

Update 4, Nutrition Challenge 2023

2/10/23

Challengers,

Only two more weeks of tracking before we wrap up the challenge!

Let's start with reviewing the foundations of healthy eating - The pieces of your diet that matter for the long term.

If you're...

- Eating 3-5 balanced meals each day,
- Eating mostly whole foods,
- Getting a good dose of protein (approx 30 grams) at each meal,
- And preparing most of your food at home,

...you're doing 80-90% of what it takes to optimize long term health, fuel your exercise and recovery needs, and trend towards a more ideal body composition.

A **decent** diet in the long run will lead to better results than periods of **perfect** eating followed by periods where you totally fall off the rails (yo-yo dieting). When your diet is very restrictive, or requires a ton of work, it's not going to last.

Your motivation and adherence will ebb and flow... Vacations and celebrations will throw you off track, snacks will sneak in, and life will get busy, leading to less time to focus on your nutrition. But if you can make the baseline behaviors above a week-in / week-out habit, you'll still be providing your body with most of the "good stuff" it needs. Even if you're not perfect, when you have a good foundation to your diet, you're never too far off from bringing yourself back to baseline.

Healthy eating should be a lifelong practice. Not something that's relegated to nutrition challenges or occasional dieting. It doesn't have to be hard. Build a few basic habits (healthy shopping, weekly food prep, etc), and have a basic understanding of how to build balanced meals (protein, carbs, and fat) and you're most of the way there.

Sneaky Calories

It's often all the extra things we add to our diets that put us into a caloric surplus (consuming more calories than we're burning). If you have a decent foundation to your diet, but struggle to get the changes in body composition you're looking for, take a closer look at the calories you consume from things like oils, sauces, creamers, butter, nut butters, and beverages.

As an example:

- A typical serving of peanut butter is 2 Tbsp (190 cal), go 1 Tbsp over and you've added 95 cal to your diet.
- A typical serving of olive oil is 1 Tbsp (120 cal), go 1 Tbsp over and you've added 120 cal to your diet.

- Some sauces and dressings can be low calorie, but many fall in the range of 30 to 60 cal per Tbsp making it easy to add an additional 100-200 calories to a salad or dish if you're not keeping an eye on quantity
- Most coffee creamers contain about 30 cal per Tbsp. A black coffee with one Tbsp of creamer only totals about 40-45 cal. Go overboard on creamer and you've turned it into a 100+ cal drink.

Throughout the course of a day, it's easy for these "little extras" to total an additional 500+ calories to your intake. Add alcohol to the equation, and the calories shoot up even more.

Personally, when I'm diligent about weighing & measuring my meals, the first thing I notice is how many extra calories I'm getting from fats, oils, and some of these other extras.

You don't have to drastically change your diet, and you don't have to eliminate these items, but be conservative with your quantities, and keep a watchful eye on how much you're adding to meals.

Protein Intake

We've mentioned the importance of getting enough protein in previous updates, but we wanted to give you a little more info on how much, and why, protein intake is important.

The most current recommendation we've seen for daily protein intake (in terms of optimizing muscle, health, and longevity) is **1 gram of protein per day, per pound of desired body weight**. So if you're currently at 165 lbs, and your long term goal weight is 155, you should be getting at least 155 grams of protein per day.

The building blocks of protein (amino acids) drive all kinds of things for your health like building healthy cells, maintaining muscle, and keeping fat storage low.

It's good to get a variety of protein sources. Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy contain a complete amino acid profile and are your best options. Legumes and vegetable protein can be an acceptable source, but most do not contain a full amino acid profile.

If you'd like to know more about the importance of getting enough protein, check out the post below:

[Are you getting enough protein?](#)

2nd InBody Scans & Tracking Sheets

The last two action items of the challenge will be turning in your tracking sheet and completing your 2nd InBody scan.

We still have a couple weeks left, but **final InBody scans** will take place from **Mon 2/27 - Fri 3/3**.

Tracking sheets should be turned in in the lobby that week as well.

Action Items For This Week

- Stick to the challenge ["Rules to Follow"](#)
 - Complete Meal Prep #4 before Monday 2/13
 - Keep your Daily Checklist up to date
 - Check-in to class
 - Record 60+ min of **Zone 2** this week (2/5 - 2/11)
 - Record 75+ min of **Zone 2** next week (2/12 - 2/18)
-