

A young couple is walking on a beach. The woman is on the left, wearing a bright blue bikini and smiling. The man is on the right, shirtless, wearing white shorts and sunglasses, also smiling. They are walking through shallow water. The background is a gradient of purple and blue.

The Okinawa **FLAT BELLY** **TONIC**

21 Day Flat Belly
Blueprint

Mike Banner

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The Okinawa Flat Belly Tonic Manual

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
1 CHANGE YOUR DIET FOR THE BEST	
1.1 FOODS TO AVOID.....	7
1.2 NOURISHING & TASTY FOODS.....	12
1.3 BAG OF TRICKS.....	20
2 WEIGHT-LOSS MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE	
2.1 STRESS & WEIGHT-LOSS	24
2.2 EASY MOVEMENTS FOR A SMOOTH WEIGHT-LOSS.....	28
2.3 HORMONES & WEIGHT	29
2.4 NUTRIENTS & WEIGHT	31
2.5 INTERMITTENT FASTING.....	33
2.6 BEAUTY SLEEP & WEIGHT	35
3 KITCHEN TOOLS.....	40
4 CONCLUSION & SMALL PEARLS OF WISDOM	44
5 REFERENCES	45

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO SUCCEED WITH FLAT BELLY TONIC

This program isn't your traditional weight-loss program. It's based on the most effective shortcuts that will make all of your unwanted extra pounds – or kilograms – go away in an instant.

We have gathered effective knowledge & tools that aren't hard to use or implement to lose weight consistently – and most importantly, to keep the weight off...for good.

The advice and proven methods in this guide are based closely on the diets on the Okinawa people who have among the longest life expectancies on the planet.

Many foods in Okinawa are not easy to find outside of Japan. However, we have found foods with similarly beneficial effects that you can find locally in order to experience the same powerful benefits as Okinawa people.

So, what can you expect by following the Okinawa Flat Belly Tonic Weight-loss Manual?

This manual was designed to respond to a real issue.

Why can't some people lose weight and keep it off?

Right?

While, others seem to shed off the pounds so easily...

Do they have some mysterious secret to keep the weight off?

In all likelihood, probably not. However, there is no single answer considering how many factors can influence our weight.

For instance, all of the following factors can have a positive or negative impact on your weight (non-exhaustive list):

- Genetics
- Hormones
- Diet
- Food Quality
- Diseases
- Addictions & Eating Disorders
- Mental Health
- Physical Activity
- Stress Levels
- Intolerances
- Sleeping Patterns

As you can see, there is no simple answer when it comes to weight. Nonetheless, more often than not, it's quite easy to resolve the problems that can cause weight gain.

What do I mean by easy?

I mean it's not as hard as it would seem. However, it's still requires effort and a real commitment to change certain unhealthy patterns.

Because at the end of the day, if you want to lose the weight and keep it off, you will have to change.

But you don't have to do all the work, that's why this weight-loss manual exists. This manual will guide you progressively towards positive change and of course, a life long weight-loss.

So, how long does it take to work?

Well, it does depend on your commitment but it's crucial that you let the program help YOU.

For instance, follow our guidelines, listen to the provided audio regularly to reinforce motivation, budget your shopping, prepare your shopping list according to our recipes, read the quick start guide and...if you don't get everything right – it's okay, too.

Also, don't hesitate to put this e-book in your desktop, tablet or smartphone, to re-read it when you

need a bit of motivation.

One of our best motivation reinforcements are the audio files. These were designed to help you improve results by motivating you to succeed with your weight-loss goals, reinforcing your will power, boosting your positivity and giving you the winning mindset.

So, those things: budgeting, shopping lists, gentle exercise to get back in shape, the audio files, this weight-loss manual, the quick start guide, etc... – are TOOLS.

Tools that will help you achieve your goal successfully and keep the weight off, long term.

There is no hocus pocus here, just hard facts, backed up by actual scientific research.

So, the only question that is left to ask...

Are you ready to embark on this wonderful weight-loss journey...

...and take control of your health?

I am pretty sure you are, considering you chose to give this program a chance.

Now, just more thing...

Give yourself a chance to succeed too. ;)

CHANGE YOUR DIET FOR THE BEST

1. Foods to Avoid (& why you should do so)

GMO's – Genetically Modified Organisms & Foods Loaded with Pesticides

A GMO or Genetically Modified Organism, is an organism whose genetic material has been altered by scientists via genetic engineering.

However, many objections have been raised when it comes to the safety of GMO's – especially, their commercialisation and long-term effects on human, animal and environmental health.

Moreover, talking about science – while the current scientific consensus says that GM crops are no more dangerous than regular ones – it's important to note that GM crops are annihilating crop diversity (a major concern for the stability of agriculture around the world) and there is no long-term science to back up that GM crops are actually safe. (1)

So, when we are looking at the big picture, GMO's safety raises quite a lot of concerns.

And when it comes to us... let's just say, that the lack of diversity also means a lack of diversity in nutrients and the possibility of unknown side effects. And 20 years of research backed by industries (involved in making GMO's) isn't enough or reliable enough, for that matter.

Also, if you add pesticides to the mix, weeds and insect killers, which have definitely very nefarious (aka dangerous) effects on us and of course, the environment – well, if possible, it's ideal to avoid those, altogether.

Deep Fried, Highly Processed Foods and Hydrogenated Fats

Do I need to explain why deep fried foods are ab-so-lu-te-ly terrible for us?

Besides the fact that they are loaded with unhealthy fats, I still should explain a bit more.

Deep fried foods are basically foods bathing in approximately 360°F or 182°C oil. So, that's not a very pleasant bath to say the least – even if it does taste darn good afterwards!

Anyhow, once fried to death, the food is pretty much nutrient free – meaning it has about 0 nutritional value – and also, it's just a fat artery clogging feast, which is as bad as it sounds for your cardiovascular health.

Now, when it comes to highly processed foods and hydrogenated fats, the results are pretty similar.

Highly processed foods are generally loaded with hydrogenated fats (sunflower oil, margarine, palm oil, etc), salt (aka sodium), sugar and mountains of additives to make it look nice and, last longer.

The combination of hydrogenated fats, too much salt and sugar, and additives is an absolute disaster for our weight and when consumed regularly, it will ALWAYS lead to health issues. (2)

So, the very occasional “cheeky” meal is an option but frankly, it's best to avoid these industrial meals altogether.

Hormone-filled Meats (and Dairy) & Farmed Fish

Nowadays, hormones and antibiotics-filled meats and farmed fish are found in most supermarkets and shops. Why are they so successful?

Well, that's an easy one and you know it as well as I do. They are much cheaper than their organic, grass-fed and/or wild counterparts.

And as result, they are far more affordable and easier on our bank accounts.

However, they not necessarily that great for our health or the ones of our loved ones.

Meats with synthetic hormones and antibiotics will influence our own physiology and mess up a few things.

For example, synthetic hormones used to accelerate the growth of certain animals can have an actual impact on our endocrine system (a system that produces, secretes and regulates hormones). These man-made hormones can mess with the body's growth, metabolism, sexual development and also, vital functions. (3)

Antibiotics loaded meats and dairy products (from animals treated with antibiotics) are another alarming issue. These antibiotics are reinforcing the grave health and food crisis we are currently facing against antibiotic resistance.

Antibiotic resistance can affect anyone, regardless of age or ethnicity. Which means that you could get an infection (that has mutated) and within all the antibiotics we currently possess, none of them would work – as such, a simple infection could easily become lethal. (4)

Also, let's talk about fish – if you have to choose, prefer wild and smaller fishes to limit pollutants levels. Farmed fish is highly polluted, it has a terrible impact on biodiversity and once again, is usually gorged with... antibiotics.

Sugar in all of its forms

These days, sugar is pretty much found everywhere. Honestly, even in a tasty marinara sauce or your favourite peanut butter – and let's not forget, in most industrial meals and fast-food items. So far, I haven't even mentioned, sweets, pastries or cakes, cookies and of course, carbs...which are, at the end of the day, another form of sugar.

Basically, sugar is everywhere or ... nearly!

How to avoid it?

There's only one answer for that, make your own meals from scratch and it doesn't have to be complicated. However, it does require a bit of practice. We all have got to start somewhere, right?!

So, when buying pre-made stuff, even condiments and anything else you haven't made, make sure to read the labels and refrain from buying if it's lists any of the following:

- Dextrose
- Dextrin
- Diastatic malt
- Ethyl maltol
- Galactose

- Fructose
- Glucose or Glucose syrup solids
- Lactose (only if you can't digest milk sugars properly)
- Maltose
- Sucrose
- Confectioner's sugar or powdered sugar
- High-fructose corn syrup or corn syrup
- Malt syrup
- Agave syrup or nectar

Hormone-like foods

As mentioned earlier, meat with hormones can wreak havoc with our own endocrine health. But meat isn't the only food that contains hormones.

For instance, a favourite of both vegans & vegetarians, soy, can mimic oestrogens – which is a sexual female hormone found in women and in much smaller quantities, in men.

High levels of oestrogens can lead to metabolism issues, sleeping troubles, mood swings and poor energy levels.

In men, high oestrogen levels can lead to erectile dysfunction, gynecomastia (breast tissue growth) and in some cases, infertility. (5)

Moreover, most soy crops are GM crops, which means they are loaded with pesticides and that can also aggravate the hormonal imbalance.

Altogether, it's best to avoid soy and soy products, or at least, do some damage control and buy soy products from reputable (traced) organic sources.

Finally, dairy, refined carbs (white bread, pasta and rice), sugar, nightshades (tomatoes, eggplants, peppers, etc.) and most non-organic food can have an impact on endocrine health. So, limiting those is always a great idea.

And don't worry, there's a lot of alternatives. I will get to them very soon!

Foods you are intolerant to – Discover how to find out

Sometimes, allergies are an obvious thing, you know when an...anaphylactic shock happens (aka turning into a very dangerous human balloon).

However, there's a very common case of "mild" forms of allergies, which are called intolerances. Meaning...while you can eat certain foods without dying, your body may not be a fan of it.

Have you ever found yourself bloated every single time you eat a particular food? Or maybe nauseous, full of gas or simply unwell?

Well, you could be intolerant to that food. It could be dairy, gluten, wheat, nightshades, peanuts or other nuts, or maybe something less common like... lemons.

If you suspect that you may be intolerant to something, eliminate entirely that food from your diet for at least a month. Then, reintroduce said food and see how your body reacts.

If it's a shit storm, you have found the culprit. If not, you can continue eating it.

But if you can't find a satisfying result, you may want to consult a professional that will test you on a number of common allergies and intolerances.

Unhealthy Alcohols (yes, there are "healthier" ones ;))

Alcohol...sweet disinhibiting alcohol, the stuff of celebrations and parties isn't necessarily the best friend of your body.

But like most things, this isn't a white or black scenario. Some alcohols are unhealthy and so is, alcohol abuse (which can lead to cirrhosis, a very serious and life-threatening condition).

On the other hand, other alcohols are actually beneficial when consumed in a certain way and with a bit of moderation. I will get to those later in this e-book.

So, what are these unhealthy boozy drinks I am talking about?

Generally speaking, most industrial beers are disastrous, on top of the alcohol they already have, they are usually loaded with additional sugar and/or carbs – a big no-no if you are watching your weight or want to be healthy.

Similarly, pre-made alcohol mixes are literally sugar bombs which are disastrous for both your liver and pancreas.

Finally, some alcohols are pretty good for you in small quantities. I will talk about those in the next chapter...

Keep your eyes peeled – you can still enjoy a drink & lose weight!

2. Nourishing & Tasty Foods

Leafy & Green Vegetables

Okay, maybe green veggies aren't exactly everyone's cup of tea. However, there's a lot to be said about cooking them right. Veggies, greens, leafy and not, aren't supposed to be a tasteless mush.

Basically, gentle cooking options like steaming or quick pan frying with healthy fats (coconut oil, olive oil, etc.) and some seasoning can make the whole experience way more delicious!

Anyway, let's go back to leafy greens.

These greens are an important part of any diet. They are a great source of vitamins, minerals and fibre, while being low cal. Incorporating these will reduce your risk of obesity, high blood pressure, heart disease and will help you stay sharp. (6)

Here's a list of the most beneficial and common leafy greens to include in your diet:

- Kale (aka curly cabbage)
- Collard greens
- Spinach
- Cabbage (green, white and purple are all good options)
- Beet greens (yes, you can eat these)
- Watercress
- Various lettuces
- Swiss chard
- Arugula
- Endive (delicious with a little Roquefort cheese and some walnuts)
- Bok choy
- Turnip greens

Proteins: Fish, Meat & Safe Alternatives

When it comes to protein, prefer lean, grass-fed or/and wild meats. If you have a good local butcher/farmer and a big freezer, considering buying big chunks, if not whole pieces of the animal.

Fish & shellfish is a trickier subject these days.

Avoid bigger fishes like tuna (loaded with pollutants) and prefer their small counterparts like wild salmon, trout, anchovies, cod, herring, mahi-mahi, mackerel, perch, sardines, Arctic char, squid and octopus.

For amateurs of shellfish, oysters are one of the healthiest options. You can also eat abalone, shrimp, clams, mussels, crab, lobster and similar shellfish. However, do make sure these are fresh and caught responsibly before buying them.

What about vegan and vegetarian options?

For vegetarians and omnivores alike, eggs are a must but these need to be organic to be actually good for you. Eggs contain all essential fatty acids we need, much protein and healthy fats.

Additionally, pulses – or legumes – are a must if you want to avoid or reduce animal consumption. They are rich in protein, easy to cook and come in variety of flavours.

So, make sure to stock up your pantry with chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, dry beans, cow peas, butter beans, black-eyed peas, lima beans, etc.

Also, for vegans and vegetarians, quinoa is a great protein and low glycemic carb addition to your diet.

Healthy Fats

Recent research shows that fat, including saturated fat isn't necessarily a bad, bad thing. (7)

Actually, if anything, your body needs fat to function properly! However, not all fats are created equal.

So, what are the healthy fat options to add to your diet?

Let's start by a favourite of many...avocado! Avocado is a fruit loaded with fat. The regular consumption of this green gem can lower "bad " LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, and raise "good" HDL cholesterol.

Like other healthy fats, avocados are great to increase satiety. So, long term, you tend to eat less when you include them in your diet.

Here's a non-exhaustive list of other healthy fats to add to your diet:

- Extra virgin olive oil (aka EVOO)
- Cold pressed coconut oil (& coconuts)
- Grass-fed/organic butter
- Grass-fed/organic lard
- Nuts (cashews, Brazil nuts, almonds, walnuts, Macadamia nuts, pistachios, etc.)
- Uncooked nut oils for dressings
- Home-made or Sugar & Palm oil Free Nut butters

- Chia seeds
- Full fat organic yogurt
- Quality dark chocolate (min. 70%)
- Quality cheeses (in moderation and if not intolerant to lactose)

Anthocyanin-rich Foods

Anthocyanins are antioxidants. Antioxidants are essential compounds that fight off free radicals – a byproduct of metabolism that is unstable and can lead to premature ageing, DNA damage and disease.

Anthocyanins are powerful antioxidants found in plants, vegetables and fruits. These water soluble pigments can be either red, purple, blue or black.

These colourful antioxidants have strong anti-inflammatory properties and can't fight off C-Reactive Protein (refer to the anti-inflammation drinks recipe book for more info). [\(8\)](#)

To make sure your diet is loaded with anthocyanins, make sure to buy the following (and don't hesitate to freeze some of your berries):

- Blueberries
- Blackberries
- Strawberries
- Elderberries
- Red & Black Raspberries
- Cranberries
- Cherries
- Black Grapes & Raisins (to be consumed with moderation)
- Prunes
- Eggplant
- Red cabbage
- Beets
- Red onions

Grains Alternatives

Grains may rule our agricultural world and most crops but they aren't exactly a staple for weight-loss and if you struggle with carbs, they won't be for maintenance either.

However, there's good news!

They are healthy alternatives to refined and nutrient-poor grains that are actually...tasty!

Some of the following options are not necessarily very well known but that's what this e-book is about, discovering new foods and enriching your plate, and your life.

Discover some interesting alternatives to grains:

- Amaranth: High in fibre and a great source of protein, this is a must for vegans and vegetarians alike. It's also considered an anti-inflammatory food.
- Barley: Barley is more than a beer making essential. Barley has probiotic properties by nourishing your healthy gut bacteria. Moreover, it's also high in fibre.
- Buckwheat: This herb can be cooked as rice or used as flour. If you have a gluten intolerance, it's also a great option.
- Brown rice: Unlike white refined rice, brown rice has a high fibre content and is far more superior nutrition wise.
- Farro: This nutty tasting, easily digestible grain is packed with fibre! It's also referred as emmer, einkorn and spelt.
- Millet: Millet is more than bird food. This grain provides a good amount of protein and lowers the risk of diabetes.
- Quinoa: This vegan and vegetarian staple has a high amount of protein and is rich in vitamin B, folate, iron and zinc. Moreover, it's completely gluten free.
- Sorghum: Another gluten free and versatile option. You can eat sorghum as porridge, flour or even use it to do some "popcorn".
- Oats: Prefer the gluten free variety. Oats are ideal for hearty breakfasts when the day gets physical. Avoid it during chill/quiet days.

As with most of these alternatives, they tend to be on the heavier side of carbs. Consequently, eat small portions of them and eat a bit more if you are having a very physical day.

However, if your diet is more focused on being low carb, you may want to stick with veggies for your daily carb intake.

Healthy & Quick Drinks (+ healthier alcohol)

The healthiest drink available is water. I know, how surprising!

Joke aside, water should be your drink of choice for weight-loss AND maintenance.

However, that doesn't mean you can't vary. You can have tasty and/or nutritious drinks in your diet.

For example, the "Antioxidant blast" smoothie found in our drink recipes (targeting C-Reactive Protein) e-book is a delicious drink that can be used as a snack or as a quick light breakfast! You can also add some oats or sorghum (for example) to make it more filling.

Moreover, you can try infusions, make your coffees and teas more interesting by adding vanilla extract or other plants. Have a look at our recipes to get going!

Just remember, that sugar isn't your friend for weight-loss or for your health. You will find interesting sweet alternatives like xylitol, erythritol and stevia to give you some of that sweet sweetness.

There's another kind of beverage that we should discuss about again...alcohol.

So, I mentioned earlier that they are healthier kinds of alcohol. Which ones, you might be wondering?!

Red wine (good quality wine, ask Internet if you have no idea) is probably one of the healthiest alcohol beverages available. Champagne – if you can afford it – is also a decent option. [\(9\)](#)

Liquor wise, stick to good quality whiskey and for a lower carb count, vodka is the best choice (for example...you can occasionally indulge in a bloody Mary).

Nonetheless, remember that drinking alcohol is essentially ingesting (a lot of) empty calories AND too much of it, will kill off more than a few cells. Drink safely friend!

Herbs & Spices

There's more to food than protein, vegetables, fruits, carbs, healthy fats, dairy, pulses...

As a matter of fact, herbs and spices are the stuff that will change the way you see food...forever.

Not only are they interesting for your health, they will also ravish your palate and turn the blandest of meals into a mouth watering party! And it doesn't have to be hot either.

Many herbs and spices can improve your health and reduce the risk of disease. For instance, a curry favourite, turmeric, has very powerful anti-inflammatory properties. Moreover, added to protein, veggies and/or pulses, it tastes amazing.

In the world of herbs, the common and well known parsley hides a few unknown qualities. Parsley is an amazing source of Vitamin K, and a decent one of Vitamin A and C. Vitamin K is essential to support bone and heart health – it also prevents blood clotting.

This humble herb is also a good source of magnesium, folate, iron, potassium and calcium.

Basically, most herbs and spices are packed with essential and interesting nutrients/compounds that will improve your health, weight-loss and of course, meals.

Here's a little chart to help you out in the vast and magnificent world of spices and herbs!

POPULAR SPICES & HERBS	GOES WELL WITH
ALLSPICE	Beets, carrots, cabbage, turnips, beef, lamb, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger
CINNAMON	Carrots, pears, sweet potatoes, squash, chicken, lamb, allspice, cloves, nutmeg
CLOVES	Apples, beets, tomatoes, squash, sweet potatoes,

	lamb, basil, nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon
CORIANDER (seeds)	Bell peppers, onions, tomatoes, potatoes, chicken, beef, pork, fish, pulses, chilli powder, cinnamon, cumin
NUTMEG	Broccoli, cauliflower, squash, sweet potatoes, carrots, lamb, allspice, cloves
PAPRIKA	Tomatoes, bell peppers, squash, broccoli, chicken, shellfish, lamb, garlic, chilli powder, cardamom, cinnamon, cumin
CARDAMOM	Citrus, carrots, peas, sweet potatoes, squash, chicken, duck, lentils, pork, cinnamon, ginger, cumin, turmeric
CAYENNE PEPPER	Potatoes, eggplant, zucchini (courgettes), bell peppers, corn, tomatoes, chicken, beef fish, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, basil
CUMIN	Tomatoes, eggplant, courgettes, carrots, green beans, pulses, chicken, beef, fish, pork, garlic, turmeric, ginger, oregano, cinnamon
GARLIC POWDER	Cabbage, tomatoes, zucchini, carrots, beets, beans, chicken, beef, fish, oregano, cumin, coriander, turmeric
GINGER	Carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, citrus, chicken, beef, fish, pork, beans, garlic powder
TURMERIC	Cauliflower, potatoes, cabbage, sweet potatoes, beans, chicken, lentils, fish, cardamom, garlic
BASIL	Eggplant, bell pepper, tomatoes, courgettes, potatoes, cheese, chicken, pork, fish, garlic, rosemary, thyme, oregano, marjoram
OREGANO	Tomatoes, artichokes, bell peppers, courgettes, mushrooms, potatoes, beans, chicken, lamb,

	pork, fish, chilli powder, bay leaves, thyme
ROSEMARY	Mushrooms, potatoes, onions, peas, lamb, chicken, beans, pork, fish, garlic, oregano, thyme, basil
BAY LEAVES	Tomatoes, mushrooms, potatoes, shellfish, lentils, beans, sage, oregano, marjoram, thyme
THYME	Green beans, peas, carrots, tomatoes, cauliflower, courgettes, beef, chicken, lamb, fish, pork, lentils, beans, rosemary, oregano, garlic

3. Bag of Tricks

Keep your Cravings at Bay

When you are limiting your calorie intake and improving your current diet, it's essential to know a few things to reduce cravings.

Yes, you will have some to start with. However, there are effective methods to control and eventually, get rid of them altogether.

For instance, having the correct amount of protein in your diet is essential to deal with cravings.

A study has shown that a high-protein breakfast can reduce cravings significantly. [\(10\)](#)

Another one showed that a simple increase of 25% protein could reduce cravings by 60%. [\(11\)](#)

Similarly, increasing healthy fats consumption can reduce appetite and prevent you from overeating.

Other techniques include slow and conscious eating. Which means, that by appreciating each bite and slowly chewing your food, you will get fuller with less food and your body will have less work to do in order to digest said food.

Finally, there's something to be said about some of our favourite drinks. Tea and coffee can also be

used as tools to curb your appetite.

You can drink tea throughout the day and stop around 4/5 pm. When it comes to coffee, do not exceed 4 cups daily and drink less (if any) if you have cardiac or blood pressure issues.

Both drinks contain caffeine, which is a natural appetite suppressant. However, beware to not replace solid food by caffeine. Use it as a tool and as such, use it sparingly.

Cutting Carbs & The Benefits of it

I previously mentioned the benefits of eating different grains and eating (a lot) less of it for the intent of losing weight and subsequently, keeping it off.

Carbs are essential for your body to function, to have energy (unless you are doing a ketogenic diet, a type of low carb, high fat diet).

However, for the purposes of weight-loss, you will need to cut carbs to prevent cravings and to simply lose pounds or kilograms.

To do so, here's a few effective tips that will help you:

- Use smaller plates: That's probably the most effective tool to visually control the amount of carbs and food that you eat. As a rule, your plate shouldn't contain more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of carbs, half of veggies, $\frac{1}{4}$ of protein and additionally, healthy fats, spices and herbs.
- Load up on low carb vegetables: Vegetables are also a source of carbs. However, this type of carbohydrates is a lot easier to digest than grains. Consequently, these carbs are used more efficiently and faster by our bodies. In the world of low-carb veggies, you will find the leafy greens mentioned earlier (spinach, watercress, kale, etc...) but also things like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, zucchini (aka courgette), mushrooms, asparagus, bell peppers, eggplant & tomatoes (if you digest nightshades properly), green beans, cucumbers, celery, radishes, onions, garlic, artichokes...
- Use a carb window – aka carb refeed: For those who are familiar with intermittent fasting and/or the ketogenic diet, you may already be well aware of the matter. A carb window is

essentially restricting carb intake in a “window” of time. For example, it could be between 5 and 8pm or between 10am and 1pm. Usually, speaking 3 hours is a good idea to start with. It allows you to include a meal and a snack. However, a carb window is a tool that is best suited for people with a highly physical lifestyle or much physical exercise. You will get the most weight-loss benefits out of it, if you use your carb window right after exercising or being physically active.

Water or the Benefits of Clean H2O

Water – aka the stuff of life – is crucial for health and unsurprisingly, for weight-loss.

Drinking enough water increases the amount of burned calories – this phenomenon is called resting energy expenditure – which technically means that water which has no calories whatsoever actually helps you burn some! ([12](#))

In adults, resting energy expenditure increases by 24 to 30% 10 minutes after drinking water. And this continues for the following hour.

In addition, drinking water before meals reduces appetite. The trick is to remember doing so!

As a rule of thumb, an adult should drink 2 litres of water per day (about 8 glasses of water).

However, this doesn't apply if you have a very physical lifestyle, it's very hot or have been exercising on any given day. In these cases, you will have to drink more.

Also, if you tend to sweat a lot, you will need more water than someone else who doesn't.

So, drink if you are feeling thirsty AND drink enough to fully quench your thirst.

Finally, not all waters are good for you.

If you have a source of (proven) clean water near you, just stock it up. If not, while not ecological, mineral water is preferable.

However, there's an alternative, you can filter your water with a specialised jug (easily found on

Internet), which is more affordable and sustainable – or if you can afford the investment, you can buy a filtering system that is directly attached to your home water conduits.

Why should you filter water?

The question should actually be...why shouldn't you, actually.

These days pollutants of all sorts have contaminated our soils and consequently, our water reserves. Even wastewater treatment plants can't get rid of it all. Also, some waters can be contaminated with heavy pollutants, usually illegally dumped in the wilderness by some industries.

Thus, it's no surprise that we also have to watch the quality of our water, for health purposes and disease prevention.

While this may sound alarmist, it's our current reality. So, drink plenty of water but make sure, it's as clean as possible.

WEIGHT-LOSS MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

1. Stress & Weight-loss

Stress can have a massive impact on health, including weight.

A stressful event, like a divorce, a difficult situation at work, financial troubles or the loss of a loved one can possibly lead to weight fluctuations. Moreover, chronic stress – frequent or continual stress – can also have a significant impact on weight over time.

This is the case for emotional eaters, when dealing with a tough time, they will “calm” their frustration through food. This is why emotional eaters tend to really struggle with weight. Food becomes the source of comfort, a way of coping with other issues.

But the problem is that food that is not eaten for the purpose of bringing energy, becomes pointless to our bodies. So, our bodies have to deal with that excess of food and as you have guessed, they store it as fat...thinking hard times with no food may come and making some reserves. Just in case.

That's what allowed us to survive when agriculture and farming weren't a thing. Now, if nothing changes in our lifestyle, the fat stays and brings a whole new world of health issues with it!

Stress is not your friend if you:

- Want to stay healthy
- Want to lose weight
- Want to improve your physical appearance
- Want to improve your mental health
- Want to sleep regularly and soundly
- And want to significantly reduce your risk of disease.

If you are stressed when you are dealing with something difficult, your body will trigger a response called fight or flight. This mechanism will mainly release two hormones, adrenaline and cortisol.

Adrenaline will prepare your body to take action (in order to fight or flight) and will reduce the desire to eat. And then, when adrenaline wears off, cortisol – aka the stress hormone – will temporarily suppress some non-vital functions such as your immune, digestive, sexual and reproductive responses.

When your cortisol levels sky rocket on the regular or too much at once, you may crave foods high in sugar, carbs and fat content.

So, what are the most efficient stress management strategies out there?

They are actually pretty simple but they do require a bit of routine and to start with, a bit of discipline, nothing crazy – routine is the key world here!

Here are the most effective strategies to manage stress efficiently:

- A good sleeping pattern: Stress can easily lead to sleepless nights and the lack of sleep can increase stress. You're seeing the circular pattern here, right? Additionally, poor sleep will mess two hormones that control appetite, leptin and ghrelin. So, to improve your nights AND your stress levels, put into practice the following:
 - 2 to 4 hours before bedtime:
Avoid hardcore exercise and large & heavy meals
 - 1 hour before bedtime:
Dim lights and stop using electronics, TV, computers, tablets and smartphones
 - 30 minutes before bedtime:
Create a nice or calming ritual (brushing your teeth, keep on reading your book, make your to-do list for tomorrow, read a story to your kids...whatever rocks your boat, as long as it's gentle and doesn't involve anything with a screen.

Finally just learn to listen to your body... you are feeling tired because last night was a bit too short, go to bed sooner the following night. Something feels weird? Check with your doctor. And of course, you may need 9, 8 or 6 hours to sleep, we aren't all equal when it comes to that but regardless, if your body needs 9 hours of sleep, give it to him. You will feel so much better afterwards!

- Foods promoting relaxation: Some foods are brilliant to improve stress levels and even boost the body's natural responses against stress.

For example, Brazil nuts are high in selenium – a mineral that may improve the mood by reducing inflammation levels, which tend to be higher with mood disorders, such as anxiety or high stress levels. 3 to 4 Brazil nuts is more than enough to get your daily selenium intake!

Similarly, fatty acids are crucial for health and low levels of omega-3 and too much omega-6 can increase the risk of developing mood disorders. So, make sure to eat a fatty fish (small ones though, ask when in doubt) at least once a week. Flaxseeds are also a good source of omega-3 but should you need to, find a good quality omega-3 supplement with EPA and DHA fatty acids. (13)

- Natural supplements: I just mentioned the mineral selenium and omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. All of these nutrients are needed for the body to function optimally. However, they are not the only ones. Due to the impoverishment of certain soils, many vegetables, fruits, plants and even animals, don't get the same nutrition as they used to. Consequently, we don't either. As such, depending on your own environment and health, it's important to understand what you need most in your diet. Doing a very thorough blood work can be useful in the matter. Also, consulting a naturopath or someone who combines nutrition with lifestyle can help you figure out what you need the most.

Nonetheless, if you live in the Northern hemisphere, you have a sedentary office job, a darker skin tone (regardless of ethnicity), spend a lot of time indoors and not a lot of time outside – you probably are deficient in Vitamin D. Don't worry, most of the Occidental population currently is! And this “vitamin” is normally synthesised through the action of sunshine on our skin. It's currently recommended to supplement with at least 5000UI to 10 000UI of vitamin D3 (best kind) between October and Mars/April.

Similarly, (organic) eggs who contain good quantities of vitamin D, also contain tryptophan, an amino acid that is a precursor of the neurotransmitter called serotonin. Serotonin is essential to regulate mood, memory, sleep and behaviour. Higher levels of serotonin improve brain function and reduce anxiety levels. (14)

- Regular exercising: Many people have found that exercising is one of the best stress relievers out there. And you know what, science backs this up!

Virtually any form of exercise, from an actual sport like cycling or yoga, to any sort of physical activity like working on a house or cleaning, will act as a stress reliever. (15)

Physical activity will boost the production of endorphins, another brain's neurotransmitter that simply...makes you feel good!

In other words, physical activity makes you feel good, improves your confidence, helps you relax (as you need to focus on what you are doing) and finally, it can help you lower stress levels, anxiety and even mild to moderate depression symptoms.

However, if you do not know where to start, pay attention to the next sub-chapter: Easy Body Movements for a Smooth Weight-loss. Physical activity & exercising doesn't have to be hard, it just has to happen regularly. :)

- Provided audio: The audio that is provided with this Manual, the Quick Start Guide and the numerous recipes (food & drinks) will help you achieve the desired results – losing weight for good.

Listen to it every time you have a moment for yourself – whether it's early in the morning, during lunch break or at night, when things quiet down. Just listen to it and be open-minded. It will help you reinforce the changes you are making and keep your motivation going...until discipline becomes part of your routine. And as such, it will no longer be called discipline but simply, routine! That's why this audio is essential, it's another tool designed to help you succeed.

2. Easy Body Movements for a Smooth Weight-loss

Starting moving more often can be a significant change, if you have become used to quite a sedentary lifestyle.

However, it most certainly doesn't have to be hard. Often, that's why people can't stick with it. They start going full on, even if their physical shape isn't quite up to scratch.

Instead, take your time, breathe, learn to re-familiarize yourself with your own body and personal strength.

And for that, slow movements and breathing exercises are a MUST!

So, how should you go about it?

Start by incorporating something easy daily or at least, every two days. For instance, you could start by going on a gentle walk in the early AM's or late PM's by yourself or with a friend. You have a dog? Even better, you know what to do!

Walking and (especially) hiking are brilliant ways to get in shape smoothly and in a very rounded manner, as many muscle groups are engaged when doing so.

After a couple of weeks or a month, you can gently increase your levels of physical activity. You may have heard that there is a nice class of yoga for beginners? Well, give it shot, you may, or may not like it but you won't know unless you try it.

For someone else, it could be going to the swimming pool to swim or do a class of aerobics in water with other people. Which are both excellent options for people who have joint pain and need a low impact but full body workout!

But generally speaking, sports or physical activity that focuses on slow movements like yoga (beware some types of yoga aren't as easy as they look like, far from it actually), tai chi (or Tai Ji Quan), qi gong and ...other practices associating breathing, meditation with slow exercises are brilliant to familiarize ourselves with our bodies and our own natural rhythm. Moreover, they accommodate all ages and all physical shapes.

And if they don't, look for another teacher and class. There are far more people proposing (sometimes free) introductions to this kind of exercises nowadays.

No hocus pocus here, just letting our bodies do their thing while respecting them.

For some, a group activity will be preferable or an activity within a sporting facility (gym, kayaking, canoeing, basket ball, football, rugby, tennis, etc.). If you have those available where you live, try an introduction course and see if you enjoy it! Don't be impressed, everyone starts at the beginning. :)

You would be surprised at all the things that start improving with conscious exercise (sleep, stress management and overall mood just to name a few).

Just remember: start gently and also, with physical activity of any kind, it has to be FUN!

So, have fun!

3. Hormones & Weight

I previously mentioned that stress was a big factor in messing with numerous hormones (particularly, cortisol levels). Being overweight or obese can produce an excess of oestrogen in men and testosterone in women and also, sleep can affect hormones that regulate appetite. I wish I could stop here. However, hormones are a complex issue and other hormones can also mess with our weight and our overall health.

Just know this, if you suspect or have hormonal issues, it's not the end of the world. Far from it. Nowadays, we can treat hormonal disorders really well. Moreover, we can prevent them from happening or improve their symptoms by adapting a healthier lifestyle and a richer, more nutritious diet.

A very important gland to watch for is the thyroid.

Small changes in thyroid function, especially lower functioning, are associated with weight gain. When this gland (found in the neck) can't secrete enough hormones, it can possibly result in a lower metabolism – which in turn increases fatigue and weight gain.

This is particularly prevalent in women. For instance, if you have a healthy lifestyle and have been putting on weight, you should check with your physician or GP to make sure your thyroid is functioning well. Or, there isn't any other underlying health issue. Better to be safe than sorry. ;)

These days there's also an environmental concern when it comes to hormonal health. Recent research has shown that endocrine (aka hormonal systems) can be affected by certain chemicals.

You may have heard about one of the main culprits: BPA, Bisphenol A. There's a bigger list of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDC) but remember this, try to avoid foods, cleaning and hygiene products stored in plastics. This is a major rule to avoid most EDC. [\(16\)](#)

You will find ecological and healthier alternatives on specialised websites. While slightly more expensive than their mainstream counterparts, there are a lot healthier and will save you money – and health issues – on the long run.

Finally, it's paramount to optimize your levels of testosterone – for men – and your testosterone/oestrogen balance – for women.

Testosterone and oestrogen are the two main sexual hormones, the first one should be abundant in men and low in women, and for the second one, it should be low in men and healthily balanced in women.

If there is no underlying disease, you will be able to regulate or/and increase your sexual hormones by losing excess weight, exercising regularly and adopting a nutritious diet.

Should you have existing or suspected health issues – that affect your hormonal health – work with your physician or GP to get the suited treatment to improve your testosterone and/or oestrogen levels.

Nonetheless, if the health issues are minor to moderate, you could improve your hormonal health by improving your lifestyle and keeping it up on the long run.

In doubt, do consult a professional.

4. Nutrients & Weight

You may have heard the term CICO in a conversation about weight loss – which means Calories In and Calories Out.

While, this is a fundamental truth about weight loss, it just isn't enough.

Sure, you will lose weight if you eat less calories than what your body actually needs. However, the weight loss may not be optimal, nor healthy.

What do I mean by that?

Let's illustrate this with a glorious example.

You could eat a small burger and fries for every meal of the day and lose weight, IF the calorie content is smaller than what you do need to function. For example, an average man needs around 2000 calories daily for his body to function properly. If he eats 1600 calories or even 1900 calories daily of fast food, he will lose weight.

Regardless, that doesn't mean he will get healthier by doing so. Actually, he could lose weight and worsen his health at the same time.

So, that's not ideal since he will have a higher chance of getting sick, of being far more tired and stressed and, of messing up his metabolism by eating unhealthy foods. Long term, he will probably regain the weight lost and...some more.

To avoid this, there is only one answer.

Your OVERALL diet needs to be improved and as a result, you will:

- Reduce your risk of disease
- Improve fatigue and stress management
- Improve your physical appearance and your mental health

Let's have a look on how to spot deficiencies of some common vitamins and minerals, and how to treat them naturally.

Deficiencies – Symptoms and Treatment Explained

Brittle nails and hair are often the result of a deficiency of biotin – also known as vitamin B7. Also, a biotin deficiency can cause chronic fatigue, muscle pain, cramps and tingling in the extremities of the body.

To treat this deficiency, it's important to increase the intake of the following biotin-rich foods: egg yolks, organ meats, fish, meat, dairy, nuts, seeds, spinach, broccoli, sweet potatoes, cauliflower, bananas, yeast and whole grains.

Most of the foods in the previous paragraph are also important to replenish other vitamins B (niacin, riboflavin and pyridoxine, aka vitamins B3, B2 and B6). A deficiency of those is commonly linked to scaly patches and dandruff.

Bleeding gums is often the sign of vitamin C deficiency. Make sure to eat plenty of green leafy greens (they are also excellent to treat vitamin A deficiency), citruses, kiwis and other vitamin C rich foods daily.

Another extremely common deficiency can be linked to mood disorders...

Vitamin D is essential for mental and bone health. If you live in a northern latitude, make sure to take a vitamin D3 supplement from October to March. Or for all of the dark months (and maybe cold months) if you live closer to the North Pole. This supplementation will make sure you have enough vitamin D in your organism. Since, vitamin D is mainly synthesised from sun exposure.

Similarly, a deficiency in magnesium, an essential mineral can reduce muscle repair and increase sleepless or agitated nights. Factors that are essential for physical and mental well-being.

Eating many nuts, seeds, a varied diet of vegetables and a little bit of dark chocolate (70% or more) is usually enough to treat a deficiency. In most severe cases, a magnesium supplement may be required for a small cure (a month or two maximum).

Finally, just remember this:

A diet that is nutrient-poor will cause several symptoms, as a result of too little vitamins and minerals for the body to function optimally.

By simply increasing your intake of nutrient-rich foods, you will significantly reduce or resolve your symptoms.

5. Intermittent Fasting

You may have heard about intermittent fasting, it's been quite trendy in the past few years. (17)

However, do you know how it can help you improve and achieve your weight-loss goals?

In simple and understandable terms, intermittent fasting is basically alternating cycles of fasting and eating. Instead of a usual eating schedule (i.e. breakfast, lunch and dinner) or pure fasting for a certain period of time.

Intermittent fasting isn't about what you eat (although it works better if you eat healthily), it's about WHEN you eat these foods.

For instance, there are several methods of intermittent fasting, as such, it's easier to find a method that really works with you and your lifestyle.

Let's look at them!

Different Types of Intermittent Fasting

- The 16/8 Method: In this method, you fast for 16 hours and have a eating window of eight hours. Some people prefer fasting for 14 hours or even 18 or 20 hours and have, in the later case, a much smaller window of eating. However, it's preferable to start with the easier 16/8 or even 14/10 method, to avoid massive hunger at first. As you will decrease the amount of carbs you eat, it will get easier to do this type of fasting – or any other type for that matter.

Need a practical example?

You could start eating at 12pm have brunch and then, have diner at 8pm. If your day is rather physical, you could have a snack in the afternoon. Of course, you could eat earlier in the morning and have an early "diner". This is why the 16/8 method is ideal to start intermittent fasting.

- The 5/2 Diet: This fasting method is a bit different. You eat "normally" for 5 days a week and then, reduce your calorie intake to 500/600 calories on two days of the week. Most people prefer doing the "fasting" days on the week-ends. However, if you don't have a very physical job, you could also do it during working days – and well, freelancers, you can do it whenever! Ideally, fasting days consist in two light meals (250 calories per meal for a woman and 300 for a man).

To help you figure out the calorie content of foods, you can find calorie calculators online.

- Alternate Fasting: This method has various versions. One of the most interesting ones, is doing a full 24 hour fast, one or twice weekly. To do so, you need to add 24 hours of fast after your last meal. So, if you finish diner Tuesday at 8pm, you will eat again Wednesday at 8pm.

It's a great option for those who are already more familiar and comfortable with intermittent fasting.

- OMAD aka One Meal A Day: This method of fasting is also ideal for fasting veterans, as it can be quite hard for a beginner to only eat...one meal a day. This method is very efficient for weight-loss because your stomach can only stretch so much.

So, as the name suggests it, you only eat a meal a day, whenever you want. So, to make sure you get all the nutrients you need, go for a "bento style" meal with various vegetables, fruits, nuts, plenty of healthy fats and protein (and a little extra carbs for those physical days).

- Spontaneous Fasting: This method is ideal for people who don't have a very structured job and/or lifestyle. It allows a lot more freedom.

Basically, you simply skip meals from time to time. If you aren't very hungry tonight, well, don't eat. You are having a nauseous, hard morning...? Skip breakfast! Especially, if you have been known to skip the so-called "most important meal of the day". Know this: it's a myth. You don't NEED breakfast to function, you need FOOD – technically calories and nutrients – but not all the time either. ;)

6. Beauty Sleep & Weight

Quite often the importance of sleep is overlooked. Yet, good sleep is paramount to have an overall good health and weight management (or weight-loss)!

Previously, I have mentioned that poor sleeping habits mess hormonal health and are also pretty rough in regards of our mental health.

To illustrate this, let's look at one of the worst health offenders of this century: sleep deprivation.

On average, if someone sleeps 5 hours a night for a week, it leads to an increase of weight of 2 pounds (slightly less than 1 kg).

Moreover, as quickly mentioned earlier, two very important hormones are messed up when you aren't sleeping enough. Even, if it's just one sleepless night.

Sleep deprivation causes a reduction in leptin levels – the hormone that suppresses appetite and encourages your body to expand energy (aka burn calories). On the other hand, ghrelin levels increase when you aren't getting enough Zzz. And ghrelin, as you might have guessed, is the hormone that controls hunger. [\(18\)](#)

To add to all of that, a sleep deprived mind isn't exactly rational. When low on sleep, your brain struggles to make reasoned decisions and when it comes to food, you will be more impulsive and give into all sorts of cravings.

So, if you are craving junk food or high fat/high sugar foods, you will be more likely to eat more while being sleep deprived. Even if it was just one night of less sleep!

Thus, just after a single night, you can gain weight. If this sleeping pattern is recurrent, it gets easier and easier to put on weight.

However, sleep deprivation doesn't specifically affect just weight – it also has other significant consequences on:

- Sexual Health & Libido: Do you want to have sex after a long arduous day, if you are still tired? Probably not. Tiredness can severely affect sexual life and sleep deprivation will eventually have an impact on your ability to “perform well”. In men, testosterone levels plummet and poor sleep can lead to erectile dysfunction. In woman, testosterone levels drop too and the little they need is necessary for physical arousal and desire.
- Physical Appearance & Health: When lacking sleep, our body produces less human growth hormone (aka HGH). This hormone is necessary to repair and refresh cells throughout the body, such as skin, muscles and bone. HGH makes you feel younger... from the inside out!

So, simply by improving sleep, you will get a HGH boost and collagen production will also increase (it gives your skin elasticity). Also, you will improve muscle mass and bone health – two essential factors to keep your body fit and your physical appearance lit!

Moreover, by not resting well and losing mass, your muscle mass and bones can also put you in danger. Your body needs rest to function well. Between, a slower working brain and tired muscles, your risk of accident goes through the roof – making you a major danger to yourself and in some cases, to others.

Finally, good and regular sleep is crucial to help us fight illnesses and boost our immune system.

- Mental health: Last but not least, sleep deprivation is a major actor in worsening mental health. If you already have enough on your plate, as it is, you may want to consider improving your sleeping habits as soon as possible. Lack of sleep triggers a cortisol spike and

the stress hormone will signal your body to conserve energy to fuel your active hours...

Meaning: your body will stock on fat. Which is also not great for mental health or...health.

So, how can you improve your sleeping habits and make your biological clock (aka your circadian rhythms)?

Improving your Sleep Naturally

You have several methods to help you improve sleep naturally.

Check the following chart to find out the best ways to improve sleep naturally.

Exercise	Natural Supplements	Foods	Stress Management	"Good Sleep" Strategies
Swimming	5-HTP also known as oxitriptan	Dark Chocolate (70% or more)	Meditation (especially Mindfulness)	One hour before bedtime, switch off anything electronic
Jogging	Tryptophan	Bananas	Yoga	Ambient and warm lights in the evening
Cycling	Magnesium	Warm milk or vegetal milks (besides soy milk)	Pilates	Reading a book
Cardiovascular Team Sports	Lavender Essential Oil (to diffuse, not ingest)	Chamomile tea	Tai Chi	Listening to natural sounds
Martial Arts	Melatonin	Almonds and walnuts	Qi Gong	Listening to an audiobook or a relaxing podcast
Kayaking &	Valerian Root	Turkey	Breathing	Drawing &

Canoeing			exercises	Painting in the evening
Surfing	Passion flower	Fatty fishes	Body Scan (with your mind)	Writing (a book or tomorrow's to do list)
Hiking & Trekking	Glycine	Kiwi	Praying or Saying to yourself what you are grateful for	Playing a board game
Badminton & Tennis	L-Theanine	Passionflower tea	Organising your time and days properly	Doing a big puzzle

Finally, the audio provided with this program is an EXCELLENT tool to help you improve your sleep and reduce your stress levels.

Use them whenever you have some calm time and just listen to it. Do nothing else.

They will help you, unconsciously, to make the most of this program and most importantly, achieve and maintain your weight-loss!

KITCHEN TOOLS

1. Things you Won't need

First things first, ditch all the junk in your kitchen, including but not limited to:

- Refined grains and products made with them (white rice, white pasta, white bread, white flour, etc.)
- Hydrogenated oils and margarine
- Industrial pre-made meals (loaded with unhealthy fats, sugar, carbs, salt and preservatives)
- Sweet cereals and even the ones without sugar aren't necessarily healthy, prefer a home-made porridge with sweetener
- Sodas with or without sugar (unless it's sweetened with stevia or a safe sugar alcohol like erythritol)
- Sweets, cookies, cakes, biscuits, chocolates other than dark, ice cream and anything else loaded with sugar and/or way too much fat
- Sugar and all of its variants (check page 10 to know the main culprits)
- Anything else that screams unhealthy or that you are "addicted" to

2. Must Haves

A clean and well organised kitchen is essential for weight-loss and quite simply, to eat well and cook pleurably.

If your kitchen looks apocalyptic, start by cleaning it and making sure you have the basics to cook proper meals.

If not, go to your local cheap reseller and stock up on pots, pans, spatulas, drainers, etc... Also, place them in easy to reach locations. If you are the proud owner of a dusty slow cooker or a blender (etc.), clean it and place it in your kitchen. You can do wonderful and easy meals with those!

A great trick to keep your fridge full – of the good stuff – is to have a board/piece of paper in the kitchen on which you can write the groceries you need.

Stock up on the basic healthy foods, such as nuts, legumes, spices, herbs, meat and fish (freeze them), eggs, etc.

Invest in good quality containers (transparent) to do your weekly meal prep – which is a MUST if you have a hectic lifestyle!

Finally, keep your kitchen clean, wash your dishes daily or put them in the dishwasher, and keep your cooking station clean. Trust me, it's a game changer!

3. Best Snacks at Home or on the Go

Here's a list of the best snacks to eat for weight-loss and maintenance, mix & match them according to your ACTUAL calorie needs:

- Nuts: High in healthy fats, many minerals, filling and delicious, nuts are an ideal “pick me up” snack. Especially, if you haven't had much calories and need a little boost. However, one small handful tends to be around 200 calories. So, don't overdo it and make sure you have enough calories to spare!
- Red bell pepper with guacamole: Red bell peppers are packed with antioxidants, vitamin C and very little calories. Guacamole adds healthy fatty acids and is super tasty!
- Cucumber or celery with hummus: If you're not on keto, hummus and cucumber – or celery – is a brilliant snack to have slow release energy and keep losing weight.
- Greek yogurt with mixed berries: Plain Greek yogurt is packed with protein and healthy fats. Add some frozen or fresh mixed berries and you will get extra nutrients and anthocyanins to boot (check the anti-inflammation recipe book to know more about anthocyanins and p.14).
- Apple slices with peanut or almond butter: Apples are high in fibre (very filling) and nut butter increases “good” HDL cholesterol while reducing “bad” LDL cholesterol. However, do not exceed more than 1 tablespoon of nut butter.

- Cottage cheese with flax seeds: Cottage cheese is packed with protein and incredibly filling, add some flax seeds to boost weight-loss and improve blood sugar control/insulin resistance!
- Celery sticks with cream cheese: Celery contains an antioxidant, luteolin that reduces inflammation and 60 grams of cream cheese will fill you up and give you some extra protein.
- Dark chocolate and almonds: This is a rich and very satisfying snack for all sweet aficionados! Dark chocolate is loaded with flavanols that can lower blood pressure and improve heart health. And almonds have beneficial effects on blood sugar control. Also, both are rich in magnesium, a must for a physical day!
- Cherry tomatoes and mozzarella: Tomatoes are packed with vitamin C, potassium and lycopene, an antioxidant that may be able to reduce cancer risk. One full cup of cherry tomatoes and 60 grams of mozzarella is under 200 calories! ([19](#))
- Chia seeds pudding: Chia seeds are low carb and low in calories, they are also high in antioxidants. Mix your chia seeds with some vegetal milk, unsweetened cocoa powder, a little sweetener, refrigerate for 30min or overnight, and enjoy! You can also had some red berries for extra yumminess!
- Hard-boiled or soft-boiled eggs: Eggs are one of the best snacks, period. They have plenty of protein, all essential fatty acids we need and they are really filling! Two large eggs are usually 140 calories tops!
- Carrot sticks and blue cheese dressing: Switch the carrot for cucumber if you are doing a low carb diet. However, carrots are an excellent source of carotenoids, antioxidants that can be converted into vitamin A. A vitamin that reduces the risk of cancer, eye and heart diseases.
- Beef or any other meat jerky: Dried meat is packed with protein for little calories. Nevertheless, make sure it doesn't contain added sugars and preservatives.
- Canned sardines or dried fish: Canned or dried fish makes for a great and filling snack.

Moreover, fatty fishes are an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, which decreases your risk of heart disease.

- Turkey roll-ups: Turkey is an excellent source of protein with very little fat and calories. Add a little cream cheese and some cucumbers to your tasty roll-ups!
- Olives: Olives are loaded with healthy monounsaturated fats and antioxidants. Also, olives may reduce inflammation, insulin resistance and cancer risk. 25 or so olives are about 150 calories. ([20](#))
- Cantaloupe with prosciutto or Serrano ham: Cantaloupe is a delicious summery fruit full of water, vitamins A and C, and antioxidants. Adding prosciutto or Serrano ham to it creates a tasty sweet and salty treat, that will thoroughly excite your taste-buds!

CONCLUSION

& SMALL PEARLS OF WISDOM

Weight-loss is not a goal but a path, a path to improve dietary habits and lifestyle. In the process, you will lose the excess weight.

Weight-loss isn't a race either. The faster you go and the more hardcore you are, the more likely you will regain what you have lost and some more weight.

So, take your time. Make small changes gradually. Don't try to change your whole life overnight. It won't work.

Little, significant changes over a long period of time will stick. And eventually, they will become a habit that you won't have to think about anymore.

That's the goal. Making small steps towards a healthier lifestyle, to simply be healthy or at the very least, as healthy as can be!

When you fall off the wagon, don't be hard on yourself. Do better the following day and don't spiral out of control.

Ask your loved ones to keep you accountable when you are struggling. They won't sugar coat it, when you are or may be naughty!

Last but not least, be kind to yourself. You only get this one body, take care of it. Not religiously but nicely, with love.

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