

# Hello Beautiful!

Welcome to the 9th Annual **HOT FOR THE HOLIDAYS** Challenge!

I see the fire inside of you. You're ready. You're committed. You're determined. And you're burning up girl!

I'm already so proud of you. Just by joining me here, you've made a huge step towards your future, health and happiness. You've decided that you want to feel amazing and confident, get healthy and fit, and you also know your body deserves the very best.

Thank you for investing in yourself and for entrusting me as your coach for the next 4 weeks. I have an incredible journey planned for you!!

I can't wait to see your Holiday Hottie Party selfie's 😊

Before you begin, I want you to answer the 7 questions on the next couple of pages to ensure you enjoy HUGE success with this Hot for The Holidays Program.

Grab a pen and paper and write down the answers to these questions. No answering in your head. It's very important that you write this out!

When you commit your goals to paper you are 42% more likely to be successful. So, write out your answers to the following questions, print a copy and post it where you can see it and re-read over the course of the next 4 weeks.

Your H4H Nutrition Plan follows a **THREE Phase Nutritional Approach** that has been extremely successful for hundreds of my past clients. The sample meal plans provided offer the flexibility you need to customize your own meal plans, while giving you the structure you crave by following set dietary guidelines for each phase.



I also created a delicious Fall Holiday collection of recipes that I'm so excited to share with you. You can mix and match all the incredible meals and snacks to make the plan perfect for you.

Over the next 4 weeks you'll learn a healthy, enjoyable and delicious way to feel fabulous, look amazing and turn heads in your favorite holiday dress.

This 28-day PROVEN program has been specifically designed to tone, tighten and transform your body into stunning HOLIDAY HOTTIE shape.

Are you READY?!?

Say 'YES' out loud right now!

Let me hear it!

DO IT!

**YOU DESERVE TO FEEL FABULOUS, LOOK AMAZING AND UNLEASH YOUR HOLIDAY HOTTIE WITH CONFIDENCE!!!**

Let's do THIS!!!!!!

xo

~ Coach Courtney

***WARNING!! Do not read any further until you've completed these questions! It will be the most effective part of your journey! I promise!***

1. Close your eyes and imagine yourself in 4 weeks. How do you want to feel physically? What about emotionally? Who is looking back at you in the mirror? Is she confident? Radiant? What has she learned?

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2. What is one habitual goal you want to achieve? Maybe it's to start meal prepping, waking up earlier to work out, or to start journaling. A habit takes 21 days to form, so by day 28 you'll be well on your way to making your new habit stick! Now is the perfect time to create those new healthy habits!

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3. What is one spiritual goal you have? It can be that you want to start going to yoga once a week or to simply feel confident and strong. Maybe you want to be more positive or respond to obstacles in a better, more productive way. Whatever it is, write it down right now and you will get there!

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4. What is one physical change you want to see? Do you want stronger arms? Do you want to build muscle overall? Or it can be something as simple as feeling confident rockin' your sexy holiday dress. Write it down. Visualize it and make every decision every day with that goal in mind. I promise you'll get there! You're capable of more than you'll ever know, and I'm by your side every step of the way.

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5. What are your usual setbacks? What usually prevents you from working out or eating healthy? Most of us are completely aware of our personal obstacles. How will you prevent them and work on them? Maybe you make everything else a priority before yourself or easily get distracted or discouraged. Or maybe your environment or the people around you are holding you back. Can you ask for their support? Whether it's work, friends or family, take the time to realize that you are the only one in control of your body and your future. Stand up for yourself and stick to your goals. You deserve it.

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6. If you could thank your future self-right now for sticking to this 4-week challenge, what would you say to her?

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7. Now imagine yourself on December 15<sup>th</sup>. You feel exactly how you visualized above. What do you want to say to the girl reading this plan, preparing for the next 4 weeks? What words of encouragement do you have for her? What do you want her to push through and what do you want her to let go of? Let it out.

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I am so proud of you for what you just did. Those were tough questions.

Sometimes, it's hard to be honest with ourselves because we already know the answers.

You're in control of your future and that can be scary, but also empowering!

As women, we'll do anything for others around us, but we forget to give ourselves that same love and support. Now it's time to nurture yourself. Mind, body, and soul!

“Life is tough, but so are you girl!”

I want you to know that over the next 4 weeks you will be challenged and you will have to be strong, but I also want you to know - it'll be worth it.

You'll feel like that girl you've already visualized. It's going to take some hard work and major hustle to get there, but I know you can do it.

## **Let Go of Distractions and Move Forward**

With all of life's distractions and challenges, I know that your own goals can end up on the back burner. If you can just dedicate some time for yourself on the weekends to prep for the week, you'll be able to do more in other areas of your life!

If you say you don't have time, try being mindful of how long you're on your phone every day or how long you might procrastinate, scroll Facebook, or watch TV. Whatever it is that's making you have less time, decide how you can refocus and dedicate time to yourself and goals.

If you don't want to wake up 30 minutes early to do your holiday workouts because you'll lose sleep, go to bed 30 minutes earlier and thank me later!

Trust me... morning workouts will be one of the most powerful things you do during this challenge. It can be a walk, jog, your 9 Minute Mission Moves, or any workout you LOVE. I just want you to MOVE as early in the day as you can.

REMEMBER... you can do anything for 28 Days! This is it!

Your TIME is NO!!!

Let's Dive IN!!!!

# Getting Started Nutrition Guidelines

## WATER

Why Is It So Important?

The body uses water for so many important functions such as regulating body temperature, facilitating nutrient metabolism, aiding in digestion and elimination (preventing constipation), cushioning joints and the spine, nourishing organs and tissues, and so much more. Since most people aren't getting enough water, it's important to pay attention to how much you're drinking and make an effort to drink more on a daily basis. Your body will thank you!

So, how much do you need?

The recommended daily intake of water for most adults is 2 liters.

Think about how much you drink in one day, are you getting close to that?

If not, it's time to start drinking more.

While 2 liters is the recommended daily intake, it's important to remember that there are factors that will affect your daily needs. Some of these factors include your own unique body's needs, exercise frequency and intensity, the surrounding climate.

Many health professionals now recommend drinking according to thirst. This means you don't need to go overboard forcing down glasses of water when you're not thirsty. Just pay attention to your thirst mechanism. We have complex hormonal and neurological processes that are constantly monitoring how hydrated we are. And for healthy adults, this system is very reliable.

Besides thirst, pay attention to how dark and concentrated your urine is. The darker your urine, the more effort your body is making to hold on to the water it has. Urine is still getting rid of the waste, but in a smaller volume of water, so it looks darker.

There are a few other things to consider when evaluating your hydration status. If you're sweating a lot, or are in a hot/humid climate, you will need to drink more.

Breastfeeding moms, older adults, and people at risk of kidney stones need to drink more water too. So do people who experience vomiting and/or diarrhea, as both can quickly dehydrate our bodies. In those cases, it's important to drink more and listen to your body's signals.

What counts toward my water intake?

All fluids and foods containing water contribute to your daily needs.

Water is usually the best choice. If you're not drinking pure water, consider the effects that the other ingredients have on your body. Drinks containing sugar, alcohol, and caffeine will have effects besides hydration.

Sugary drinks should be avoided at all times as they can affect blood sugar balance and cause food cravings.

Alcohol puts a strain on the liver and caffeine can keep you awake or jittery.

Many foods contain significant amounts of water as well. Especially fruits and vegetables like cabbage, cantaloupe, watermelon, strawberries, celery, spinach, lettuce, apples, pears, oranges, grapes, carrots, and pineapple. These foods are over 80% water, so they are good sources of hydration.

Noncaffeinated herbal teas like peppermint, rooibos, chamomile, ginger, and many other varieties are also great choices to include more water into your day.

A great way to start the day is to drink an 8oz glass of water before eating or drinking anything else. You can make it even better by adding a half lemon squeezed into the water, which gives you amazing digestive benefits.

## PORTION SIZES

### How Much Is Enough?

Eating large portions of food on a regular basis can have serious consequences on both your digestion and overall health. The implications of overeating can include excess energy intake and weight gain.

Overeating also puts stress on the digestive system which can cause sluggish digestion and even constipation. Overeating can also lead to poor protein digestion if you are eating a large portion of protein in one sitting. Your stomach has only enough acid and gastric juices at one time to handle a certain quantity of food, and if that supply is exhausted, food is not getting broken down properly which can cause bloating and indigestion.

Large portion sizes can also disrupt blood sugar balance, and that can lead to more overeating through blood sugar spikes and crashes and cravings for more food. Fluctuations in blood sugar increase the risk for type 2 diabetes and can put pressure on the cardiovascular system.

The following general rule of thumb outlines how big each portion of food on your plate should be.

- o Proteins: should not exceed the size of your palm
- o Carbs/Grains: should not exceed a closed handful
- o Vegetables: one to two closed fists
- o Fats: one to two lengths of thumb
- o Fruits: one fistful

## HAVE 5 MEALS A DAY!

Yes 5! You'll be keeping your metabolism and energy levels boosted all day long with these meals.

M1: Breakfast

M2: Mid-morning snack

M3: Lunch

M4: Energizing afternoon snack

M5: Dinner

I'll be giving you all the details on each meal with recipe suggestions later in the plan!

## Label Reading 101

When you pick up a package of food you may be wondering, is this food healthy? It's important to remember that eating whole, natural and fresh foods is always best, but if you are shopping for anything that comes in a jar, can, container or another type of package, here is a general breakdown:

### Things to Note on a Nutrition Label

**Sodium:** A healthy range is 1400 - 2400 mg of sodium per day; this equates to just one teaspoon per day so watch out for added salts in your meals or foods.

**Fiber:** Aim for 25 - 35 grams of fiber per day.

**Saturated fat:** 20 grams of saturated fat per day is acceptable.

**Sugar:** Zero grams of sugar is always best because of its, but you have to keep in mind where the sugar is coming from. The sugar that is harmful is any processed sugar in the ingredients list (e.g., sugar, corn syrup, high fructose corn syrup, glucose, fructose, beet sugar, to name just a few). A general recommendation for the maximum daily intake of sugars (natural or added) for men is about 35 grams and for women 24 grams. Remember 4 grams is equal to

one tablespoon.

**Protein:** One serving of protein is about 25 grams. The total amount of protein needed in a day will depend on body size and activity level. When reading labels, it is important to look at where the protein is coming from, check the ingredients label.

**Carbohydrates:** One serving of carbohydrate is equal to 15 grams but remember if your goal is weight loss or blood sugar balance you may want to be below this number.

#### INGREDIENTS TO AVOID:

- o Artificial sweeteners like sucralose, aspartame, sorbitol.
- o Artificial colors like blue#1 or #2, Yellow #5, Tartrazine, Allura red, Red #3 and Blue #2
- o Preservatives like TBHQ, sodium benzoate, nitrites (such as sodium nitrite), sulfites (such as sulfur dioxide), sorbates (such as sodium sorbate, potassium sorbate)
- o MSG/monosodium glutamate
- o Trans Fats like hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils
- o High Fructose Sweeteners

These harmful ingredients can disrupt blood sugar balance, can cause headaches and overeating, and may have cancer-causing effects. Some contribute to asthma and allergies, affect your moods and hormones, and can contribute to heart disease.

It's just not worth the risk, right?!

## Create your Meal Plans in Advance for Each Week.

Using the Sample meal plans provided. Set aside some quiet time to design your weekly Meal Plan. Get out the Clean Comfort Foods Cookbook, the additional H4H recipe collection, select the recipes you'd like to try and that meet the guidelines of each Nutritional Phase.

Personalize your grocery list and head to the grocery store. I also recommend you print off your personalized weekly meal plan and post it on your fridge.

Set-up an optimal meal-time schedule based on your daily availability.

For example, 7am breakfast, 10am mid-morning snack, 12:30pm lunch, 3pm mid-afternoon snack, and 6pm dinner. Meals should be spaced 3-3.5 hours apart, do not go longer than 4hrs between meals. I highly recommend that you commit to setting alarms on your phone daily to remind you when it's time for your next meal.

Established a **meal preparation** strategy that will work for you.

Are you going to wake up early each day and prepare your meals?

Prepare everything on Sunday?

Prepare everything on Wednesday and Sunday?

It is **CRITICAL** to your success with this program that you create a *meal preparation ritual* that becomes part of your weekly routine.

## Meal Planning Tips

Over the next 28 days, meal prepping will literally be your best time investment ever. It's crazy how much time you'll save during the week by just taking an hour or so on Sunday!

I made your meal plan so flexible that you can meal prep like a boss and then get on with your week organized and ready for anything!

Create your best plan for your lifestyle by plugging in any of the meals I share with you, just make sure the recipes you do select meet the nutrition guidelines for the phase that you are in.

If you sub in your own H4H approved meals, dine out, or mix and match your favorite healthy foods, it still means you're "on the plan!"

You can also mix in any of the recipes from my Clean Comfort Fat Burning Foods Cookbook, or any other Love Yourself Lean challenges or programs that you may have done in the past.

Sundays are great days to meal prep, but if your day off from work is Monday or another day during the week, take full advantage of it and making meal prep THE priority! Your success depends on it.

## **Keep a VERY Detailed Food Log**

Keep a VERY detailed food log and note how you feel within 30min-1hr after each meal. Make sure to record any symptoms you experience, cravings and how satisfied you feel after each meal.

When you're feeling sluggish I want you to ask yourself these questions:

1) Are you thirsty? When was the last time you drank water?

Most of the time when your brain is tired, and you feel fatigued, you're actually dehydrated, and you can be tempted to grab something high in sugar to help your energy levels. But if you do that, your insulin levels will spike, and you'll actually be more tired and even hungrier an hour later. It's the sugar high and crash. So, remember to grab that water, girl.

2) Have you been sitting for too long?

Most of us spend our days in front of a computer... me included. I start to get tired too. I'm also tempted to grab an extra coffee around 3pm or eat something I don't really need at that

time.

Instead, your body just needs to wake up! You don't need to walk to the vending machine, you need to walk, period. Take a 5-minute break and walk the stairs in your building, outside, or wherever you are.

3) When is the last time you ate?

I want you eating 5 times a day! If you skip a meal, you'll feel the effects.

Make sure you're eating a breakfast, a snack midmorning, a lunch, an afternoon pick-me up, and a dinner.

## **What About Food Cravings?**

Food cravings should start to go away as you adopt a healthier diet because you will be removing the specific foods that cause cravings and blood sugar will be more balanced. If you do find yourself experiencing a craving that could potentially cause you to make a poor food decision, try these tips to get you through it:

**Drink Instead of Eat:** Many people experience cravings that are thirst signals, so it's important to up your water intake to kick those type of cravings.

**Up Your Healthy Fats:** Fats keep you full, so it's important to make sure you are getting enough each day and with each meal. If cravings are getting you down, try adding a healthy fat such as avocado, chia or hemp seeds, salmon or eggs to your meals. Also, consider your protein intake as protein works to keep you feeling full as well.

**Try Cinnamon:** Adding cinnamon to your diet is an amazing blood sugar balancer. Try sprinkling it on foods such as oatmeal, or fruit, add it to your smoothie or anywhere else you can sneak it in. Cinnamon tea is also a great option too!

## **What if I slip up?**

I understand there will be holiday gathers and parties to attend over the next 4 weeks...I'm with you! That's why I'm committed to sharing with you inside the Private Facebook Group weekly nutrition tips and guidelines to follow for celebratory nights that you just can't skip.

The general rule of thumb is, if you slip up for a meal, don't let it get you down. The best way to recover is to get right back on track for the next meal.

So, if you mess up on a Wednesday, it's not the end of the world. Thursday morning, grab a light breakfast, jog your pretty tush, and voila, you're golden.

It's not how you fall, it's how you get up and bounce back!

## **Wine + Cocktails**

I know you love your wine, but I do recommend that you keep it under control. No full bottles in one evening! ;)

Choose 2-3 nights or less per week to have 2 or fewer drinks.

You may even choose to drink nothing at all. Do YOU, girl!

For the next 4 weeks, you'll be grabbin' that sparkling water and kombucha and you'll feel so good during your morning sweat session.

## **TREAT YOURSELF GIRL!**

The H4H meal plan is designed to help you feel and look the best you ever have. You're going to be eating clean and satisfying meals that are so delicious, that you'll feel energized immediately and you'll actually start craving healthy food!

I also love a little something sweet or a glass of wine to relax or celebrate a girls' night out. Whether it's a bubble bath, face mask and a glass of wine, or a happy hour with the girls after

a long week of work. Celebrating a girls' night is good for your mental health and happiness. Just try and keep it to 1-2 glasses a couple nights a week.

In fact, if you feel like celebrating but you want to ditch the wine, try sipping on some kombucha! I love to pour kombucha or soda water with fresh lemon in a wine glass to get into spirit!

As for desserts, it's about making smart choices and not overindulging when you do go for something sweet. Just make sure to stick to the serving size!

Whether you choose to have the occasional glass of wine or dessert or nothing at all, just remember to make the plan work for you and your goals!

# Getting Started Exercise Guidelines

## AM Booty Call

At least 15 minutes. No matter what it is, I want you to MOVE first thing when you wake up! Why? Your body has been resting for the night. Your metabolism has been working overtime with the hormones that are released when you sleep and now is the perfect time to stimulate that fat burning and get your heart rate up.

What if you have an afternoon or evening workout planned? I still want you to get moving for a minimum of 15 minutes when you wake up to boost your metabolism.

If you're hitting it hard later with a longer workout, complete the 9 Minute Mission Moves at least once, or just walk on your treadmill for 10min...just do something in the AM!!!!

## Weekly Workout Calendar

Follow the Weekly Workout Calendar.

This is the perfect tool to help plan your workouts for the week! Taking your favorite hot yoga or Zumba class on Wednesday? Perfect! Sub it out for the workout on the calendar.

Prefer to workout At-Home instead of the Gym? No worries!!! I've included workouts you can do At-Home or at the Gym.

It's all about what works for you!

## 9 Minute Mission Challenge

Squeeze this 9 Minute Workout in anytime!

You can do it in the morning for your Booty Call or in the evenings for a PM workout.

I strategically designed these short and simple workouts to make it super easy for you to get a workout in no matter how crazy your schedule.

These workouts are JUST 9-Minutes....NO EXCUSES!!! Get ready to Move, Sweat, Tone and Shape Up!!!

## **100 Mile Exercise Challenge**

I'm challenging you to complete 100 miles of exercise in 28-days. That's an average of 3.5 miles per day. You CAN do this!!! And together with our LYL Community we're going to hold each other accountable by posting in the Private Facebook group how many miles we have completed at the end of each week.

**What counts as 'MILES'?** Any form of exercise such as walking, jogging, running, biking, swimming, dancing, group fitness class, yoga, resistance training workout, or any other form of movement that makes you sweat.

### **Every 10 minutes of exercise = 1 Mile**

For example, if you complete a H4H 9 Minute Mission Workout followed by a 21-minute run on the treadmill you've earned 3 miles.

So long your time and track your miles DAILY!!!

## **Saturday Sweaty Selfie!!!**

Between Friday - Sunday, weekends can add up to almost half of your month.

So, for this 4-week Challenge, I want you to stay driven and focused on the weekends. When Friday rolls around and you haven't done your 9 Minute Mission, I know what you're doing as soon as you walk in the door from work, right?!

If your Saturday is packed with commitments, I know I'll see you at the first spin class on the schedule at your local gym or working out in your living room before you have to leave the house. Instead of your weekends working against you and canceling out your efforts during the week, they're going to be YOUR time!

## Getting Started Lifestyle Guidelines

### Lights Out

I want you to get at least 7 hours of sleep each night. 8 is optimal! A new study recently found that not enough sleep can result in metabolic and endocrine alterations. This includes decreased insulin sensitivity, increased cortisol levels, increased ghrelin, decreased leptin, and increased hunger/ appetite.

If you need to get up at 5:30am to squeeze in a quick workout, try your best to have lights out at 9:30/10pm.

I know this is going to be tough but ask for support around you. And avoid evening distractions like hour long TV programs or Netflix.

Ask yourself this one question throughout your morning or evening...

***Is what I'm doing right now helping me with my goals that I wrote down on Day 1? If not, you know what to do!***

It's in your power!

Do it for you and no one else.

### Weekly Weigh-In

Record your starting weight on your home scale first thing in the morning on Day One! Take your measurements (arm, chest, waist, hips, thigh) and take two before pictures (front and side). Your body is going to change so fast and it'll be a shame if you don't have proof of your transformation.

Take your pictures in good quality lighting; wear a swim suit or shorts and a sports bra.

PLEASE DO NOT skip this critical step. Make sure to take your own bi-weekly progress pictures on the same day and time every week to keep yourself motivated.

## **Check-in with Your New Tribe of Support DAILY**

Commit to daily check-ins inside the Private Love Yourself Lean Community Facebook group.

Share a post-workout selfie, a photo of your healthy meals, an inspiring quote or anything that you feel will motivate someone else in the community.

Support, like, and comment on check-ins from others every day, and encourage them to keep at it!

## **Check-in with YOURSELF Daily**

Ask yourself these SIX questions every day to help you exercise the art of self-reflection to monitor your progress.

- 1) "What is it that I need today to be my healthiest & happiest self?"
- 2) "Who can I ask for help?"
- 3) "Is what I'm doing right now helping me get closer or further away from my goals?"
- 4) "What did I do well today?"
- 5) "What lessons did I learn?"
- 6) "What can I do better tomorrow?"

## Hot for the Holidays Challenge Q & A

### **Can I mix and match the meals?**

Of course! Using the blank meal planning sheets, mix & match meals from the Sample Meal Plans provided to create your own personalized meal plan. You can have the same meal 2-3 days in a row. Simplify your plan as needed to best support your food preferences and lifestyles, just make sure your personalized plan meets the nutrition guidelines for the phase of the challenge you are in.

### **Can I substitute ingredients?**

If there's an ingredient you can't have or don't love, feel free to sub in another. Just make sure it fits in with the nutrition guidelines for the phase of the challenge you are in.

### **Are there "cheat meals"?**

I don't believe in the term "cheat meals" because having the occasional dessert or cocktails with friends and family isn't cheating, it's called TREATING and enjoying your life, and I'll never want you to feel guilty or be hard on yourself. Remember, you're still "on the plan" if you treat yourself 1-2 times per week. The key is to make sure you get right back on the plan with the next meal and scheduled workout. Love Yourself Lean is a lifestyle and it's all about balance!

To help you enjoy those festive holiday treats I've created a Treat Guide which outlines guidelines that you can follow for successfully enjoying your treats without sabotaging your results. Make sure to read this guide prior to enjoying your holiday treats.

### **When should I eat my meals?**

Depending on your schedule, space your meals out by about three hours. Remember to have water with you at all times and sip all day!

### **When should I work out?**

This is up to you and your schedule! I recommend waking up 30 minutes earlier (so going to

bed 30 minutes earlier), so you can crush your workout first thing in the morning! If you need to work out in the afternoon or evening, go for it! Just remember to do your best to get up and move your body for at least 15 minutes most mornings throughout this challenge.

# **NUTRITIONAL PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

## **PHASE I: (Week 1)**

Protein Cycling

## **PHASE II: (Week 2 & 3)**

Carb Cycling PLUS Treat Meal

## **Phase III: (Week 4)**

7-Day Holiday Hottie Meltdown

# Welcome to PHASE I (Week 1): Protein Cycling

## PHASE I GUIDELINES

Protein is an essential nutrient which helps form the structural component of body tissues and is used within many biological processes, for example protein is used to make enzymes, antibodies to help us fight infection as well as DNA the building blocks to life. It's also needed to make up muscle tissue which in turn helps to keep our bodies active, strong, and healthy.

Most protein is stored in the body as muscle, generally accounting for around 40-45% of our body's total pool, so it makes sense that if you increase activity, whether to improve health and fitness or body composition, you need to consider protein as an important food group in your diet.

Protein is found in dairy, meat, eggs, fish, beans and nuts, as well as in protein powders. A sensible approach to meeting your daily protein requirements is to include a combination of these foods within your diet every day.

In an attempt to keep our protein intake high and simplify or meal planning many of us turn to using the same protein sources day- in-day out. For sample you might have a chicken salad for lunch and a baked chicken breast topped with salsa and goat cheese for dinner. Or you might opt to have a protein smoothie for both your mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack. What you may not realize is that the use of the exact same protein source every day can be detrimental to their health.

Over the past decade, I have helped hundreds of women achieve optional health and fitness. During our journey together I have noticed an interesting trend, as they begin to increase their protein intake many of them start to experience complaints when they use the same protein sources regularly. They report ***feeling gassy, bloated, or experience systems of a head cold, stuffiness and congested.*** These symptoms are completely associated with food allergies and or food intolerances. What you may not realize is that you can become intolerant to many of the foods that you eat every single day, or multiple times a day.

Now many of us do typically vary our food choices daily, chicken for dinner tonight and steak tomorrow night. However, some of us often stick to a single protein source day after day and this is when intolerances can develop leading to problems with stomach health, hormonal health and even mood.

The problem- the body uses digestive enzymes in various concentrations when breaking down foods, over time these enzymes become accustomed to breaking down certain foods which can cause the body's digestive system to become sluggish, resulting in poor digestive health.

In addition, as the body searches for Amino Acids (building blocks of protein) to repair its tissue and cells it is important to get various sources of proteins to help facilitate good digestion and uptake of amino acids. The body's immune system has to allow these proteins in the body before they can be used to build new cells which leads to successful muscle repair and growth. Healthy lean muscle growth is key to optional fat loss. So, changing up your protein sources is critical.

## ***What's the solution?***

## **Protein Cycling**

What is Protein Cycling?

It is the strategy of choosing different protein sources like milk based protein (yogurt, cottage cheese) if you can tolerate them, fish, seafood, red meat, poultry and vegan choices like (hemp, peas, lentils, quinoa etc.) and rotating them throughout your day and your week.

By rotating your protein sources you can minimize or sometimes completely avoid experiencing symptoms of food intolerances while also getting a diverse amino acid profile from a number of high quality protein sources to effectively boost your protein intake while both looking and feeling better.

So the objective of Phase III – Protein Cycle is to help those of you that might already be experiencing protein intolerance, feel more comfortable and improve your overall progress. While also helping those of you that might not be experiencing any protein intolerance continue to feel and perform well.

In the end while solving food intolerances is never an easy issue the simple strategy of cycling your protein can make a huge difference for those of you that might be complaining of food related intolerance issues.

## **5 MORE REASONS WHY I LOVE A DIET HIGH IN PROTEIN AND WHY YOU SHOULD TOO!**

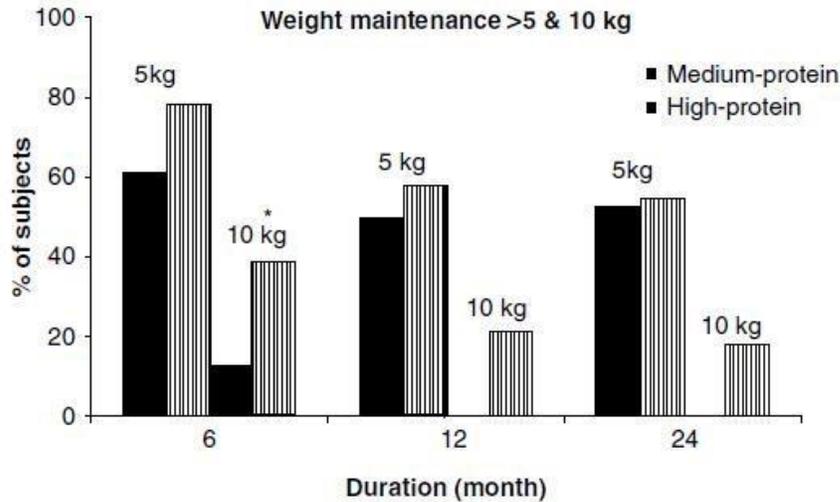
If you think a high protein diet is only useful for bodybuilders or marathoners, it might be time to rethink: not only can high protein diets build muscle and optimize body composition, they can also curb hunger, enhance satiety, and promote fat loss.

I think we'd all say that choosing an egg is better for you than a waffle. What you might be wondering is just how much better is it, and why is it so effective? Whether you want to lose weight, keep weight off, or maintain, research shows that a high protein diet is most effective for all three goals.

### **High Protein Diet – The Research**

In the longest term weight loss study, those who consistently followed a high protein diet lost more weight than those following a medium protein diet. Over the course of the study, total caloric intake dropped only ~12%, and we're not talking outrageous levels of protein here: 21.2% of calories, or just over 100 grams/day.

After 6 months of dieting, the proportion of people who maintained big-time weight loss (over 20 pounds) was greater in the high protein group. And at 12 and 24 months, only those in the high protein group were able to keep off 20 or more pounds. So, as we can see from the following chart, keeping those protein levels high is actually a big plus not only for the weight loss phase, but also for maintenance. Not bad on the protein score.



This is not an isolated finding. Another group jacked up protein to 133 grams and the results were even more profound. The group with the high protein diet definitely drops far more significantly than the carb group (approx. 10kg vs. 6kg). Obviously, our own personal diets aren't marked by a certain time frame, but if you're planning on dieting and moving into a maintenance phase, these findings could be a good way to plan a diet that can help you lose the weight and keep it off.

### #1: PROTEIN SATISFIES & SAVES CALORIES.

Diets high in protein will help you feel fuller longer. When you eat a diet that is higher in protein it slows down your digestion therefore helping you feel more satisfied for longer periods of time. As a result, you are less likely to go back for seconds and overeat. Eating a high protein diet over the course of multiple days/weeks will help reduce your total calorie intake, while still keeping you satisfied and full leading to faster fat loss without feeling hungry.

### #2: IT CURBS CARB HIGHS AND LOWS.

Pairing protein with carbohydrate-rich foods slows down the absorption of sugar from your stomach into your bloodstream, which may help keep your blood sugar from skyrocketing and ward off future cravings.

### **#3 PROTEIN REQUIRES MORE OF YOUR ENERGY.**

The “thermic effect of food” (TEF) is the energy we use to digest food into small, absorbable components. Protein has a higher TEF compared to carbs and fat meaning you’re actually burning more calories to process protein than to process the other two.

Greater calorie burned = faster fat loss!

### **#4 IT FUELS FAT BURNING.**

It may be surprising, but it is a scientific fact that your body cannot effectively burn and use fat as energy if it doesn’t have help from either carbohydrate or protein. As you lose weight, your body loses both muscle and fat (I know, bummer!). Therefore, if your goal is fat loss it is especially important that you continue to eat enough protein in your diet to further fuel your fat loss while preserving calorie-burning lean muscle. As known as avoiding the “skinny-fat syndrome”.

**#5: PROTEIN PROMOTES MUSCLE REPAIR & GROWTH.** Your protein needs increase especially after bouts of intense exercise so increasing your protein intake on days that you exercise is beneficial. Additionally, if you strength train it is recommended that you consume a protein shake after each training session which is when your muscle tissue is the most sensitive to nutrients and therefore can use the protein to repair and grow.

## **PHASE I GUIDELINES**

**RULE #1:** Keep a VERY detailed food log and note how you feel within 12hrs after each meal. Make sure to record any symptoms in your food journey and share them in the Private Facebook group so that I can best support you in addresses these symptoms.

**RULE #2:** The meal plan provided with this protein cycle is a SAMPLE. You do not have to follow it exactly! Use the plan as a guide to create your own personalized meal plan based on the foods you and your family enjoy the most.

**RULE 3#:** Create your plan using any of the recipes in the Clean Comfort Foods Cookbook or from the Recipe Collection that is included with the challenge. Just make sure the recipes you select follow the Protein Cycle guidelines.

**RULE #4:** Do not eat the same protein source twice in the same day. For example, if you have chicken for lunch, do not have chicken for dinner.

**RULE #5:** If you do not have an allergy to seafood, then try to include one seafood serving per day. For example, Salmon Cakes for lunch and Taco Lettuce Wraps for dinner. If you do have an allergy to seafood then build your daily meal plan around poultry, red meat, eggs, dairy, protein powder and 100% natural plant-based protein sources, such as lentils, beans and quinoa.

**RULE #6:** If after eating red meat, chicken or poultry for 2-3 days in a row and you start to experience symptoms of a food intolerance you should:

- A. Eat seafood, eggs or 100% natural plant-based protein sources ONLY for a few days and or until your intolerance symptoms disappear.
- B. Add a Digestive Enzyme to your daily supplement routine. Choose to take it with your largest protein meal of the day.
- C. Enjoy either a peppermint or ginger tea after each meal to soothe your belly and ease your digestion.
- D. If you have an allergy to seafood, opt for eggs, dairy, or 100% natural plant based protein sources

**RULE #7:** Cut out 'starchy' carbs (breads, pasta, rice, potatoes, crackers, oatmeal, etc.). If you want to try the plant-based protein recipe Dahl, make sure it is AFTER a resistance training workout. Most plant-based proteins like beans and lentils are also high in starchy carbs; so limiting them to post-workout meals will ensure your body does not store the additional carbs as fat.

**RULE #8:** Add one serving of healthy fats to three of your five daily meals. It is recommended to avoid adding them to your post exercise/workout meal. For a complete list of LYL Approved fats and serving sizes, refer to the Approved Foods List included at the end of the Nutrition Guide.

*Just as it is recommended to Cycle Your Protein it is just as important to **Cycle Your Fats**.* Therefore, when designing your Phase II meal plan choose different sources of healthy fats.

**RULE #10:** Add one scoop of protein powder in water post resistance training.

**RULE #11:** Drink at least 70 ounces of water per day. This can include teas, and coffee. You add ½ cup water for every one full cup of coffee you drink to your daily total.

Okay girl, there you have it!

Using the **Phase I SAMPLE Meal Plans** provided, grab your cookbooks, pull out the recipes you want to try and custom design YOUR PERFECT meal plan for Week 1.

Note that I have also included a **Blank Meal Planning Sheet** that you can use to create your personalized plan.

I look forward to seeing your meal planning check-ins inside the Facebook group.

# Welcome to PHASE II (Week 3 & 4):

## Carb Cycling

### PHASE II GUIDELINES

Carb cycling involves eating low carb for a period of time followed by a day of increased carbohydrate consumption; sometimes referred to as carb loading or re-feeding.

#### *Why I LOVE Carb Cycling*

Learning to carb cycle will not only accelerate your fat loss but it will also prevent you from falling off your healthy eating plan when you enjoy eating carbs.

Finding success with a carb cycling plan will mean letting go of the idea of dieting and feeling guilty about low willpower and slip-ups that often cause people to give up on their diets. Realizing that eating healthy carbs in addition to your favorite cheat foods can actually help your fat loss and lean muscle building efforts is a critical step in getting off the yo-yo dieting cycle.

#### *How it works*

Incorporating low carb days into your plan teaches your body to burn its own body fat for fuel instead of relying on dietary carbohydrates. Once your body increases its ability to burn fat, your occasional high carb days won't affect your body's ability to continue to burn fat.

Your body is way to clever to let you starve. When calories are low, the body knows to slow down your metabolism, and when there is a spike in calories the body speeds-up, increasing your metabolism. I like to call this spike in your metabolism, from increased calories 'shock therapy'. Carb cycling shocks the body by giving it high carbohydrates after a few days of low carbohydrates, to reignite the metabolism for maximum fat burning.

Cycling carbohydrates also regulates hormones related to hunger and allows your body to restore its muscle glycogen stores. This is extremely helpful in recovery after your workouts.

Lastly, psychologically, it can be easier to eat low carb when you know you can have a high carb day every few days. Allowing yourself to enjoy your favorite high carb foods every few days can strengthen your willpower for the days when you eat low carb. Learning to eat in a way that satisfies your cravings and supports your fat loss and lean muscle building goals is the key to changing your body composition permanently, in addition to helping you find balance and building a healthy relationship with food.

It's important to take the time to plan your menu for the week and prepare some of your meals and snacks in advance.

Carb cycling is a fantastic way to add variety to your meal planning so you don't feel like you are on a diet and is a healthy and enjoyable way to reach your weight loss goals. If you have ever followed a low carb diet before, you may have experienced fatigue, brain fog, loss of training performance and the inevitable carb cravings. The solution to this is the carb cycling method. Give it a try and you will be surprised how easy, enjoyable and successful carb cycling can be.

## **Here is the Carb Cycling Plan you should follow for the next 2 weeks:**

**Monday – Low Carb Day**

**Tuesday – Low Carb Day**

**Wednesday – High Carb Day**

**Thursday – High Carb Day**

**Friday – Low Carb Day**

**Saturday – High Carb Day**

**Sunday – High Carb Day**

## Low Carb Day Guidelines:

You may have these meals in any order you prefer.

You must have vegetables/salad with at least 2 of your meals - you may add additional fibrous vegetables if hungry. Vegetables have very few calories (and most you will burn off by just the process of digesting them). They are full of nutrients that your body needs, they are high in fibre and they will help fill you up if feeling hungry!

You may have an optional 6th meal on this day.

### **Meal 1**

1 serving protein  
1 serving fat

### **Meal 2**

1 serving protein  
1 serving fat

### **Meal 3**

1 serving protein  
1 serving fat  
1 serving vegetables/salad

### **Meal 4**

1 serving protein  
1 serving fat

### **Meal 5**

1 serving protein  
1 serving fat  
1 serving vegetables/salad

### **Meal 6 (if hungry)**

30g/1oz protein powder in water

*\*Can add 30g/1oz berries (yes, just a few!)*

## Low Carb Day Sample Meal Plan (Without Recipes)

### Meal 1

2 whole eggs scrambled with mushrooms and spinach, topped with 60g/2oz avocado

### Meal 2

30g/1oz chocolate protein powder blended with 1 cup unsweetened almond milk, ice and 1 tbsp. natural peanut butter or any natural nut butter

### Meal 3

Poached Salmon with a large salad of mixed lettuce, cucumber, red and green bell pepper, cucumber and red onion. Dressing: (pre-make this and use for 4 servings of fat): 1 medium shallot – chopped, 2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar, 4 tbsp. olive oil, 1 tsp. Dijon mustard, ¼ tsp. salt - blend all in a food processor until combined

### Meal 4

One hard-boiled egg and 8 walnut pieces

### Meal 5

Pan seared cod with 1 tbsp. olive oil and mixed veggies

### Meal 6 (if hungry)

30g/1oz protein powder in water + 30g/1oz strawberries (if needed)

## **High Carb Day Guidelines**

To assist with fat loss, energy and recovery I recommend you eat your carbohydrates around your resistance training or high intensity cardio sessions.

Ideally, have one serving of carbs in the meal prior to your training session and the remaining one in the meal that follows your training session.

Limit fats to two meals; ideally not with your carb-based meals.

You must have vegetables/salad with at least 2 of your meals - you may add additional fibrous vegetables if hungry. Vegetables are full of nutrients that your body needs, they have very few calories (and most you will burn off by just the process of digesting them), are high in fibre and they will fill you up if feeling hungry!

### **Meal 1**

- 1 serving starchy carb, fruit or dairy (or a combination)
  - 1 serving protein

### **Meal 2**

- 1 serving starchy carb, fruit or dairy (or a combination)
  - 1 serving protein

### **Meal 3**

- 1 serving protein
  - 1 serving fat
- 1 serving vegetables/salad

### **Meal 4**

- 1 serving protein
  - 1 serving fat

### **Meal 5**

- 1 serving protein
- 1 serving vegetables/salad

## High Carb Day Sample Meal Plan (Without Recipes)

### Meal 1 (Carb Count #1)

Egg whites scrambled and served with sprouted grain bread

### Meal 2 (Carb Count #2)

Low fat cottage cheese mixed with natural yogurt and top with mixed berries, plus ½ cup gluten-free granola

### Meal 3

Lean beef strips with mixed leafy greens, red onion, sliced tomato, cucumber, snow pea sprouts with a dressing of lime juice, chilli and garlic and topped with 15g/0.5oz pine nuts

### Meal 4

30g/1oz chocolate protein powder blended with 1 cup unsweetened almond milk, ice and 1 tbsp. natural peanut butter or any natural nut butter

### Meal 5

White fish seasoned with lemon pepper seasoning served with steamed asparagus.

# Welcome to PHASE III (Week 4):

## Holiday Hottie Meltdown

### OVERVIEW

For the next 7-days you won't be eating the most flavorful food you've ever had. This is an intense program to achieve quick results.

If it's not on the plan you don't do it or you don't eat it!!!

Follow it EXACTLY and it will work!

This is NOT a lifestyle plan.

This IS a quick, 7-day plan that's a perfect way to prepare for an event, jump start your diet plan, slim down quickly or give your system and body a good old 'detox' if you've been slacking off.

It's the perfect plan to help you stay focused and on track to achieving impressive results at the end of your transformation challenge.

It's not going to be easy; if it were easy everyone would be walking around with a six pack abs!!!

Expect your will power to be tested, but those of you who are REALLY commitment will triumph in the end.

### Phase III RULES:

**RULE #1.** Always stay hydrated with a minimum of 80 ounces of water, which equals ten, 8oz glasses. Measure it! Don't just assume you are drinking that much.

**RULE #2.** Of the 80oz of water required each day, drink 16oz upon rise every morning and add freshly squeezed lemon.

**RULE #3.** For every 8oz coffee or caffeinate beverage you drink only 4oz contributes to your daily water intake.

**RULE #4.** Drink three-four, 8oz cups of green tea per day. Green tea speeds up your metabolism by 40%, helping you to burn fat faster. To super charge your belly fat burning potential, MAKE SURE to drink one cup with your morning grapefruit.

**RULE #5.** Eat 5-6 small meals per day consisting of mostly vegetables and raw food. Meals should be every 3 hours. Set your alarm if you have too. This habit is critical to maintaining your energy levels.

**RULE #6:** Have your last meal at least 2 hours before bedtime. No ifs, ands or buts!

**RULE #7:** Cut out 'starchy' carbs (breads, pasta, rice, quinoa, yam, sweet potatoes, oatmeal, etc.)

**RULE #8:** Receive sugar from fruit only as your mid-morning snack, or Meal 6 on Days 1 & 2 – no additives in food or in drinks. Keep your sugar intake as low as possible. Berries, grapefruit, apple and pears are the best choices.

**RULE #9:** Take two krill oil caps with Meal 1 and two caps before bed.

**RULE #10:** 5 Days Out - Temporarily cut out dairy products from your diet.

**RULE #11:** 2 Days Out - For the last two days eat asparagus with your dinner. Asparagus is a natural diuretic, taking excess water out of your skin.

**RULE #12:** 2 Days Out - Cut sodium between 500 & 800mg per day to prevent bloating. Continue to the last day. Having too little sodium is dangerous, so do not drop lower than 500mg! (This equals ¼ of a teaspoon).

**RULE #13:** 2 Days Out - Decrease your TOTAL water intake for the finally two days to 48 ounces. The 48 ounces should consist of an lemon water, coffee, plain water and green tea.

**RULE #14:** Maximize your results by starting your day with a 20min High Intensity Interval Cardio Session (HIIT) upon rise; before Meal 1. PLUS, complete 5 strength based LYL Workouts over seven days to ensure you are feeling toned from head to toe!

## Food List

### \*\*\* *Protein* \*\*\*

**Portion: Size of your palm or small deck of cards**

Chicken breast

Turkey breast

Lean beef

Lamb

Game meat (i.e. rabbit / deer / buffalo etc.)

Seafood (i.e. cod, salmon, trout, sole, tilapia, tuna, haddock, herring, mackerel, perch, mahi mahi, orange roughy, shrimp, scallops)

6 egg whites

2 whole eggs (once per day max)

Low fat cottage cheese

Equivalent to 20-30g/0.75-1oz protein powder

### \*\*\* **Additional Vegetarian Protein Options** \*\*\*

**Portion: Size of your palm or small deck of cards**

Chickpeas

Lentils

Kidney beans/red beans/black beans/broad beans

Quinoa

Tofu (3 x week max)

## Food List

### \*\*\* *STARCHY CARBOHYDRATES* \*\*\*

**Portion: Size of your clenched fist**

Oats (plain – no added sugar, flavor or fruit)

Rice (basmati, wild, or brown)

Brown rice pasta

Sweet potato or yam

Lentils

Chickpeas

Kidney beans

Pumpkin/squash

Quinoa, amaranth, buckwheat, millet etc.

### \*\*\* **Fruit** \*\*\*

**Portion: Size of your clenched fist**

Strawberries or other berries

Apple

Orange

Grapefruit

Pear

Peach

# Food List

## \*\*\* *Fats / Oils / Dairy* \*\*\*

### Dairy:

- 1 cup milk alternative (almond/rice)
- 100g (3.25oz) full fat natural/Greek yogurt (unsweetened)
- 100g (3.25oz) full fat cottage cheese
- 1 tbsp. organic butter\*
- 30g/1oz full fat cheese\*
- (\* use in moderation 1x per day)

### Fats / Oils:

- 1 tbsp. flaxseed oil (do not cook with flax oil), Udo's Oil, coconut oil, or olive oil
- 60g/2oz avocado
- 15 almonds or 8 half walnuts
- 1 tbsp. 100% natural peanut butter or other nut butter (i.e. almond butter)
- 2 tbsp. flax meal
- 30g/1oz pumpkin seeds
- 30g/1oz sunflower seeds
- 30g/1oz chia seeds
- 30g/1oz hemp seeds

# Food List

## \*\*\* *Fibrous Vegetables* \*\*\*

**Portion Size: UNLIMITED – minimum 2 servings of 2 cups per day**

- Asparagus
- Alfalfa
- Leek
- Onion
- Bok Choy
- Broccoli
- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Bell peppers
- Mushrooms
- Brussels sprouts
- Green or yellow beans
- Snow peas
- Cucumber
- Cabbage
- Celery
- Cauliflower
- Tomato
- Carrots

## CALORIE ADD ON'S

If you're still hungry or did a long workout, you can use these calorie add-ons to add to your meals.

### 100-150 CALORIES

- 5 egg whites
- 1 tablespoon almond butter
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- ½ cup cooked quinoa
- ½ medium (5oz) avocado
- 3oz canned tuna, in water, drained
- 3oz skinless chicken
- 1 cup cooked and chopped kale
- 3 tablespoons ground flaxseed
- 2 cups raw chopped veggies
- 3oz grilled shrimp ¼ cup almonds

### 200-250 CALORIES

- 1 cup beans or lentils
- ¼ cup chopped walnuts or
- ¼ cup unsalted sunflower seeds
- 2 tablespoons of almond butter or coconut oil
- 1 cup cooked quinoa
- 4oz cooked protein like salmon, cod and chicken