



GET FIT & FOCUSED . . . Be Done with Old Habits in 2021

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Our overall health and energy levels are really a reflection of what we eat and how often we exercise. When we are exercising regularly, drinking more WATER, and eating clean, balanced meals we feel so much better. When we focus on these things, we are able to maintain a healthy body weight, regulate our blood-sugar levels, and keep our bodies properly hydrated. But for so many of us, incorporating these healthy habits are more of a fad than a true lifestyle. We all get busy, but it is important to re-group and re-focus so that we are on track for success. Below are some healthy tips for getting lean and focused in 2021:

- **Drink ½ your body-weight in ounces of WATER each day** (only count water – not juice or coffee)
- Start to limit the amount of coffee you drink (if this applies). Coffee is highly acidic which is disruptive to the digestive system, and it also has a negative effect on insulin levels. Switch to drinking green tea if you can (or even as a substitute for those afternoon coffee breaks), as green tea has lots of antioxidants, and it also is a PH balanced form of caffeine -- so it doesn't wreak havoc on your digestive system the way coffee does. Let's at least TRY to reduce coffee intake.
- **Meal Prep:** It is so important to plan out your meals and snacks for the week – and then create your food shopping list accordingly. Take an hour in the kitchen on a Sunday to prep some things – like slicing up some raw veggies, cooking a few lunches for the week, etc. A person's readiness to change starts with proper planning and accountability.
- When prepping your main meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner), let's start focusing on **more lean proteins** (chicken, turkey, fish/seafood, small portions of lean red meat, eggs or egg whites, or organic tofu & beans (if you are a vegetarian).
- Also start focusing on **more vegetables** and getting 25 grams of fiber each day. Fiber has a pleasing effect on blood-sugar levels – so this makes decreasing body-fat a lot easier.
- **Eat every 3 hours** . . . having either a planned meal or snack: This helps to regulate blood-sugar levels which not only assists with weight loss, but it also helps with mental focus and our ability to stay disciplined by staying AHEAD of the hunger valve. So when planning your day, include a snack in between breakfast and lunch, and another between lunch and dinner. Eliminate or reduce evening snacks – as it is best to put your body in a fasting state in the evening. You will not only sleep better when you go to bed with a relatively empty stomach, but your body will use fat for fuel as you sleep.
- **Avoid thinking so much about food** (keep busy with other things) and minimize eating in the evening – limit it to raw veggies or a cup of herbal tea. It might not be what you are hankering for, but in a few days your cravings will subside. Remember, so much of our eating is tied to emotions and stress. So the more we are aware of that, the better we will be at asking ourselves "Am I really hungry and is it time for a meal or snack, or am I stressed and looking for comfort?"
- **Eat Low-Glycemic, Low-Calorie Healthy Snacks:** This means you are choosing snacks that do NOT have a negative effect on blood-sugar levels. When we control blood-sugar levels, it's so much easier to decrease bodyfat. So let's stay away from high-carb/processed carb snacks – and look towards lower calorie snacks that have more fiber and better nutrition. For example, having a hard-boiled egg and a ½ cup of raw veggies has under 100 calories, and it is loaded with protein, fiber and antioxidants . . . It is also low-carb. Another great example is to have 1 slice of Ezekiel brand bread (low-glycemic bread made from sprouted grains) with 1 level Tablespoon of Natural Peanut Butter or Natural Almond Butter only had 180 calories, and it has some protein, natural fats and fiber, and it is really satisfying. So let's plan better snacks.
 - **Consistency is key:** If you are true to clean eating, regular exercise and drinking more water 80% of the time -- and only have minimal cheats on a weekend night, you will have a much better chance of reaching your goal. And by giving yourself a Saturday night cheat meal, you also avoid that feeling of being deprived which can lead to binge eating