

# The Biggest Loser Challenge



**PEAK PHYSIQUE FITNESS**

**MKETRAINER.COM**

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# Welcome to The 28 Day Challenge!

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## I'm VERY excited to have you as a part of this challenge!

The next four weeks are going to be a life-changing journey filled with new experiences and self-discovery.

This challenge was created to help you reach your goals with *intention*.

By following this plan, you will boost your metabolism, eliminate sugar cravings, & rid your body of unwanted fat!

The benefits of this eating strategy stretch far beyond fat loss, however.

You'll be eating a LOT of delicious recipes that are loaded with energy-boosting, nutritious, and healing properties.

### Here's a quick snapshot of some of the other benefits:

- ❖ Naturally balance blood sugar and helps eliminate cravings
- ❖ Supports hormone production and rebalancing
- ❖ Improves brain health and help protect against dementia and other disorders
- ❖ Improves memory and clear brain fog
- ❖ Improves digestion
- ❖ Increases energy levels
- ❖ Improves fertility
- ❖ Improves quality of sleep
- ❖ Decreases anxiety and mood swings

I'm very excited and grateful to be a part of your journey to better health and fitness.

I'm here to help and answer any questions, no matter how big or small.

I want you to have the BEST possible experience and get the BEST possible results, so please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks again for trusting in us and joining us for the next four weeks.

Sincerely,

**RICKY GRABOW**

**[RGRABOW@MKETRAINER.COM](mailto:RGRABOW@MKETRAINER.COM)**

# Let's Get Started!

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## First...the Basics

Over the next 28-days, you'll be eating a real, whole-foods based meal plan. If it comes out of a box, you're probably not going to find it on the grocery list.

Great nutrition is the foundation of great results. Your main focus is going to be on eating high-quality protein, healthy fat, nutrient dense greens, and real fruits and vegetables.

Processed foods laden with chemicals, artificial colorings and preservatives are NOT on this plan.

Other things you won't find here: added sugars like high fructose corn syrup, inflammation-causing grains (like white bread or other baked goods), and most dairy.

*Inflammation is the root of all disease in the body.*

That's why the overall goal of this challenge is to feed your body with nutrient rich foods to help reduce inflammation so your body can heal and restore itself.

As your body begins to balance out, you'll notice increased energy, better quality of sleep, better digestion, and increased fat loss.

I am VERY excited about the next 28-days, because what you will be learning can literally change the rest of your life.

## Powerful Protein:

*"When life gives you lemons, ask for something higher in protein." – Anonymous*

Simply put, we wouldn't exist without protein. Protein plays a lead role in nearly every function in your body.

It's part of every cell in your body, and is used to help build muscle, organs, and other tissues. It's also important for brain health and to help make enzymes, hormones, and other necessary chemicals.

Not only that, eating the right amount of protein will help to boost your metabolism and keep your weight in check.

AND....protein can also help you avoid gaining unwanted weight in the first place. This is because when you're eating enough protein, you'll feel more full for a longer period of time, and have less of an urge to eat junk food.

In fact, studies have shown that when women eat around 30% of their diet from protein, they eat 441 fewer calories per day.

For this challenge, you'll be eating about 30% of your calories from protein – which is ideal for fat-loss and maintaining lean muscle mass.

You'll be eating high-quality proteins like grass-fed meats, wild fish, and free-range poultry.

If you're thinking that eating like this may start to get expensive.... it really doesn't have to!

A lot of times you can find items on sale- just buy in bulk and freeze them! Also- make sure you check out local farms and farmers markets.

Most of the time, you'll be able to get a much better deal because you're buying direct from the source. Not only that, but it's always great to support our local community ☺

Make sure to read the “Personalizing Your Plan” section in this manual for details on how to adjust these numbers based on your individual needs.

## **The Not-So-Sweet Truth About Sugar...**

Added sugars (*that don't occur naturally in the foods you are eating*) can be absolutely detrimental to your health.

We've already talked about how inflammation is the root of all disease in the body...

I'm talking about diseases like cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer's, digestive disorders, arthritis, and the list goes on and on.

Consuming a high amount of refined sugars is a **LEADING** cause of inflammation in your body.

Did you know that soda and other sugary drinks are the #1 source of calories in the American diet!?

**Here are a few not-so-sweet facts about sugar:**

- ❖ Sugar **promotes inflammation** in the body – the root cause of disease.
- ❖ Large amounts of sugar will **suppress your immune system**. (*Imagine how your immune systems suffers if you're eating processed sugars every meal.*)
- ❖ Sugar **suppresses the release of HGH** (Human Growth Hormone) in the body.
- ❖ Sugars will raise your insulin levels- which over time can lead to a whole host of diseases.
- ❖ Sugars have a massive **negative effect on energy levels** throughout the day.
- ❖ Impacts your hormones and your ability to deal with stress.

Artificial sugars like Splenda and Aspartame are no better for you, either. They have been proven to have countless negative effects in your body and especially in your brain.

Sugar in itself is NOT bad. In fact, we need a certain amount of it to even survive and be able to think straight.

The problem really stems from the quick rise in our blood sugar levels when we consume large amounts sugar on a regular basis.

When you eat healthy carbs- like a sweet potato or an apple, you're also eating the fiber that comes along with it. Digestion is slowed down, so even though you're eating sugar, your blood sugar levels do not raise as fast. Your body can easily handle it.

If you drink a Coke, there's no fiber or anything to slow down the digestive process, and your blood sugar levels spike to unnatural highs.

So- for this challenge, we're going to keep it close to nature.

We're going to stay away from ALL white and refined sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, and artificial sweeteners.

Acceptable substitutes (in moderation, of course) are raw coconut palm sugar, raw local honey, dates, and Green Leaf Stevia.

The first three are slow to raise your blood sugar levels, so they're ok in small amounts. Green Leaf Stevia is a much less processed form of Stevia and does not have an impact on your blood sugar levels. It has been around for centuries. It's about 30-40 times sweeter than regular sugar... so make sure you only use the smallest amount!

Remember- this is a LIFESTYLE approach, not a fad diet. I don't want you feeling deprived in any way- so it's all about finding healthier alternatives to what you're already eating! ☺

## The Skinny on Fat...

We hear it all the time- fat is BAD for you! Drink skim milk instead of whole. Get fat-free yogurt instead of full-fat. Have an egg white omelet. Trim the fat off your meat and remove the skin before you eat it!

But is this really the best advice? Here are the real facts about fat...

It's important to understand that **eating fat does not make us fat.**

If you're looking for the shady criminal to blame- look no further than the processed carbs, sugar, and HFCS that find their way into almost everything we eat.

**Plain and simple: eating SUGAR makes us fat.**

Now it's definitely important to not overeat on your healthy fats, as too much of anything will have an impact on your waistline.

Please keep in mind that the key word is healthy fats.

Healthy fats include things like coconut oil, olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds, grass-fed butter and ghee, animal fats (duck, beef, pork), Omega 3's (found in fish), etc.

The "bad" kinds of fat you want to stay away from are trans fats.

Most trans fats that people eat have been cooked up in a laboratory kitchen where scientists "hydrogenate" certain oils so they have a longer shelf life.

Trans fats are found in a LOT of packaged foods- like baked goods, donuts, pie crusts, cookies, crackers, margarine, and a lot of fried foods.

Basically look at your labels- and if you see anything labeled “partially hydrogenated” or “hydrogenated” get rid of it fast.

In addition to trans fats, you also want to stay away from refined oils that tend to be high in Omega 6’s (*which throw off the ideal Omega-3 to Omega-6 balance*) like peanut oil, canola oil, vegetable oil, soybean oil, and corn oil.

Not that you know what kinds of fat NOT to eat, let’s talk about why the right kinds of fat are GREAT for your body.

**Healthy fats are incredible for your body. They are important for:**

- ❖ Making hormones
- ❖ Brain health
- ❖ Energy levels
- ❖ Supporting your thyroid
- ❖ Strengthening your bones
- ❖ Strengthening your immune system
- ❖ Reducing your risk for Cancer
- ❖ And the list goes on....

If you’re thinking that eating more healthy fats will increase your cholesterol and put you at an increased risk for heart disease, get ready for these facts:

\* There is NO significant evidence that dietary saturated fats are associated with an increased risk for heart disease. ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20071648](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20071648))

\* “No study to date has adequately shown any significant link between dietary and serum cholesterol levels or *any significant causative link between cholesterol and actual heart disease*” – Nora Gedgaudas, Primal Body Primal Mind (pg. 80)

\* About half of people admitted to hospitals with heart disease have normal cholesterol levels.

AND....in 2015, the DGAC (Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee) has recommended that limitations on dietary cholesterol be removed from their guidelines for Americans. WIN! [forbes.com/sites/larryhusten/2015/02/10/new-us-guidelines-will-lift-limits-on-dietary-cholesterol/](http://forbes.com/sites/larryhusten/2015/02/10/new-us-guidelines-will-lift-limits-on-dietary-cholesterol/)

I encourage you NOT to take my word for it, but to do your own research and explore the links above.

You'll be blown away by what you find and also by the myths that will be shattered when you read the science.

The great news is.... that grass-fed beef, real butter, and bacon (*all in moderation, of course*) are back on the menu!

## How much Water should I drink?

*"If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water" – Lauren Eisely*

Staying hydrated is one of the BEST ways you can possibly take care of your body. Water is essential for every single cell in our body to function at its highest level.

Water helps increase your energy levels, promote weight loss, flush out toxins, improve the quality of your skin, improve digestion, can help relieve joint pain, and can even help relieve headaches!

Your body is about 60% water... and just a small 2% decrease can significantly impair performance and the way you feel.

Your goal for this challenge is to drink at LEAST half of your body weight in ounces each day.

**Example:** If you weigh 150 pounds, you should be drinking a minimum of 75 ounces of water each day.

## Personalizing Your Plan:

Men and women metabolize food differently. Not only that, but our daily energy requirements vary quite substantially.

To help you get the BEST results, you'll need to adjust your meal plan according to what your body needs.

### **Protein Serving Sizes for Men & Women**

**Women:** 4oz – 6oz

**Men:** 6oz – 8oz

### **Starchy Carbohydrate Considerations:**

**Women:** keep plan as is

**Men:** ADD ½ cup of starch when it calls for it in the meal plan at each serving (this includes items like sweet potato, quinoa, etc. *(see Swap Guide for the complete list.)*)

### **Healthy Fat Considerations:**

**Women:** keep plan as is

**Men:** ADD about 3 Tbsp. or ¼ cup PER DAY to the plan

If you need help with this, simply reach out. My goal is to make this plan as simple as possible to follow, so if you have any questions, just let me know!

### **The First 2 Days of Your Challenge:**

Your first two days are scheduled “detox days.” These days are designed to cleanse your liver to allow your body to process the foods you eat more easily and efficiently.

No pills, drugs, or juices... just lots of fresh vegetables, fruit, water and minimal protein.

Depending on what you’ve been eating lately, you may experience headaches and some fatigue in the beginning.

Just make sure you drink plenty of water so you continue to flush out the toxins, and you’ll make it through. After Wednesday, you should be feeling a renewed sense of energy!

**NO CAFFEINE is allowed on detox days, and please limit over-the-counter drugs like Advil or Tylenol.** All prescribed medications should still be taken.

# House Rules!

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## Caffeine:

Caffeine is a stimulant that will increase your stress hormones. When stress hormones go up, insulin also goes up. Now- there are definitely benefits to drinking caffeine, so we just need to find a healthy balance.

Limit caffeine to 5 servings per week MAX (*and never after 1 pm.*) On days you have caffeine, make sure you drink an extra glass of water.

*\*\*\*For creamer, use coconut milk. No sugar unless it's 1 tsp. or less of coconut sugar or raw honey. Organic coffee & green tea are your best options for caffeine.*

## Alcohol, Sugary Juices & Soda:

Liquid calories can add up FAST. Not only that, they're loaded with sugar that will spike your insulin. It places a heavy load on your body to detoxify from it (which is the exact opposite of what we're trying to do during this challenge.)

For the next four weeks, you'll be steering clear of anything other than water, the drink recipes in your meal plan, or an occasional coffee or green tea. If you're going to indulge on one of these drinks during your cheat meals, make sure it's only 1-2 servings maximum per week.

## Sleep to Peak:

Over 40% of us suffer from chronic lack of sleep! Lack of sleep is associated with impaired memory, slowed speech, lack of ambition, and will lead to imbalanced hormones in your body causing weight gain and chronic fatigue. During this challenge (and in general) aim for 6-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep.

## Always Be Prepared:

*"If you keep good food in the fridge, you will eat good food." ~ Errick McAdams.*

This goes for your pantry, too. It's simple and easy to follow and is the main premise behind pretty much every program and challenge we run at **PEAK PHYSIQUE**

Being prepared will mean the difference between success and failure during this challenge! Set yourself up for success by cleaning out your pantry from temptations and replacing them with healthy, delicious options.

## Go Organic as much as Possible:

Below is EWG's updated "Dirty Dozen List and Clean 15 List".

This will outline the fruits and vegetables that have the highest levels of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides on them. Try to purchase as many organically grown foods as you can from the "dirty" list.

The "Clean 15" is the list of foods that are likely to have *fewer* chemicals. Other than this list, a good rule of thumb is to choose organic when you're going to eat the skin such as grapes, pears, cucumbers, etc.



## ONLY Purchase Food on your Grocery List:

Don't fall into the trap of putting tempting items in your cart while you are at the store. If this is something you struggle with, try eating a small apple before you go. This will definitely help! Also- always print out your grocery list before you go.

## **De-Stress Your Life:**

It's time to focus on YOU for the next four weeks. Here's a great rule of thumb to help: If it's NOT going to help you grow, contribute, or reach your personal goals, then it's probably wasting your time.

All of that "extra stuff" = stress. Stress increases cortisol in your body and that equals more body fat. Not only that, it takes away the most valuable resource which we have, our time. Guard your time like your life depends on it, because it does.

## **Toss the Margarine:**

Just get rid of it. Margarine smells SO horrible after all of the processing that it needs to be chemically deodorized so people will be able to eat it. It's also processed with a petroleum solvent. Toss it.

## **Measure Your Food:**

Measuring is extra important if portion control is an issue for you. When you start doing this regularly, you'll soon be able to estimate the correct serving sizes just by looking at it. This is a very eye-opening exercise!

## **Grass-Fed, Organic & Wild:**

The living conditions (whether or not the animals were raised in congested feed lots, given antibiotics and hormones, what they are fed, etc.) all play a major role in the amount of nutrition that is passed along to us when we eat protein.

I could write an entire chapter about the differences between grass-fed, organic, and wild practices versus conventionally raised and farmed practices. It's true that you'll pay a little bit extra for the quality, but it is definitely worth it in my opinion.

Plus... you'll be saving money during this challenge because you won't have any food that goes to waste, so it will help balance out the cost.

If you're interested in learning more, check out this great article about grass-fed meat vs. grain-fed raised: [chriskresser.com/why-grass-fed-trumps-grain-fed/](http://chriskresser.com/why-grass-fed-trumps-grain-fed/)

# How to Handle Your Cheat Meals:

**In a nutshell, don't do anything that you will regret.**

Cheat meals are a way of not feeling deprived from any of your absolute favorite foods.

They also have a positive impact on your hormone levels when they're planned into your weekly schedule (like this challenge).

A great quote to remember is *"You will never out train a bad diet."*

You do NOT want to ruin all of your hard work and preparation in a single cheat meal.

So, feel free to indulge a little bit... but make sure NOT to go overboard.



# Supplements & Swaps:

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To help maximize your results and fill in any gaps, you may wish to swap or supplement with the following:

- 1. Protein Powder:** For your smoothies in the morning, you will need a good-quality protein powder. This will help you meet your protein requirements for the day simply and quickly!

Look for one that contains 5 ingredients or less and has about 20-25 grams of protein per serving. Grass-fed whey protein is the “gold standard” of powders and is the most absorbable.

- 2. Switch to Pink Himalayan Rock Salt or Sea Salt.** Himalayan salt has more minerals and trace elements than almost every other salt. It's also a very pure and unprocessed product.

Table salt is chemically produced, bleached, and may contain anti-caking agents, MSG, and even aluminum!

Ben Greenfield says *“Refined table salt is poisonous to the body and is responsible, in great part, to the onset of many terrible diseases including thyroid and metabolic dysfunction.”*

Sodium is an important electrolyte, so Himalayan Pink or Sea Salts are the perfect ways to get high quality salt in your diet!

- 3. Probiotics** – Did you know that up to 70% of your immune system resides in your gut? Probiotics will help to restore balance back to your digestive system- and overall boost your immune system.

The bacteria in your body outnumber your cells by more than 10 to 1. Remember the good bacteria help to keep you in check- they help to fight against the “bad” bacteria, viruses and other pathogens.

It's really important to give these good bacteria an extra hand, because toxins, chemicals, and any antibiotics we are exposed to will kill off these microscopic warriors. Probiotics are best taken 30 minutes before food on an empty stomach.

- 4. Homemade Bone Broth.** This will help balance the vitamins and minerals in your body in the most incredible way. Broth is amazing for healing and promoting a healthy digestive tract, reducing joint pain and inflammation, and promoting hair and nail growth. *(and it can actually help with cellulite- because it helps maintain the integrity of the cell walls!)*

Drinking 1 cup of bone broth per day can have incredible effects on the body. Here is a great resource if you're interested in trying it out: <http://nourishedkitchen.com/bone-broth/>

- 5. Omega 3's (Fish Oil)** – To give you a quick breakdown: Omega 3's reduce inflammation in the body, increase your ability to burn fat, strengthen your immune system, improve circulation, improve good cholesterol, and the list goes on and on.

Since Omega 3's are "EFA's," that means that your body is NOT capable of producing them on its own, and you MUST consume your Omega 3's from an outside dietary source.

- 6. Rhodiola** – If you live a high-stress life, this may just be the best thing you've read all day. I started taking this supplement months ago to help support my adrenal glands and protect my body against stress.

It's also used to help combat fatigue, boost memory, and increase work capacity to improve productivity.

- 7. Magnesium:** Another one of my go-to recommendations to help combat stress. It's not only great for stress, but it's an important mineral that's required for more than 700 biochemical reactions in your body!

## Additional Swap Options...

- ❖ Exchange a protein for a protein
- ❖ Carbohydrate for a carbohydrate
- ❖ Healthy fat for a fat
- ❖ Fruit for a fruit
- ❖ Vegetable for a vegetable

## Non-Starchy Veggies (NSV's)

|                  |                     |                 |
|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Artichoke        | Celery              | Onions          |
| Artichoke hearts | Cucumber            | Peppers         |
| Asparagus        | Eggplant            | Radishes        |
| Beets            | Greens (no iceberg) | Sprouts         |
| Brussels sprouts | Hearts of palm      | Squash (summer) |
| Broccoli         | Jicama              | Swiss chard     |
| Cabbage          | Leeks               | Tomato          |
| Carrots          | Mushrooms           | Turnips         |
| Cauliflower      | Okra                | Zucchini        |

## Common Starchy Veggies:

|                  |         |                  |
|------------------|---------|------------------|
| Acorn Squash     | Parsnip | Quinoa           |
| Butternut Squash | Pumpkin | Spaghetti Squash |

Sweet Potatoes

Winter Squash

Yams

### Lower-Med Sugar Fruits:

Apple  
Apricots  
Berries (any kind)

Cantaloupe  
Grapefruit  
Honeydew

Peaches  
Pear  
Nectarine

### Higher-Sugar Fruits:

Banana  
Cherries  
Grapes

Mango  
Plums  
Oranges

Kiwi  
Pineapple  
Tangerine

### Protein Swaps:

Turkey  
Chicken

Fish  
Eggs

Pork  
Lean Beef

### Fat Swaps:

Extra Virgin Olive Oil, 1 tsp.  
Coconut Oil, 1 tsp.  
Salad dressing, 1 tsp.  
Avocado (1/4 avocado)

Large Black olives (8)  
Bacon, 1 slice (limited quantities)  
Nut Butters, 1 ½ tsp.

## Have Fun & Stick to the Plan!

In order to get the best results and the most out of this transformation challenge, you have to stick to the plan! Trust in the journey itself, and take it one day at a time.

We're always here to help if you need anything. Never hesitate to reach out- that's what we're here for.

Committed to Your Success,

**RICKY GRABOW**

[RGRABOW@MKETRAINER.COM](mailto:RGRABOW@MKETRAINER.COM)

