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

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Congratulations and a long-distance high five to you! Changing your nutritional lifestyle is a huge achievement and you should be proud of yourself.

*Over the last five weeks, you've:*

- Started eating breakfast every day.
- Switched from skipping meals or eating three large meals every day to eating several small or regular meals throughout the day.
- Started taking some important supplements twice daily.
- Cut out highly processed and fried foods.
- Started eating from the rainbow of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Replaced unhealthy trans-fats with healthier unsaturated fats.
- Traded in your sodas and other beverages for pure water.

You've taken a lot of unhealthy foods out of your daily diet and added in a lot of healthier choices. Now, as we leave you to your new way of eating and your new, improved health, we'll show you how to blow it all. Actually, we're going to show you how to eat some of those less-healthy foods you love once again, *without* blowing a thing.

As we said in Week 1, deprivation is one sure way to make sure that any diet or lifestyle change will fail. No one likes to feel deprived of the things they love, especially when it comes to food. Everyone needs a little pizza, ice cream or pastrami in their life, just not every day.



*Image courtesy of lockstockb/SXC*

### ***This Week's Step: Cheat or treat the right way***

The key to cheating, or as we prefer to call it, “treating” on your diet is to plan ahead for a scheduled treat and not go crazy with it once you have it.

The best way to do this is to pick a day of the week that will be your treat day. Any day of the week will do, but it's best if it's on the weekend, when you're more likely to have time to get it and enjoy it. Now, this doesn't mean you eat whatever you want all day on that day. It means that you can have some of whatever it is you've been craving. Not a meal full of forbidden foods, just one thing. If pizza is what you're fantasizing about, eat pizza for your treat. If you've been craving ice cream, go for it.

There are no rules about what you can have for your treat, but there are some guidelines about HOW to have it:

- If you're going to have it, have the very best version of it. If you want ice cream, don't bring home a half-gallon of sub-standard grocery store ice cream. For one thing, you don't need a half-gallon of ice cream whining at you from the freezer. For another, you want to make the most of your treat, to really make it count. Go to your favorite ice cream parlor and get your favorite flavor. One or two scoops, it's up to you. Likewise, don't order pizza from some national chain, go to your favorite pizzeria and get a slice of the best pizza you know.
- Use some sense about portions. Yes, you can have pizza. No, you cannot have a whole pie. Have one or two slices and enjoy them to the hilt. Savor them and then walk away. This will be easier than you might think. When your body grows accustomed to healthy eating, you actually have less of an appetite for the less healthy foods. You may have eaten a whole pint of Ben & Jerry's before, but now a little scoop will do you.
- Don't have something you don't really want and then call it your treat. That's not your treat. Your treat needs to be one of your favorite foods, not the so-so chocolate cake everyone else ordered at dinner. Likewise, don't screw up by eating a Twinkie and then try to make yourself feel better about it by saying you'll count it as your treat. Call it screwing up and move on.

By scheduling a time to enjoy something really yummy but not so healthy, you'll make it easier for you to eat healthy the rest of the week. You'll find, too, that you have cravings less often if you know that even forbidden foods are allowed in their proper time. You're not going to gain weight in from one treat a week, no matter how gooey or chewy or decadent it is. You're also not going to hurt your health.

You know that depressed, bloated and guilty feeling you have after you have that cake, that ice cream or that salami? You don't need to worry about that anymore. There's nothing quite like biting into a slice of pizza that you're *supposed* to be eating.

Six weeks in, you are invested enough in your new lifestyle to want to stick with it. This makes you better able to plan for, look forward to and indulge in your favorite foods once a week, without fear of blowing the whole thing.

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**Now that you know how and when to eat, have conditioned your body to want the healthiest foods and learned how to indulge without guilt or worry, you have all of the tools you need to live healthier, stronger and more energetic than you've ever been.**

**Keep at it, stay with it and go back to it if you blow it on vacation or during a stressful week. Healthy eating is a lifestyle, not a race or a contest. It gets easier the longer you do it and the rewards are huge.**