



# Primal Potential Food Guide

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Simple Strategies for  
Fat Loss



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# Introduction

**You can reach your goals.** You can change your body and your life. You can do it without dieting. This guide is not a diet plan or a food list. It is about helping you understand the right types of food for fat loss and avoid common mistakes. But that is only the first step! From there, you need to choose foods you love and practice consistency.

Losing weight and burning fat does not require tremendous willpower or suffering through hunger, cravings and low energy. In fact, the opposite is true! When you follow the recommendations within this guide, you will see fantastic results while requiring less willpower and experiencing less hunger and fewer cravings!

When your food choices meet three essential criteria, you will feel better than you ever have while experiencing fat loss. Your energy will be stable and constant. You will have improved mental focus. You won't experience constant cravings and you will very rarely experience hunger. Your sleep will improve. Your mood will improve. You will get rid of that puffy, bloated look and feel. You will get into what is known as the cycle of accelerated returns.

In the **cycle of accelerated returns** you feel great and you experience fat loss so you feel more motivated to make good choices. The more good choices you make, the more results you see and the better you feel. The increased motivation encourages more great choices. More results. More improvement. It's a fantastic place to be where fat loss and focus feel more effortless than ever. That's the goal. That's what you get with the right approach and consistency. That's what this guide is going to help you achieve.

So what are those criteria for food selection?

- ☐ Choose foods you love
- ☐ Choose foods that are fat loss friendly
- ☐ Structure your meals and meal timing for optimal hormone balance.

This guide will teach you how to do all those things. Then *your* work begins.

It is up to you to do them. It is up to you to take action. You do not need to be perfect but **you can't just accumulate information and wish for transformation.**

Make one change at a time. You know the time is going to fly by anyway so let's use it to make one meaningful change and add more when the first change is a deeply engrained habit.

I totally understand if you're reading this with doubt or uncertainty. I used to think it was impossible for me to lose the weight and live the life of my dreams. I had failed so many times that I started to believe success just wasn't in the cards for me. I started to believe that I was destined to be fat. I wasn't. **You're not either.** This does not have to be hard. It won't always be easy but it's not complicated. **When you identify the right fat loss strategy and consistently implement it, you will see results.**

If you follow the primary strategies outlined in this guide, you will see results. You will unlock new energy, new confidence and a new body. I want to help you be successful because we only have one shot at this life and we all deserve to feel great, look great and be happy.



# How to Use This Guide

**FIRST AND FOREMOST:** read it. No, really. You have to read it. I have downloaded countless cheat sheets, manuals and e-books and never read them. I'm sure you have great intentions but you need to read this all the way through. Make the time. Your results, effort and energy are worth the time it will take to read this. You are just a few good choices (and some consistency) away from a new body and a happier life. Read it.

Once you read it, **pick one strategy that you're going to put into action.** Each morning, remind yourself of your one choice. Find a way to hold yourself accountable. Practice your one change each day. Just like learning a new skill, it only gets easier when you practice. You can't just wish for it, you have to work for it.

Go through the food lists and identify your favorite foods. **Don't prepare foods you don't like.** There are more than enough options to allow you to eat foods you love.

If you need more accountability, get it. Recruit a friend,

tell them the change you're adopting and tell them how they can hold you accountable. Join one of the Primal Potential e-courses for the accountability of me and the other members. Commit to measuring your accountability on your own if you have the self-discipline to hold yourself accountable. One way or another, be accountable to this process.

**No matter what, you have to take action.**

**Fat loss requires two things:**

1. **That you consume less energy than your body needs**
2. **Hormone balance**

You might be thinking, "How will I know if I'm consuming less than my body needs if I don't count calories?" I have a better question. "How would you know that you're consuming less than your body needs even if you count calories?"



# Please, Stop Counting Calories.

**No, seriously.** Our understanding of calories is so flawed it blows my mind. A calorie is a unit of measurement just like inches, miles and degrees are units of measurement. While inches and miles measure distance, calories measure the energy potential within a food. The calorie content of food is determined by burning it in a closed chamber (essentially a little glass box) and measuring how much heat the item generates.

Here's the fundamental problem with calorie counting: the human body is not a glass box (shocking, I know). You are not a closed chamber. You breathe. You move. There are a million other inputs and outputs that influence fuel usage. Fuel type matters significantly. You have to *use* these calories. You don't just burn fuel. You metabolize, digest, and absorb--just to name a few. Looking at food purely based on how it reacts in a closed system is highly misleading for that very simple fact – you are not a closed system. The body uses different fuel sources in different ways and therefore 700 calories of soda creates a vastly different response in the body than 700 calories of broccoli.

Calorie counting assumes that all calories act the same way in the body. They do not. Not even close. Foods, and the calories they contain, do way more than just release energy. They influence satiety, metabolic rate, brain activity, blood sugar and the hormones that store or burn fat in very different ways.

Different types of foods have entirely different metabolic pathways in your body. Metabolism is not held constant. It varies greatly based on the type of fuel in the same way that your car will not process diesel fuel the same way it would gasoline or ethanol. Different fuel types generate vastly different responses. This matters tremendously in pursuit of fat loss because some foods are not readily used to fuel the body. If your body can't use the food efficiently for fuel, more is leftover to be stored. When you choose efficient fuel sources by following the recommendations outlined in this guide, you are giving your body fuel it can use. That means that more of what you consume can be used to fuel the body and less will be leftover to be stored as excess. That's pretty important!

Let's look at an example here. This powerful example was originally described by Dr. Mark Hyman. He compares 750

calories from soda to 750 calories from broccoli though you could easily do a similar comparison between 750 calories from almonds and 750 calories from ice cream.

I love the broccoli/soda comparison because both are carbohydrates. **The same number of calories from the same macronutrient (carbohydrate) creates a vastly different response in the body.** One creates hormone balance, triggers satiety (feelings of fullness), balances blood sugar, allows fat burning and delivers fuel throughout the body. The other creates hormonal chaos, decreases energy, increases cravings & hunger while not triggering satiety, prohibits fat burning and even leads to fat storage. Same number of calories. Same macronutrient. Massively different response within the body.

Seven hundred and fifty calories of soda is the equivalent of one 7-Eleven Big Gulp or just over three 20oz bottles. It contains 46 teaspoons of sugar.

This sugar hits your blood stream and your blood sugar rises like a rocket ship. Some of that sugar will be used to meet your immediate energy needs while you sit at your desk or drive in your car. The hormone insulin is released to help usher the excess sugar from your blood and carry it away to be stored. Here's the thing though: the presence of the hormone insulin tells the body, "Hey! We're in storage mode. We've got a fuel excess so definitely don't allow fat burning. We've got an abundance of fuel in the pipeline (sugar in the blood) so we don't need to create more energy." Your body is highly efficient. **Burning body fat is only allowed when energy is needed by the body in excess of what you have delivered to it via food.** If insulin is elevated, the body knows that means there is a fuel excess because insulin is a storage hormone. **Elevated insulin prevents fat burning.**

That soda just turned off your ability to burn fat for now. But wait! There's more!

- The sugar triggers the pleasure center within your brain. This turns on sugar cravings, making you want more.
- While you might experience a brief energy surge as the sugar hits your blood stream, it will inevitably crash and so will you. The rapid rise and drop in blood sugar leaves you with low energy and increased hunger and cravings. Your body doesn't quite know what happened and it



sounds the alarms of hunger and carb cravings in an attempt to raise your blood sugar again after the crash.

- This soda contains a good bit of high fructose corn syrup. The fructose, a form of sugar, can *only* be metabolized by the liver. It cannot be used to fuel any other cell in the body. One of the many downsides of fructose is that it is the single most lipogenic carbohydrate. If we break down that word, lipogenic, we can quickly see why this is a problem. 'Lipo' refers to fat. 'Genic' refers to genesis or to create new. **Therefore, fructose is more likely to be turned into and stored as fat than any other carbohydrate.** Calories from another carbohydrate, even the same exact number of calories, don't have that same propensity to be turned to fat that we see with fructose and high fructose corn syrup.
- Fructose also does not have the ability to trigger your satiety mechanisms. **Therefore, you can drink all the soda and not feel full.** The same number of calories from another fuel source would have an entirely different impact on satiety.



Now let's take a look at what happens when you consume 750 calories from broccoli. Broccoli is a carbohydrate (yep, fruits and vegetables are carbohydrates) and if you are just counting calories, the broccoli and the soda are equal. They are not. Not even close.

Compared to soda, broccoli is high in water, high in fiber and low in sugar. For these reasons, it is much more slowly digested and won't lead to blood sugar and insulin spikes we see with soda and many other carbohydrates. This matters because we want stable blood sugar to control hunger, energy and cravings and we want low insulin because that is a hormonal requirement for fat burning. **Simply put: soda turns off fat burning. Broccoli does not.**

Those 750 calories of broccoli make up 21 cups and contain 67 grams of fiber. Can we just pause here for a second and imagine eating 21 cups of broccoli? That would take forever. But 3 20oz bottles of soda? No big deal. The sugar in 21 cups of broccoli is the equivalent of only 1.5 teaspoons; the rest of the carbohydrates are the low-glycemic type found in all non-starchy vegetables, which are very slowly absorbed. The

slow absorption is the reason for broccoli's minimal impact on blood sugar and therefore insulin.

While the soda turns off fat burning and triggers cravings without triggering satiety, the broccoli generates a very different response.

- There is no fructose so you won't tax the liver and set yourself up for storing fat
- The high fiber content will trigger satiety very quickly while also quenching hunger (realize there is a difference between resolving hunger and feeling satisfied).
- It stabilizes blood sugar and does not trigger an insulin response so you can get in (and stay in) fat burning mode much more easily.

Clearly, this demonstrates that all calories are not created equal, even when they are within the same macronutrient group. Counting calories just doesn't work. For a more in depth look at the different metabolic and hormonal



responses generated by the broccoli and the soda, please listen to [episode 062](#) of the Primal Potential podcast.

So how do you know if you're consuming less than your body needs? If calorie counting isn't the answer, how can you meet that first requirement for fat loss of consuming less fuel than your body needs to operate?

The answer is simple: **listen to your body and monitor your results.** We'll talk about this in more detail but regularly looking in the mirror is going to give you a great sense of whether you're over fueling your body or not.



# The Role of Hormones

**BEFORE WE DIVE INTO THE** specifics of what to eat and when, let's address the second requirement for fat loss: hormone balance. We are going to establish what hormones have to do with fat loss and how you can possibly know if you're creating that hormonal environment (without lab tests and doctor visits).

It is your hormones that turn fat burning on and off. Your hormones are in constant communication with your body and they send explicit instructions based on the conditions within your body. There are two wonderful things about this:

- 1. You can significantly impact your hormones via the food you eat**
- 2. You can interpret the signals your hormones are sending via obvious biofeedback signals such as hunger, cravings, energy, mood and quality of sleep.**

We already talked a little bit about the hormone insulin. Insulin is often known as the master fat loss hormone even though it actually doesn't trigger fat loss. It kinda does the opposite. Insulin is a storage hormone. It responds to fuel excess and ushers the excess fuel throughout the body for healing, repair, growth, recovery, and storage.

Just like you can't throw a ball up and down at the same time, your body doesn't allow fuel storage/delivery and fuel breakdown at the same time.

**Your body breaks down stored body fat when it needs energy and there isn't any readily available.** So, if you're always eating, if you're always consuming more fuel than your body needs for operations, fat burning just isn't possible. That's why you have probably heard "You can't out-exercise a bad diet". If you are eating too much and if you are constantly elevating your blood sugar and triggering an insulin response, your body just won't allow fat burning.

When insulin is low and the body needs fuel, the hormone glucagon is released. Glucagon is insulin's alter-ego. Insulin governs fuel storage and glucagon governs fuel release. Glucagon allows fat to be released from your body fat storage so it can be burned to provide energy for your body. But glucagon and insulin are like a see-saw. If insulin is high, glucagon must be low. Glucagon cannot operate in the presence of high insulin. So if glucagon is high and you are actively burning fat but then elevate your blood sugar requiring a release of insulin, which pushes glucagon down, fat burning is over. It can't happen anymore. You've switched over into storage mode.

This is exactly why managing blood sugar and insulin is the key to fat loss.

The four strategies outlined in this manual ensure that you control these two hormones. Your fat loss results and your hormonal biofeedback will let you know how successfully you're managing these hormones.



# Am I Doing It Right?

**Your sweet spot is the place where your energy is balanced, you have little hunger and few cravings, you're sleeping well and you're burning fat.** You know you're burning fat based on decrease in your waist and hip circumference, not a decrease in your scale weight. I do not recommend monitoring fat loss by checking your weight. Weight loss and fat loss are not the same thing. There are three things you should do to establish your starting point so you can easily monitor progress. Don't make a mental note to do them later. Do them now. Take action. Waiting until later decreases the chances that you'll get them done.

- 1. Take a full-body picture in your underwear.** Just do it. It's not for the world to see but it is a very objective way to monitor your fat loss. When you've made great progress you'll be so glad you documented your starting point. Trust me.
- 2. Take your waist and hip circumference measurements.** Get a fabric tape measure (they're \$0.99 or so at major craft stores) and measure your

waist (at the narrowest point) and your hips (at the widest point). You can certainly take additional measurements of your bust, your arms and legs but waist and hip are critical.

- 3. Find or buy a pair of "goal pants".** Goal pants are pants that you can get over your hips but can't button or can't button comfortably. Try them on and take a picture.

Every week repeat items 1 and 3. Every two weeks re-take your waist and hip circumference measurements.

Do not skip this. Most of you will. Those who want success and are ready for transformation will not. Did you do it yet? Information is completely useless without action so I'm really believing in you that you will not continue reading until you've taken your picture, taken your measurements and found your goal pants. What you measure improves. **If you don't measure, you'll never objectively know if what you're doing is working.**





# The Four Strategies

**NOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND** why calorie counting is not the answer and why hormone balance is a critical part of the equation, let's dive in to the strategies. As I will continue to reiterate, this is not a diet. Diets are short-term strategies and short-term strategies deliver short-term results. I don't know about you, but the only results I want to work for are results I can maintain. Treating it like a diet looks like this: highlighting the rules and waking up tomorrow determined to white-knuckle your way towards perfect compliance. You might have a few good days but ultimately, you aren't establishing new habits so when life gets rocky (and it always happens), you'll revert right back to your habits and reverse any progress you've achieved.

I don't want that for you. Instead, approach this as information to help you permanently improve your habits. While I want you to understand and absorb this information, I only want you to take action on one strategy at a time. This will ensure that you can practice it, tweak it to fit your lifestyle and your preferences and really establish it as a new habit in your life.

Please, speaking from the experience of thousands of failed diets, resist the all or nothing approach. Chances are you've tried that before and it hasn't been so

successful. All or nothing leaves you with nothing but frustration.

Think about it in terms of learning a new skill like playing the piano. Would you wake up on day 1 completely determined to play Bach? Uh, no. Not unless you were looking to make yourself feel completely useless. You'd wake up determined to practice the basics. You wouldn't move on until you felt really good about the basics.

This guide is a compilation of basic strategies. Adopt one at a time, practice it until it becomes effortless. Then, and only then, move on and add more.

Ready for the strategies?! Here we go.

1. **Follow the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss**
2. **Emphasize fat & fiber**
3. **Don't overdo protein**
4. **Avoid overfeeding**



# The Golden Rules of Carbs & Fat Loss

**I'M KIND OF CHEATING HERE** by lumping all the Golden Rules into one strategy but they are mission critical for fat loss. Please remember that the goal here is not to implement all of these at once. Pick one and work to establish it as a habit. Habits are things we do with ease no matter what gets in the way, like brushing your teeth or taking a shower. Even when you're stressed, tired or traveling, you execute your habits. We can't build a dozen habits at once so pick one and practice until it feels effortless. Then, and only then, add more. Let's overview each of them and then I'll go into more detail.

1. **Eat carbohydrates at the right time**
2. **Eat the right quality of carbohydrate**
3. **Eat the right quantity of carbohydrate**
4. **Eat carbohydrates in the right company**

## The Right Time

Have you ever had a bowl of cereal for breakfast and felt hungry less than an hour later? Or chowed down on a big bagel but it didn't hold you over for long? When fat loss is the goal and you start the day with carbohydrates (think: granola and fruit, bagel, cereal, pancakes) you set yourself up to prevent fat burning and trigger extreme hunger, constant cravings and low energy. This is true because of the unique hormonal environment in the body after an overnight fast and upon waking.

**The morning is the absolute worst time to consume carbs when your goal is fat loss.** Let me explain why.

After an overnight fast, your blood sugar and insulin levels will be low when you wake up. This makes morning the time of day when you will have the most exaggerated response to consuming carbohydrates. I like to explain it using this analogy:

Imagine you were in a totally dark room for 12+ hours and then someone comes in and turns on a floodlight. Your eyes would have an extreme response, right? Now imagine you've been outside in the sun all day and someone comes out and turns on a floodlight. Very minor response, if any, right?

Introducing carbs in the morning is like turning on the flood light after being in the dark room for hours and hours. Your body has been fasting while you sleep. Your fuel supply is low. You will have an exaggerated blood sugar and insulin response in the morning. Why does that impair fat burning? Remember that you cannot burn fat when insulin is high. Insulin is a storage hormone. A fuel delivery hormone. The presence of insulin tells the body, "Hey! We've got fuel! We're in storage mode now!" and that message prevents the breakdown of body fat for energy. Your body doesn't need that extra fuel when your blood sugar and insulin are elevated.

The exaggerated morning response means a larger surge of blood sugar and therefore a more significant insulin response. The result: more time out of fat burning mode.

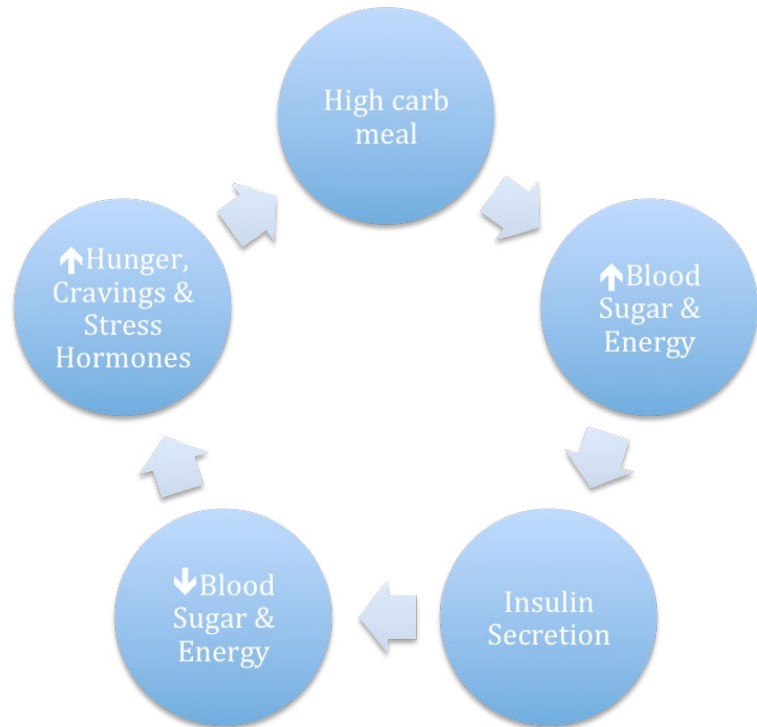
On the flip side, when you don't send your blood sugar soaring in the morning and you don't require a large insulin deployment, you are in prime fat burning mode! That's the environment you want to create by avoiding carbs in the morning.

Introducing carbs in the morning puts you in what I call the carbohydrate cycle. This happens with high carb meals like pancakes, cereal, granola & fruit, etc.

- You raise blood sugar and insulin
- You feel a slight surge of energy
- Insulin clears the sugar from the blood and blood sugar drops off



- Your energy crashes
- Sensing low blood sugar, your brain triggers hunger and cravings for carbohydrates
- Feeling artificially hungry and battling carb cravings, you eat more carbs
- The cycle repeats itself and you are now giving your body far more fuel that it needs because of these false hunger signals caused by mismanagement of blood sugar and insulin



This carb cycle is why so many of you go searching for mid-morning sugary snacks like granola bars, soda or candy bars. You're trapped in the carb cycle that you entered into with your high carb breakfast!

Now I know what you're probably thinking. I bet you have a couple questions:

1. If this is true, wouldn't it be best to never eat carbohydrates? Not exactly. Hang tight, I'll explain.
2. How come I know lots of lean people who eat oatmeal or pancakes for breakfast? I did an entire episode on carbohydrate tolerance where I answer that question and talk about how you can improve your carbohydrate tolerance. But remember – there is a major difference between eating for fat loss and eating to maintain lean mass. Super different hormonal requirements. So listen to this episode. I also give a brief answer in the FAQ section of this guide.

Now let's address #1. Remember the example of turning on the flood light after being outside all day? Very mild reaction, right? That is pretty similar to your response to carbohydrates later in the day after your body has been responding to fat, protein and veggies in your meals and snacks. As the day goes on, as you eat throughout the morning and afternoon, as your hormones shift with the normal daily cycles, you become less sensitive to those spikes in blood sugar and insulin.

There is another morning hormonal situation that creates a really strong argument for skipping the carbs at breakfast. Cortisol levels are at their peak in the morning. Cortisol, a stress hormone, rises throughout

the night and reaches it's peak in the morning. This is part of your body's natural sleep/wake cycle. The rise of cortisol overnight helps you naturally wake up in the morning. The mere presence of elevated cortisol in the morning *can* help facilitate fat loss. However, if you elevate your insulin levels, game over. **Cortisol compounds the fat-storing effects of insulin. Not only that, in combination, they can actually trigger the generation of brand new fat cells. No thanks! This is why you want to pass on the carbs in the AM!**

Fortunately, cortisol levels drop throughout the day. They are lowest in the evening. Again, this is part of your body's natural sleep/wake cycle. Lower cortisol in the evening helps you to fall asleep and stay asleep until it is time to wake up.

By limiting your carbohydrate consumption to the evening, you'll avoid these less-than-desirable effects of a high-insulin + high-cortisol environment.

This discussion begs the next question: "What should we eat in the morning when the goal is fat loss?"

I'm so glad you asked! We're getting there. For now, understand that you want to limit your carbs to your evening meal or post workout. When you make this simple switch, this is what you can expect to experience:

- Fat loss (of course, right?)



- ☐ Increased energy
- ☐ Improved mood
- ☐ Improved mental focus, attention and memory
- ☐ Significantly fewer and less intense cravings
- ☐ Less hunger
- ☐ Improvements in menopausal symptoms including hot flashes, mood swings and night sweats

### The Right Quality

Alright so let's move on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Golden Rule of carbs & fat loss – eat the right **quality** of carbohydrates. This goes back to the example I gave when talking about why counting calories is misleading. Different types of carbohydrates create vastly different metabolic and hormonal responses. Some carbohydrates turn off fat burning and trigger fat storage while others have a far more mild impact. When fat burning is the goal, you want to make sure you're managing your blood sugar and insulin even when you consume carbohydrates. Part of that is backloading your carb consumption to the end of the day but the other part is making sure you choose quality carbohydrates that are the most fat loss friendly. Fat loss friendly carbohydrates are those that:

- ☐ Are less processed
- ☐ Have a mild impact on blood sugar & insulin

We can keep it really simple with the following guideline: **choose unprocessed carbohydrates as often as possible.** You want to avoid the carbs that will send your blood sugar through the roof. You want to avoid the highly processed, chemical-laden kinds of foods you get in boxes and bags. I'm talking chips, cookies, cakes, etc. If it is made in a factory, it is not the best carb for fat loss. It doesn't mean you can never enjoy an Oreo, it just means that for optimal fat loss, you'll want to choose less processed carbs most of the time.

The more processed carbs are generally higher in sugar and starch and will have a more significant impact on blood sugar and insulin than whole food carbohydrates. **Remember, the more you spike your insulin, the longer you stay out of fat-burning mode and the more likely you are to experience chronic hunger and carbohydrate cravings.**

The carbs you want to emphasize are going to be those that are as close to their natural state as possible. Ideally, you want to focus on fruit (especially berries, apples or citrus fruit) and starchy vegetables. Starchy vegetables are things like potato, sweet potato, squash and plantain.

### The Right Quantity

Ready to move on to Golden Rule #3? Eat the right quantity of carbohydrate  
Start by limiting your serving size to 1/2 cup and adjust up or down from there based on your fat loss results. That means 1/2 cup of sweet potato or 1/2 cup of berries – one carb choice limited to roughly 1/2 cup. If you're cruising along and burning lots of fat, seeing rapid results, you can add a little more and monitor your results. On the flip side, if you aren't getting the results you want, you can try scaling back to 1/4 cup and see how that goes. For me personally, I try to stay around 1/4 cup with my evening meal or post-workout (depending on the length and intensity of my workout) and that's where I get the best results. My clients experience the same thing.

### The Right Company

Golden Rule #4 is about eating carbohydrates in the right company. This isn't about eating with nice people versus eating with jerks, though that's a pretty decent rule to abide by for life, no? Pair carbohydrates with protein or fat. For optimal fat loss, **never eat your carbs alone.** Why is this important? Because eating your carbs with either fat or protein will slow down the digestive process since fat and protein are more cumbersome to digest than carbohydrates. **By slowing down the digestive process you slow the release of sugar into the blood stream.** What does that do? It requires less of an insulin response. This is one of the important ways we can enjoy carbs and still stay in fat burning mode!

Before you dive into the 2<sup>nd</sup> strategy for fat loss (yup, the above 4 were rolled into 1! I'm sneaky like that!) I want to remind you that the goal is not to incorporate all 4 Golden Rules at once. You want to build habits, not go on a diet. Pick one. Master it. Practice it until it feels effortless. Then, and only then, move on.



# Emphasize Fat & Fiber

**ONCE PEOPLE UNDERSTAND** the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss they often make a critical mistake: they overemphasize protein and underemphasize fat and fiber.

Dietary fat is absolutely essential for health, hormone balance, fat loss and satiety. Unfortunately, because the macronutrient goes by the same name as the fat packed on our bodies, it tends to have an unnecessarily negative connotation.

You might think of fat as a “high calorie food” and therefore avoid it. Yes, fat contains more calories per than protein and carb but with the right perspective, you’ll understand that that is actually a good thing! A gram of fat has 9 calories whereas a gram of protein or carbohydrate has only 4. Remember that calories are how we measure the energy potential in food. This means that dietary fat delivers twice as much energy to our bodies than protein or carbohydrate! That’s a GOOD thing! **That means that we can fuel our body for longer on less than we can if we just stuck to protein or carbs.** Practically speaking, what does this mean? It means your body detects good, long lasting fuel and therefore doesn’t deploy signals that trigger hunger and cravings as quickly when you eat fat compared to when you eat protein or carbohydrate. So eating fat makes you feel full, it sustains your energy and keeps hunger and cravings at bay! It gets even better than that!

Research has shown that when you eat a low fat diet you actually increase the activity of certain enzymes that encourage your body to store more fat. On the flip side, eating enough dietary fat has been shown to increase the activity of enzymes that help you burn stored body fat! How’s that for a twist on what you’ve been taught?

You need fat in your diet if you want to be healthy. Do you realize that your brain is about 60% fat? In addition to being an incredible fuel source and critical component of cognitive health, fats are components of every single cell in your body, they are required for the manufacture of hormones and they are essential for the utilization of many vitamins and antioxidants. If that’s not enough, you need fat for the proper growth and calcification of your bones, they keep your skin soft and supple, they support your immune system and help control your body’s inflammatory response.

With that said, there’s no doubt that there are in fact good fats and bad fats. The bad fats, however, are not saturated fats from animal products. The bad fats are

these toxic, plastic fats (trans fats) made in factories. They are chemically altered, foreign to our bodies and wreak havoc inside you. They have been linked to just about every disease you can think of. The FDA has recently decreed that trans fats need to be eliminated from foods in the United States within the next few years.

Choosing the right fats is paramount, as your body will incorporate these fats into all the cells in your body. Avoid processed, man-made fats such as margarine, canola oil, corn oil, vegetable oil, soybean oil and shortenings as well as factory-made fats found in processed foods. Look for whole, natural, unprocessed fats including coconut oil, ghee (clarified butter), extra virgin olive oil, sesame oil, macadamia nut oil, avocado and eggs.

Fat is not the enemy and it will certainly not keep you fat – in fact – fats may be the missing link that’s keeping you from weight loss success. Fuel your body the way nature intended and start incorporating healthy fats into at least two meals each day!

Fiber is the other essential component you’ll want to incorporate into your meals and snacks. **When I say “fiber” you should not think “whole grains”.** That is not the kind of fiber I am talking about. I am talking about **fiber from non-starchy vegetables.** Work to incorporate these non-starchy vegetables into as many of your meals and snacks as possible. The great thing about fiber from non-starchy vegetables is the way, during digestion, it temporarily expands your stomach. This suppresses the hormone ghrelin. Ghrelin is responsible for the sensation of hunger. I think you’ll agree with me that it very challenging to make good food choices when you’re extremely hungry!

**One of the most significant ways you can address hunger is by increasing the amount of non-starchy vegetables you consume.** I will often have 3-4 cups of non-starchy vegetables with 2 of my 3 daily meals. It satisfies my hunger for hours. My clients experience the same thing. Following the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss does great things for reducing hunger and you make further improvements by emphasizing fiber via non-starchy vegetables.

My favorite non-starchy vegetables include Brussels sprouts, cauliflower and cabbage. If you find that your meals aren’t satisfying you for more than an hour or two, look to add fiber.



# Don't Overdo Protein

**LIKE FAT, PROTEIN IS ESSENTIAL FOR** the growth, maintenance and repair of your body. Unfortunately, when people transition to a whole foods lifestyle, they often dramatically over consume protein. Remember that one of the essential requirements for fat loss is consuming less total fuel than your body needs for operations. Over consuming any food will inhibit fat loss. Just because it is “healthy” doesn’t mean you have carte blanche when it comes to serving sizes. You don’t.

Here’s what many people don’t initially realize: over consuming protein will increase your blood sugar and cause an insulin response, turning off your fat burning potential. What?! How?! You thought blood sugar rose due to carbs, right? Well, it does. And an excess of protein. Here’s why:

Excess protein can be stored as body fat. **Excess protein can be broken down and converted to glucose, yielding a similar type of metabolic response we see with carbohydrates: fat storage, insulin and blood sugar increases, hunger and cravings.** Excess protein consumption was the primary reason for my very extended weight loss plateau. I was overeating chicken, fish and protein shakes. When I cut back on protein and increased my fat and fiber intake, I immediately got back to fat burning mode.

Consuming too much protein can also lead to dehydration because the process of protein metabolism requires more water than carbohydrate or fat metabolism.

Finally, if you’re consuming excessive amounts of protein, you’re probably doing so at the expense of other important nutrients like dietary fat. You always want to work towards balance. An excess of any one macronutrient can create problems for your health and your weight loss efforts.

So how can you ensure that you aren’t eating too much protein while also making sure that you’re getting enough? Be sure to include a serving of protein with each meal. Eggs are a great combination of fat and protein for breakfast. Chicken, fish and beef are fantastic protein sources for the rest of the day. Don’t worry that consuming protein at each meal will lead to “excessive intake” – it won’t – **so long as you keep your portions to about the size of the palm of your hand.** There’s no need to double or triple up on your protein servings. If you’re still hungry go for more non-starchy vegetables or increase your fat intake.



# Avoid Overfeeding

**IMAGINE YOU FILL YOUR CAR** up with gas and start out on a road trip. A couple miles down the road you pass a gas station and think, "Oh! Gas. Gas is good. I need to stop and get some!" You stop. Your car doesn't need gas but you don't think about that. You put the nozzle in the car and start pumping. The extra gas spills out around your feet. You get back in the car and continue down the road a few more miles. "Oh! Another gas station. My car likes gas. I'm gonna get some." You keep stopping for fuel without ever considering whether or not your car needs it. It doesn't. The excess is wasted.

Honestly, as crazy as that analogy is, that is how many of us approach food. You have breakfast and then get into work and see that someone has brought donuts. You like donuts! You eat said donut. Does your body need fuel? Uh, no. You start working. You get bored. You walk to the break room and get a soda. You like soda. Does your body need fuel? NO! That excess doesn't just hang around for good measure. It gets STORED. Very likely as body fat! Not good! This is overfeeding. How do you know if you are overfed?

Step 1: Take off all your clothes

Step 2: Look in the mirror

Step 3: See with your eyes whether or not you're overfed

There are only 2 states your body can be in and it can't be in both at the same time.

1. Anabolic (fed)
2. Catabolic (fasted)

Another way to think about this is by considering what your body is doing: It is either using, processing and storing energy you've consumed via food or it is tapping into your fuel reserves and using those to fuel your bodily functions and activity. It's not doing both. It can't do both. You control which state you're in via how much you eat and how often you eat.

You cannot be burning fat/losing weight when you're in that anabolic, fed state. Your body is breaking down the food you've eaten and using that as a fuel source or taking the extra and storing it. The length of that process depends on what and how much you ate. A large, complex meal could take several hours to process, metabolize and store. Yet you keep eating! You get a twinge of hunger a few hours after a big meal so you get a snack, even though your body is still in the fed state. Do you ever allow your body to get into a state where it isn't actively processing what you just ate except when you're sleeping?



Maybe you are like most people and tend to get into this mindset of having to eat every few hours or else... you'll die. You'll be hungry – or worse – hangry – or you'll lose muscle or go into starvation mode or whatever. And really, that's not true. Think about your evolution. Think about how you were designed. Did your Paleolithic ancestors snack every few hours? Uh, no. Was there an obesity epidemic? No. Heck, even a few hundred years ago. Did they eat every few hours? No. Was there an obesity epidemic? No. You are not going to starve.

And think about **who** perpetuates this message that you need to eat every 2 hours: often it's people selling diet programs where they want you to drink shakes all the time. Or take pills. Or food companies selling cereal and breakfast bars and protein bars. This is a relatively new concept to humanity (thank you, food industry) and look what happens – we eat more frequently than ever and as a society, we're fatter and sicker than ever.

Don't believe me? Look at it from a common sense perspective. The constant snacking, eating, grazing – is it working? Look in the mirror. Is it working? You might be thinking, "Well, it works for my trainer or it works for that super lean fitness model on the cover of the magazine. She says she eats 6 meals a day." She isn't trying to burn fat, is she? **Remember that there is a difference in the strategy required for weight loss versus maintenance.** Beyond that, what is her activity level compared to yours? Most importantly – stop comparing! Just honestly evaluate if your current strategy is working for you.

You need not panic in the face of hunger. I hear all the time from clients, "I know the candy bar wasn't a good choice but I was starving and there was nothing else." Ok, you aren't starving. You won't starve. You probably have no idea but it means to even approach starvation. Honestly, you probably don't even need fuel.

Don't be so quick to point to low blood sugar or hypoglycemia. That is rarely a problem for non-diabetics. It is really only a problem for about 5% of the population because your body is designed to regulate blood sugar for you. In fact, fasting blood sugar (between 70-120 mg/dL) is representative of about 1 teaspoon of sugar. Just one tiny teaspoon dispersed throughout your entire volume of blood. That means you don't need a candy bar, a bag of trail mix or even a full piece of fruit to address what you might fear is low blood sugar. It is a learned appetite in 99% of the cases. The hunger you think you feel is behavioral, habitual or psychological and often based on smell, sight, pattern or boredom.

The reality is this: most of us are over fed. We are eating too much and eating too frequently and we are misunderstanding our hunger signals. Most of us genuinely have no idea what true hunger feels like. That's not to say you don't feel that pang in your belly. But think about it – it's 2 hours after you ate a full meal and you've been sitting at your desk. Do you think your body really needs more fuel? Probably not. You've just conditioned yourself to expect it. You like it. It feels good. That's real. But if fat loss is your goal, you need to avoid overfeeding.





# Meal Structure

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW** and understand the four strategies for fat loss, what do you eat? You understand the guidelines but how do you put them into practice?

Let's first establish a basic structure for meals and snacks and then I'll give meal ideas and some food lists and answer the most common questions.

## Breakfast

- Fat
- Fat & Protein
- Fat, protein & fiber

## Lunch

- Fat, protein & fiber

## Dinner

- Fat, protein, fiber & carbohydrate

## Snacks

- Fat
- Protein
- Fiber
- Any combination of the above



# Fat Loss Meal Ideas

## Breakfast

- Bulletproof coffee or tea
- Bacon & eggs
- Omelets with meat and/or veggies
- Frittatas
- Baked egg in avocado
- Meat muffins
- Chia seed pudding
- Smoked salmon
- Salmon & veggie stirfry

## Lunch

- Chicken/tuna/salmon salad
- Cobb salad with chicken or fish
- Deviled eggs
- Burger without the bun
- Dinner leftovers minus the carbs

## Dinner

- Bunless burger and sweet potato fries
- Steak, salad & fruit
- Grilled salmon, Brussels sprouts and baked potato
- Spaghetti squash with meatballs and tomato sauce
- Salmon cakes with broccoli and rice
- Meatloaf and mashed cauliflower
- Chipotle chicken and cauliflower rice
- Chicken liver mousse with apple slices

## Snacks

- Almonds
- Macadamia nuts
- Cheese
- Deviled eggs
- Beef jerky (watch for added sugars!)
- Protein bars (see preferred brands in resources section. Many are glorified candy bars)
- Raw veggies with chicken liver mousse or pate



# Food List

**THESE ARE NOT EXHAUSTIVE LISTS** – they are meant to generate ideas. This would be 20 million pages if I listed every single option so please, no panicking when dill isn't listed. This is not meant to be a completely comprehensive list of the only “allowed” options. Remember that perfection is not the goal. We are seeking progress.

## Fat Food List

- Avocado/avocado oil
- Chia seeds
- Coconut oil
- Coconut cream
- Egg yolks
- Macadamia nuts/macadamia nut oil
- Almonds
- MCT oil
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Grass fed butter
- Ghee
- Full fat dairy products (unsweetened only)
- Fatty cuts of meat/fish

## Protein Food List

- Beef
- Bison
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Lamb
- Pork
- Turkey
- Wild game meats
- Fish
- Shellfish



## Fiber Food List

- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccoli
- Artichokes

Though not as high in fiber, liberally consume other non starchy vegetables including but not limited to:

- Asparagus
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Greens
- Hearts of palm
- Jicama
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Peppers
- Radishes
- Sprouts
- Swiss chard
- Tomato

## Carbohydrate Food List

- Fruit
- Starchy vegetables
  - o Potato
  - o Sweet potato
  - o Squash (all varieties)
  - o Beets
  - o Plantain
  - o Corn
- Beans & legumes
- Rice
- Quinoa
- Oats
- Rye
- Barley

## Foods Exceptionally Fat Loss Unfriendly

These items should be treated as occasional indulgences and shouldn't be a part of your daily intake. Now, remember that you're shooting for progress, but keep these items in the back of your mind as particularly unfriendly for fat loss. It doesn't mean you can never enjoy them, but gradually work to decrease your consumption.

- Processed foods
- Soy
- Dried fruit
- Sugar-sweetened beverages
- Wheat & grains



# Suggestions for Getting Started

**NOW THAT YOU UNDERSTAND** how fat loss works and the right breakdown for your meals and snacks, it is time to get started. I've mentioned that I don't want you to treat this like a diet and strive to "get everything right" immediately out of the gate. Instead, I want you to embrace moderation and practice these strategies gradually and consistently until you feel like you've established them as habits. Here are a few suggestions for how to get started. Remember that information is useless without action so review the options for getting started and find one that works best for you!

## 1. Begin with a fat loss breakfast

Where the day starts it stays. I recommend to my clients that they start by mastering the fat loss breakfast. Having a fat loss breakfast not only delivers results but it increases energy and decreases cravings. One strategy you might decide to implement is to only focus on tackling breakfast. No matter what the rest of the day brings, you'll have your fat loss breakfast. Continue this for as long as it takes for you to feel like you've really got it down to a science and it feels effortless. Then and only then should you tackle the next meal.

## 2. Reduce processed foods by hour of the day

Individuals who are transitioning away from the Standard American diet rich in processed foods might really benefit from a gradual transition to whole foods. One approach I recommend to my clients is tackling it based on hours of the day. For example, starting out you might commit to not having any processed foods before 10am. Keep that commitment to yourself no matter what is going on. You don't have to be perfect, but whatever processed item you want, it has to wait until after 10am. Practice that for several weeks.

When it feels effortless, bump it back by an hour. Now practice not having any processed foods before 11am. Continue that process until you get comfortable with your whole foods approach. Be patient with yourself and remember that the more you practice, the easier it gets.

## 3. Carbs at night

A more significant strategy for those who feel ready to take on a higher degree of change would be to dive right into to limiting carbs to the evening time. Don't stress about perfection in your meals or food choices but commit to limiting all your carbs (except non-starchy vegetables) to your evening meal. This includes fruit, juices, soda, sugar, processed foods, wheat, grains, rice, oats, etc. Remind yourself that they aren't off limits but you're going to backload them into the end of the day.

## 4. Limit indulgences

Have a major sweet tooth or consider yourself prone to bingeing? Identify your most meaningful indulgences and limit them to a frequency that is a gradual improvement. For example, if you are routinely drinking soda and indulging in sweets, start by limiting yourself to one indulgence per day. Don't tell yourself that soda is off limits, but rather commit to choosing only one indulgence and then enjoying it mindfully. If you're currently indulging less often, maybe you can work towards limiting your indulgences to 3 items per week. This is an exercise in moderation and making sure that you aren't mindlessly indulging just because something is there.



# Frequently Asked Questions

□ **If vegetables are carbohydrates, can I only eat them at night?**

Non-starchy vegetables have very high water and fiber content and therefore very minimal impact on blood sugar and insulin. These non-starchy vegetables can and should be enjoyed liberally throughout the day. For the purposes of the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss the only vegetables that need to be limited to the evening time are starchy vegetables.

□ **If eating carbs in the morning turns off fat burning, why does my very lean personal trainer stay lean despite having huge bowls of oatmeal for breakfast?**

Keep in mind that the Golden Rules of carbs and fat loss are about fat loss. Your very lean personal trainer is not seeking fat loss. There are very different nutritional requirements for maintenance versus fat burning. Beyond that, everyone has a different carbohydrate tolerance. The greater your carbohydrate tolerance the more quickly and efficiently you can clear sugar from the blood and have insulin levels return to baseline. This means less time out of fat burning mode.

□ **Should I limit my fruit consumption to the evening?**

Yes, when fat loss is the goal that will produce the best results. Remember, however, that you should strive for progress, not perfection. When I was at my heaviest, I was eating Chick-fil-A for breakfast every day. Any improvement would have produced results. A banana is certainly a more fat loss friendly option than a chicken biscuit.

□ **Are beans a protein or a carbohydrate?**

Beans are a carbohydrate that happen to contain some protein. However, beans and legumes also contain protease inhibitors - compounds that block the breakdown and absorption of protein. Beans should be treated like carbohydrate (because they are carbohydrates) and should follow the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss for best results.

□ **What are the best vegetarian sources for protein?**

Eggs are a fantastic vegetarian source of protein. If you eat fish, that is a wonderful option too.

□ **I workout in the morning. Can I have carbs pre and post workout?**

Again, you "can" have whatever you want. The most neutral times for carbohydrate consumption will be evening time and post-workout. If you workout in the morning and feel like you need carbs post workout for recovery, certainly do so. However, don't assume that your body does need them. Low and moderate intensity workouts probably do not produce a need for carbohydrate consumption. Listen to your body and let it be your guide.

□ **How can I improve my carbohydrate tolerance?**

First and foremost by working to maintain blood sugar and insulin balance. The simplest way to do this is minimizing processed food/beverage consumption. Beyond that, carbohydrate tolerance is improved when muscle mass is added because glucose transporters reside in muscle tissue. Generally speaking, the more muscle tissue you have, the more glucose transporters you have so the more quickly and efficiently you can clear sugar from your blood and get back to fat-burning mode.



# Resources:

## Primal Potential Podcast – Relevant Episodes

- [Carb Timing](#)
- [Carb Tolerance](#)
- [Insulin](#)
- [Calorie Counting Doesn't Work](#)
- [Intermittent Fasting](#)
- [High Fructose Corn Syrup](#)
- [Dried Fruit](#)
- [Fruit](#)
- [Eating Healthy On a Budget](#)
- [Beat Stubborn Belly Fat](#)
- [Make Breakfast a Fat Burning Meal](#)
- [Soda](#)
- [Alcohol & Fat Loss](#)

## E-Courses

- [Overcoming Emotional Eating & Self-Limiting Behaviors](#)
- [Carb Strategies for Fat Loss](#)
- [Lean Potential Fat Loss Mastermind](#)

## One-Time Fat Loss Analysis & Consultation

### 90 Day Fat Loss Coaching

### Hormone & Fat Loss E-Book

### Primal Potential Blog

## Protein Bars

[EPIC bars](#)

[Quest bars](#)



# Eating For Fat Loss Cheat Sheet

## Requirements for Fat Loss

- ☐ Consume less energy (food) than your body needs for operations
- ☐ Create the hormonal environment that allows for fat loss

## Strategies for Fat Loss

- ☐ Follow the Golden Rules of carbs & fat loss
  - Right time
    - Skip carbs in the AM
    - Limit to evening or post workout
  - Right quality
    - Limit processed foods
    - The closer to natural state the better
  - Right quantity
    - Start by limiting to ½ cup
    - Monitor & adjust
  - Right company
    - Consume with fat or protein

- ☐ Emphasize fat & fiber

Fiber from non-starchy veggies for satiety

Fat with meals and snacks for hormone balance, focus & energy

- ☐ Don't overdo protein
  - Excess protein can elevate blood sugar & invoke insulin response
- ☐ Avoid Overfeeding
  - Does your body need fuel?
  - Avoid being chronically in fed state

## Recommended Meal Structure:

Breakfast: Fat OR fat/protein OR fat/protein/fiber

Lunch: Fat/protein/fiber

Snacks: Fat, protein, fiber or any combination

Dinner: Fat/protein/fiber/carb

## Implementation:

- ☐ Identify one meaningful change
- ☐ Practice it daily until it becomes effortless and habitual
- ☐ Then and only then add more
- ☐ Monitor your results and stay accountable
  - Full body photos
  - Waist/hip circumference
  - Goal pants





