

Your Life Is In The Balance
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The foundation of Rugged Elegant Living is simply stated: Healthy living means balanced living. Your body is a complex, organic system which functions best when it is in balance. In fact, we define health as living in balance. Disease, on the other hand, results from the accumulation of imbalances in the body.

Here is our theory of health, stated front and center for your consideration:

By balancing the level of insulin in your body you will achieve optimal health.

Of all the things you need to balance in your life, we believe that balancing your insulin levels is the most critical. By balancing your insulin you will reap the following benefits:

- 1) Permanent reduction of body fat because high levels of insulin make you fat and keep you fat.
- 2) Improved mental functioning because your brain functions best when your blood sugar is stable.
- 3) Improved physical performance because your body functions best when insulin and blood sugar levels are stable.
- 4) Dramatic reduction in disease risk because high levels of insulin foster a myriad of health problems: obesity, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diminished immune system function.

Think of insulin as a switch. High levels of insulin shift your body into fat storage mode while low, balanced levels of insulin shift your body into fat burning mode. How do you achieve balanced levels of insulin in your body? Here are important points. We call them "The Ten Commandments of Balanced Living."

1. Exercise

Exercise not only burns calories during your workout, exercise increases your cell's responsiveness to insulin for up to two to three hours after you complete your workout. This means that your insulin levels will be reduced and your body will transition into fat burning mode. Exercise should include both aerobic exercise (walking, running, biking) and anaerobic training (weight and resistance training).

2. Eat Like a Neanderthal

Agriculture did not appear on the scene until 8,000 to 10,000 years ago, which is the blink of the eye from an evolutionary point of view. We, as a species, have simply not evolved to eat a diet consisting of refined carbohydrates such as Honey Nut Cheerios, Coca-Cola, Krispy Kreme Donuts and red licorice.

From an evolutionary point of view, we should be eating the same types of food that our prehistoric ancestors ate: lots of fruits, vegetables, and low fat protein.

In fact, researchers from Colorado State University found that hunter-gatherers consumed a diet consisting of, by caloric intake: 27% protein, 31% carbohydrates and 43% fat (Eur J Clin Nutr 2002 Mar;56 Suppl 1:S42-52).

Since we are less active than our prehistoric ancestors, and therefore need less fat for energy, Rugged Elegant Living recommends that you use the following ratios as a starting point: 30% protein, 40% carbohydrates and 30% fat. The easy way to achieve this ratio is to use the "hand" method described in the next section.

3. Eat Small and Often

Because small meals and snacks are a better match for your body's ongoing energy needs, you will keep your insulin in balance by eating small meals and two to three small snacks per day. Large meals lead to excess insulin production and puts your body into fat storage mode. Any food that you eat in excess of your body's immediate energy needs gets stored as fat. You should try to never eat more than 500 calories at a meal. A good rule of thumb, actually a rule of hand, is as follows:

Meals:

a. Low-fat Protein (chicken, turkey, fish, egg whites, low-fat cottage cheese, tofu)
-- A serving of low-fat protein about the size of your palm.

b. Carbohydrates: Choose **one** of the following.

EITHER

Bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, fruit, oatmeal, strawberries:

-- A serving about the size of your clenched fist

OR

Vegetables (broccoli, lettuce, green beans, mushrooms, spinach, asparagus, cucumber)

-- A serving about the size of two loose handfuls

c. Fat (olive oil, cashews, avocado, macadamia nuts, almonds)

-- A serving about the size of the tip of your thumb above your knuckle.

Snacks:

Approximately 1/3 of what you eat at a meal.

4. Eat Your Fruits and Vegetables

Did you know that bread, pasta, rice, fruits and vegetables are all carbohydrates? Refined carbohydrates — such as bread, pasta and rice — are fast-acting carbohydrates because they stimulate a rapid rise in insulin levels. A high level of insulin means that nearly all of plateful of pasta you ate for lunch gets stored as fat on your body. Worse yet, insulin works so hard to bring your blood sugar under control that you often end up with low blood sugar one to two hours after eating fast-acting carbohydrates. At this point, your brain screams out for more fast-acting carbohydrates. A Snickers bar may satisfy the carb craving, but puts you right back on the blood sugar roller coaster.

Does this mean that you can never enjoy bread, rice or pasta again? No, it simply means that you should eat these fast-acting carbohydrates in moderation.

Fruits and vegetables are also a much preferred source of carbohydrates. Not only are they slow-acting carbohydrates which will keep your insulin levels in check, they are also a great source of vitamins and antioxidants — which are critical to maintaining health.

5. Eat Low-fat Protein

The best sources of protein are beans, fish, poultry, egg whites and low-fat cottage cheese. Your consumption of red meat should be minimized because it has high levels of saturated fat, which reduces your cells' receptivity to insulin.

It is interesting to note that beef has a high level of saturated fat because cattle are fattened with a low-fat diet consisting of over 60% fast-acting carbohydrates (ground grain). Sound familiar? This is exactly what the USDA recommends for humans. Is it any wonder that obesity in the U.S. has doubled over the last 30 years?

6. Eat Healthy Fats

Dietary fat has gotten a bad rap. We have all been bombarded with the all-fat-is-bad dogma. Yes, there are certain types of fat which should be avoided such as trans fats (found in margarine, potato chips, cookies, snack foods) and saturated fats (found in red meats, egg yolks, cheese). Both trans fats and saturated fats decrease your cells receptivity to insulin, resulting in high levels of insulin circulating in your body.

Other types of fat, such as monounsaturated fat (found in olive oil, almonds, cashews, avocados) and polyunsaturated fat (found in vegetable oils) are good for you. These fats add flavor to your food, give you a sense of fullness and help to slow down the rate at which carbohydrates are converted into blood glucose, which keeps your insulin levels low.

Yes you read this right: The right kind of fat in your diet actually **helps** you to burn fat!

"The bottom line is this: It is perfectly fine to get more than 30 percent of your

daily calories from fats *as long as most of those fats are unsaturated,*" says Dr. Walter C. Willett, M.D., Chairman, Department of Nutrition at the Harvard School of Public Health in his recent book, "Eat, Drink and Be Healthy."

7. Drink (Water) Link A Fish

Water consumption is critical to our ongoing health. As you lower your levels of insulin, your body will naturally burn fat for energy. Drinking 64 ounces of water per day helps to eliminate the resultant waste products.

8. Drink Alcohol in Moderation

If you choose to drink, you should do so in moderation. In fact, many studies have shown that one drink a day — especially of red wine with a meal — is beneficial to your health. Please note that that one drink (4 oz. glass of wine, 12 oz. beer, 1 oz. distilled spirit) should be treated as a fast-acting carbohydrate. As such, you should reduce your carbohydrate consumption to 1/2 a fist of fast-acting carbohydrates or 1 loose handful of slow-acting carbohydrates when enjoying a drink with your meal.

9. Supplement Your Food With Fish Oil

Due to changes in our food supply, our diets are woefully lacking in Omega-3 fatty acids. Whereas beef cattle and chickens once grazed on grass, which is high in Omega-3 fatty acids, they now feed on grain which is low in Omega-3 fatty acids. It is theorized that the resultant deficiency in Omega-3 fatty acids has brought on a plethora of modern autoimmune diseases such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, multiple sclerosis, and rheumatoid arthritis.

Fish oil supplements, which are rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, have been proven in study after study to fight not only autoimmune diseases but also to improve cholesterol profiles, reduce the risk of heart attacks and help people deal with depression.

10. Take A Good Multivitamin Once A Day

A good multivitamin helps ensure that you are getting all the critical micronutrients that **your** body needs. According to Walter Willett of Harvard, "Many chronic diseases such as some cancers and heart disease could be due to vitamin deficiencies."

Summary

Remember this: This is not a short-term diet but rather a change in your lifestyle. By following this program, you should expect to lose 1-2 pounds per week. More importantly, your long-term health outlook will improve.

To change your life permanently, you must make permanent changes to your life.

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