

AN INSIDE LOOK

Pn

Level 1 Nutrition Coaching Certification

The Industry's #1 Rated Nutrition Coaching
Certification from



Good nutrition can change lives.

Wanting to help others eat, move, and live better is a commendable, worthwhile pursuit. We believe it's one of the coolest, most meaningful professions out there.

And if you're passionate about it too, you're in the right spot.

We're known for helping coaches get the best client results.

We're also known as a world leader in educating nutrition professionals.

Precision Nutrition is the ONLY nutrition coaching certification on the planet that's...



Endorsed by NASM, ACSM, and ACE... AND...



Rated the #1 nutrition certification by Business Insider... AND...



Proven and informed by our experience coaching over 150,000 clients—and *currently* used by real coaches to coach their own clients every day

Our certification is client-tested, scientifically proven, evidence-based, and constantly updated.

We study and practice this stuff every day. And we pour everything we learn into our certification so YOU can stay on the cutting edge of the nutrition industry.

After completing our certification, you'll have all the nutrition knowledge you need to coach even the most advanced clients.

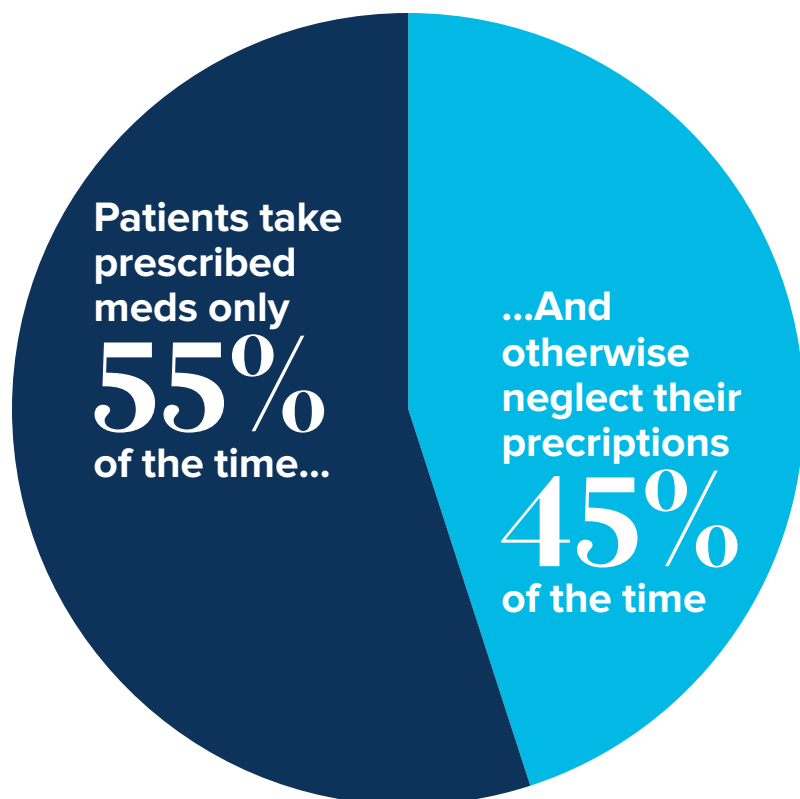
But here's why coaches need *more* than nutrition expertise.

Although many coaches have all the nutrition knowledge they need, the vast majority still struggle to help clients put basic nutrition concepts into practice, especially on a consistent basis.

This issue isn't unique to coaching:

Even medical doctors report embarrassingly low patient compliance rates when prescribing heart disease, diabetes, and cancer medications—medications that are *life-saving*.

(And all you have to do is take a pill!)

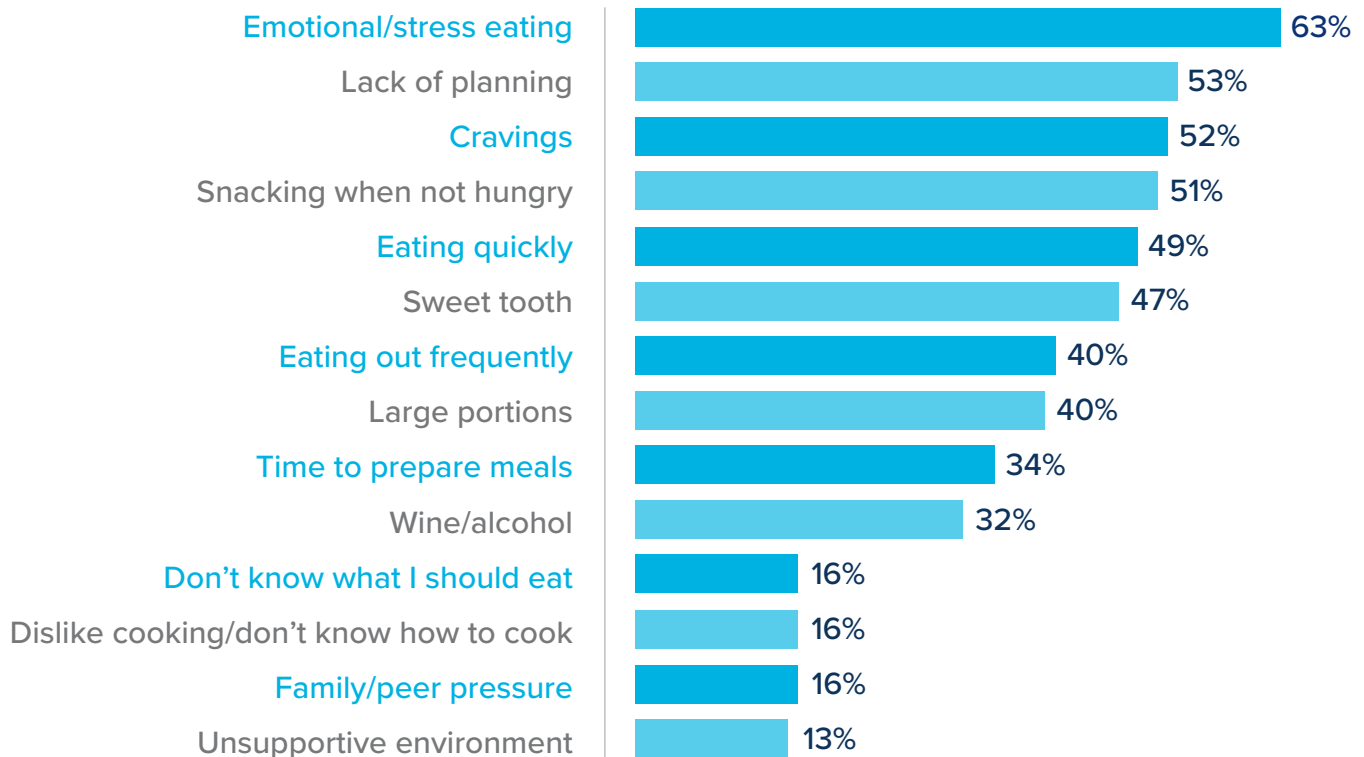


Most people already know what they *should* do.

Pooled data from our client intakes reveal that only a small percentage of people say their biggest nutritional challenge is knowing WHAT to eat.

Instead, their biggest challenges relate to *executing* what they already know they need to do.

WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST NUTRITIONAL CHALLENGE?



Even though nutrition is relatively simple—and 90 percent of people can get incredible results just by doing the basics—it turns out:

Change is hard.

And it requires some serious expertise.

We blend the science of nutrition with the art of coaching so coaches can help clients turn *knowing* into *doing*.

Our Level 1 Nutrition Coaching Certification covers the advanced nutrition know-how coaches need to work with clients who benefit from greater dietary precision.

But we also incorporate insights from change psychology—literally, the study of helping people *change*.

It's *this* angle of our program that gives our coaches the tools they need to help clients finally get results—even in the context of a messy, busy, *human* life.

The science of nutrition covers:	The art of behavior change covers:
Calories, metabolism, fat storage, and muscle gain	How to enable people to make changes
Macronutrients—protein, fat, and carbohydrates—and how to determine the right amount for each individual	How to help people find what they actually need, versus what they think they need (these are often different!)
Micronutrients—vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, and zoonutrients—and the role they play in overall health	How to know what level of difficulty and complexity is appropriate for each client
Digestion, absorption, elimination, and water balance	How to properly assess clients and track their progress
Hormones and neurotransmitters, and how they affect appetite, hunger, and metabolism	How to help people set realistic goals
Special scenarios like pregnancy, aging, food intolerances, and high performance athletics	How to create the conditions (routines, supports, settings) that make change easier and more sustainable

How to take ACTION, *right now.*

In the following sneak-peek, you'll find some cool nutrition science nuggets.

But mostly, we've focused on giving you some change psychology coaching practices you can use *immediately*.

If you're not coaching already, no sweat. Use these tools to help yourself—or your loved ones—change the way you think about change, overcome barriers, and find success.

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Why coaches can have such a big impact—and why YOU'RE just the right fit

Why Eating Healthy and Exercising Is So Hard

According to popular fitness and nutrition media, if someone wants to get healthier, the solution is simple:

“Eat a little less, and move a little more.”

Easy, right?

Nope.

If this was easy, everyone would be doing it.

Instead—according to a recent National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey—*over 97 percent* of US adults DON'T maintain the following four characteristics:

- ◆ Exercise regularly
- ◆ Eat a healthy diet
- ◆ Avoid smoking
- ◆ Maintain a healthy body fat percentage

Said another way:

Less than *three percent* of adults exercise adequately *and* apply the most basic nutrition principles.

For many, eating healthy and exercising ISN'T so simple.

As the below image illustrates, people struggle with their diet and exercise due to a variety of very legitimate barriers.

WHY 'EAT LESS, MOVE MORE' CAN BE INCREDIBLY HARD

Stressful job that feels insecure



Frustrating relationship with mother



Partner prefers takeout for dinner



Unreliable child care



Often wakes up at night and can't fall back asleep



Feels shame after eating sweets



Knees hurt when exercising



Takes anti-anxiety medication



⊗ Reduces activity due to stress, lack of time, or physical ability

⊗ Increases drive to eat due to stress, hormones, or food quality

Most people are sitting on an iceberg of barriers like this, unique to their own life and circumstances. It's an "iceberg" because you can't know what barriers someone is struggling with just by looking at them.

For this reason, nutrition advice like "eat more vegetables," "make more homemade meals," or "go to the gym" can fall pretty flat.

Good nutrition advice is just a piece of the puzzle.

The rest of the pieces are about addressing those hidden barriers. (At PN, that's EXACTLY what we teach coaches how to do.) When you do, eating healthy and exercising becomes more accessible—and yes, a little easier.

LEARN
MORE



Hidden Barriers



“What’s the Best Diet?”

There’s lots of great diets out there. One to suit every palate and value system.

But surely, amidst all the diet competition, there must be a winner.

A *best* diet.

What does the research say?

Although many people believe low-carb diets are best for weight loss, after a year, people don’t lose more weight on a low-carb diet compared to a low-fat diet.

(Low-carb diets often cause initial water loss, which can lower the number on the scale. But when calorie and protein intake are the same, research shows there’s no significant difference in fat loss between the diets over time.)

The same is true when longer-term studies (which track participants for a year or more) compare popular diets like intermittent fasting, Paleo, and the Mediterranean diet. After a year, differences in weight loss are relatively marginal.

(Note: Weight loss isn’t the only way to assess if a diet is “good,” but it’s often what researchers focus on.)

Further, we’ve seen from traditional diets around the world that the human body can do well under a host of different nutritional conditions.

- ◆ The Arctic Inuit and African Masai eat traditional diets that are very high in fat and animal products with very few vegetables.
- ◆ The Kitavans in the South Pacific eat traditional diets that are low in fat but very high in vegetables and starchy carbs.
- ◆ The Tokelau near New Zealand eat traditional diets that are very high in saturated fats.

What does all this tell us?

There is NO best diet.

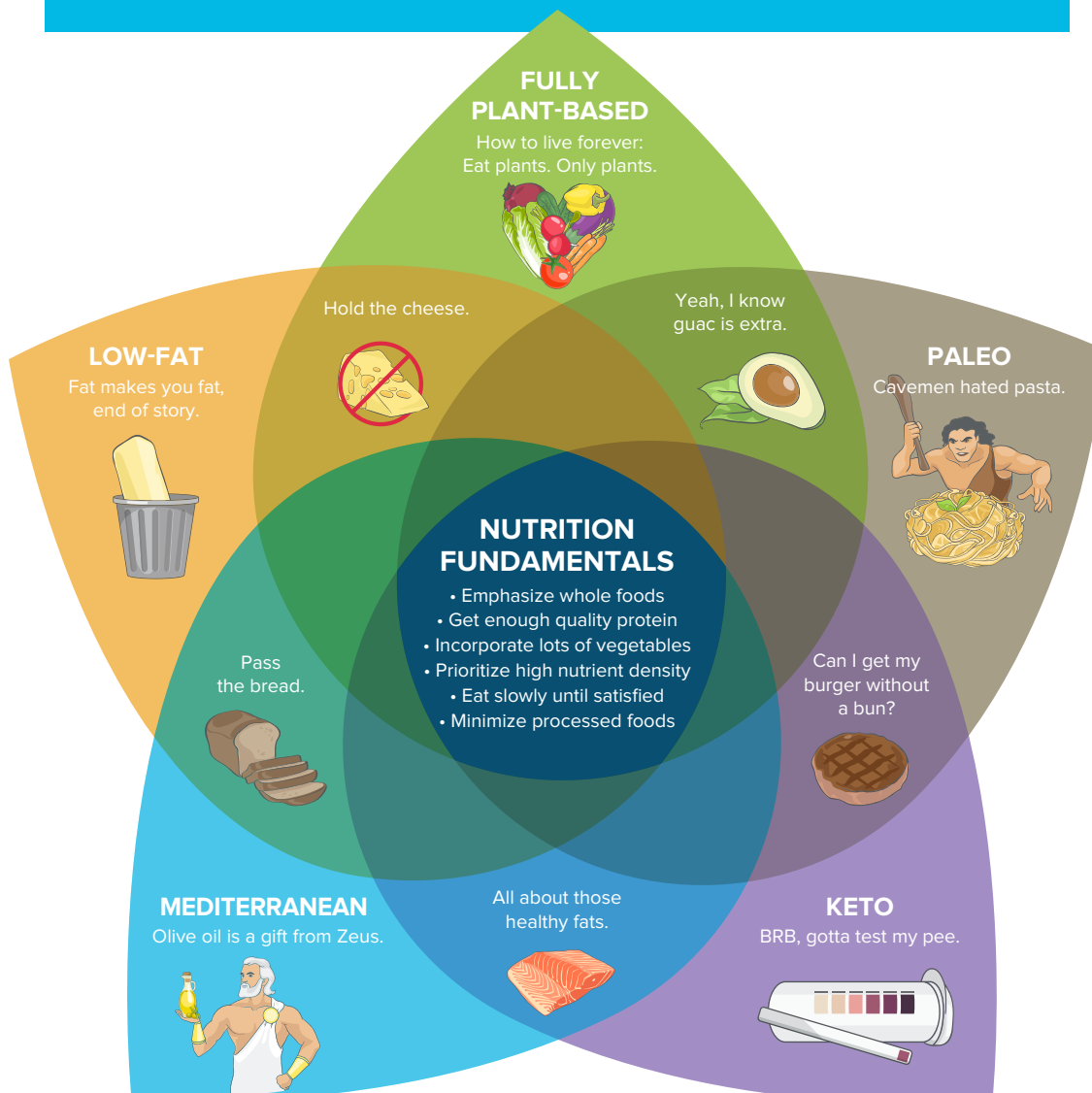
There's no *ONE* diet that optimally benefits ALL bodies, activity levels, budgets, abilities, schedules, values, goals, and taste preferences.

That's actually good news. It means—often through a little trial and error—you can create a *personalized* diet that feels good for YOUR body, lifestyle, and goals.

More good news: Eating healthy is less confusing—and less polarizing—than many people think.

In fact, the most popular, reputable diets actually have more in common than they have in opposition, as the below image shows.

WHAT DO MOST HEALTH-FOCUSED DIETS AGREE ON?



Instead of promoting one specific diet, we prefer to coach nutrition fundamentals—the food choices and eating behaviors all effective diets have in common.

These overarching principles consistently promote good health, while still being flexible enough to adapt to most people's preferences and resources.

The Coaching Method That Turns Dreams into Reality

We all have goals.

The stuff we fantasize about before we drift off to sleep, or while stuck in traffic.

Some examples we hear a lot:

- ▶ “I want to feel like I can walk on the beach with confidence.”
- ▶ “I want to be able to run around with my kids / grandkids / dog and not feel exhausted.”
- ▶ “I want my doctor to tell me my blood sugar and cholesterol are A+.”
- ▶ “I want to run a 10K, pain-free.”

Often, these dreams don't make it beyond our imagination.

[Wipes tear.]

But we don't like sad endings.

So, we've developed a system to help people take vague, pie-in-the-sky goals and turn them into reality.

We call it the GSPA system.

GSPA stands for:



We break it down this way because it's not enough to have thrilling visions or clear goals.

You need to know what regular, consistent *actions* will ultimately get you to your goals.

When you consistently practice certain strategic, daily actions, you build skills.

These skills then provide the building blocks that allow you to not only *reach* your goals, but *sustain* them too.

In the Precision Nutrition Level 1 Nutrition Certification, we always break goals down like this.

So when you have a dream, you have a path to get you there too.

How to Choose the Right Type of Goal

Did you know you can improve your chance of success by picking the right *kind* of goal?

When they want to improve, most people set **outcome-based goals**—goals that focus on the end result, like losing 20 pounds in six months or deadlifting double your bodyweight by the end of the summer.

Problem is, outcome-based goals are tough to control.

You don't know, for example, exactly how your body will respond to a new way of eating or exercising.

Additionally, outcome-based goals tell you nothing about how you're supposed to get from *here* (your current reality) to *there* (your desired outcome).

As a result, outcome-based goals are more likely to lead to frustration, and poor results.

The solution?

Behavior-based goals

Behavior-based goals are centered on the *actions* you take, like consuming three servings of vegetables per day or eating slowly at every meal.

Behavior-based goals tell you exactly what you need to do—*today*—to get closer to your goal.

Plus, they shift your focus to things you can control, so they're also empowering.

If you have an outcome-based goal, don't throw it in the garbage. Just use it as a starting place, then brainstorm *behaviors* that could help you achieve that goal.

Choose one or two of those behaviors to focus on, and—BAM!—you've bumped up your chances of success.

A Better Way to Track Food Intake

Trying to gain muscle? Lose weight? Just eat healthy?

Then you're probably looking for an effective way to be intentional about food intake.

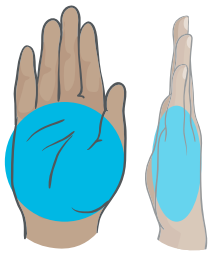
Calorie counting is often considered the gold standard for tracking food. And if done correctly, it works.

However, measuring portions and tallying up food math at every meal can be tedious and frustrating—not to mention socially awkward. (Um, who invited the guy with the *calculator*?)

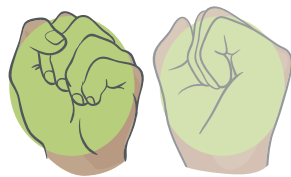
So, we came up with a different way to track food intake so clients can get the right amount and balance of protein, carbohydrates, veggies, and healthy fats at every meal.

It's called the “hand portion method.”

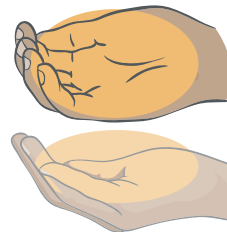
YOUR HAND IS YOUR PORTIONING TOOL



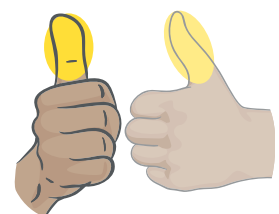
A serving of protein
= 1 palm



A serving of vegetables
= 1 fist



A serving of carbs
= 1 cupped hand



A serving of fats
= 1 thumb

You're not actually measuring your food, but rather using your hand to gauge portion size.

Our internal calculations show hand portions are about 95 percent as accurate as carefully weighing, measuring, and tracking your food.

(With substantially less effort and time involved.)

For most people, the hand portion method is accurate enough to help you consistently track your food intake, *and* reach your health, aesthetic, and performance goals.

Although there's no one-size-fits-all recommendation that'll work for everyone, most folks will meet their nutrition needs by eating:

1-2 palms of protein-dense foods at each meal

1-2 fists of vegetables at each meal

1-2 cupped handfuls of carbohydrates at most meals

1-2 thumbs of fat-dense foods at most meals

Depending on your goals, adjust these general recommendations up or down and assess every couple of weeks to see based on how you're progressing.



Hand Portions



Macros vs. Hand Portions vs. Intuitive Eating

People who want to eat, move, and live better usually do well with hand portions. They're convenient, easy to understand, and highly customizable with very little effort involved.

But it'd be wrong to say that hand portions are hands-down the best approach for everyone.

Different strategies work for different types of goals.

Ultimately, the nutritional tool that fits best depends on the “job to be done”—what you hope to achieve.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT TOOL FOR THE JOB

JOB TO BE DONE

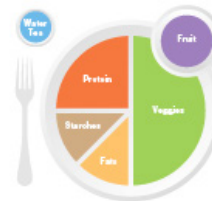
TOOLS TO USE



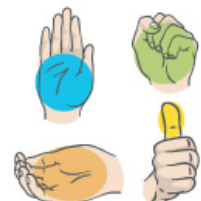
Eat, move, and live better



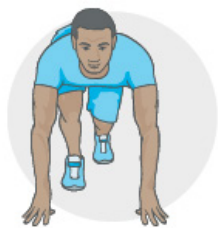
Mindful / intuitive eating



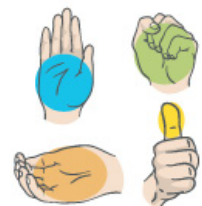
PN plates



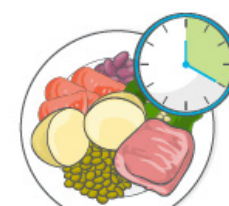
Hand-sized portion tracking



Reach high-level performance or aesthetic outcomes



Hand-sized portion tracking



Moderate nutrient timing protocols



Macro tracking



Reach extreme aesthetic outcomes



Macro tracking



Extreme nutrient timing protocols



Follow strict meal plan 100%

In particular, hand portions may not be the right approach for people who have aggressive aesthetic goals.

For instance, physique models or actors cutting for a photo shoot may need more precise strategies, like macro counting or even a strict meal plan. Same with athletes who need to cut weight or reach a specific body fat percentage.

(Keep in mind: These people are essentially being paid to eat this way. It's part of their job. And that comes with tradeoffs.)

Hand portions may also not be right for people with a history of or current struggle with disordered eating. For them, measuring and tracking food—no matter the method—can feel triggering. Instead, they might do best with intuitive and/or mindful eating approaches, focusing more on internal body cues for appetite and satiety.

Of course, there'll be some people who try hand portions and simply don't like them.

That's valid.

It really comes down to this:

Hand portions work for a lot of—if not most—people. But there are always exceptions, because there's no single best way to eat.

“Help!
I Want to Change
But I Keep Doing the
Same Old Thing!”

Have you ever told yourself, “I’m going to start eating healthy tomorrow!”?

Then, tomorrow comes and you’re like, “Hmm, maybe I’ll start next week.”

If so, congratulations: You’re normal.

This feeling of “I want to change but also *don’t* want to change” is called ambivalence.

On one hand, you might *really* want to change and become a healthier, stronger version of yourself.

On the other hand, that sounds like a lot of work. Your current way of doing things is so comforting and familiar.

Trouble is, while ambivalence is normal and expected, people can also get stuck: As you (sometimes unconsciously) weigh the pros and cons of change, you don’t actually take action.

If you find yourself at such an impasse, we suggest asking yourself the following questions:

1. What’s **GOOD** about **NOT CHANGING**?
2. What’s **BAD** about **CHANGING**?

The answers to these questions are revealing.

All behaviors—no matter how “self-sabotaging” they may seem—serve a purpose.

Your answers to these questions will tell you WHY you feel resistant to change.

You also discover what purpose a current behavior is serving, and what you might lose if you give that behavior up.

For example, maybe you want to stop snacking at night, but it also helps you calm down, or avoid thinking about a stressful relationship.

Maybe restricting calories is starting to cause health problems, but it also gives you a sense of control when life feels too chaotic.

No wonder you feel such a push-and-pull.

The good news: Once you know how your current behaviors serve you, you can come up with replacement behaviors that support you in the way you need to be supported—without sacrificing your larger goals.

How to Stay Healthy When Life Gets Nuts

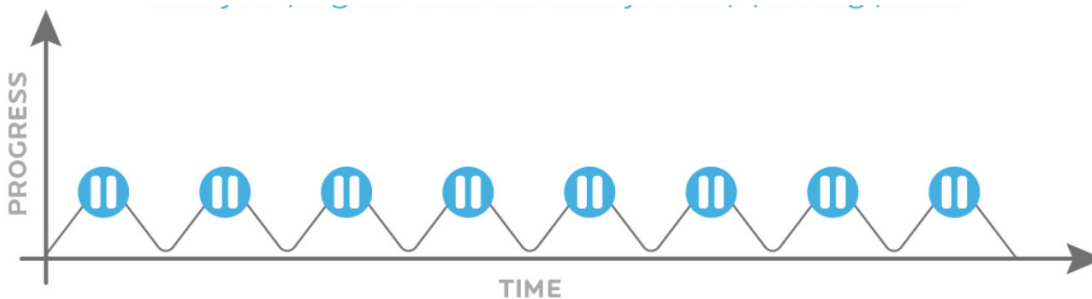
When it comes to health and fitness, many people get stuck in an “all or nothing” mentality.

They feel like they have to be nailing their diet and exercise habits PERFECTLY, and if they’re not, they’re a COMPLETE FAILURE and should just give up.

As a result, progress happens when life cooperates, and then crashes when it doesn’t.

The net gain: Zilch.

WHAT YOUR PROGRESS LOOKS LIKE WHEN YOU KEEP PRESSING PAUSE



We offer a paradigm shift.

Health habits don’t have to be an “on” or “off” switch; they can be more like a dial.

When life is sweet and smooth, you can turn your exercise, nutrition, and sleep dials way up—if you want.

But if life is bumpy and crunched, you don’t have to switch off completely.

Just turn the dial down a little.

If you can’t do the whole workout, do some air squats. If you can’t make healthy, balanced meals at home, add a side salad to your takeout.

Here's how our dial method might look for exercise, but we apply this same thinking to nutrition, sleep, stress management, relationships, and more:

MOVEMENT



This “continuum” concept is woven throughout our coaching method.

For example, most of us know that eating whole, minimally processed foods is good for you.

But do you have to eat 100 percent whole, minimally processed foods—100 percent of the time?

No.

(And actually, doing so might cause more anxiety and obsession than it's worth. See: [The Cost of Getting Lean](#))

Instead, we look at food choices on a spectrum, and simply aim for a steady smidge of progress.

THE WHOLE FOOD CONTINUUM



Progress will never look like a straight line.

When you apply the “dial” and “continuum” concepts to your choices, change is still, well, a *bumpy ride*.

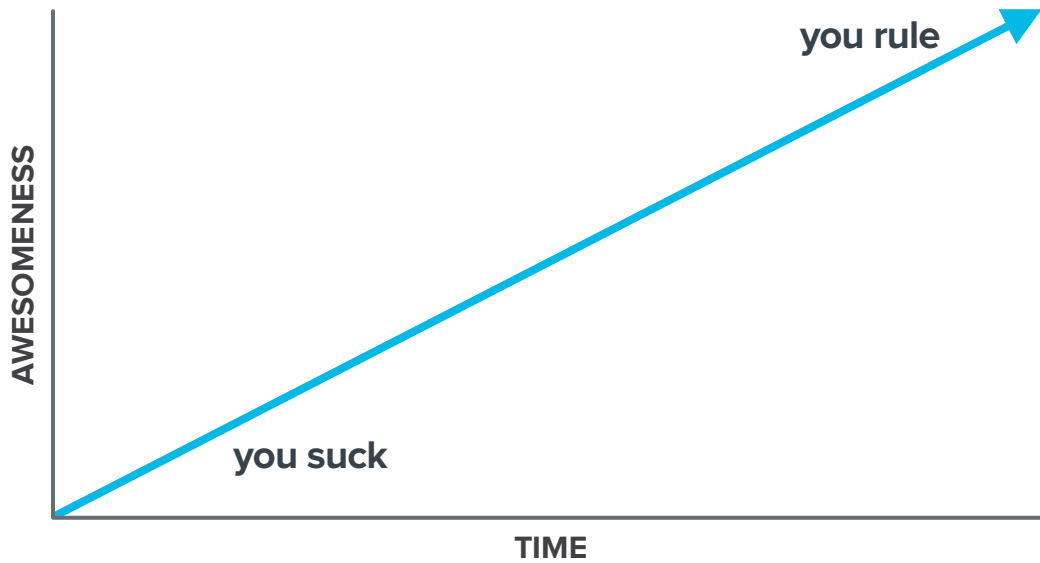
We’ve learned: The healthiest people aren’t doing it *all*. And they’re certainly not doing it *perfectly*.

They just practice doing *something*—even on the messiest, busiest, most temptation-filled days.

But over time, you build the skill of choosing to do *a little bit better*, even when conditions aren’t perfect.

That’s how progress happens—in real life.

HOW WE IMAGINE CHANGE



HOW CHANGE ACTUALLY LOOKS



LEARN
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The Dial Method



The Cost of Getting Lean

Six-pack abs. Tight butts. Biceps you can bounce coins off.

That's the image the fitness industry is selling.

But have you ever wondered what it costs to achieve that "look"? What you have to do more of? What you have to give up?

Below is an image of a level of leanness that's relatively accessible for many people. At this level (which may vary from body to body) people can maintain healthy habits relatively consistently, without feeling prisoner to them.

(As in: Your weekly nachos and beer date with your buddies is still totally on the table.)

HEALTHY

Athletes at this level of body fat

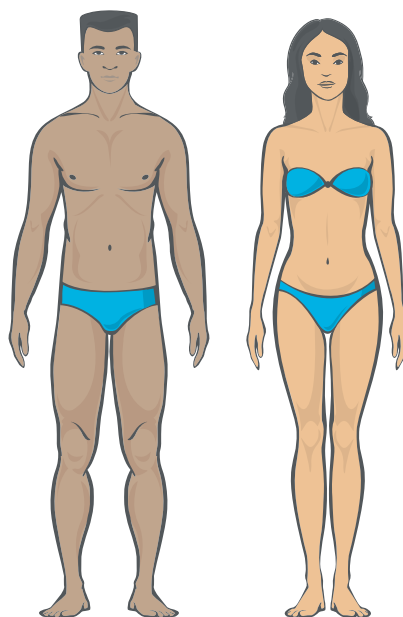
Olympic canoe and kayak athletes.
Professional baseball players.
Professional softball players.

Benefits

Fairly easy to maintain.
Energy levels will continue to improve.
Will probably be able to reduce or eliminate many medications.

Tradeoffs

Requires some planning and may require minor social sacrifices, e.g. exercising instead of hanging out with friends at a bar.
May require effort and attention to maintain this much sleep.
May require some increased food prep skills and effort.



13-15%

23-25%



Do more

Eat slowly until satisfied at 75% of your meals.

Include 1-2 palms of protein dense foods in 2-3 meals per day.

Include 1-2 fists of vegetables in 2-3 meals per day.

Exercise 30-45 minutes daily, with 1-2 sessions breaking a sweat.

Sleep at least 7 hours per night.



Do less

Eat desserts / processed foods 3-5 times per week, within reason.

Drink up to 3-5 caloric beverages per week.



However, pursue a level of leanness on the more extreme level (as the image below shows) and the sacrifices needed to maintain such a physique go up.

Even though this is what the fitness industry tells us we should look like, people in this category of leanness may dip into the “unhealthy” zone.

UNHEALTHY

Athletes at this level of body fat

Elite bodybuilders on contest day.
Fitness models on the day of the photoshoot.

Benefits

May feel pride at achieving an athletic goal.

Tradeoffs

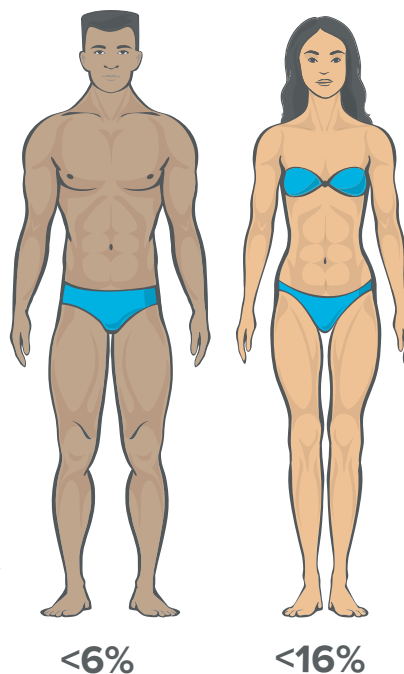
Will have difficulty socializing in most typical situations where food is involved.

May miss out on fun events with family and friends.

Big time commitment to measure, weigh, and track all foods.

Hyper focus on diet and exercise may contribute to disordered eating.

Time required for exercise may crowd out all other pursuits and interests.



↑ Do more

- Eat slowly until satisfied at 99.9% of your meals.
- Incorporate calorie/carb cycling.
- Follow meal plan with predetermined foods and amounts, and measure food specifically.
- Include exact amount of lean proteins, fibrous veggies, and healthy fats in each meal.
- Exercise 45-75 minutes, twice daily, with 6-7 sessions breaking a sweat.
- Sleep at least 8-9 hours per night.

↓ Do less

- Limit carbs to post-workout or designated higher carb days.
- Eat desserts / processed foods once every 10-12 weeks.
- Avoid caloric beverages.

Food planning and tracking can become obsessive, and demanding training schedules can crowd out other meaningful life pursuits like work and relationships.

Extremely low body fat levels can also compromise hormonal balance, affecting sleep, mood, fertility, and libido.

There's nothing wrong with pursuing a certain aesthetic ideal. However, it's helpful to understand the sacrifices that go along with this level of leanness.

Sometimes, the trade-offs aren't worth it.

LEARN
MORE

The Cost of
Getting Lean



Proof You Don't Have to Eat Perfectly

If you're not familiar with our year-long coaching program for both men and women, here's a snapshot:

Clients check in every day and tell us if they completed a workout and did their habits.

These habits are daily health practices—such as eating five servings of fruits and vegetables a day or protein at each meal—that we switch up every two weeks. By the end of the year, clients have incorporated about 25 new healthy practices.

Clients also regularly report body measurements and answer progress surveys, where they tell us other important stuff, like how they're feeling.

We're sitting on a mountain of data.

So we decided to look at changes in our clients' bodies combined with how often they said they did their practices and workouts.

We focused on those who said losing weight was their priority, and looked at how much weight (and inches) they actually lost after a year.

And we asked:

How consistent do you have to be in order to make “good progress”?

What we discovered was surprising.



**10-49%
CONSISTENCY**



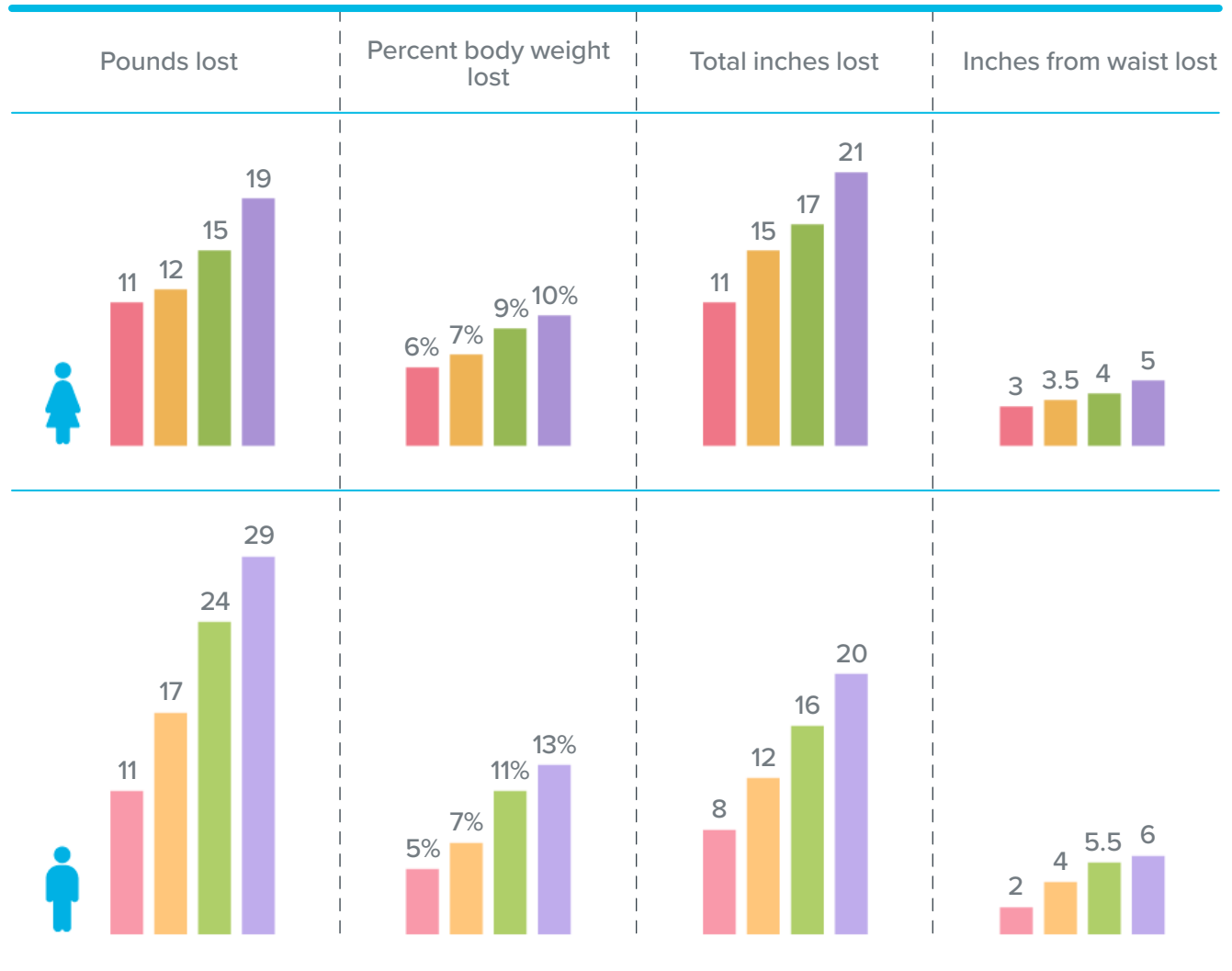
**50-79%
CONSISTENCY**



**80-89%
CONSISTENCY**



**90-100%
CONSISTENCY**



Yes, those who were **MOST** consistent lost the most inches and pounds.

But perhaps more inspiring:

Those who were **LEAST** consistent—but nevertheless stuck with the program the full year—ended up losing between 5-6 percent of their total body weight. (BTW, that's a clinically significant amount that's linked to lower risk of heart and metabolic disease.)

We'll put this takeaway on a motivational t-shirt any day:

To get results, you don't have to be perfect. You just have to show up.

**LEARN
MORE**



**Body Transformation
Research**



Ignite Positive Momentum—in 5 minutes

If you're looking at your current habits and thinking, "I wish I could do better, but eating healthy and exercising can feel so overwhelming," here's a gentle, effective way to get you back into it:

It's called the 5-minute action, and it's one of our signature coaching tools.

There's nothing special about 5 minutes. It could be 10 seconds, 1 minute, or 10 minutes. The point is:

- ◆ It's an action—something you do.
- ◆ That action is very small, something that feels easy and simple.
- ◆ It moves you in the direction you want to go.
- ◆ It's an easy win—which gives you the confidence boost to do more good for yourself.

How to do it

Pick an action that might have a positive impact on health and wellbeing *right now*.

Some examples:

- ◆ Cut up some carrots for a later snack.
- ◆ Do five minutes of foam rolling.
- ◆ Slowly enjoy a mug of tea.

You can also get a little more strategic, and pick an action—maybe even one to commit to daily—to support a larger goal.

For example, maybe your ultimate goal is to get back into the habit of eating mostly home-cooked meals.

Take ONE small action in support of your bigger, future goal.

That might mean making a grocery list, looking up some recipes, or chopping up a few vegetables.

It can be tough to get motivated, but here's a secret:

It's action that drives motivation, not the other way around.



When you do a small thing to improve your circumstances, this actually inspires you to do more things.

Now you're no longer "waiting to get motivated." You're creating your own motivation.

How Much Water Do You Need?

Humans need about 3 liters (101 ounces) of fluid per day, though the exact amount will vary from person to person.

Depending on someone's diet, about 34 ounces (1 liter) of that will probably come from food, especially if they're eating watery foods like veggies, fruit, prepared oatmeal, or yogurt.

That leaves about 2 liters (67 ounces) to get from beverages.

So the old "drink 8 cups of water a day"—which adds up to 64 ounces—is actually a pretty good general rule.

However:

How much water you need will depend on a range of factors, like age, weight, health status, and activity level, to name a few.

If you're small and sedentary, you might need less than 3 liters. If you're in a larger body and also exercise in a hot humid environment, you'll need more.

That's why thirst is probably a better gauge than forcing yourself to guzzle a predetermined volume.

Another way to assess your hydration?

Check your toilet.

If you compare your urine color to what's shown on the chart below, you'll get an answer that's almost as accurate as an expensive hydration test that your physician or trainer would run in the office.

The colors assume you've peed in a cup.

ARE YOU HYDRATED?

Your urine color is an indication of your hydration level.



If you don't want to do that (and who does?) just assume that the toilet water will dilute your urine color 1 or 2 shades.

Why You Shouldn't Try to Stop a Bad Habit

A common coaching scenario:

A client comes to you with a laundry list of bad habits they want to delete. They'll say to you, "I want to quit snacking at night" or "I have to stop stressing out so much."

It's the way people talk.

And it's not just clients; it's coaches too.

Many (well-intentioned) coaches advise their clients: "Don't eat processed foods" or "Don't let yourself get over-hungry."

The problem?

"Don't do X" isn't an action plan.

"Don't snack at night" tells you what behavior you want to *avoid*, but it doesn't tell you what million other behavior options you might replace it with.

If you stop snacking at night... what do you do instead?

Snack in the morning?

Drink at night?

Any other behavior that's *not* "snacking at night"... but isn't necessarily better or more productive?

In our curriculum, we suggest framing change in terms of positive, specific actions.

Coaches work with clients to figure out what behaviors to ADD in order to crowd out undesired behaviors.

In this way, coaches and clients learn to focus on solutions rather than problems. For example:

Focus on...	Instead of...
Eating protein at every meal	Not snacking so much
Creating a relaxing bedtime routine	Trying to stop sleepless nights
Eating more fruits and vegetables	Avoiding "junk" foods

Add more good stuff, and get better results.

Research shows that when people are told to increase minimally-processed foods like vegetables, fruits, and lean protein—and not even necessarily restrict calories—they still lose weight.

Further, they're able to sustain this weight loss long term.

When people are simply told to decrease food intake, results are mediocre, dropout rates are high, and long term adherence is unlikely.

This is likely due to a few reasons:

- 1. Restricting food is hard.** When you focus on what's being subtracted, you're more likely to feel deprived, experience cravings, and interpret your diet as stressful.
- 2. Adding in more minimally-processed foods is satisfying.** While still relatively low in calories, minimally-processed foods (like fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and legumes) tend to be rich in fiber and protein—nutrients that help regulate appetite and boost satisfaction.
- 3. More minimally-processed foods also means better nutrition.** Minimally processed foods are rich in vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients, so emphasizing them will simultaneously reduce the likelihood of nutrient deficiencies, and boost overall health.

Next time you want to make a change, think about what you'd like to ADD to improve your health. This not only feels better psychologically; it works better too.

How Much Protein Do You REALLY Need?

The average person eating a standard Western diet is probably not protein *deficient*.

However, “not deficient” doesn’t mean *optimal*.

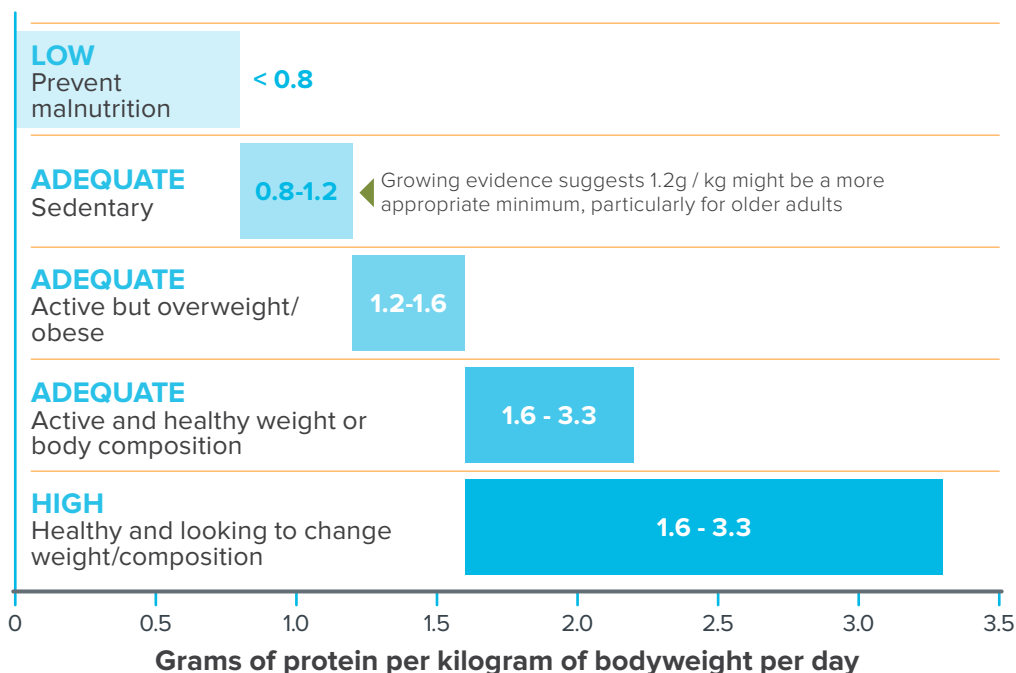
It just means people are getting enough protein to maintain function and prevent malnutrition.

For sedentary, generally healthy adults, about 0.8 g of protein per kg of body mass is enough to cover basic daily requirements.

But because protein is involved in so many essential processes—repair and rebuilding of tissues, creation of hormones, immune system regulation—your protein needs can go up if you’re:

- ✓ Training hard frequently or have a heavy physical job
- ✓ Injured, sick, or recovering from surgery
- ✓ Older (because protein digestion tends to reduce with age, so you need more to meet requirements)
- ✓ Trying to lose body fat but still maintain lean mass

The chart below shows some suggested protein ranges.



But isn't too much protein bad for you?

For years, people have been concerned with the safety of eating too much protein—specifically that it might harm kidney function.

- This myth began with a misunderstanding of why doctors tell people with poorly functioning kidneys (usually from pre-existing kidney disease) to eat a low-protein diet.
- But there's a big difference between avoiding protein because your kidneys are already damaged and protein actively damaging healthy kidneys.
- It's the difference between jogging with a broken leg and jogging with a perfectly healthy leg.
- Jogging with a broken leg is a bad idea. Doctors would probably tell you not to jog if your leg is broken. But does jogging cause legs to break? No.
- Same with protein and kidneys.
- Eating more protein does increase how much your kidneys have to work, just like jogging increases how much your legs have to work.
- But protein hasn't been shown to cause kidney damage—again, just like jogging isn't going to suddenly snap your leg like a twig.

Clinical studies show people can eat up to 4.4 g of protein per kg body weight without any short term health problems. (Except maybe losing their appetite for chicken breasts.)



High Protein Diets



Protein Powders: How Do They Stack Up?

If you're trying to increase your protein intake, protein powders can be an easy, calorie-minimal, cost-effective way to do so.













But walking into the protein powder aisle at your local health food store can feel intimidating.

How do you choose between the seemingly endless options?

Use the chart below to weigh the pros and cons of each protein type. (If you're strictly plant-based, stick to the options with the little leaf icon next to them.)

COMPARING PROTEIN SOURCES

Grams of protein per 29g serving* (approx. 1 scoop of protein powder)

Whey (isolate)	26			Well-researched, complete protein		Not everyone can tolerate dairy
Casein (micellar casein)	23					
Egg White	23			Dairy-free complete protein option		Common allergen
Collagen/beef isolate	25			High in protein		Not well-researched, incomplete protein, expensive
Bone broth	26.5					
Soy	24			Well-researched plant-based complete protein		Common allergen
Pea	22			Plant-based source of BCAAS		Low in EAA methionine
Rice	23			Hypoallergenic, gluten-free		Low in EAA lysine
Hemp	14.5			Contains omega-3s, fiber		Low in EAA lysine
Rice/pea blend	21			Complete protein source		Lower in protein than some other plant-based options

*Approximate values. Exact nutrition information will vary by manufacturer.

Many stores offer single-serving protein packs too. If you're not sure what flavor or type of protein will suit you best, try a bunch and see.

LEARN MORE

Protein Powder



The Truth about Calories In vs. Calories Out

When it comes to body change, there's no topic more polarizing than "calories in vs. calories out." (Also called "CICO.")

CICO is an easy way of saying:

When you take in more energy than you burn, you gain weight.

When you take in less energy than you burn, you lose weight.

This is a fundamental concept in body weight regulation, and about as close to scientific fact as we can get.

Why is CICO the source of so much disagreement?

At one end of the debate, there's a group who believes CICO is straightforward.

If you aren't losing weight, the reason is simple: You're either eating too many calories, not moving enough, or both. Just eat less and move more. [\(You remember that advice, right?\)](#)

At the other end is a group who believes CICO is broken (or even a complete myth).

These critics say it doesn't account for hormone imbalances or other health problems that affect metabolism. Or, they might claim certain diets and foods provide a "metabolic advantage," helping you lose weight without worrying about CICO.

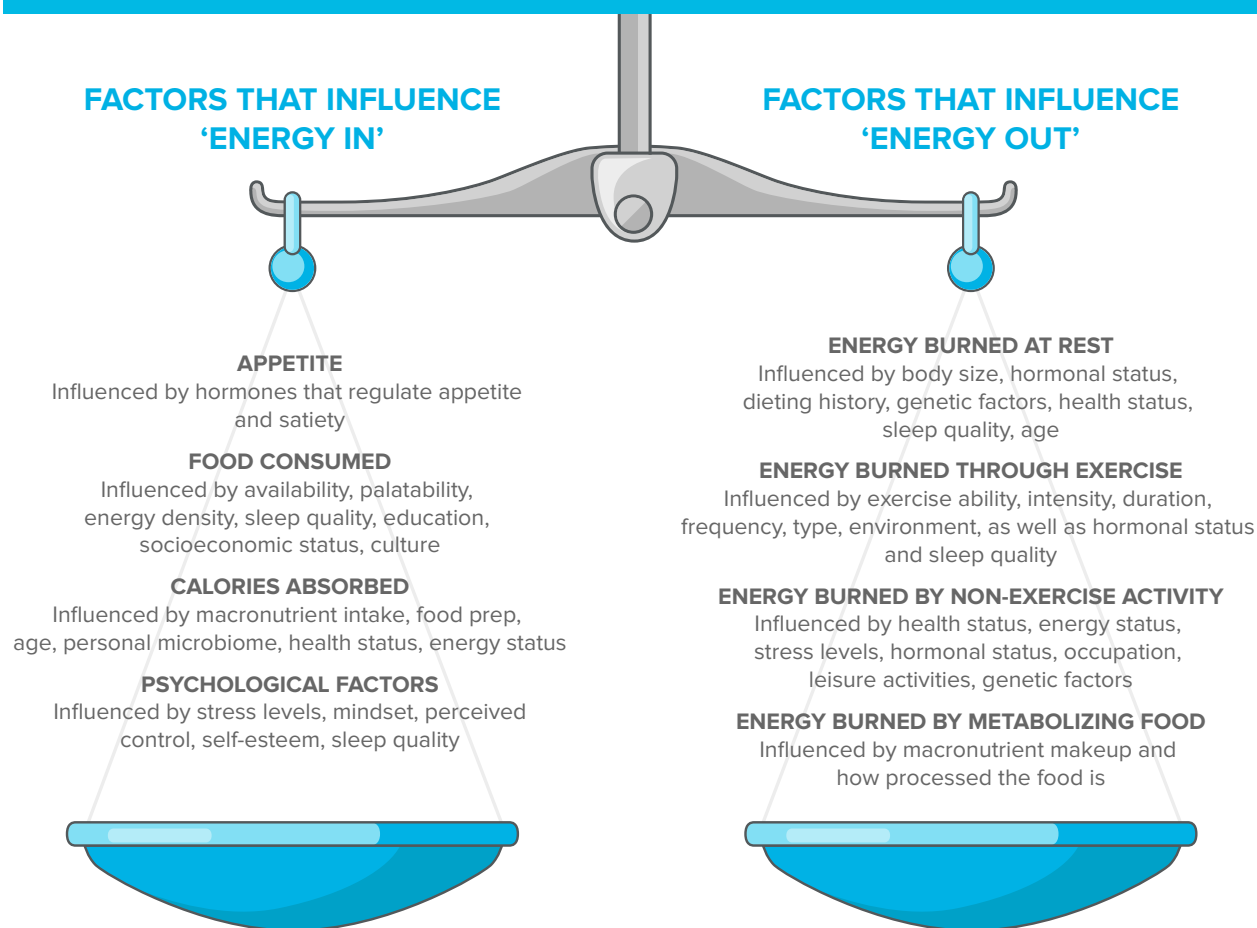
Neither viewpoint is completely wrong.

But neither is completely right.

What's actually happening:

Many factors influence the "calories in" *and* "calories out" parts of the equation making it *feel* like you're eating less and moving more than you are (or vice versa).

ENERGY BALANCE



This isn't a comprehensive list of factors, but rather a snapshot of the most common ones. It's important to know that elements on both sides of the scale are influenced by: each other, hormones (e.g. leptin, thyroid), sleep, stress, medical conditions, pharmaceuticals, and more. This means none of these things invalidate CICO. Rather, they influence how many calories we absorb and how many we burn. And this is what leads to weight gain or loss.

Adapted from Alan Aragon's CICO scale, www.alanaragon.com

For example, a person might *feel* like they're barely eating enough calories, and also training super hard at the gym.

Meanwhile, they might just be sleep deprived.

This would cause their hunger hormones to increase, making them feel hungry even when they've had enough calories. It would also cause them to feel easily fatigued, even if their workout was relatively low demand.

In summary, CICO is complex. (But it's also inescapable.)

LEARN
MORE

Calories In,
Calories Out



The Easy Way to Calculate Your Calorie Needs

Love math and want to calculate your calorie requirements by hand?

Then this is going to be fun for you. (It's okay, we're nerds too.)

First, match your activity level and goal in the below table, and find your multiplier.

DAILY CALORIE ESTIMATOR using multiples of bodyweight

	CLIENT GOAL		
	Lose Weight	Maintain Weight	Gain Weight
LIGHTLY ACTIVE (< 3 hours/week)	10-12	12-14	16-18
MODERATELY ACTIVE (3-7 hours/week)	12-14	14-16	18-20
VERY ACTIVE (> 7 hours/week)	14-16	16-18	20-22

Then, multiply your bodyweight in pounds by the given multiplier. This will yield your daily calorie estimate.

Notice that the bodyweight used is in pounds. If you're used to using metric, you'll have to convert the formula.

1 kilogram = 2.2 pounds

To show how this works, let's go through a couple examples.

Example 1:

A 140 pound, very active woman interested in fat loss would begin by taking in between 1,960 (140 lb x 14) and 2,240 (140 lb x 16) kcal / day.

Example 2:

A 190 pound, moderately active man who wants to build muscle and gain weight would begin by taking in between 3,420 (190 lb x 18) and 3,800 (190 lb x 20) kcal / day.

Now you've got a rough estimate for your energy requirements, based on YOUR body, YOUR lifestyle, and YOUR goals. Cool!

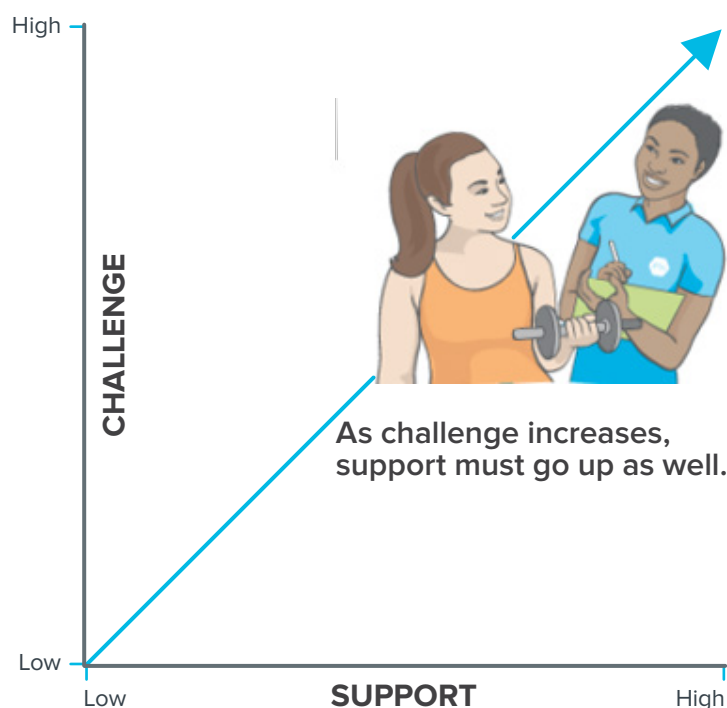
***Note:** Short-hand multipliers become less accurate at each end of the weight spectrum, such as very light and very large or very muscular individuals. Adjust as needed.

Why YOU'RE Perfect for the Job

When making big changes, we all benefit from the support of others.

Clients are the same.

In fact, the amount of challenge a client is able to successfully take on will somewhat depend on the quality of support they receive.



There's a name for this kind of support.

It's called the "coaching alliance."

It describes the level of trust and rapport between a coach and a client.

Some studies show the results a client achieves are up to 85 percent dependent on this alliance*. (Whoa.)

(*In therapy this is formally known as the *therapeutic alliance*. As a coach you are not a therapist, but the strength of your coaching relationship is still critical.)

Interestingly, the quality of this alliance isn't correlated with how many capital letters are after a practitioner's name, nor is it dependent on the practitioner being some emblem of "perfection."

Instead, a good coaching alliance happens when clients feel they can rely on and freely express themselves around their coach.

Yes, good coaches have to have expertise in whatever subject matter they're coaching.

But just as important, good coaches just have to be empathetic, open-minded, and relentlessly solution-oriented. They have to be willing to sit in the muck with clients during inevitable hard times—and still see the best in them.

"Am I really good enough?"

YES.

Although many new coaches wonder this, here's what we know (from research, and from our experience certifying over 150,000 coaches):

Your humanness can help you relate to your clients.

No one has all their food or life issues completely sorted out. (Not even the best coaches.)

And you *definitely* don't have to have six-pack abs.




With a solid foundation of nutrition science and behavior change coaching skills (we'll teach you both), plus a deep desire to help others, you'll have all the know-how you need to make a world of difference.

Everything You Need to Become a Top Tier Coach

Now that you've perused through this sample of nutrition and behavior change tools, you might be wondering:

What else will I learn in the Precision Nutrition Level 1 Certification?

The Level 1 Certification comes in three unit textbooks—beautifully packaged in a box set for easy reference.

-  **In Unit 1**, you'll learn all about the Precision Nutrition approach to behavior-change coaching. After working with over 100,000 clients (and counting), we've learned what really works for helping people change. Now we're passing it onto you.
-  **In Unit 2**, you'll dive into the science of nutrition. Yes, you're going to “nerd out” a bit! But don't be intimidated. Each chapter is written in a way that's easy to consume and comprehend.
-  **In Unit 3**, you'll learn how to best *apply* all this new information. Many of your clients will come to you because they want to change their eating habits, but truth is, you can apply the concepts you learn to change *any* lifestyle habit. (Better sleep, anyone?)

In all, you'll get nearly 700 pages of the latest, most effective research in nutrition science and behavior-change psychology—co-authored by some of the industry's leading authorities in health and fitness.

In addition to the unit texts, you'll also get:

- ▶ Over 40 premium coaching tools we use at PN—forms, questionnaires, assessments—to help you unlock your potential.
- ▶ Case studies and “try it now” exercises to help you practice and retain the material.
- ▶ Chapter review checklists to help you prep for each exam.
- ▶ Assessment tools to help you stay on track with your learning.
- ▶ Fully-animated video seminars to help you better understand each chapter.

Our PN grads go on to coach nutrition in a variety of fields and settings, either part-time or full-time...

Some are personal trainers, strength coaches, group exercise instructors, and physicians who want to deliver better results for their clients.

Others are full-time teachers, accountants, hospitality workers, and stay-at-home parents who want to coach nutrition on the side, or even make a complete career switch.

Regardless of their background, they all share this in common:

They had a desire to change people's lives through better nutrition. And they chose PN to help them do it.

Want in?

I want in.

