

Nutrition Challenge Update: Week 6

02/21/2022

We're almost there! The challenge ends this Friday (2/25).

A couple reminders for this week and next:

- Turn in your checklists at the front desk sometime between Saturday 2/26 and Friday 3/4.
- Sign-up and complete your 2nd InBody scan. Scans will run between Mon 2/21 & Fri / 3/4. Sign-up sheet is in the lobby.

Preparing for Post Challenge

Even though the challenge ends this Friday we want you to continue your diet for another 2 weeks. This will give us a full 8 weeks, and if you remember from a previous update, 8 weeks tends to be the diet length that produces the best long term results (highest amount of fat loss or muscle gain, with the lowest risk of regaining fat or losing muscle after the diet period).

After your 8 weeks is up, we suggest going back to maintenance for 6-8 weeks, and then trying another 8 week diet cycle. Then you can repeat this cycle throughout the year. Below is an example similar to what we used in the challenge presentation on how to break up your year:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Cut		Maint		Cut		Maint		Gain		Maint	
8 wks		6-8 wks		8 wks		6-8 wks		8 wks		6-8 wks	

To set your maintenance level post challenge, increase your intake by 200-500 calories (depending on body size). Keep this level for 3-4 weeks, and then increase again by another 200-500 calories.

If you followed your calories adjustments correctly, your protein level should have stayed consistent throughout the challenge, so as you increase your intake, add those calories back to your daily carbs and fat.

I highly recommend checking out this article from Renaissance Periodization on all things "Maintenance." It's a decently long read and gets into some numbers discussion, but it will give you a lot more insight toward how the body functions after periods of gain or loss.

[Everything you Need to Know About Maintenance](#)

Once you get back to a cut or gain phase after maintenance, remember to follow the general template below. This example is of an active person with an ideal body weight of 138 lbs. The basics are to reduce calories slightly and tighten up your diet when you go from a maintenance phase to a cut phase. Keep intake consistent for 2-3 weeks, and then reduce calories again. Then repeat until you've reached 8 weeks.

During the challenge we used the first two weeks as a mini-maintenance period, but if you're coming off of a 6-8 week maintenance phase, you'll be able to jump right into reduced calories your first week of a new diet. The key is to keep it a small reduction and to leave room for subsequent reductions every 2-3 weeks.

Phase	Duration	Daily Calories	P	C	F
Cut 1	2-3 weeks	2200	138	248	73
Cut 2	2-3 weeks	1980	138	220	61
Cut 3	2-3 weeks	1782	138	195	50

Simplifying it All

Whether it's the plate method, hand method, or tracking your macros, finding a maintenance level, and then making measured adjustments can be a lot of work. Each time you revisit a diet phase, the process does get easier; however, you don't need to be super-precise if you're just looking for general health.

Eat 3-5 times a day, consume mostly whole foods, minimize processed foods, and get protein, carbs, and fat at every meal.

Make healthy shopping and meal prep a weekly habit, keep junk food out of the house, and when you eat out, look for meals that have some semblance of protein, carb, and fat balance.

If you follow these simple parameters 85% of the time (leaving 15% for relaxed / cheat meals), you'll be well on your way to a diet that will keep your body composition within a healthy range.

Do this for a period of time, and then **if you want** to lose additional fat, reduce your intake for a couple months, or if you want to gain muscle, increase your intake for a couple months, and then go back to maintenance for a couple months.

It takes a little bit of work and discipline, but if you'll stay at it, it eventually becomes part of your lifestyle and the effort level becomes much the same as any other way of eating.

Get your 2nd InBody scan, and turn in those tracking sheets after this week. We'll send out another update next week as we wrap up the challenge.

[Here's the link to our challenge resources page if you missed any content up to this point.](#)