

SUMMARY

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What to Eat When

By Michael Roizen,
Michael Crupain, Ted Spiker



Summary of What to Eat When by Michael Roizen, Michael Crupain and Ted Spiker

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How to improve your diet by planning ahead.

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Introduction

Diets don't work. That's not an invitation to throw in the towel on your New Year's resolution right now, though-- it's just a fact. Because as anyone who's dieted before can attest, every time you lose that weight, you're almost guaranteed to find it again. But that doesn't mean you're doomed to stay overweight or that you should give up on your efforts at self-improvement. Instead, it simply means that you need to learn how to eat correctly. And as you'll see over the course of this summary, "diets" and "eating correctly" aren't always the same thing!



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What You Eat and How it Affects You

Many people assume that consuming high-fat foods is what makes you fat. But if that were true, you could just replace all your favorite foods with low-fat alternatives and everything would be great! But in fact, such a diet would actually be more likely to make you gain weight because of the effect of insulin. Why? Because insulin is a hormone that controls how your body processes calories. Insulin levels get higher when you eat food and decrease when you've finished eating. This process releases the nutrients from your fat cells into your bloodstream, sending energy to your brain and other vital organs. However, eating too many refined carbohydrates-- things that are high in sugars and processed starches-- cause your body to produce a surge of insulin which, in turn, leads to weight gain.

So, why is it that we crave things like cinnamon rolls and pasta and candy if they're so bad for us? The simplest answer is that they taste good. But we also like them because they provide us with a temporary boost of energy. Consuming these foods floods the body with glucose, which causes our insulin levels to spike. Our fat cells then work overtime to absorb excess glucose and fatty acids to remove all that sugar from our blood. But here's the catch: because these foods give you instant sugar gratification, your body runs out of that energy almost instantly, which prompts your brain to get panicky and convince you you're hungry so you'll eat more. If you don't start consuming more sugary foods, your body goes into starvation mode as your blood sugar levels fall, triggering your metabolism to slow down and hang on to the calories you do have. And as you might imagine, this only makes you gain more weight.

So, now that we've discussed some of the "right" and "wrong" foods to eat, it's time to turn our attention to another issue: the inconsistency of the dietary guidance that's available. If you've ever tried a few different diet plans or even watched commercials for popular fad diets, you've probably noticed that the definition of the "right" and "wrong" foods change from diet to diet. So, what really is the right type of food if you want to be healthy and lose weight? Well, the first thing you want to do is forget about low-calorie or low-

fat diets, as we've already proven that they don't help. So, instead, follow these healthy tips.

First of all, make sure your body gets the correct nutrients. Your body craves nutrients and needs them to grow, so if you don't get enough of them, your body will tell you to keep eating until you finally acquire the right amount of nutrients it needs. That's why, if your diet consists primarily of unhealthy foods, your effort to get enough nutrients means that you'll consume more calories than you actually need and gain weight. You can combat this problem by seeking foods that are high in nutrients and that come in smaller portions. It's also crucial that you get a few ounces of protein every day. You need a fraction of an ounce of healthy fat, too, so aim for foods like olive oil, coconut oil, and fish. Salmon especially is a great source of protein because of the omega-3 oil it produces! Omega-3 is considered a "good fat" because it's an unsaturated macronutrient that provides you with an awesome boost of energy.

And though you probably heard this all the time in childhood, don't forget your vegetables! In addition to being a fantastic source of protein and calcium, vegetables also help you lose weight and strengthen your gut bacteria. That's because plant fiber is good for maintaining healthy bacteria and lessening the effect of the harmful types. Promoting good bacteria can also help you reduce inflammation, so make friends with your veggies as soon as possible! It's also important to remember that your body doesn't actually need a lot of carbohydrates. While carbs aren't the root of all evil as a lot of diets would have you believe, they can contribute to weight gain, so just eat them sparingly. So, maybe don't eat an entire loaf of bread for dinner; just have a few slices and balance it out with a salad.



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Be Your Blood Sugar's Buddy

I'm a diabetic. Which isn't great, considering that I have an affinity for sugary cocktails and three table-spoons of sugar in my morning coffee. (If you're wondering, yes, I've had to give up that habit). For me, overdosing on sugar means that I'm prone to suffering a severe hypoglycemic episode in which my blood sugar drops and I grow weak, delirious, cold, and shaky. And as you can imagine, that's not an awesome way to start your day. So, although I have to be more careful than most people, non-diabetic folks aren't off the hook either! And unfortunately, far too many people start their days by flipping the bird to their blood sugar. This can occur whether you realize it or not, but most of us simply aren't aware of what we're doing! That's because most of us kick off the morning with a horrifying helping of sugary, sweet breakfast foods.

In the previous chapter, we mentioned the effect that blood sugar can have on your weight gain. But balancing your blood sugar is important for your overall health even if you aren't worried about your weight at all. As we also mentioned in the previous chapter, sugary foods like pancakes and cinnamon rolls are all delicious, but they're also devastating for your blood sugar. And sadly, that's true even if you're not diabetic. That's because tanking your blood sugar will override any other positive steps you take for starting your day. So, what can you do to counteract these ill effects? Well, unfortunately, if you want to be your best self, you definitely have out to cut out the morning carbs and sugars.

In the previous chapter, we mentioned that you should bulk up on healthy foods because it's what your body needs in general. And while that's true, meeting your body's need for healthy food is especially vital in the morning. Mornings are uniquely important because what you eat in the morning sets your blood sugar and your metabolism for the day. So, if you usually opt for cinnamon rolls in the morning, you can try replacing them with menu items that are high in protein, like scrambled eggs, fresh grapefruit, or some yogurt with a fruit topping. In fact, in a pinch, even a breakfast biscuit from McDonald's will be better than a helping of pancakes slathered in syrup! It

may not be the yummiest way to start your day, but there's no question that these options are the healthiest.



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What to Eat When

In the previous chapters, we've talked about what to eat and what not to eat. But now it's time to turn our attention to the primary focus of this book: what to eat when. So, why does timing matter? Well, just like your body has a natural sleep cycle, it has a natural eating cycle as well. And although we typically associate our circadian rhythm with sleep, the reality is that it controls both your sleeping and eating cycles. So, the first step is to listen to your circadian rhythm's directions. And that means starting your day with breakfast! If you're like most people, you find it way too easy to cut breakfast out of your life altogether. It's easier to just grab a coffee and rush on to start the morning grind. But the author's research shows that people who eat breakfast are actually healthier than people who don't! They also lose more weight.

These two-fold benefits are due to a technique called "front loading." If you're not familiar with the term, "front loading" simply means that you consume the majority of your calories during the first meal of the day. Concurring with the author's research, dietician Tamara Duker Freuman observes that:

The advice to eat more at breakfast to help with weight loss sounds counterintuitive, but I've found that front-loading their calories and (high-quality) carbs into the first part of the day works wonders for patients in my practice. Interestingly, a recent study tested an extreme version of the "big breakfast" dietary pattern in two groups of overweight women on 1,400-calorie-a-day diets. The group given a hefty 700-calorie breakfast, 500-calorie lunch and 200-calorie dinner lost 2.5 times more weight compared to women whose meal pattern was reversed, with 700-calorie dinners matching the same exact foods as their peers ate for breakfast. The big breakfast eaters also had substantial improvements in their metabolic profile in terms of cholesterol and blood sugar control compared to the big dinner group.

This interesting finding may shed some light into the body of evidence that's found skipping breakfast to be associated with increased risk of obesity compared to regular breakfast eating. The bottom line: A low-cal breakfast is

not “being good.” It’s self-defeating. In my book, anything less than 300 high-quality calories for breakfast isn’t breakfast and probably won’t help you lose weight. Moreover, breakfast is not the time of day to skimp on carbs – dinner is. And it’s far easier to control your choices and portions at dinnertime when you’ve had a substantial and well-balanced breakfast and lunch.”

So, front loading your calories and making healthy food choices is one great way to ensure that you’re eating the right things at the right time. But there’s another awesome tip you might not have considered before: eating dinner for breakfast. Yes, you really heard that right! Usually, when we hear that phrase, it’s reversed; we talk about eating breakfast for dinner. But you rarely hear of people who have a salmon burger for breakfast! However, the author remarks that this is absolutely the right thing to do. After all, foods aren’t really constrained by time. There’s no such thing as a “breakfast food,” in reality; we only classify certain meals as “breakfast foods” or “dinner foods” because of our social perception about what’s “normal” to eat at certain times of the day. That’s why the author advises that we break free from this unnecessary pressure to conform and re-vamp our eating routine.

Although it might take a little bit of getting used to, front loading healthy “dinner” meals can be a perfect way to start your day. If you want, you can start the day with grilled chicken! (You can even make it a grilled chicken biscuit to start with if that will help you make the transition!) Or you can ease in a little more slowly and start by incorporating some nutritious omelette dishes or berries into your breakfast. Your taste buds might feel out of sync at first, but the good news is that you have an infinite amount of food options to choose from! You can try as many new flavor combos as you like until you hit the right fit for you.



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Final Summary

Many people are interested in healthy eating, but their efforts are often fruitless because they are misled by the wrong information. Fad diets and well-intentioned advice all push their own eating philosophies, many of which are baseless or toxic. By unpacking the science behind “what to eat when,” the authors aim to combat misinformation and make healthy eating choices accessible to everyone. All you have to do is relinquish your assumptions about food and re-structure your eating habits!

Start by learning about the impact of high-calorie foods on your body. Next, be kind to your blood sugar by avoiding foods that will cause severe drops in your blood sugar. (That means saying no to sugar for breakfast!) And lastly, pay attention to your body’s circadian rhythm by eating the right foods at the right times. Front loading your calories and eating dinner for breakfast might feel weird at first, but it will pay off in the long run! That’s because these healthy eating choices will maximize your energy, stabilize your blood sugar, and help you lose weight.



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