

Nutrition

UNDERSTANDING NUTRITION BETTER
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Intro:

To understand how to lose weight, gain muscle or whatever your goal is you must first understand the relationship between your body and food. We will achieve this by looking at calories, macros and what it is we put into our bodies.

Get rid of common misconceptions

<https://www.verywellfit.com/what-is-a-calorie-and-why-should-i-care-3496238>

<https://www.livescience.com/52802-what-is-a-calorie.html>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/understanding-calories/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/food-and-diet/what-should-my-daily-intake-of-calories-be/>

Calories:

A calorie is a unit of measure of how much energy a certain food or drink contains and your body needs these to be able to function every day. Calories is shorthand for “kilocalorie” and therefore it is written as kcal, you will see this on the nutritional section of food products. Your body burns a certain amount of calories per day just by being. This leads us to the Base Metabolic Rate (BMR), i.e. how many calories your body will burn per day just by existing. Your BMR will depend on age, height, weight, lifestyle, hormones and so many other things. The average BMR for a women is between 1200 kcal and 1600 kcal and for men between 1600kcal and 2000kcal per day (<https://fitfolk.com/average-basal-energy-expenditure-bee-basal-metabolic-rate-bmr/>).

Food caloric value:

Food:	Caloric value per 100g:
Chicken Breast	129kcal.
Steak	195kcal.
Egg	143kcal
Sweet Potato	91kcal
Brown Rice	139kcal
Snickers Bar	
Mars Bar	

Calories Per Food Type:

*Note that a 1G of a food does not equate to 1G of carbs, this is explained further on in macro-nutrition.

Food Type:	Caloric Value: (calories per gram)
Carbohydrate	4
Protein	4
Fats	9
Alcohol	7

Pros & Cons of Tracking Caloric Intake:

Pros:	Cons:
Will provide a measurable metric and therefore help give you a better idea of what you are eating and where you could be going wrong.	You may end up over thinking and complicating meals to reach caloric value and create a negative relationship with food.

Clarify the quantity of food you can consumer per day, therefore increase your mindfulness of food.	Loss of focus on food quality and therefore you may end up cutting out foods and pleasure to reach caloric goal.
Provide a clear guide and goal for you to stick to.	Can be manipulated to eating junk food and end up starving yourself as junk food tends to be high in calories.

Macro-Nutrition:

Food macro value:

Protein:	Carbohydrates:	Fats:
Chicken breast; 29g per 100g.	Chicken breast; 0g per 100g	Chicken breast; 3g per 100g
Steak; 31g per 100g	Steak; 47g per 100g	Steak; 1g per 100g
Oats; 17g per 100g	Oats; 66g per 100g	Oats; 7g per 100g
Eggs; 13g per 100g	Eggs; 1g per 100g	Eggs; 10g per 100g
Sweet Potato; 6g per 100g	Sweet Potato; 15g per 100g	Sweet Potato; 4g per 100g
Brown Rice; 3g per 100g	Brown Rice; 26g per 100g	Brown Rice; 1g per 100g
Snickers; g per 100g	Snickers; g per 100g	Snickers; g per 100g
Mars Bar; g per 100g	Mars Bar; g per 100g	Mars Bar; g per 100g

What each macro does:

Protein:	Carbohydrates:	Fats:
one of the main building blocks of body tissue.	provides fuel and energy for the body (glucose).	back up fuel for energy.
a fuel source for the body.	stops the breakdown of muscle mass.	helps with brain development.
aid in repair of muscle tissue, organs and skin.	some organs will only use glucose therefore your body requires carbs.	helps insulate your body.

Pros and Cons of tracking macros:

Pros:	Cons:
helps understanding intake.	can lead to stressful thinking.
you are what you eat.	quality vs quantity.
satisfaction.	eating disorders.

Diet Fads:

Paleo:

Fasting:

Low carb high fat:

Low fat high carb:

Weight (fat) Loss:

Number one rule: you will not lose any weight unless you are in a caloric deficit!

A brief introduction on how to lose weight:

To understand how to lose weight we must first understand how the body functions, i.e. what is it exactly that makes us lose or put on weight. So how does the body work? Well to put it at its simplest, your body needs a certain number of calories per day to function and maintain itself. For example, the average male will need to consume 2500 calories per day and a female will need 2000. Therefore, taking from this, if you eat more than your daily required caloric intake (caloric surplus) you will put on weight, if you eat the required amount you will stay at your current weight (maintenance) and if you eat less you will lose weight (caloric deficit).

So how does one lose weight then? Well the answer is as simple and complex as the question, yet equally as complex. As stated above, the only way to lose weight is to be in a caloric deficit, this way the body is forced to use up those fat stores to sustain itself. You're looking to be in a deficit of 500 calories, so if your body needs 2500 calories per day, you will be eating 2000. Why 500? Well scientists have found that this is the "golden amount" for weight loss. This way, the body isn't getting enough nutrients so it is forced to use up those fat stores. However, it doesn't go into "starvation mode" where the body isn't getting anywhere near the right amount of nutrients so it begins to actually hold onto food more and store it as fat, so you end up doing the opposite of the desired effect.

Once you have your daily caloric intake down you can take it a step further diving into your daily macro-nutrition, i.e. your daily protein, carbohydrate and fat intake. I go into this under the macro-nutrition header. This will also explain why food like pizza and fast food are considered "unhealthy" and this method is used by professionals; for example, pizza will have 36g of carbs per 100g where as 100g of sweet potato will only have 17g, therefore, you will be able to eat more than double the amount of sweet potato than pizza and therefore feel fuller and happier.

Calorie Tracking (intermediate):

Now that we have covered the basics of nutrition and how one can regulate their intake through portion control we can take it one step further by calculating and tracking the caloric value of food to reach our daily intake without going over. I would strongly recommend this method over portion control as this is much more accurate and gives you more control over your food and guarantees results. This method will require you to use MyFitnessPal, I have created a basic guide at the bottom of the page: [MyFitnessPal](#).

Once you have calculated your daily caloric intake it is extremely simple to do. Simply log each meal into MyFitnessPal and it will tell you how many calories you have remaining.

Macro-Nutrition (advanced):

As stated previously your body needs a certain number of calories per day to function and we get these calories from our foods. However, we can break this down even further and look at them in further detail. Furthermore, this is done by going into macro-nutrition, i.e. protein, fats and carbs (carbohydrates). Therefore, your body not only needs only a certain number of calories per day but also a specific amount of carbs, fat and protein per day. This will give you the greatest control over what you can eat and is used by any professional bodybuilder or athlete as it is the most effective, however, does require the most effort (less so with a meal plan in place).

So how do we know how many proteins, carbs and fats we need per day? Well, 1 gram of protein will amount to 4kcal, 1 gram of carb will amount to 4kcal and 1 gram of fat will amount to 9kcal. Furthermore, you will want to break your diet down to 40% protein, 40% carbohydrates and 20% fats. Therefore, if you know you need 2500 calories per day you can quickly calculate your macros by taking

40% of 2500 and dividing it by 4 for proteins and carbs and taking 20% of 2500 and dividing it by 9 for your fats.

Once you know your macros you will need to know the macros of food (I have put a table below for quick reference and examples). For this you can either google it or use MyFitnessPal. MyFitnessPal is your best and easiest bet as you can just scan a bar code and it'll tell you all of its nutritional information. I have made a guide of how to use MyFitnessPal at the bottom of the page. You will also need a weighing scale to weigh your food to know your portion size. Now granted that this is very time-consuming weighing and logging all your food everyday this is where a meal plan comes in. Which I will get on to later.

Muscle Gain:

<https://www.t-nation.com/diet-fat-loss/eat-like-a-warrior-king>

Maintenance:

Supplements:

MyFitnessPal:

References:

Calories:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/food-and-diet/what-should-my-daily-intake-of-calories-be/>

Food Caloric Value:

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Calories Per Food Type:

- a

Pros & Cons of Tracking Caloric Intake:

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Macro-Nutrition:

- a

Food Macro Value:

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What Each Macro Does:

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Pros & Cons of Tracking Macros:

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Diet Fads:

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Weight (fat) Loss:

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Brief Introduction on How to Lose Weight:

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Calorie Tracking (intermediate):

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Macro-Nutrition (advanced):

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Muscle Gain:

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Maintenance:

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MyFitnessPal:

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