued with your physical exercise on a regular basis, without fail, you'd see definitive results that would surprise even you.

Losing weight requires a lot of self-control and discipline because you have to actively exercise your willpower and make conscionable decisions that lead to healthier results. It is a significant lack of willpower and self-control that has people spinning in a downward spiral, preventing them from effectively getting fitter and leaner.

When you incorporate discipline and organization in all aspects of your life, you are inadvertently exercising your willpower. And since improved self-disciplined and strong willpower is a learned or acquired behavior, you are facilitating your weight loss journey every time you follow a particular schedule.

### **Grab a Pen and Paper; Take Notes**

Are you aware that, according to research, people who systematically take notes and track their progress in written form are far more productive than their non-tracker, note-taker counterparts?

Writing down information by hand, or by typing it out in your phone, tablet, laptop or computer is possibly one the best ways to actively inform your brain to pay attention. When you write, you are forcing your mind to hone in on what it is that you are doing, actively involving yourself within the processing of the information you are noting down.

This written information allows for improved levels of understanding, and assimilation for the writer. What's more, writing also gives one the opportunity to become more organized and detail oriented a fact which is particularly helpful for an individual striving to turn their life around and walk a healthier path.

When you have packed on the pounds over a period of several years, you essentially lose track of what it was that caused you to gain that weight in the first place. Was it your unhealthy dietary choices, or your untimely eating habits? Was it the sleeping right after eating, or not eating for extended periods of time and then over-stuffing yourself?

When you're trying to shed the unwanted weight, it's important to know where you went wrong in order to hold yourself accountable for your mistakes so that you may avoid them in the future. When you actively take notes, you are, in effect, keeping a close track of your health journey in a way that allows you to literally pin-point the miss-steps so that you may be more careful in the future.

The importance of tracking your progress is only realized when you compare the detailed you noted before and after to see how far you've come. However, when we mention tracking, we don't just mean that you take note of those dreaded numbers on the scale every morning and then proceed to have a mini melt-down because there's no change or you seem to have gained a pound or two.

See the purpose emphasizing on taking notes and keeping track is to encourage you to keep a record of every little thing that directly or indirectly affects or measures your weight loss journey. From what you ate, to how much you ate and what you didn't eat, all the way to the amount of exercise you did and for how long. You should track the changes on the scale as well as the changes that are apparent on your body.

While it's a good idea to note certain things on a daily basis such as your food and water intake and exercise durations, it's unadvisable to step up on that scale or measure yourself every day, day after day after day. Doing this only promotes the formation of an unhealthy obsession within you that eventually leads to people having breakdowns by blowing even the minutest of changes completely out of proportion.

Set a specific routine and strictly stick to that when it comes to keeping track of yourself and your progress.

If you are one of those people that is likely to forget what you consumed throughout the day, take a minute to jot down the details of your meal before you actually eat it. I would, however, advise that you list down everything as the day comes to an end. In fact, consider incorporating it into your nightly routine.

For body measurements and scale checks, decide on one day and time of the week where you'll take the opportunity to not just weight yourself but also measure your body for any change. Depending on what your schedule is like, it's advisable to choose either a Monday or a Friday to begin your measurements so that you have the entirety of the week to make any adjustments necessary.

Once you develop a habit of regularly updating your notes, you'll notice that as you proceed forth, the choices you make and don't make do actually have an effect on your weight loss journey. As everything will be directly reflected the numbers and other details you note down, you'll automatically begin to hold yourself accountable for any and all missteps. What's more, as you lose weight, you're weekly weigh-in will act as a direct confidence booster as it shows you that your efforts are paying off.

## Shift Your Attention to Nutrition

As newer, more 'cooler' forms of exercise take center stage in mass media platforms, the concept that weight loss is only accomplished through heavy physical movement is deeply cemented into the minds of all those fighting this particular battle.

That belief is one of the main reasons why so many obese people in the world and this country are unable to succeed in their quest to become healthier.

See when you're so heavy-set, any sort of fast movement is difficult, and exhausting. Why? Because A, you are literally carrying so much weight that it's impossible for your feet, and knees to support it, and B, the more weight you have piled up, the greater the effect you have on your body system. So for example, while a ten minute uphill climb might have a physically fit individual only barely winded, it can and will have a physically in-active individual panting, puffing and struggling to draw a proper breathe.

Because of this struggle, most obese people give up on the thought of weight-loss even before they've made any effort at all. Or if they do manage to show determination and begin working out, they soon lose momentum and quit in the middle because it gets so physically challenging for them to continue. This throws them into vicious cycle of struggle that loops itself around over and over and over again with seemingly no forward progress at all.

We're here to debunk the myth that exercise is the sole factor responsible for causing significant weight-loss in an individual.

The fact is, theoretically put, an equal balance of exercise and diet is what causes a person to lose weight. What fitness experts emphasize on is the importance of rigorously exercising without factoring in or altering the foods we consume or their quantities. However, in order to effectively drop one single pound of fat, one has to cut back on the certain amount of food consumed AND use exercise to burn it the rest.

This conjunction is what allows us to effectively lose the weight and become the healthier version of our self. That said, we'd like to tell you here and now that this achieving this optimal balance is next to impossible from a practical point of view.

Why, you ask?

That's because this theoretical standard of losing weight does not factor in or take into consideration the limitation of the resources needed to expend the weight collected over time. These resources, which include physical energy, mental capacity and determination and willpower, time, and money, are all finite such that they come with constraints and are liable to run out.

Everybody is quick to advise that you eat healthier, pick more vegetables, get out more, drink less alcohol, become more active but no one really thinks about the constraints of the sort of lifestyle each individual has.

Maybe there's a person who has financial issues that consistently plague them so much so that they cannot possibility imagine spending a substantial amount at a gym membership. Or maybe they work two desk jobs to have the time to spend at a gym anyway. So how does that person successfully lose weight?

By keeping in mind, tracking and being careful of their nutritional needs.

Based on countless years of research, multiple studies and mega-studies, a general rule of thumb has been devised which states that a hefty seventy five percent of an individual's weight loss is dictated by said individual's diet while it is only the remaining twenty five percent that is influenced by exercise.

This is so because it is far easier to cut down on the bad food choices than it is to burn them off. Having said that it's also important to note here that only a diet-specific weight-loss program is also not conducive to being a healthier version of you. That is because when the weight-loss focus is shifted singularly on diet, there's a great chance of inadvertently causing nutrition deprivation which can and does lead to significant decrease in overall body strength and immunity.

Essentially though, it can be determined that both nutrition and body nutrient demands in combination with physical movement is what leads to effective weight loss.

While there are consistent calls to lead a more active lifestyle on a global basis, it has been seen in recent years that people in general have responded and increased their overall physical activity. According to data collected from the year 2001 till 2009 it was found that there was significant increase in the number of American's incorporating exercise within their lifestyles. However, at the same time, it was found that the obesity percentage within the same population also increased by the same standard.

From that it can clearly be deduced that while exercise and physical movement is particularly beneficial for leading a healthy lifestyle, solely it is not enough. Rather, it can be determined that it is both nutrition, body nutrient demands in combination or conjunction with physical movement which results in effective weight loss.

As you read along, we'll help you establish a deeper connection between the food consumed and the calories burnt to aid in weight loss as well as explain how you can achieve a nutrient balance by selecting what it is that you eat and don't eat.

The aim is to allow you to be able to devise for you're a dietary routine and meal plan by selecting the meal sizes and components which work best for you. Based on the information provided below you should be able to do exactly that, paving yourself a definitive way to effective and lasting weight loss.

## **Size Matters – But NOT In the Way You Think**

Earlier on in the book we talked about the BMR and touched upon calories and creating a caloric deficit for effective weight loss. The Size Matters portion of this book elaborates on the same concept.

As we mentioned before, the BMR or Basal Metabolic Rate calculates the specific number of calories or amount of energy a body burns due to its very existence. This BMR is calculated by factoring in your current weight and height and it also takes into consideration your age. Essentially, we can say that the BMR number reflects the amount of food calories you need to consume in order to live.

Now when you exercise, you burn an additional number of calories. The combination of the calories burnt along with the BMR number of calories is the complete energy expenditure of your body on a per day basis.

For example, consider that your BMR places you within the 1750's caloric range. Depending on your activity levels which are based on your regular movement and physical exercise incorporated within your everyday routine bumps up the calories to somewhere in the 2000 per day range. Keeping that in

mind it's safe to say that if you were to calculate every little morsel of food that you ate in a day and compared it with the total number of calories needed to be consumed and hit the decided range day after day after day, you would not lose any weight nor would you gain any either. Rather you'd easily remain at your current weight, steadily maintaining it.

However when we talk about losing weight, there is a need to create something known as a caloric deficit. We've just established that your body requires that it expend a certain amount of energy in order to maintain itself, right? The food you eat provides this energy. So basically when you maintain a 2000 calorie diet per day, the food you eat gets burnt off giving the body the necessary energy needed to function.

However, if you wish to lose weight, you need to consume LESS the amount of calories required by your body so that your body utilizes the energy preserves of the body in order to fulfill the body's energy needs. Essentially, you need to create a caloric deficit. So going by the same example of the 2000 calorie diet, we can safely say that in order to drop your current weight, you should consume a particular amount less than the requisite 2000 calories.

Now the question is raised of just how much of a caloric deficit is required for one to see substantial results in terms of weight loss.

Before I provide this all important question, I just want to take the opportunity to address one tiny little fact – most diets that guarantee exceptional results within a very short time span, are nothing more than severe crash dietary plans which enforces upon the participant a severe caloric deficit which does so much more harm than any weight loss benefit it may provide. Read along and you'll understand why I say what I do.

According to scientific calculations, it has been determined that one pound of fat equals exactly 3500 calories. Now if, based on your BMR, your daily caloric requirement is only 2000 calories and you are only eating as much, you cannot possibly lose one pound per day. This completely dispels the ideals of fad diets that promise 30 pounds lost in 30 days. That is just physically impossible – especially if you aim to lose your weight without compromising on your health.

So how does one decide how many calories does one cut out from their diet in order to lose a substantial amount of weight? It's easy. Take your daily calorie requirement and multiply it times 7.

This gives you the total number of calories required per week. For 2000 calories per day diet, that's 14,000 calories per week. Now subtract 3500 or the equivalent of one pound of fat from that total. Simple mathematics calculations here people.

$14,000 - 3,500 = 10,500$  calories.

Now, take this new total and divide it by seven. In this case the answer is 1,500 calories. This figure right here, is your new caloric target on a per day basis. By calculating and only consuming 1,500 calories per day, all seven days a week, you are effectively creating a total caloric deficit which is the equivalent of one pound of fat per week. You've essentially reduced 500 calories from your daily intake of energy, encouraging your body to compensate towards your body maintenance energy requirements by burning off the fats stored within.

With that we have the caloric deficit explained; but what does that have anything to do with size and why does that matter?

Basically, when you have your caloric deficit calculated, you can adjust your daily food intake by eating within the confines of this range. But how does one translate calories into the amount of food consumed. If you're only making healthy food choices and eating fruits, raw veggies, lean meats and grains, then how do you calculate how much of each or collectively equals 1500 calories? Are you eating more or less than the requisite amount?

This is where the size or rather the portion of the food comes in. Most people believe, in part thanks to the convoluted view promoted by the food and exercise industry that if they're avoiding fat-laden, sugary foods and gorging on pseudo-healthier options in large quantities, they are likely to lose weight. Unfortunately though that is not the case – while you may not gain any additional weight if you eat more fruits or veggies compared to ice creams and burgers, you are unlikely to drop any pounds on the scale unless you limit the amount that you consume.

The calories calculated dictate the overall size of the food consumed on a per day basis. There is another school of thought that teaches us to control the amount of food consumed by way of limiting the size of the meals per meal that we consume throughout the day. That is called Portion control.

Don't be confused between a portion and a serving of a meal, though. The portion of a food consumed is quite different than a serving of a one. A portion is essentially the amount of food you actively select to consume at one given time, regardless of whether you cook your meals at home, have them at a restaurant or buy it pre-packaged from a grocery store. A serving on the other hand is the amount of food provided. While the serving and portion size can match at times, it's often that they don't especially when eaters' follow the generous serving trends that popular in the food and drink industry in current times.

There are two things which dictate portion control. One is our individual fitness goal and the other is the food groups we divide our food into.

Because we're largely focused on learning how to reduce piled up weight in this book rather than maintaining or increasing it, let's consider weight loss as our standard fitness goal here. By that standard, if we only take into consideration the macronutrient food groups such that include proteins, fats and carbohydrates only, the essential break up of our food portions would be in the 50- 30-20 percentage where 50 percent of the entire meal consists of proteins, 30 percent of fats and 20 percent of carbohydrates.

While portion control and calorie counting are two completely different schools of thought when it comes to weight loss, I suggest combining the two together in order to achieve optimal weight loss results.

Why? Allow me to explain. Singularly, calorie counting has an individual quantify the amount of food they consume down to the last morsel; however, it does not take into account the quality of the food that we consume. So if you were to eat a large fast food meal consisting of a burger, large order of fries and a coke, you're most likely to consume a major chunk of the calories allotted to you per day in one meal. If you stick within the limit at your next meal, you are likely to be underfed and undernourished because you aren't taking into account the nutrients needs of your body.

However, if you combine your caloric deficit with a portion control based on your body's macro and micronutrient requirements such as 50 percent of your allotted 1500 calories per day are proteins, with 30 percent fats and only 20 percent carbohydrates not only will you be eating healthier options, you'd be fulfilling your nourishment requirements and losing weight.

While exercise can expedite your weight loss process by adding to the caloric deficit created by restricting the amount of food consumed on a per day basis, it is your diet and the foods you consume and the quantity you consume it in which dictates approximately 70 percent of your entire weight loss journey. We'll talk more about exercise and the importance of physical activity as we proceed further in the book, but for now, let's talk more about selecting healthier food options in the next section, shall we?

## **You Really Are What You Eat**



You know we just established that a majority of the weight loss is influenced by the amount and quality of the food that we eat. And that's true. Most people completely focus their energies on incorporating physical activity within their regular routines, entirely disregarding the how much they're eating and what.

That's not a healthy diet though – something which is absolutely crucial for effectively losing weight.

But what is a healthy diet? How do we define it and how do we categorize it?

According to WHO health standards, a healthy and balanced diet is the consumption of fruits, vegetables, dairy, grains, and proteins in proportions which fulfill the nutrients needs of an individual based on their age, gender, lifestyle as well as their degree of physical activity.

We've generally touched upon the proportional percentages of the food to be consumed by a person based on their individual caloric needs. Now let's talk about the importance of distinguishing between the different food groups in order to help you make better, and more informed food choices.

First, we'll majorly address the macronutrients such as the Carbohydrates, Proteins and Fats which make up a majority of an individual's diet. Later on, we'll touch upon the need for incorporating Fruits, Vegetables, and Dairy products into our dietary routine for a wholesome nutrient balance.

### **Carbohydrates**

Carbohydrates are by far the most controversial of all food groups.

Often times when one mentions the terms weight-loss to any one, be it a fitness expert or a health buff, the first thing that they're told is to 'quit carbs'. For some reason people really like to advocate cutting out carbohydrates from the diet as a way of losing weight.

I can't even begin to tell you how awfully misleading that school of thought is.

Just because carbohydrates break down into simple sugars does not mean that an individual completely eliminate a very essential food group from their diet altogether. Yes, there are studies that prove low-carb diets to be successful in aiding weight loss but that in no way proves that consuming a limited amount of carbohydrates will make you seriously overweight, overnight.

These sort of half-informed health promotions are what land a majority of weight-loss enthusiasts in hot water, health wise. To set the record straight, let's first discover what carbohydrates, its types are and why are they important.

Carbohydrates are macronutrients that are the basic source of energy for the human body. There are three basic types of carbs or carbohydrates including Simple Sugars, Starches, and Fiber.

Simple Sugars are the smallest of carbohydrates that have form the shortest carb chains. They are glucose, fructose, sucrose and galactose. Starches in comparison are the slightly more complex carbs which are required to be broken down by the body to release energy. Fibers on the other hand are the carbohydrates that are indigestible for the human body.

The simple sugars, namely glucose, are the most important carbohydrate for the body because it is the main source of energy for the body cells, most readily available for use.

As we mentioned earlier, carbohydrates are not created equal.

While we just explained the difference between simple and complex carbohydrates, this belief that simple sugars are bad and complex carbs are good for you is also a little skewed.

The terms that really help untangle the carbohydrate mystery are 'whole' and 'refined'. When most health experts tell an individual that there is a need for you to cut out carbs, they are not actually telling

you to eliminate every morsel of carbohydrate from your diet. That is completely impossible because every fruit, vegetable and element of food will have some quantity of all the macro and micronutrients.

Instead, what they mean is to select whole, or rather, unprocessed carbohydrates over the refined and processed ones. Unprocessed carbohydrates contain all the short and long carbohydrate chains. These chains contain essential fiber content, important vitamins, minerals, fiber content as well as other phyto-nutrients. They also contain the important calories which are made available for the body to utilize as energy sources when broken down. The refined carbohydrates on the other hand are the ones which have been stripped of all the naturally beneficial nutritional contents – they are what you would call empty calories.

Examples of whole and healthy carbohydrates would be raw vegetables, whole fruits, whole grains, potatoes, and even legumes.

Unhealthy carbohydrates would be white pastas, rice and breads, along with sugar laden beverages, boxed fruit juices, and other sweet confectionaries.

Now when nutrition experts advise eliminating carbohydrates from ones diet to reduce weight, what they're actually doing is promoting the establishment of an unhealthy caloric deficit. As soon as you cut out all the carbohydrates from your diet, your body will begin to breakdown the stored reserves to provide the necessary energy. This will result in rapid weight-loss of what is usually known as the water weight for up to a period of six months.

However, after six months, as most of the water weight is lost, your body will begin to break down your muscles in order to create a physiological nutritional balance. The caloric deficit combined with the muscle breakdown will lead you to become considerably weaker in terms of overall health. So you might still be losing weight, but you will be becoming progressively weaker as you continue your diet, losing the necessary strength rendering you unable to perform the daily functions at optimal levels let alone partake in rigorous strenuous exercise.

What's more is that because you will have you body break down its energy reserves to provide energy for you, especially when you are not taking in sufficient amounts of energy providing foods, the second you slip up, or stop cutting out high carbohydrate food components from your diet, you will begin to gain weight as your body will begin to replenish its lost reserves.

So the next time anyone tells you to cut out carbohydrates from your diet in order to lose weight, tell them thanks but no thanks.

You can easily gain energy AND lose weight all by choosing to eat the right kinds of carbohydrates. Know that, if anyone is misinformed, tell them too.

The recommended amount of carbohydrates essential for daily intake even for people looking to lose weight is between 170 to 245 grams per day. That is approximately 45 to 65 percent of an individual's total caloric intake for the day.

## **Proteins**

Moving on from carbohydrates, let's discuss proteins and why are they such an important component of your diet.

Proteins, much like carbohydrates and fats are macronutrients – in that they are the components needed in relatively bulk amounts to ensure optimal functionality of the human body.

Proteins are actually the most essential macronutrient of the body for two basic reasons. One that it plays not one but a FEW vital roles in the body, each more different than the other. Two, there are no reserves of proteins in the human body. Unlike carbs or fats which get stored within the human body cells, the only proteins in your body at any given time are the ones that you have consumed.

Proteins are needed for a variety of different functions and in a variety of forms.

Proteins are made up of a number of small components called amino acids which are essential for proper functionality of the human body and its processes. These amino acids, depending on the combinations they are present in, are responsible for the body's healing, ability to recover from injury, growth, as well as essential development.

Proteins or a collection of amino acids, when combined with nucleic acids form nucleoproteins which form a part of your DNA. Protein called Haemoglobin, when combined with iron becomes the transporter of oxygen for your body cells. All the muscles of the human body are majority made up of two main proteins namely Elastin and Myoglobin. The hormones that regulate body functionality, growth and sex drive are all different forms of proteins. The keratin which forms the basis of your hair and nails is also a protein.

Furthermore, the bones are made up of a majority of different proteins which are combined with different minerals such as calcium, phosphate and magnesium to provide various strengthening characteristics. Even the antibodies and the protective immunity providing components of your body are also proteins.

Given the wide range of forms and functionality of proteins, it only makes sense that there be a wide range of sources for proteins as well. The way our body utilizes the proteins, and how effective they are to our body depends on where we source the proteins from. The protein sources are categorized on their completeness, which essentially describes the profile of essential amino acids it contains.

For humans, the most complete profiles, or effective sources of proteins are those driven from animals because we, biologically speaking, resemble most closely to animals rather than plants. However, that's not to say that plants are incomplete resources of proteins.

For any individual, regardless of their food and lifestyle choices, it would be the easiest thing ever to maintain a healthy protein intake. Some of the most commonly available combinations of proteins, readily available for human consumption are in the following forms:

- Legumes – Pulses of all types be it peas, lentils, or beans are all very rich sources of protein.
- Dairy products such as milk, cottage cheese and Greek yogurt,
- Eggs
- Whole grains such as Wheat bran, couscous, Amaranth, Quinoa, brown rice, Oats, whole wheat pasta
- Lean meat sources, such as Salmon, Cod, sole, snapper fillets, chicken breasts, and beef (beef is the best source of complete protein for the human body but is combined with high content of saturated fats as well; as such, it's essential to choose a low fat beef cut such as round steak, crosscuts, or beef shank or ribs)

- Natural nuts such as Almonds, peanuts
- Seeds such as Sunflower, Hemp, Chia, Flaxseed
- Tofu

It is recommended that an approximate of 10 to 35 percent of the daily caloric intake per day for an individual looking to lose weight should be proteins. That's anywhere between 38 to 131 grams of proteins everyday – depending on your body type and total caloric intake.

## **Fats**

The journey towards a healthy life is plagued with words such as 'weight-loss' and 'fat'. If you're considering switching to a healthier lifestyle to remove the excess weight that you carry, you're bound to hear, see and read the word fat used more times than you can count- and always in a negative connotation.

However I am here to dispel that particular myth.

Ladies and gents please let it be known that fats, the ultimate health pariah, are not your enemy.

In fact, as hard as it may be to believe, there are some fats that are actually beneficial for your overall health and are an ally in your weight-loss journey. To understand that a little bit better, let's first distinguish between the different types of fats.

Simply put, there are good fats, and there are bad fats. Though composed of a similar chemical structure, the fatty acids vary considerably in how they affect you and your health.

The main types of fatty acids are unsaturated and saturated ones. The saturated fats are the heavier kinds that are filled with carbon-hydrogen bonds which are significantly harder to break down and absorb.

The unsaturated fats, especially the polyunsaturated, those that are not completely filled with carbon-hydrogen bonds are what you need to be concerned with. There are two basic types of polyunsaturated fats that most of anyone who has ever struggled with their weight will immediately recognize. They are the Omega-6 and the Omega-3 Fatty Acids.

We're going to go slightly in-depth with the fat breakdown and discuss the Omega-3 Fatty acids in a little more details just to give you a better understanding of why it's completely counterproductive to cut out fats from your diet when trying to lose weight.

Here, we're specifically talking about the EPA/DHA, naturally found in fish oil supplements that are so popular in the fitness world. Though both these fatty acids almost always go hand in hand, they are different but beneficial in their own ways.

Here's how:

Eicosapentaenoic Acid or EPA is the first line of defense against cellular inflammation. It inhibits the enzyme that produces the Omega-6 fatty acid known as Arachidonic Acid which functions primarily to mediate cellular inflammation.

DHA or Docosahexaenoic Acid is a fatty acid that is now known to have a significant impact on cardiovascular health, memory, mood, vision quality and macular generation, cognitive function and fertility.

It is known to suppress the expansion of fat cells by preventing the accumulation of fat chains called triglycerides. It lowers the levels of the Leptin – the hormone responsible for regulating energy levels within the fat tissue of the body. This also enhances enzyme functionality which allows your body to break down fat cells that have long since been stored within your body. Furthermore, there's evidence that suggests that DHA significantly affects cardiovascular health by reducing the levels of fat stored within the major arteries. This in turn improves the fitness and strength of the heart – and isn't that what our overall aim is? To have better health? Now if the very organ – your heart – which dictates your health status is not functioning at optimal level – which is what happens when you completely eliminate the good fats from your diet – how can you become the best version of yourself?

When working in tandem, EPA and DHA both seem to have anabolic properties which are essential to encourage the growth of muscle protein helping bodybuilders and those training recover faster during strenuous exercise. Moreover, there is research that suggests increased blood flow in muscles to allow improved performances during workouts. As most people, at one point or another do partake in extreme forms of physical activity during their weight-loss journey, it makes sense to incorporate within your diet elements which will enhance your performance and provide better results, does it not?

Having established the importance of fats and fatty acids within the body, let's dispel another myth that dictates us weight-loss enthusiasts to use pharmaceutical or synthetic supplements to fulfill these dietary requirements. However, why would you want to do that when there are more than ample natural resources readily available in the market which allow you to do the same?

Admittedly it's slightly trickier to intake just the right kinds of Omega-3 Fatty acids purely by consuming rich foods, especially when the biggest source is fish and not every individual shares the same dietary lifestyle.

Fret not though, here's a list of different natural foods rich in the right kinds of fat's that you can easily incorporate within your diet to fulfill the Fat macronutrient requirement.

- For vegan diets – sea plants or vegetables such as Arame, Dulse, Kelp, Nori, Wakame as well as seeds such as Flax, Chia or Hemp.
- For strictly vegetarian diets – sea plants or land plants that may be fermented with fungi.
- For vegetarian diets but including dairy products- eggs, cheese, milk, yogurt, especially those that may be obtained from the animals that have been strictly grass fed.
- Omnivorous diets – all meats especially fish along with sea plants, vegetables, and seeds.

While people would love to completely omit fats from their diet altogether in order to lose weight, as explained that is by far the worst thing one can do to one's self. The daily recommended intake of fats is anywhere from 20 to 35 percent per day based on your total caloric intake. According to that percentage that means a daily intake of 33 to 58 grams of fats is essential for proper functionality of your body.

## Do You Know The Importance of Adequate Water Intake?

We've talked quite a bit about food, the correct portions and sizes, as well as the components of food that we eat. However, there's barely been any mention at all of water and the amount of hydration our body requires. It's time we remedy that, especially considering just how important water is for our optimal health.



Did you know that water makes approximately 60 to 75 percent of our body weight, depending on our gender, age and body composition? That equates to almost two-thirds of the human body being made up of water.

If that doesn't give you valuable insight into the importance of water, consider this: Water has multiple roles, like regulating body temperature, lubricating joints, and removing toxins and waste products from the body.

However that's not all, the real relevant fact to consider here is that being properly hydrated also helps regular your appetite – something that is quite essential for anyone intending to lose any amount of weight.

In fact, here's something to try - the next time you find yourself with an uncontrollable craving, consider the possibility that you may actually just be dehydrated. Try drinking a tall glass of water before reaching for a snack and see

if your hunger or craving abates. We can almost guarantee that it will.

As we mentioned just now, hydration is absolutely crucial for optimal health. Unfortunately however, not only do people not pay the necessary attention to their hydration needs, rather they also opt to fulfil their water requirements by depending on other liquid sources. Ask yourself, how many times has it been that instead of drinking water, you reached for a can of your favorite soft drink, a box of juice, a cup of coffee or tea?

In an ideal weight loss circumstance, it is absolutely mandatory that the majority of your liquid consumption be pure water. You want to lose weight? You'll have to replace all sodas, fruit juices, and other sugary drinks with water – there are no two ways about it. Moderate amounts of coffee, teas, and broths can also be included in your diet but we recommend drinking at least half of your body weight in ounces, every day.

Although I don't think many of you would be wondering about the reason why for such an extreme emphasis on drinking water, especially since I just explained that water makes up a major chunk of your body, I'd still like to give you an idea of just how important water is to your body. Read along to find out.

### **Effects of Dehydration**

Water is the maintainer of a regulated body temperature. While helping control the blood circulation throughout the body, water carries away the heat that accumulates near your internal organs during exercise. This prevents a heat stroke from seriously damaging your insides.

The recommended daily water intake is necessary for a human body because it helps balance the water loss such as the one caused by sweating. This in turn aids in maintaining the total water weight. Even the minutest change is registered as a water loss. Feeling thirsty is the first sign that your body is inadequately hydrated. Dehydration has immediate and noticeable effects on the body. If your level of hydration drops by just two percent, it can lead to blurry vision, trouble concentrating, increased appetite, and lower energy. It can also mess with your digestion, resulting in bloating and abdominal pain.

Dehydration is also associated with an increased risk of anxiety, irritability, premature aging, weight gain, cancer, and numerous other health problems. Just a few more reasons to drink up!

### **Benefits to Staying Hydrated**

Water is indeed miraculous when it comes to aiding the body. The following are some amazing benefits:

- Staying hydrated will help ease muscle soreness by assisting your body in repairing muscle tissue and removing toxins.
- It will boost your energy by improving your circulation
- It will help control your appetite. Often dehydration is mistaken for hunger, and we end up reaching for snacks when we are really just thirsty.
- Your skin will be smoother.

According to a research carried out in the University of Washington, drinking water can help fight late-night cravings. Ninety-eight percent of participants in the study found relief from drinking just eight ounces of water when cravings hit. Another study carried out by researcher Michael Boschmann revealed that drinking sixteen ounces of water can boost the metabolism by up to 30%.

Start every morning by drinking 10 ounces of water before you do anything else. Fill up a glass at night, set it on your nightstand, and drink it before getting out of bed (or reaching for your phone). Bonus points if you squeeze half of a lemon in. Use this part of your morning to sit up, set a positive intention for your day, and give your body the thing it needs most.

### **Other Liquids and Recommendations**

There is no argument against water as the best choice for staying hydrated. We strongly recommend giving up sodas (especially diet), sugary juices, and unnatural energy drinks all together. These liquids cause inflammation, create false hunger pangs, and lead to chronic diseases like cancer.

However, moderate amounts of organic coffee, green and herbal tea, coconut water, broths, and kombucha can be great to create variety while hydrating your body. Adding herbs like mint, berries, and citrus can help make plain water more exciting and will also give you important micronutrients.

## Hints to Keep Yourself Hydrated

Now that we've established that water is a man's best friend in maintaining a healthy lifestyle, it is also important to note that every individual has different needs when it comes to body fluids. The mean environmental temperature of your surroundings, humidity, your choice in clothing, and of course, the rate of physical activity and sweat all make a considerable difference in the amount of water you need to consume per day.

Having said that, we also realize that it's not easy keeping track of all the water you drink in one day. Sometimes it just slips one's mind that one needs to drink a certain amount of water. Hence, we've got a few very helpful hints, tips and tricks to help you make sure you stay on track with your water target.

Here's how:

- Don't allow yourself to reach a point where you actively feel thirsty. Make sure you have a water bottle at hand all day and keep sipping.
- Take cues from your body! The number of times you go to relieve yourself and the color of your urine are both great indicators of your level of hydration. You shouldn't be waiting six or eight hours between bathroom breaks and your urine shouldn't be dark yellow, cloudy or even too smelly.
- Invest in a good quality, bigger sized bottle. While having a water bottle at hand is a good step, we all know you'll never get round to refilling a small 12-ounce water bottle multiple times a day. Instead, opt for a larger, 1 or 1.5 liter bottle.
- Set water goals. Start small. If you have a large bottle of water at hand, make it a goal to finish it before the work-day ends. If you feel that you have the tendency to submerge yourself in work and are likely to forget all about taking a sip, try setting a regular reminder or alarm that goes off every two hours or so to prompt you into taking a few swigs.
- Add drinking water to your workout and eating routine. For light, limited duration exercise, drink some water before, during and after you're done. Same goes for the meals. Drink a glass full of water before and after each of your daily meals.
- Track your daily intake of water. Much like you track the number of steps you walked or the miles you ran, digital media makes it extremely easy for you to record just how many glasses of H<sub>2</sub>O you've drunk a day. You can even use your food journal to do the same.
- Switch things up. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to drink all two or three liters of water every day. Incorporate foods that are high in water content in your daily diet and compensate your water intake with those. Apples, watermelons, cantaloupe, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, broccoli, and zucchini, are all called fluid-rich foods for a reason. What's more, they're absolutely delicious. Water intake and scrumptious taste, it's a win-win!

## Nutrient Supplementing



Who, here, hasn't wished for all the excess weight to just disappear by popping a little magic pill?

We know we have.

However, despite the countless supplements and weight-loss pills so extravagantly advertised everywhere you turn, the fact of the matter remains that there isn't one simple solution in the form of a colorful capsule that can give you your desired body in just a few weeks – we know because exactly like you, I was and know countless people in the same boat just desperate for a quick-fix solution that would help me get rid of all the excess physical baggage I carried.

Weight-loss solutions, diet supplements and pills will claim all sorts of things and make promises they will never be able to keep. No matter how frustrated you are with your progress, it is important to realize that honestly, there is no quick fix to the healthier version of you and absolutely no diet supplement that will give you any form of benefit.

We've heard of and seen people try so many of these over-the-counter magic weight loss pills that promise the user a magnificent body in a matter of days – and we've also seen the horrid side effects of such pills first hand.

Now while there may not be any magical supplement which would help you shed weight, there is an abundance of naturally available nutrients, which, in combination with a proper diet, and exercise plan, can help accelerate the weight-loss process.

Please note that these nutrients will not act like a spell and make all the fat just fade away.

They'll work, instead, to shift the body mechanisms at the microscopic level. Not too much though, it'll only require a small amount of tweaking that will allow your body to melt the fat instead of storing it. What's more, these nutrients, which include vitamins, minerals, complex chemical compounds, microorganisms and probiotics, as well as omega-3 fatty acids, will only provide for your body the necessary nourishment it needs to power through your weight-loss regimen.

While all the above mentioned nutrients are beneficial in their own right, it is vitamins and mineral that are the most popular in the fitness world, and rightly so –because they are the most beneficial. Let's take a slightly deeper look at them to discover why.

### **Multivitamins**

Everyone has heard about Multivitamins being an absolute must component of a healthy style. People talk about taking multivitamins left, right, and center. There are all sorts of them available in the market, some of them even flavored like candy, designed to entice regular people into munching down on them like you would a bag of M&M's.

Both those things are horribly wrong: the bag of M&M's and the candy-flavored multivitamins. The number of different types of vitamins is endless. There are so many of them, you'll be hard-pressed to remember even the names of the ones you see regularly on the bottle of pills that rests on a shelf in your home. Randomly taking in a combination of any and all kinds of vitamins has better chances of doing you serious harm than giving any benefit.

Of all the varieties, there are some specific vitamins that are especially effective in aiding in fat reduction. The range of B vitamins, Vitamin D and Vitamin E are significantly prominent for losing weight.

### **Vitamins B**

Vitamins B, that includes Thiamine, Riboflavin, Niacin, Pantothenic Acid, Vitamin B6, Biotin, Folic Acid and Cobalamin or Vitamin B12 and of course, Folic acid, are a group of vitamins that are known to significantly contribute towards the conversion of energy.

These vitamins assist the human body in breaking down the carbohydrates, protein and the fats – the bigger molecules – into smaller, easier absorbable versions at a faster rate. However, it's important to note that the 'faster' rate is highly subjective for each individual. Metabolism is extremely resistant to any form to change, and even the most minor of differences is noticeable.

### **Vitamin D**

Vitamin D is also known to aid in the process of losing fat, though not in the conventional way. Vitamin D is essential to ensure the hormone Insulin, released by the Pancreases- a small organ in your abdomen- works correctly. It helps the broken down sugars such as glucose become available for cells to use and be converted to energy.

In Vitamin D deficient circumstances, the body triggers the release of another hormone called the Parathyroid Hormone or the PTH. This PTH gives rise to a chain of reactions that essentially lead to the broken down sugars being converted and stored as fats. As if that wasn't enough though, the lack of adequate amounts of Vitamin D also interfere with the proper functioning of a hormone called Leptin

that sends the signals to the brain that the body needs to stop eating and is full. This is one of the reasons why vitamin deficient people tend to eat considerably more than they need to.

### ***Vitamin E***

Another one of the vitamins, the Vitamin E also plays a role in aiding weight-loss, though that's not all it's good for. Vitamin E is a fat-soluble antioxidant. It helps in delaying coronary heart disease as well as preventing the formation of clots of blood that could possibly lead to a heart attack. Moreover, Vitamin E helps muscles recover from a rough workout quicker, as well as help in increasing energy levels.

Now that we've made a point about the importance of the above mentioned vitamins, we'd just like to take a moment to point out that loading up a surplus of any one particular vitamin is not what we're after when we say that one should take multivitamins. Rather it is ensuring that your body is not running deficient of an essential component that has the potential of holding you back in the journey towards a healthier you.

Which is why we suggest before you begin taking an off-the-counter multivitamin on the regular, visit your physician and opt for a complete blood work up. Find out whatever it is that you may be lacking and then select a combination of vitamins that best suits your nutritional needs- but only under the circumstance that you are unable to compensate for your deficiencies through your diet. Consider the Multivitamins as diet insurance.

You should, ideally, be able to receive a majority of your micronutrients from your soon-to-be whole foods diet. After all, all sorts of power-foods are readily available at the local grocery stores that are packed to the brim with nutrients. However, even the best of efforts can lack the diversity that's essential to cover all your micronutrient needs.

### **Calcium + Magnesium**

It's actually interesting to note that while most of the free world is fairly obsessed with all things weight-loss, not many of them are aware of the nutrients do not end at just vitamins. Minerals play a significant role in aiding loss of fat in the human body, as well as helping keep up energy levels and strengthening muscles and bones.

Much like multivitamins, a host of minerals exist that affect our bodies and how it functions. Again, similarly, there are some specific minerals that individually, and in combination assist in fat loss and prevent gain of it as well. Two of the most noteworthy minerals include Calcium and Magnesium.

### ***Calcium***

Calcium, the most commonly occurring dietary mineral in our body is generally required for the strengthening of teeth and bones. It also helps maintain muscular contraction along with facilitating vascular expansion and contraction. Calcium is heavily involved in the production of various hormones and body enzymes and it also contributes towards the proper transmission of impulses sent within the nervous system.

Most importantly however, is the fact that calcium is directly related to fat-loss. According to a recently published study, an increase in the daily dietary calcium intake, in combination with the regular protein intake can modulate the inflammatory response within the body. This ultimately leads to an increased expulsion of fat from the body. There are theories that suggest that calcium prevents the absorption of fats from within the intestines as well as inhibiting the production of

hormones which lead to the accumulation of fats in the body. All in all, a high-calcium diet is good for losing overall weight, body fat percentage as well as improving the body composition and preventing weight regain.

### ***Magnesium***

Magnesium is another highly abundant mineral found in the human body. Individually, magnesium is associated with helping the body digest, absorb and utilize proteins, carbohydrates and fats more efficiently. Moreover, it contributes, significantly we might add, to the production and activation of a number of important enzymes. Magnesium is found in every single organ within the body and is, naturally, ranked as the fourth most commonly found mineral in humans.

Magnesium has a very strong connection with weight-loss and obesity management. It is the nutrient that directly controls the digestion and utilization of the major food complexes. It also helps facilitate the chemical reaction which allows the consumption of simple sugars such as glucose by cells. Magnesium is also directly associated with the production of something called adenosine triphosphate- the natural source of energy for the human body.

According to research it has been found that a consistent diet that's high in magnesium has a considerable effect on the overall metabolism. It helps you produce more energy so that you have more to burn those calories.

Magnesium and Calcium, when combined, work synergistically in a way that boosts the functionality of both. Magnesium facilitates in balancing the calcium intake by aiding the body cells in absorbing it better. What's more, it also helps enhance the effects calcium has on the reduction of fats from the body. There are various mineral combinations available as over-the-counter dietary supplements. The ones that contain an amalgamation of calcium, magnesium plus vitamin D (which helps magnesium help the body absorb calcium better) are a sensible choice when looking to reduce weight.

## **Have You Got Your Movement Plan?**

A lot of people in this world are affected by obesity – it's an everyday struggle for most. The doctors, physicians, physical health specialists and fitness trainers have some very common conversations with a majority of their patients/clients on a daily basis – conversations that are actually quite difficult.

These conversations usually revolve around the confrontation of the obesity epidemic and how it affects a particular individual. Unbeknownst to most of these people, obesity is the number one leading factor for such exorbitant mortality and morbidity rates in the developed world. And yet there are people who choose to justify their weight gain by claiming to have a 'slow metabolism', unknown weight-gain despite barely eating anything, or 'just being different to other people'.

There are reasons for unexplainable weight gain and they mostly just revolve around pre-existing, yet undiagnosed systemic health conditions that prevent an individual from losing weight – for example PCOS or Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome in women.

People who have a seemingly clean bill of health cannot possibly justify their consistent weight gain by using any versions of the above mentioned excuses. The fact is, if there is proper knowledge, management, balanced eating and exercising habits, any individual on the planet can lose weight – they should only be willing to do so.

As we explained earlier that weight gain is 70 percent of what you eat and the best way to lose weight through the diet is to utilize the metabolic rate in order to manage the calories consumed on a per day basis.

Now the thing is, exercise and physical movement is the process which aids in and expedites the weight loss process.

The whole purpose of knowing the BMR is to be able to create a significant caloric deficit which promotes weight loss, right? Now we can either create a significant caloric deficit by reducing the amount of food that we consume, OR we can increase our physical exercise of movement such that we are utilizing or as we fitness instructors like to say BURNING more calories than we are taking. There is also a third, tried and tested way to losing weight – one that is more effective and quick than both the formerly mentioned methods. This way involves utilizing a balanced mix of BOTH exercise AND decreased food intake such that the individual effects are synergized into producing successful weight loss results.

When you create a caloric deficit by reducing the number (and type) of calories consumed on any given day, and then follow it up with a regular routine of physical movement, you are aiding your weight loss in that you are already dropping pounds by limiting the amount of calories you take in AND burning off some more in your workout.

The greater caloric deficit created, results in an expedited weight loss process, overall. For example, if you were to be losing 1 pound unwanted weight per week, based on your caloric targets per day, and if you work out 5 days a week, depending on the overall amount of calories burned you could be losing 1.5 or even 2 pounds per week.

Speaking of number of days of physical activity, let us talk a little more about that.

## **The Workout Calendar**

When peoples begin including some form of physical exercise within their weight loss routine, more often than not they're pretty confused and the most popular questions asked are either "how/where do we start?" or 'how much exercise should we do?'.

The fact is, regardless of what anyone else might have told you – especially the fitness gurus that discourage people by telling them that if they work out 4 out of the 5 recommended days they won't lose weight – exercise and its effectiveness is entirely subjective per individual.

The effect of exercise on any particular person's weight loss journey is entirely dependent on THEIR body's shape and body type, their genetic makeup and even the lifestyle they live. No two individuals on this planet can successfully synchronize their weight-loss journey 100 percent because no two individuals on this planet are 100 percent the same.

You have to remember the amount of exercise that you do or don't do, will affect you differently than it would your exercise partner. When you want to lose weight, there's no competition with another person. You can't compete on the amount of inches or pounds you shed, or the number of hours you put in at the gym or the number of calories you burn.

Losing weight, for each individual should mean following their own individual trajectory- one that is completely unrelated and incomparable to another. You can only do so when you have a workout or exercise plan of your own – one that you've devised by taking into account your abilities, as well as your physical limitations.

Here we're outlining the most basic of beginner's workout routine for your first fitness month. The workout routine isn't specific in the sense that it is limited to only a certain number of people only; rather it's a flexible guide for any and all type of people who want to incorporate a physical movement element into their weight loss journey.

The reason why we're presenting an outlined plan that is for one entire month – divided by weeks – is that this will give you the basis to modify, adjust and tweak the map in order to come up with your very own workout calendar.

One last thing before we give that workout routine to you is that you need to remember that consistency is key to EVERYTHING in life. If you wish to see any sort of definitive results you HAVE to be able to keep consistently determined towards your objective. There are no gains to be had if you do something for a small period of time and give up completely, or even if you do things with prolonged intervals in between.

Having said that, here is **WEEK 1**

The first week of any exercise routine is the acclimatizing week; you help your body adjust to whatever it is that you're doing. As such, it's important for you to do a little bit of everything so that you can equally introduce all individuals' parts of your body to a work out.

Always start out slow, and only work out on alternate days on the first week so that you can give your body the time it needs to recover – this is especially important for people who have no history of physical exercise, EVER. But taking a rest day should only be limited to ONE SINGLE DAY. There cannot be a rest week between each workout.

Go through the basics this week – do a few stretches, or maybe start with a light walk. Do whatever feels comfortable for you.

## **WEEK 2**

Week two involves breaking up your workout routine into different sections. If you're keeping up the same pace, of the four workout days in your exercise routine, you have to divide them equally between your upper and lower body.

Day 1 and 2 of the workout, say for example Monday and Wednesday (with Tuesday as the rest day in between) should be upper body workouts where you focus on your arms, chest, upper back and core. Day 3 and 4 of the workout, Friday and Sunday should only focus on your lower body. You can adjust your workout days such that there is always a one day gap between your workouts to give yourself the necessary recovery time.

However, if that does work too well for you, you can build it up until you have enough stamina to work out two consecutive days, take a rest day and then workout again for two consecutive days and then

give yourself the weekend off to enjoy. Remember you can easily make up and adjust your workout routine however you see it fit.

### **Week 3**

Intense workout routines that are concise and have a certain time limit encourage people to increase the number of days they are working out during week three. Because we're not giving you an intensified short guide for a weight-loss quick fix, we're not going to do that. Especially since this will only be your third week in the gym – ever.

For week three, we'd like to introduce a different sort of exercise division. 2 days of the week, with one day of rest between each, focus on a total body workout. Usually day one and three work best for this. Day 2 and 4 are best reserved for individual focus routines for example; day 2 is all about the upper body while day 4 tackles lower body strength.

### **Week 4**

Week four is the week where you should think about increasing the intensity of your workout in order to build your overall strength.

Because you've been consistent with your workout for over 3 weeks and your body is beginning to get into routine - adjusting to the movements you are putting it through, we would like to suggest that you slowly build up the intensity of your routine in order to increase your strength. Add to the reps, sets, or cycles you are doing for each exercise – even if it is just one more. Don't introduce any new movement and don't try any fancy new tricks in the gym just because you've been working out for almost a month and now consider yourself some sort of a pro - believe me you're far from it now but you will get there in your own due time. There's really no need to rush things.

## **Posture and Position**

Have you ever heard about someone who's had a workout injury and have rendered themselves unable to exercise for life? We're pretty sure you might have at some point or another because it's that common an occurrence. Ever wondered why it happens, though?

Allow us to enlighten you.

Sports and exercise injuries are so common because of incorrect posture and positioning of the body while performing rigorous physical movements.

Posture refers to the human body's physical alignment with respect to the earth's gravity. Essentially, the correct body posture is one that ensures that all the major landmarks of your body align in a straight line when viewed from the side.



You can easily check your posture by viewing yourself from the side. If your ear, tip of your shoulder, halfway of your trunk/core, over the bony projection on your thigh, all the way through your knee till your ankle align in one straight vertical line, your posture is correct such that it will prevent injury and lead to a more effective workout. In case you see any form of deviation – you're in trouble or looking for it, my friend.

The exercises that you do, such as Ab crunches, squats, planks, dead lifts or even something as simple as running or walking are all meant to be done in a certain way such that they target one set of muscles and keep the strain off of another.

If you are doing 500 hundred abs crunches in one go and are not lifting your shoulders up correctly, or have your arms folded inwards with the elbows pointed towards one another, you aren't about to feel a thing in your abs but I can guarantee you'll definitely get a crick in your neck – one that isn't about to go away so soon. Planks are supposed to be performed such that a straight imaginary line can pass through from the top of your head all the way down to your ankles. If your stomach and head are hanging, sagging towards the floor you're going to put unnecessary strain on your spine – one that could lead to a serious spinal injury.

So remember, when you're taking up an exercise, it's always the quality of your workout that matters so much more than the quantity. I kid you not; correctly done 5 reps of basic abs exercises are far more effective than the 50 incorrectly done ones ever will be. If you don't feel the strain in the body area you're meant to be targeting while working out, you're doing it incorrectly.

## Guided Beginnings



You know how there's still a stigma attached to seeking help from a therapist or psychologist even when you're so obviously struggling through a mental turmoil? Just because society labels anyone who seeks psychological help as 'mad' or 'insane' people avoid going to the shrink even when they most need it.

The same stigma is attached to obese people seeking help from a physical fitness expert or professional trainer. In both circumstances – this stigma is equally baseless.

Seeking professional guidance and expertise before you begin to take your life into a new direction in terms of your health is one of the best things that you can do for yourself. There is absolutely no shame in asking for help or assistance from someone who is obviously more qualified than you and can clearly help you navigate what may seem like very murky waters.

Losing weight is a physically and mentally stressful endeavor, one that can really affect a person's self-esteem and not in a good way – especially when you are slow to see results. A physical fitness expert may help you get into the right direction in terms of introducing physical movement in your life in a way that is beneficial for you and takes into consideration any and all health limitations you might have.

With a guided beginning, you can develop a fitness routine and program based on your abilities, capabilities, and fitness goals in easily achievable ways.

The first and foremost thing to do, before you begin any fitness journey, whether it's diet based, or physical activity based is to consult your primary healthcare provider.

Your physician needs to evaluate your current health status in order to diagnose the possibility of the existence of any underlying issues that may have the potential to safely participate in a workout routine. It could be anything from bone or joint issues, blood pressures problems, arthritis, fluctuating cholesterol or sugar levels – essentially anything that could cause you any harm during the course of your fitness journey.

Depending on that evaluation, a professional personal or fitness trainer will come up with a physical fitness routine that takes into consideration your health concerns, catering to them individually and specifically so that you lose your excess weight in the safest way possible – WITHOUT comprising on the quality of your health in any way.

What's more, your personal fitness guide will also be a consistent source of motivation and inspiration for you- one that will give you the push, dedication and drive to continue moving even when you feel



like giving up.

I've known fitness trainers to adjust the fitness routines of their clients taking into consideration the current state of physical and mental stress. If you've had a particularly grueling day at work and are just hitting the gym because you don't want to skip it but honestly have no energy to go through the workout, your fitness trainer will not only motivate you to keep going, s/he will also tailor it for you in a way that you are able to accomplish it – even in your worn down state.

Remember, by considering and taking help of the right, experienced people, you have nothing to lose and EVERYTHING to gain. When you consult and take advantage of the expertise of a professional

healthcare provider and fitness expert, you're only minimizing the chances of causing yourself unnecessary and irreparable harm and exponentially maximizing the chances for succeeding in achieving all your fitness and life goals.

If you have the opportunity to seek counsel from an expert to aid in your fitness journey, leap up and take advantage of it. Believe you me, you will only benefit from it

## Mental Mayhem No More

You know how we talked about the foods we eat having an impact on the lives that we lead? Well there's another correlation of the phrase 'you are what you eat' – this time around though, it has to do with your mental state.

Now you might be wondering what the mental state, or mental health have to do with one's physical health – more specifically, what does it have to do with weight-loss?

In case you didn't know, only everything.

The human mind and the nutrients it receives dictate pretty much everything about your body's functionality. When you pile your body with empty calories, synthetic sugars and high levels of caffeine, you are actually stressing your mind by depriving it of the essential simple sugars and energy providing nutrients that are necessary for optimal functioning.

That's one side of the spectrum – the second side usually has people skipping meals and excessively cutting back calories in order to lose weight. They eat lesser and lesser every day in the hopes that the lack of food will lead to effective weight loss. Unfortunately, that too, is completely counterproductive.

What happens when you quit eating properly is that you essentially end up depleting your body's nutrition reserves as it tries to compensate for the lack of outside energy by utilizing the stored ones. As it does so, it slows down your metabolism to the point where the body is only capable of carrying out just the most basic of functions and nothing more. As we explained earlier, your body requires a certain amount of caloric energy to carry out the basic life support functions. When it receives next to no energy externally, the body is forced to utilize its energy storage. However, there is only so much energy the body can afford to expend on a daily basis.

This eventually leads to the fitness enthusiast – in this case you – to feel high levels of fatigue which cause what we like to call a 'brain fog'. Your mind is muddled and unfocused, you're irritable and extremely tired – what's more is that you don't see any changes in your weight.

This muddled mindset creates further hurdles in your weight-loss journey rendering you unable to realize your fitness goals despite consistent and continuous efforts. In this last section of our weight loss guide, we're going to talk about that deep connection or rather doomed union that is mental stresses and weight-loss efforts as well as the importance of adequate rest for a better, fitter you.

## **Mental Stress and Weight-loss – The Doomed Union**

Mental stress is one of the biggest contributors towards the deadliest of diseases to affect mankind which includes heart disease, diabetes, cancer and deep psychological disturbances which lead to suicide.

Stress is a highly personal, and individualized psychological reaction that occurs due to a number of different psychological, physical, and environmental factors. While there are numerous causes and contributing factors that cause stress, the results of stress or the ways in which it affects us and our physical and mental health are endless.

To better understand what happens to the human body when stressed; let's consider the physical response of a human body to stress.

When there is a presence of an external or internal stressful or excitable stimulus, the body produces a hormone called Cortisol. A diurnal hormone, cortisol is responsible for a person's alertness and energy levels and is released from the adrenal cortex in a cyclic manner. Meaning that it peaks as you wake up and wanes during the day until the levels fall enough at night to allow the body to rest. Unfortunately though, most of us don't have a very stable cortisol cycle anyway such that we require additional pick-me-ups bright and early in the morning to function – yes we're talking about caffeine. Doses of caffeine help release a small, but significant amount of cortisol within the body which allows us to go about our daily routine.

Now the catch with the use of caffeine as a stimulant to produce more cortisol is that it also has an over-stimulatory effect on our adrenal cortex, one that causes a greater hormonal imbalance. This over-stimulation and the resultant imbalance in the basal levels of cortisol can have a number of adverse effects of our body which include but are not limited to the following:

- A fight-or-flight response that automatically gears up your body for action by increasing your blood pressure and sugar levels.
- Insomnia
- Tension headaches
- Weakened functionality of the heart
- Inability to form lasting new memories
- Increased hair loss
- May even cause pre-mature labor
- Inhibit weight loss.

Of all the various results of stress, the one that we are most concerned about is the inhibition of weight loss because we are talking about reducing those pounds that we suddenly seem to have gained. Before we talk about how it inhibits weight – loss though, we have to mention one tiny little tidbit of information. That is, that according to research conducted by a well-known obesity psychologist, it has been found that the human brain and body is naturally designed in a way that inclines it to eat and to eat well and enthusiastically.

Basically, eating is one of the most ingrained, basic activities that our bodies are intrinsically trained for – it is one of the reasons why it's so difficult for us, as humans to challenge and alter the set eating habits and patterns in order to lose weight.

Now according to other, related studies, it was found that the stress hormone cortisol does a few basic things that prevent effective weight loss and in fact lead to considerable weight gain. The first is that it leads to the enlargement of fat cells in the body. This means that there is more space to store unhealthy fats.

Secondly, cortisol causes an increase in appetite, more specifically an increase in the cravings for sugar and fat-laden foods. Moreover, it has also been found that cortisol prevents the body from burning calories as effectively as it would in the absence of stress, hence preventing weight-loss despite insistent efforts through caloric deficits or exercise.

Now combine this knowledge with the human body's natural instinct to eat and consume foods and you have on your hand a monstrosity of stress-induced food binge that completely wrecks your weight-loss journey to pieces.

So what can one do to prevent the mental stresses and related weight gain? Because the life that we lead these days, turbulent, ultra-competitive and fast-paced, stresses seem to be a part of our daily lives. Every which way you turn, there's a different kind of stress, to the point where there's no escaping it. Keeping that in mind, how does one move past those stresses and continue to successfully lose weight?

Here's a list of all the things you can do in order to move past the stress, gain mental peace, and lose weight.

### Incorporate Neuroplasticity

Our mind is made up of neurons and small electric connections and pathways which help dictate both our actions and thoughts. These neural pathways, when used over and over and over again become ingrained to the point where our body automatically performs certain functions, practices certain beliefs without us consciously expending any energy to do so.

One of those functions is taking stress, and then giving into our cravings as a result of those stresses. However, fortunately for us, scientists have learned that our minds are not as inflexible as we once thought they were. In fact, it has been found that the belief that minds don't grow, expand and evolve past a certain age is utter nonsense.

You can, in fact continue to change your life, your beliefs and your practices through the concept of neuroplasticity- a phenomenon that dictates your mind to be flexible and malleable like plastic. Essentially what this means is that you have to tell your mind that your beliefs and practices are not set in stone and can be changed. If you step away from your regular practices and habits and pick up, new, better, healthier ways through healthier choices – you can eventually train your mind to automatically follow those ways instead.

### Breathe Right

Unbeknownst to most of us, our breathing can actually help regulate our stress levels. Deep, consistent and controlled breathing causes a great reduction in cortisol levels as well as aiding in muscle relaxing, relieving deep-set muscular tensions and providing mental relief and reprieve from stress inducing thoughts.

The next time you're stressed and find yourself reaching for a bag of your favorite chocolate cookies to help you feel better, lean back in your chair, close your eyes and focus on your breathing for a few minutes to the point where you are able to synchronize them like clockwork.

If that doesn't help, step outside in fresh air for a few minutes, away from the stressful environment and we guarantee that your food cravings and your stress will have abated considerably.

## Exercise

Exercise is not just effective for burning calories, you know. Continuous physical movements have the capacity to stimulate the production and release of endorphins, the happy hormones. These hormones are capable of combating and reversing the adverse effects of cortisol, effectively helping you reduce stress, minimize unwanted junk food cravings as well as aiding in effective calorie burning and weight loss. Essentially, with regular exercise, you're looking at a win-win in either circumstance.

There's a whole section of this book dedicated on teaching you how to incorporate regular exercise in your everyday lives to help you reduce your weight. Go back and read it again to gain new, stress reducing perspective on physical activity.

## Eat Wise

You wouldn't think it, but the food choices you make actually have a huge impact on your stress levels. We've mentioned earlier how empty calories and eliminating meals altogether both have an adverse effect on your state of mind, but the fact is that there's one more aspect of not eating right that creates additional mental stress – that is guilt.

For people who continually struggle with their weight, feelings of guilt are very commonly associated with eating unhealthy foods – especially when you're consistently fat-shamed by people everywhere you turn. Unfortunately for our society and the impossible standards that have been created, fat-shaming is still a huge reality.

This has led to the creation of a fat-complex in the minds of most obese people to the point where the everyday stresses lead them to indulging in their cravings and those cravings cause excessive feelings of guilt for making unhealthy choices – effectively causing the creation of a vicious cycle that deteriorates one's overall health more rapidly than you would think possible.

By choosing the healthier food and fats in your diet, even when fulfilling your cravings, you will, really, be killing not one, not two, but five birds with the same stone i.e. proving the sustenance your body needs, indulging your cravings, reducing your stresses, preventing unnecessary guilt, and eventually losing weight too.

## The All-Important Zzz's



We've all, over the years, heard various reasons why getting an adequate amount of sleep is necessary. All sorts of issues and problems you might be having are blamed on sleep or rather its lack thereof. Feeling crabby in the morning? Didn't get enough sleep. Tired? Restless night. Can't concentrate? You definitely didn't get proper rest. Memory lapses, cold and flu like symptoms, high blood pressure and in severe cases, even hallucinations, heart disease and most importantly, eventual weight gain comes with continuous lack of sleep.

So how many of these actually hold true? Is sleep really that necessary? And lack of it so harmful? Before we discuss about all the reasons why adequate amount of sleep and most importantly, a fixed routine of sleep is so essential for optimal health, first let's talk about the biology of sleep a little, shall we?

### The Biology of the Human Sleep Cycle

You're aware, aren't you, of just how complex your body is? Yes? Well then, it shouldn't come as a surprise that not only is your body complex, it functions self-sufficiently in a very smart manner. The human brain regulates the naturally occurring rhythms which determine the times when you wake up and when you fall asleep.

These naturally occurring rhythms are what compose the human internal clock. Yes, an actual internal clock exists which dictates when you wake up and when you sleep. This internal clock or the circadian rhythm is established during the very first months of life, that is, almost as soon as you are born. These rhythms control the desire you feel to sleep, which is the strongest between the hours of midnight and dawn. What I'm saying here is that your body is naturally inclined to seek rest at night.

Managed by a group of cells that sits just above the optic nerves from the area where the eyes cross, the circadian rhythms are produced by the natural factors present within the brain and the body, but they are also significantly affected by various environmental signals. These signals include exposure to light, reading time and the levels of hormone Melatonin.

A change in any of the three major factors can result in an upset sleep cycle even though they vary significantly from individual to individual. However, every single one of us passes through a series of physiological steps during the time that we are off the land of hopes and dreams. It is the fluctuation of the nerve activity within the brainstem that coordinates the changes in a sleep pattern.

The sleep pattern itself is composed of two stages:

- The Quiet Sleep
- The Dreaming Sleep

**The Quiet Sleep** is the deepest kind. This is where all the bodily functions, as regulated by the Brainstem are slowed down while the heartbeat, breathing and blood pressure are the only ones that are performing actively. There is also some movement during this period; surely you shift during the night?

This type of sleep is called the non-REM or non-Rapid Eye Movement stage. It is often described as flipping a switch. Either you are awake, or you are not. Usually, this occurs at the very beginning of your sleep cycle. You are likely to spend approximately twenty percent of your total sleep time in this deep sleep, though as you grow older that, decreases exponentially. The geriatric very rarely, if ever, experience deep sleep.

**The Dreaming Sleep** or the Rapid Eye Movement Stage is the part of your sleep cycle when your brain and the involuntary functions it regulates are the only active components of your body, the rest is almost like it's paralyzed. During this sleep, you'll be dreaming, conjuring images, or thinking and your eyes will even be moving back and forth, all behind closed lids. Raised body temperatures and increased breathing and heart rate are fairly common, as is a spike in blood pressure.

While it is said that deep sleep is necessary for cellular repair of the body, REM is essential for the restoration of your mind. Memory, learning, information collection is also facilitated during the hours of REM sleep. On average, a normal healthy person will enter the REM sleep stage of the cycle every one hour and thirty minutes and about four or five times in one single night.

### ***Why Is It Important?***

A majority of the world's population suffers from chronic sleep deprivation. There is so much to do; the competition to survive is so tough, that there aren't enough hours in a day to accommodate all the things that need to be done. The logical solution that nearly everyone comes up with is letting go of sleep and functioning on the bare minimum couple of hours. That, and of course, a healthy dose of all things caffeinated to keep you going.

Today, the advances in science and technology have allowed greater insights into the working of the brain. Basically, we can now nitpick at our sleep cycle, more than ever before. Science has examined, and explained in grave detail, just how important sleep is to us and our overall health.

No longer are restlessness and the drowsiness the only known consequences of lack of a good night's sleep. Over sixty percent of the adult population is experiencing some sort of sleep disturbance; and

that's just in the United States of America. With more than 70 known sleeping disorders, that hardly comes as a surprise.

Inadequate sleep can have lasting damage. There are instant damages such as accidents, car crashes and falls; and then there are chronic ones, for example depression, anxiety, and obesity, which chip away at you for longer periods of time.

### **Sleep Is Imperative For Mental Health**

We've established that sleep is essential to help the brain and body repair itself. I would also like to clarify that sleeping right is absolutely crucial for the brain to function properly. A good night's sleep not only helps improve your memory but also significantly alters learning capabilities. Sleeping well will allow your mind to process and retain information better, which is why it is always suggested that children and adults get a good amount of shut eye before a big exam.

Lack of adequate sleep can cause problems in keeping an emotional check. Difficulty in coping with change, performance anxiety, emotional behavior, depression, rash and risk-taking behavior are all symptoms directly associated with sleep deficiencies. In fact, teenage behavioral problems such as violent mood swings, lack of motivation and a brash and impulsive attitude are also attributed to lack of sleep.

### **Sleep Is Important For Physical Well-Being**

Physical health should be our life's number one goal, if it isn't already. And a large influencing factor that affects physical well-being is the absence or presence of sleep. If your body is getting the rest that it so desperately needs, then it will have the chance to repair itself, heal and grow. As I mentioned earlier, deep sleep triggers the body to release growth hormones as well as sex hormones.

Sleep is important to keep diseases such as heart, kidney diseases, and diabetes, hypertension, stroke and infertility issues at bay.

Lack of sleep can cause damage to the blood vessels and hinder in heart muscle repair, leading to heart attacks and imbalance of blood sugar controlling hormones such as insulin. This can cause spiked levels of glucose, increasing the chances of developing diabetes type 2. It can also damage the strength of your immune system. Be sure to pay attention the next time you succumb to a nasty bout of cold and flu. You'll find that you recover much faster if you're getting adequate amounts of rest. If not, then you have trouble fighting even the simplest of infections, which just keep dragging on forever.

### **Sleep Is Vital For Cognitive Functioning, Performance And Safety.**

Sleep will also enhance your problem-solving skills and mental focus. It allows the brain to recuperate and sharpen the cognitive functionality. People who tend to run on a sleep deprived mind are likely to be far less productive at work or during school. Not only is the processing time slowed down, decision making powers are also affected due to sleep deficiency, making you take longer than usual in completing everyday tasks.

Sleep depravity also makes you more careless. You have a slower reaction time, you aren't as physically agile as you normally are, and you make more mistakes. All of this significantly affects an individual's personal safety, but it also makes them a public hazard. Don't get offended, you know that it's true.

Now that you know just how important sleep is for you to not only function at your optimum but to also maintain your health levels and aid in weight loss, we've decided it's imperative that we tell you just how you can manage to get adequate amounts of sleep per night so that you're always feeling your best.

- ✓ Create the optimal sleeping ambiance – clean your room, turn down the bed, and essentially create a sanctuary for yourself that calls you to rest.
- ✓ Fix a particular bed-time for yourself and stick to it. Try not to make it too late. In fact, we'd recommend setting that alarm for bed at 11 p.m. at max and making it non-negotiable
- ✓ Regularly treat yourself to a good body massage to decompress and de-stress yourself. As your body relaxes, you'll sleep that much better, guaranteed!
- ✓ Limit caffeine intake to aid better sleep
- ✓ Use scented oils such as Lavender, Eucalyptus, Roman Chamomile, Clary Sage, Ylang Ylang for their soothing effects to help promote deeper sleep.
- ✓ Make eye-masks and ear plugs your best friends – especially if you live in traffic zones where there's a greater possibility of your sleep getting disrupted on a regular basis.

## Conclusion

Hey there!

Congratulations on making it through to the end of this book!

We're so thankful to you for not only taking out the time to download and read this book but more than that, we're so proud of you for making the effort to learn more about how you can begin to lose the weight you've inadvertently piled on over the years.

This book is the culmination of advice; expertise and experience of numerous fitness experts that not only have helped others realize their fitness dreams but have always been through the same experiences themselves.

Everything from the purpose, scheduling and planning stages mentioned in the book to get you started, to the facts about nutrition, food choices, and necessarily nutritional supplementation, all the way to the fitness routines and importance of exercise and awareness of mental health, stresses and it's impact of weight loss – all of it mentioned here is not only supported with endless scientific research, every single thing that we've mentioned here has been tried, tested and experienced by the experts at On the Go Fitness Pro.

We've tried to come up with a comprehensive, teach-all sort of a guide that we hope not only compels you to take the first steps towards beginning your weight loss journey, but also keeps you driven and motivated to reaching the desired end goal.

To any and all of you fighting to shed the pounds, get started and get going, you'll get there, we promise!