



INTRO

Welcome to FLO Trainer's Introduction to Nutrition. In this course we will cover the basics of nutrition and some strategies you can implement to be more successful in your journey. I'm a big fan of what works. I don't subscribe to nutritional dogma or stick to particular way of thinking to prove I am right. Nutrition is actually pretty simple and over the years people have complicated it for a variety of reasons.

This course will arm you with knowledge that WORKS. Everything we discuss below is absolutely 100% based in facts, real world experience and common sense. There IS nothing special about what I'm going to show you. What is special is the freedom you get from the knowledge you will gain. Understanding sustainable nutrition will help you be more successful in your fitness journey.



FLO Trainer

ENERGY BALANCE (deficit v surplus)

Energy balance is the difference in the calories you take in versus the calories you put out. In simple terms it's:

Calories In (food in)
-Calories Out (activity out)

= Energy Balance

This is the most important concept in your fitness endeavors, as energy balance dictates whether you will lose weight or gain weight. If your energy balance is negative, that is what is called a “deficit”. Eating at a deficit will induce weight loss. If your energy balance is positive, that is called a “surplus”. Eating at a surplus will cause you to gain weight.

For example, if a person needs 2000 calories/day to maintain their weight, called “maintenance calories”, but only eats 1500 calories/day, they are creating a caloric deficit of 500 calories a day. Since this person is taking in less than they need, they will lose weight.

Let's say that same person eats 2500 calories/day. They will gain weight as they are taking in 500 calories/day more than what they need to maintain weight.

The great thing about energy balance is you can create a deficit through food AND your activity. The more active you are in your daily life, the more calories you need to maintain your weight.

Let's say you want to create an energy deficit of 500 calories/day and you need 2000 calories/day to maintain. Instead of just eating 1,500 calories/day you can:

Spend 250 calories via extra activity
(exercise, walking, bike riding etc..)
+ Eat 1,750 calories/day

= -500 calories/day

The combination of “extra” activity and the reduction in daily calories create a daily caloric deficit of 500 calories.



MACRONUTRIENTS

Proteins, fats, and carbohydrates are what make up your macronutrients or “macros”. To understand how macros make up your total calories, here is a quick lesson. Protein and carbohydrates equal 4 calories for every 1g. For example, if you eat 100g of protein and 100g of carbs, that totals 800 calories. 400 calories coming from carbs and 400 calories coming from protein. Fat on the other hand equals 9 calories for every 1g. So 100g of fat comes to 900 calories.

The main role of your macronutrients is to determine what type of “weight” you will either lose or gain with your energy balance. Eating higher amounts of protein will typically yield more muscle retention when you are eating at a deficit. This is important as when trying to lose “weight”, you really want to lose fat, not muscle. The reverse is true when trying to gain muscle and eating in a surplus. You want to add muscle, not a ton of fat.

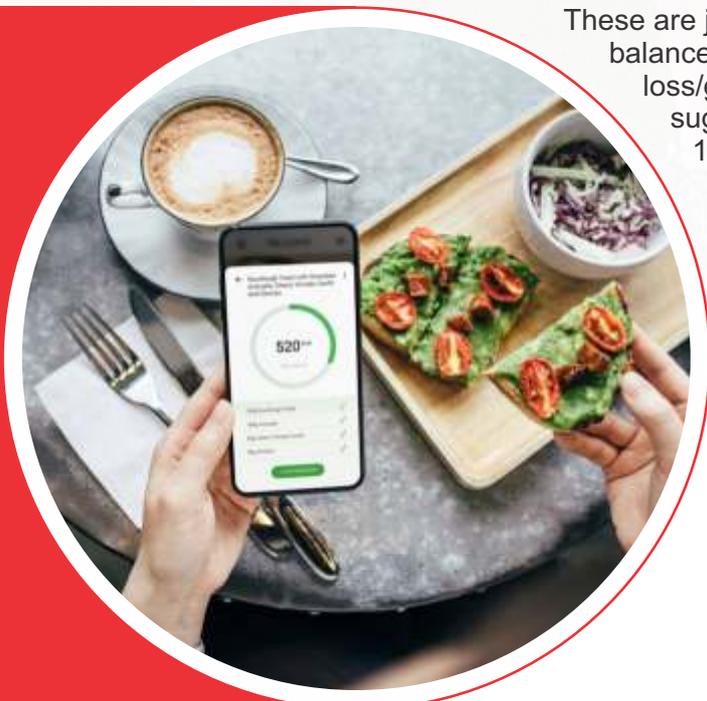
“GOOD FOOD” VERSUS “BAD FOOD”

Foods have gotten a bad rap over the years because of our inability to moderate our own intake and our fascination with a magic bullet solution to weight loss. For a while fat was “bad” and “fat free” foods flooded the market. Fast forward to today and putting a stick of butter in your coffee is ok because it's “Keto” coffee. Were people successfully losing weight and staying healthy eating low-fat foods years ago? YES! Are people successful today eating tons of fat on a Ketogenic diet? YES!

So what's the answer? Well it's simple and we already discussed it. Energy balance + macro breakdown. As long as you are eating in a caloric deficit and within a good macronutrient breakdown, there are no good or bad foods. The problem occurs when we don't stick to a caloric “budget” (we'll discuss this later). We look for foods to blame and label them as bad.

If “bad” foods caused people to be fat, than how did this [Professor lose 27lbs eating nothing but Twinkies?](#) [What about the teacher who 'lost 37lbs and reduced his cholesterol by eating 100% at McDonalds?](#)

These are just extreme examples that prove energy balance is THE most important factor in weight loss/gain, NOT avoiding “bad” foods. I am not suggesting anyone eat nothing but twinkies or 100% fast food. Neither of those food sources will create an environment for muscle to stick around or grow. Which is why macronutrients are the second most important factor in weight loss/gain. You will notice that when eating to specific macros, you will have to choose foods that aren't “junk” in order to hit the prescribed numbers.



EATING AT NIGHT AND FOOD TIMING

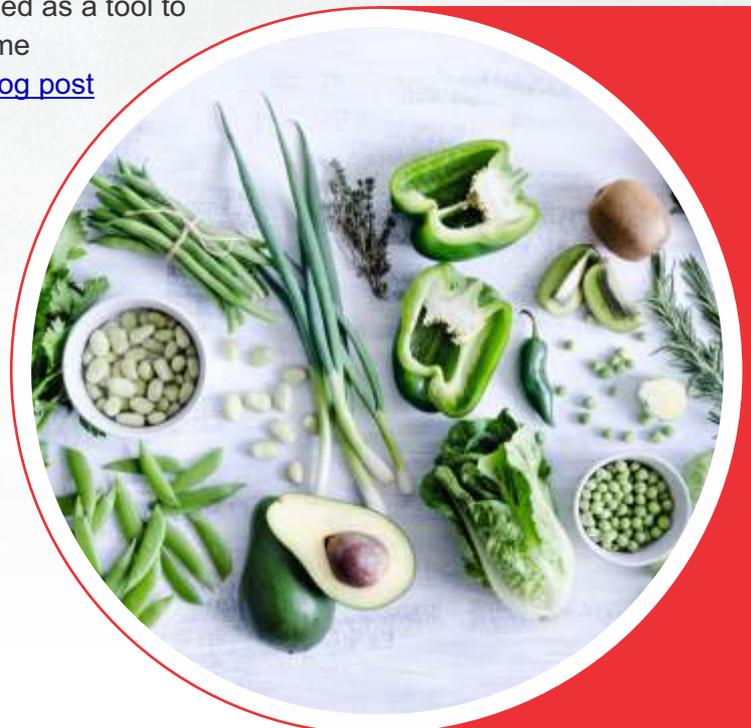
Have you heard of the late nights food fairies? They turn 200 calories into 400 after 7pm! I joke, but we are led to believe that eating at night makes us fat. This is simply not true. If you eat at night and are going over your daily calories, you will gain weight! If you eat in the morning and are going over your daily calories, you will gain weight! If you eat in the middle of the day etc..... You get my point. It doesn't matter when you eat, it matters how much.

Now some people have a harder time controlling themselves at night so they have a hard cut off time. Some people use intermittent fasting to create a "eating window" to ensure they get all their calories and macros in certain period of time. No matter what time you eat your foods, as long as you stick to.....you guessed it, energy balance, you will be successful!

INTERMITTENT FASTING

Intermittent Fasting is just NOT eating for a certain block time and eating for the other. The most popular method of IF is the 16/8 Method. This is fasting for 16 hours/day and eating for 8 hours/day. An example of this is a person would not start eating until 12p and stop eating at 8pm. While it is no magic bullet for fat loss, I believe it is an important tool to use because it helps to create mental toughness. You will be hungry, whether interment fasting or not, when you are in a caloric deficit and training hard. Ignoring that hunger and pushing on with your day will help you establish mentally that YOU are in control.

There is absolutely nothing special with Intermittent Fasting and fat loss. However, it can be used as a tool to help with your.....energy balance! For some strategies on how I use [IF check out my blog post HERE.](#)



TRACKING CALORIES AND MACRONUTRIENTS

In the world of health and fitness, things get unnecessarily complicated. Dieting, calories and macros are one of those things. Simply changing how you view you calories in and out can be a profound shift that leads to more consistency and a higher level of enjoyment. Just like when you have control of your finances, controlling you dietary “budget” gives you freedom and makes hitting your numbers much easier.

To begin, you have to know what you're “spending”. Track everything you eat for a week or two. Don't worry about total calories or macros. Just get used to the habit of tracking as soon as you eat something. There are some awesome apps out there that make this incredibly easy. My personal favorite is [MyFitnessPal. It's been around forever and has a HUGE database of foods. It also syncs with the software I use with my clients so naturally it makes my life easier.](#)

Once you have been tracking for a couple weeks, successfully and consistently, now add a calorie goal. Most tracking apps will help you with this too or you can use a calorie calculator. I have a great free one [on my site HERE. Don't worry about macros \(proteins, fats, and carbs\) just yet. See if you can successfully hit just a calorie target for a couple weeks.](#)

Now you have been successfully tracking for a month. The habit is there, you are more comfortable with whatever software you are using and it's time to add in macros. A good macro breakdown to start with is 33% of each macro. This will allow you to eat a variety of foods without being too limited. For example if you need to hit 1,500 calories/day to lose weight that breaks down:

33% from Protein = 495 calories from proteins
33% from Fat = 495 calories from fats
33% from Carbs = 495 calories from carbohydrates

Now remember our lesson above on how many grams equal how many calories for each macronutrient? This is how we determine how many grams of each macro we need per day.

33% from Protein = $495 \text{ calories} / 4 = 123\text{g}$
33% from Fat = $495 \text{ calories} / 9 = 55\text{g}$
33% from Carbs = $495 \text{ calories} / 4 = 123\text{g}$

Now the goal is to track and meet these macro targets each day. Focusing on these macros will automatically have you hitting your specific calorie goal, 1,500 calories in our example above.

If you work with me, or any good coach for that matter, these goals are given to you so you won't have to figure this stuff out on your own. However, I believe it's important that you understand where the numbers come from and how to get them yourself.



MEASURING FOOD (WHAT MAKES IT EASIER)

Tracking is only as good as your measurements. I've been doing this for a decade and I still weigh and measure my food because humans are notoriously bad at eye balling foods. So get yourself a few tools to make it easier:

- Food Scale – I prefer to weigh my food raw or before cooking it.
- Measuring Cups
- Measuring Spoons

Once you know the amounts of your foods, you can determine it's calories and macros. Most tracker apps will have a search function and a database that's pretty accurate. You can also scan the barcodes on most foods in those apps as well. If you can't find what you are looking for, try doing a Internet Search. "How many calories in 4oz of 90/10 ground beef?" And you will eventually find what you are looking for.

CELEBRATIONS, NIGHTS OUT OR "CHEAT DAYS".. ...HOW TO FIT THEM IN DON'T AVOID THEM

Unless you are a competitive body builder, than you probably have times where you will go "off diet" due to life. This is healthy and absolutely NORMAL! No one is 100% on track 100% of the time. Life is meant to be enjoyed, so let me show you how to work it in with your nutrition goals.

Remember above how we said that your calories are like a daily budget? You decide how to spend those calories. Think of your calories just like a paycheck. Each day you get a deposit. Let's say 2000 calories is what you need to lose weight. You start each day with a "deposit" of 2,000 calories. That's 14,000 for the week. Don't think of each day as a pass or fail. You know you're getting another 2,000 calories tomorrow and the next day and so on. So lets say on Monday you go out with family and eat 2,500 calories, it's not the end of the world, just adjust. You could eat 1,500 the next day, or you could eat 100 less for the next 5 days to make up for the overage of 500 calories. It's up to you!

Another strategy is using Intermittent Fasting as a tool, you could "save up" you calories for the day you are going to potentially go over your caloric needs. Using the number above, lets say I need to stay under 2000 calories for the day, but I am going out later tonight. Literally just don't eat during the day. When you go out, you will have all 2,000 calories to spend and know that you are still within your calorific needs for the day. It's entirely up to you on how you "slice the cake".

The point is that you are able to be flexible with your diet because you understand how it all works. This knowledge makes it more likely that you will be successful through consistent habits and building on each block, creating a strong foundation!



WRAP UP

Nutrition isn't difficult. The diet industry, fitness industry, and food industry try to make it seem that way to sell you something. Nutrition, much like life, is all about balance. Unfortunately common sense, moderation and balance aren't sexy sellers.

There are no shortcuts, magic bullets or easy ways in dieting. There are no "only one way" either. What works for you, might not work for me. While nutrition and dieting is simple, it certainly isn't "easy" and takes consistency in your habits to be successful.

I hope this crash course in nutrition was useful to you and you picked up some knowledge along the way. If you have any questions, please [shoot me a message via email or on social! My goal is to help others become the best they can be, and nutritional knowledge is the cornerstone of that process!](#)



