



CSN

The Common Sense Approach to Nutrition

The Common Sense Nutrition Plan is built on evidence-based research with real people over a 10-year period. It is not a diet, but a lifestyle designed to make you feel good inside and out.

BALANCE IS WELLNESS

A healthy body fat percentage and the accompanying body weight range that comes with it (5-8 pounds of fluctuation included) can be achieved through a balanced approach to fitness including, as a cornerstone, a very simple and common sense nutrition plan. A plan that involves well-rounded nutrient consumption (USDA MyPlate) coupled with a solid strategy for putting these foods in at a consistent interval, which works in conjunction with the way our body processes food.

The human body craves nutrients that allow it to run well. We require vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, and fats to work at an optimal level of performance. Each one of the above-mentioned nutrients plays a specific roll in how our human engine runs. ***A well balanced approach to nutrition includes all of the food groups to be successful.*** Avoiding any one nutrient (fat/carbs based on certain trend diets) will limit our body's potential to perform at a high level in some way; this is a law of nature. With this in mind, we are responsible for the amounts and manner in which we choose to consume these nutrient-rich foods.

It takes about 3 hours for the human body to digest food once consumed. At this point in the metabolic cycle, the machine must make a choice: release excess calories or store them. This is a survival instinct that carries over from the days of the caveman, when foods were not as plentiful and readily accessible as they are today. Cavemen would eat large quantities of food after a hunt and store the excess calories as fat to keep themselves alive between meals. Since there were no refrigerators or grocery stores around back then, eating large amounts during infrequent meals and storing the excess was a great way to stay alive. The average person with 20 percent body fat can live for 3 weeks on water alone. This survival mechanism still applies today. However, the need to store energy as fat for survival's sake is no longer paramount to our physiology.

So then how do you turn off this mechanism?

By consuming the **proper quantities of nutrient-rich foods at a consistent 3-hour interval (roughly 6 meals a day)**, you turn off the caveman syndrome which sends the signal that your body will be without nutrients, and therefore need to store excess calories as fat. The key to this approach is the proper amount of nutrient-dense foods, not lots of empty calories every 3 hours, but **healthy choices spread across the day**. Once you have acquired a healthy body fat percentage, the total calories consumed should be relative to the

amount of energy expenditure per day. (I will eat more total calories on days that I am more active.) Using MyPlate in conjunction with your personal goals and exercise strategy will give you the game plan needed for success. From there, your accountability and follow-through will maintain balanced levels of nutrients in the blood stream for optimum performance.

Tips for Success

- **Include protein at every meal.** Protein is the building block of muscle. Every pound of body weight that is muscle burns 35 calories a day sitting in a chair versus every pound of body weight that is fat which burns 2 calories a day
- **Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner in your regular pattern and fit in protein-based snacks** in between to fuel your metabolism and stave off your body's tendency to store fat.
- **Plan ahead.** Make a set of perfect days and then buy and prepare the foods you need so that you can keep them on hand to be successful.
- **Write down what you eat**, especially if this is new information to you. Being honest with yourself on paper about what is going in will help you get better results.
- Have someone else look at what you have written down on your food charts.
- **Use portion control.** Measure your food with your hands or measuring cups and know what the portion size is of the foods you are eating.
- Have some **convenient snack options available** (protein bars with you at all times).
- **Become consistent** with your food choices. In general, 4 of your 6 meals a day should be relatively similar each day.
- If you want to lose body fat, don't include calorie-dense foods after lunch.
- If you are in your ideal body fat range, fuel your machine with calorie-dense food on days that you workout heavily
- Try to **limit yourself to 2 misses** a week. A miss means you skipped a meal, ate more than the suggested serving size, or made a bad choice.