



*Image courtesy of jordifa/SCX*

## The FitEngine 6-Week Nutritional Makeover – Week One

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**Y**ou can spend half your day working out and still see little return on your efforts if your diet is unbalanced, filled with the wrong foods and lacking the right nutrients. The adage “You are what you eat” may not be precisely true, but it’s close.

The fact is that no matter how hard you train your body, an unhealthy diet will result in stored fat, bloating from poor digestion, and excess water that will cover up all or most of your hard work. You’ll also lack the nutrients your body needs to build and maintain lean muscle tissue and power you through both your workouts and your busy life.

The good news is that it doesn’t take long for your body to respond to healthy changes in your eating habits. You’ll feel the effects of some changes within just a couple of days and see the results of others in just a few short weeks.

The purpose of the FitEngine 6-Week Nutritional Makeover is to guide you through making several of the most important nutritional changes; the ones that ramp up your energy, promote lean muscle growth, allow your body to rid itself of stored fat and water and get your digestive system working properly again. You’ll also be getting an excellent supply of heart-healthy fats, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals.

Each week, you'll have one or two new tasks or changes. You'll also be enhancing or building on the tasks and changes from each previous week until, by the end of Week 6, you will have made all of these new nutritional habits a part of your lifestyle.

Don't worry; we're not talking about deprivation here. Deprivation is one of the quickest ways to fail and even if it worked, you'd be miserable. You'll still be able to eat great food, even some of the stuff that's not great *for* you.

*By the end of Week 6, you can expect:*

- To feel more energy at a steady level throughout the day.
- To see much less bloating and puffiness.
- To be losing stored fat.
- To feel less hungry, with fewer cravings throughout the day.

*You'll also reap several other benefits, such as:*

- Healthier, more youthful looking skin.
- Better mental focus and less moodiness.
- An excellent intake of healthy fats, antioxidants and other vital nutrients.

The 6-Week Nutritional Makeover isn't a temporary quick-fix to help you lose "X" pounds in "X" days, although you will likely lose some fat weight. This is a fast track to incorporating all the best recent nutritional research into your lifestyle.

None of the steps you'll be taking are complicated, difficult or time-consuming. There's nothing to count, measure, weigh or calculate and the makeover isn't going to intrude on your life or feel like a part-time job. It's simple, it's based on solid scientific research and it works.

Look at this way: you can spend six weeks totally revamping the way you look and feel or you can spend the next year looking and feeling exactly the way you do right now.

If you're ready to make some serious changes and see some serious results, you have three steps to take this week in order to get started, so read on.

## Week One Steps:

**Step 1: Start eating breakfast.**

**Step 2: Start eating all day long.**

**Step 3: Start taking your supplements.**



*Image courtesy of Klarissa/SCX*

### ***Step 1: Start eating breakfast***

If you were ever a kid, you've heard that breakfast was the most important meal of the day. That adage has been revived in recent years, especially as part of a successful weight loss plan. There's good reason for this. Recent studies on the way our metabolisms work has shown that skipping breakfast is a bad move. It slows your metabolism and bottoms out your blood sugar. This has several effects that you don't want: it makes it harder to lose weight, can actually make you store more food as fat and makes you moody, mentally fuzzy and more likely to reach for a soda or candy bar by mid-morning. If your goal is to be sluggish, overweight and unproductive, skipping breakfast will work out great for you. If you want to reach or maintain a healthy weight, feel energetic and stay focused, you need to eat as early in the morning as possible.

Mornings are rushed for just about everyone and chaotic for those of us with kids. Eating breakfast can be problematic with everyone scrambling to get out the door. But breakfast doesn't have to be a large

meal that takes time to prepare and eat. In fact, in Step 2 you'll see that you need to be eating several small meals as opposed to a couple of huge meals each day. It's perfectly fine to have a full sit-down meal, but breakfast doesn't have to be one of them.

Your breakfast should contain a combination of protein, high-fiber carbs and healthy fat. The protein and fat will help you to stay fuller longer and also slow the absorption of sugar into your bloodstream, giving you energy without causing a quick spike and even quicker crash. Your energy will come from the carbs, but eating high-fiber carbs also helps to slow the absorption of sugars, aids healthy digestion and helps you feel sated. The healthy fats help your body to absorb vitamins and minerals and also help you to feel satisfied.

As we said, you don't need to cook a full breakfast to get these nutrients in. Here are some excellent breakfast options that take very little time to fix or to eat:

- Oatmeal with blueberries and bananas and a boiled egg.
- Scrambled eggs with spinach and cheese and a slice of whole grain toast.
- Peanut butter and honey on whole grain toast with a glass of milk.
- Leftover baked sweet potato with butter and cinnamon and a sliced pear.

If you're one of the many people who don't feel like eating in the morning or who really can't spare fifteen minutes to sit, you can still get an incredibly healthy breakfast in. You can even take it with you and eat on the way to work. This Power Breakfast Smoothie is one of the most nutritious shakes we know and it actually tastes great, too. It's crammed with protein, healthy fats, fiber and a good dose of carbs. The addition of psyllium husk means that you'll feel satisfied all morning and it also helps get your digestive system running smoothly (In fact, you could see a good deal less bloating after just a couple of days of using it). The flax seed provides super-healthy Omega-3 fats, which we'll talk more about later in the makeover. We're not kidding about this shake being a Power Breakfast.

### **Power Breakfast Smoothie**

- 1 cup cold water or ½ cup cold water and ½ cup ice
- 2 tablespoons chocolate whey protein powder
- ½ banana broken into chunks
- 1 teaspoon flax seed
- 1 teaspoon psyllium husk

Blend all ingredients very well until smooth. Drink immediately.

Breakfast is extremely important and eating it is vital to your success on the FitEngine 6-Week Nutritional Makeover. However, you can see that it doesn't have to be a huge ordeal. Even if you don't normally like to eat in the mornings, you'll find that you look forward to it after just a week or so. The

way you feel in the mornings might be all the motivation you need, but if you're trying to lose weight, the results you see after a week or so will be a huge bonus.

**TIP: IF YOU HAVE A FAVORITE SMOOTHIE SHOP, TAKE THIS RECIPE TO THEM AND ASK IF THEY'LL PREPARE IT FOR YOU. MANY OF THE HEALTHIER SMOOTHIE PLACES WILL EVEN HAVE THE PSYLLIUM HUSK AND FLAX SEED AVAILABLE. IF NOT, ASK IF YOU CAN BRING YOUR OWN.**



*Image courtesy of iprole/SXC*

## ***Step 2: Eat all day long.***

This is possibly the most surprising step for many people, but it's certainly a welcome one.

It's so common for people to try to cut calories by skipping meals, but skipping meals will actually stimulate your body to store most of your next meal as fat. Not only is this counterproductive, but skipping meals all the time leaves you feeling hungry, dragged out and deprived.

If you're one of those people who regularly skip meals because you're so busy, you're not alone, but you're not doing your body any good. You're probably struggling to lose the same weight over and over, giving in to cravings between meals because you starved yourself most of the day, and feeling tired and moody.

Without getting into a lecture on metabolism, here are the key things to know about why you should eat every two to three hours:

- Going without food for more than three hours causes your metabolism to slow and stimulates your body to store the calories you eat later as fat. Your body releases a hormone known as cortisol, whose sole purpose is to store fat in case of upcoming famine.
- Going without eating also causes a drop in blood sugar. This leaves you fatigued and mentally sluggish, causes cravings for the quick boost of sugar, carbs and caffeine and can even lead to insulin resistance and Type 2 diabetes.
- Eating small, healthy meals every two to three hours actually speeds up your metabolism, helping you to burn more calories throughout the day.

- Eating every two to three hours will give you a steady supply of energy, rather than quick bursts and fast crashes throughout the day.
- Eating small meals every two to three hours helps to keep you eating healthfully, rather than grabbing unhealthy snacks or wolfing down far too many calories in a big meal later.

There are a few guidelines that you need to keep in mind when planning your meals. As promised, you don't have to count calories or grams and you don't have to spend hours carefully designing a diet. You just need to follow a few simple rules of thumb:

- Each meal should contain some protein, some carbs and some healthy fats. If you need to pick two, eat protein and carbs. They'll give you the most staying power and energy. Next meal, eat fat and carbs, etc. so that you get a healthy balance throughout the day.
- Choose the healthiest foods possible for your meals. Later in your makeover, you'll be switching out a lot of unhealthy foods for healthier choices, but until then try to use common sense. Focus on fresh fruits and veggies, lean meats, seafood, low-fat dairy and whole grains.
- Take a few simple meals to work with you so that you're not tempted to hit the vending machine. A Snickers bar does not count as a meal.
- Meals do not have to be full-plate affairs. Something as simple as an apple and a stick of string cheese is fine, as long as you're getting some protein, carbs and healthy fats every two to three hours.
- There is no limit to how many times a day you eat. Eat every two to three hours the entire time you're awake. If you're trying to lose weight, try to eat most of your carbs during the day when you need more energy and focus on protein and fats at night. This will help your body to use what it needs when it needs it. Eating a lot of carbs at night when you'll be sitting in front of the computer or sleeping can mean most of those carb calories get stored somewhere around your rear end.

If the concept of eating small meals throughout the day seems daunting, here are a few suggestions for healthy, balanced meals or mini-meals to show you how uncomplicated it really is:

- ❖ Sliced apples with a handful of walnuts and a piece of cheese.
- ❖ A banana sliced lengthwise and spread with peanut butter and sliced almonds.
- ❖ A container of Greek yogurt and a mango.
- ❖ A whole-grain tortilla or wrap with turkey breast, lettuce, chopped apples and poppy seed dressing.
- ❖ A smoothie made of water, ice, frozen blueberries and vanilla protein powder.

Of course, not all of your meals need to be mini-meals. Eat small meals throughout the day and have a regular breakfast, lunch or dinner. Whatever suits your lifestyle and schedule is fine.



*Image courtesy of alexkalina/SXC*

### ***Step 3: Start taking your supplements***

You may or may not already be taking a multi-vitamin or several separate vitamins and minerals each day. If you're already on a vitamin regimen, you may be able to skip this step. Check your daily intake with our suggestions and adjust accordingly if you need to.

Nutritional research has shown that the most efficient way for you to get the right vitamins, minerals and other micro-nutrients is through a healthy diet. The vitamins and minerals in foods are far more accessible and readily used by the body. However, the truth is that most people don't get enough of these nutrients in their diet.

For the purposes of your nutritional makeover, there are three supplements that you'll need to begin taking. They are Vitamin C, a Vitamin B complex and an omega-3 supplement. If you're already taking a multi-vitamin, it's perfectly fine to take additional Vitamin C and a B complex. These are both water soluble vitamins, which means your body doesn't store them in large supply and will simply dispose of any extra. On the other hand, stress, environmental pollution and lack of sleep can all deplete your body of these nutrients, so most of us need to take them daily.

You should take these supplements both in the morning and in the late afternoon or evening.

**For each dose, take:**    1000mg Vitamin C (we recommend the chewable type)  
                                  1 B-complex tablet (check RDA and split into two doses)  
                                  1 Omega-3 capsule (check RDA and split into two doses)

#### ***Here's why we want you to take these three:***

- Vitamin C is required by the body for all cell growth, so our bodies need a good supply of it. Unfortunately, stress, infection and other factors quickly deplete our body's supply. In order to have enough, most people will need a supplement. Also, if you're trying to lose weight, Vitamin C is one of the most important vitamins you can ingest. Vitamin C lessens the effects of stress on the body, which means less cortisol is released into the bloodstream. Less cortisol means less fat

storage. Like the commercials say, “But wait, there’s more!” Once you’ve curbed that constant release of cortisol by eating throughout the day (and a few other steps you’ll be taking), you still need a way to get rid of the fat your body already has stored. Enter L-carnitine. L-carnitine is the chemical compound in your body that transports stored fat to where it can be used as energy. Guess what L-carnitine is made out of? Mostly Vitamin C. Unfortunately, if you don’t get enough Vitamin C, there won’t be any left over after cell construction and infection fighting to make L-carnitine. Your body prioritizes its use of Vitamin C. You need to have enough on board daily if you want to get rid of stored fat.

- The B-complex of vitamins are what boost energy, among many other handy things. Because they’re also soluble vitamins, your body doesn’t have a ready supply stored up. What isn’t used in a day or so is disposed of through waste. However, very few people get enough of these essential vitamins. Taking a B-complex will help you to feel energized and awake, without overdoing the caffeine, processed carbs and sugar.
- Omega-3 fats are considered a nutritional superpower. They’re most widely endorsed as being excellent for heart and arterial health, but they also help concentration, mental clarity, mood stabilization and warding off the symptoms of both depression and ADD.

**To recap, these are your first three steps during Week One of your 6-week nutritional makeover:**

- Eat many small meals each day, no more than two to three hours apart.
- Start those meals off with breakfast.
- Take your Vitamin C, B-complex and Omega-3 supplements twice daily.

**\*\*\*IF YOU MISS ANY OF THESE STEPS ON A GIVEN DAY, DO NOT GIVE UP ON THE WHOLE THING. JUST GET RIGHT BACK ON TRACK THE NEXT DAY. IT’S VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU STICK WITH IT, EVEN WHEN YOU SLIP UP.\*\*\***

*See you next week!*

