



Eating Well Balanced

How many times have you heard people say they need to lose weight in order to get healthy? The truth is excess **weight is lost naturally with minimal effort when your metabolism is healthy.** So if you are one of those folks exercising more than you ever have and dieting as hard as you can and still not experiencing the weight loss success you desire, perhaps it's time to take a look at your metabolism and ask yourself if it is healthy?

If you are doing all you can to lose the weight and it's still not coming off chances are it's not going to without some specific nutritional tips. So what is a frustrated weight loss seeker to do? **Eat well balanced.**

Eating well balanced goes a long way toward healing your metabolism because it directly impacts hormone production and weight loss. For example, eating a well and balanced meal **keeps you feeling full and feeling satiated.** It also **regulates your blood sugar.**

Why is blood sugar regulation so important? When blood sugar rises, insulin is released into the blood stream to clear the sugar away. Insulin is one of the hormones that can tell your body to store energy as fat if your cells are insensitive to it. In fact, a large majority of carbohydrates will go directly to body fat storage instead of being utilized by the muscles for energy if one is insulin resistant.

When you eat a meal that has the sub-optimal amount or type of carbs, protein, or fat, your blood sugar rapidly rises and then suddenly drops. This leaves you still feeling hungry even though you just ate less than an hour ago, and may cause you to consistently over eat. Below are some tips on how to eat well and balanced for optimal hormonal response and blood sugar control.

One hour after eating a meal, mentally ask yourself these questions?

- Am I full - yet still hungry? If so, what for? Have I developed a sweet craving?
- What's my mood like? Do I feel angry, tired, depressed or happy?
- What's my energy level like? Do I have any? Do I feel sluggish and tired?

If for some reason you do not feel energized, satiated, and happy after a meal it's time to look at what you ate. A well balanced meal consists of 3 macronutrients:

Good Fats/ Healthy Proteins/ Smart Carbohydrates

Good Fat Sources: Avocados, nuts, seeds, grass fed sources of meat and dairy, olive, coconut and fish oil

Protein: Basically anything that has eyes. Organic sources are always best (www.grasslandbeef.com) is an excellent source for purchasing organic grass fed meats and dairy products

Smart
Carbohydrates: Fibrous, green leafy vegetables of any kind, cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower and low sugar fruits and berries (apples and raspberries, blueberries). If you're not sensitive to grains, opt for low sugar alternative grains such as quinoa, spelt, millet, or kamut. These can often be used as adequate rice/pasta substitutes in any of your favorite dishes.

Change one of your daily meals and perfect its nutrient ratios until you find the combination that keeps you full and happy for 2-3 hours.

Ask yourself how many meals you're eating daily. Optimally there should be 5-6 meals throughout the day. Three major meals plus 2-3 snacks in between. All meals and snacks should include all 3 macronutrients. Why? To keep blood sugar steady, ensure you receive lots of nutrients when you eat, and to keep you satiated. Below are some ideas for snacks:

- Celery stalks with almond butter or any other nut butter of your choice
- Hardboiled egg with steamed asparagus drizzled with olive oil and your favorite spices
- Homemade trail mix of nuts and seeds with a piece of fruit.
- Natural no-sugar-added yogur topped with nuts and berries of your choice.
- 1/2 an apple and some organic cheese or some nut butter spread. The organic cheeses can be purchased from the same company as the organic grass fed meats, www.grasslandbeef.com
- Avocado dip on flax seed crackers/alternative grain crackers

Forget about counting calories. If your meals contain lots of nutrients they're often lower in calories and far healthier than most processed foods.

For example: 1 cup of lucky charms with milk vs. 1 cup of steamed broccoli drizzled with extra virgin olive oil, garlic and spices.

Which has more calories? Which has more sugar? As a general rule, if it has more sugar, it's going to have more calories.

Do not worry about the fat content of a meal if the fats are healthy fats.

According to Dr. Mary Enig, Ph.D, who has been a leading fat researcher and biochemist for more than 20 years, certain healthy fats are readily used as energy by the body instead of being stored as fat. Coconut oil is one such healthy fat which can help to heal your metabolism by healing your cells. Healthy cells can then assist every major hormone in the body to function properly.

If your cells are in good shape then insulin and all your other hormones are more likely to be used efficiency and effectively. Aesthetically and internally, you'll also be in good shape - and with minimal effort - when your cells are healthy because true fitness is function of the body's wellness. It's not six pack abs and grilled chicken breast day-in and day-out. Blah!

Drink lots of water. 2/3 your body weight in ounces per day if you are very active, 1/2 your body weight in ounces if you are less active and a minimum of 12 cups per day if you are sedentary. More than half of our bodies are made up of water and as little as a 2% drop in hydration can alter bodily functions.

Read labels. If a label has ingredients listed on it, half of which you cannot pronounce, put that product down and choose something else preferably - something fresh and organic.

Commit to making the changes necessary to eat well and balanced. Seek the support of family and friends. Teach them what you have learned about healthy nutrition, and then ask them to create snacks or suggest meal ideas. This will get them involved in the meal prep process and you may be pleasantly surprised by their interest and creativity.

Use the 'net for recipes. A simple Google search for healthy meal ideas should yield a plethora of sites where nutritious and delicious recipes can be found. One of my personal favorites is www.wholefoodmarket.com

Have fun. Share your new well balanced meals with others at a dinner party.

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I hope you have enjoyed this article and found it most helpful and useful to you. I would also like to offer a special thank you to James Williams of Total Fitness.net for his help in editing this material.