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The Balanced Way to Burn Fat Faster

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October 2012 - If you are an athlete devoting countless hours to strength and conditioning but still find it difficult to reach and maintain your ideal weight, it's time to focus on your diet. If your diet is not balanced, you are limiting your ability to reach full potential in your workout and competition. Nothing can sabotage months of training faster than poor nutrition. You've probably been told to eat a balanced diet, but until you actually make a commitment to balance the carbohydrate, protein, and fat in every meal you eat, you haven't experienced the true hormonal power of a balanced diet.

A balanced diet or more specifically, a balanced meal has the power to control the release of either your fat storing hormone—*insulin* or your fat burning hormone—*glucagon*. Stored body fat is the body's preferred source of energy, not glucose. We all have plenty of stored body fat to burn, doesn't it make sense to use that fat for energy instead of relying on carbohydrates? And, when you start burning stored body fat for energy, you tap into a virtually unlimited source of energy while sparing muscle glycogen and glucose for your brain. You can experience greater strength, energy, mental focus and concentration, less hunger, plus mental toughness necessary for peak performance and a competitive edge.

So how do you burn fat faster? With a better understanding of the two opposing hormones, insulin and glucagon, you can begin to balance your diet and control the release of the body's powerful fat burning hormones so you can maximize the burning of stored body fat for energy.

Hormones regulate virtually everything your body does, so it's not hard to understand that hormones can determine whether you burn or store fat. And, the food you eat controls the response that regulate those hormones. Insulin is considered a storage hormone while glucagon is a mobilization hormone.

When a meal is too high in carbohydrates, insulin is released to manage the flood of glucose into your bloodstream. Insulin forces your body to burn glucose for energy, converts and stores excess glucose into glycogen, and stores it in the liver and muscles. But any excess glucose is stored as body fat. Insulin also prevents the body from burning stored fat for fuel and can cause the body to store fluids as well.

When a meal contains carbohydrates, balanced with protein and fat, blood sugar levels remain steady. Protein in the meal stimulates the release of the hormone glucagon, which mobilizes glycogen in the liver to maintain stable blood sugar. Glucagon also mobilizes the release of stored body fat, allowing your body to burn fat, (its preferred source of fuel), rather than glucose.

With a dietary goal of losing fat weight without sacrificing lean muscle mass, learning how to stabilize blood sugar levels with your food choices to maintain a favorable balance of insulin to glucagon makes sense. You can finally begin to train your body to use stored fat rather than muscle glycogen as its primary fuel source.

So how do you put it all together? The ratio of carbohydrate, protein, and fat in every meal and snack controls the release of either the fat storage hormone, insulin or the fat mobilization hormone, glucagon. And it's important to remember that your blood sugar and energy levels are only as balanced as your last meal or snack.

Preparing meals with the proper ratio is as easy as 40-30-30. Meals should contain 40% of total calories from predominately low-glycemic carbohydrates, supplying fiber and vital nutrients. Carbohydrates should be balanced with 30% of calories from high quality protein and 30% from healthy fats.

- 40% Carbohydrates – Low to medium-glycemic carbohydrates that are mostly fruits and vegetables, high in fiber and nutrients. Avoid high glycemic and highly processed carbohydrates.
- 30% Protein – High quality protein such as chicken, turkey, fish, lean beef and pork, low-fat dairy (milk, Greek yogurt & cottage cheese) eggs, egg whites, and whey protein powder. Avoid high fat proteins.
- 30% Fat – Natural, healthy fats like avocados, fish, fish oil, olives, olive oil and raw macadamia nuts. Avoid processed fats and trans fats

You never need to diet again when you learn to balance your diet. Instead of eating a bowl of high carbohydrate cereal or a plain baked potato, have a bowl of oatmeal with eggs or half of a baked potato with tuna salad. Both are examples of balanced meals with the approximately 40-30-30 ratio of carbohydrate, protein, and fat. You can find more meals and recipes plus a complete personalized 40-30-30 program in our book, *The Formula, A Personalized 40-30-30 Weight Loss Program*.

As part of the original team who developed the Balance Bar, we are enthused to see Balance Bar as the “official energy bar” of the NWCA. Balance Bars offer delicious 40-30-30 nutrition to fuel your body between meals and pre and post workouts for steady blood sugar and that competitive edge.

Don't neglect balanced nutrition... it's as important as training.

Gene and Joyce Daoust are Certified Nutritionists and national best selling authors of:

THE FORMULA, A Personalized 40-30-30 Weight Loss Program.

BIOGRAPHY - Gene and Joyce Daoust are the national best-selling authors of The Formula. They are the clinical nutritionists who worked with Dr. Barry Sears in the development and testing of the original 40-30-30 zone nutrition program more than 20 years ago. They owned the Bio-Syn Human Performance Center, the world's first weight loss and sports-nutrition 40-30-30 zone clinic. They were also two of the original team who developed the Balance Bar.

Joyce and Gene are considered two of America's leading experts in 40-30-30 nutrition, fitness and weight loss. The Daousts have reunited with Balance Bar as their 40-30-30 nutrition experts. They provide content and delicious balanced recipes for the Balance Bar website (www.balance.com) and partake in Balance Bar activities across the U.S.

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