

DAY 5

PREPARING YOUR MEALS



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Would you like to know the main reason why people don't get the results they hope for when they try to lead a low-fat life?

It's because they don't have the right food available or are not sure how to get the right food when it comes time for a meal. They either haven't bought the right food at the supermarket or they haven't pre-prepared their meals in advance.

Well, we're about to change all of that. Before you get too involved in the 21-Day Slimdown, you need to learn to have the right food close by.

Considering how often you're going to be eating from now on, you can't hope to succeed if you don't have the food at your fingertips. There's absolutely no way around it. You cannot be leaping up from your desk at the office a couple of times per day to search for the right food, nor can you afford to put off meals (this leads to cravings that keep you thinking about food). You never want to find yourself in a position where you're hungry and all you're stuck with is vending machine food, fast food or snacks in the pantry. You don't want to get home from work late and be so hungry you start wolfing down whatever you can get your hands on.

When it's time for your meals, you've got to be ready. It doesn't count to have a frozen chicken breast in the freezer or an uncooked potato. You will be too hungry to wait. You'll end up snacking on things while you wait for that meal to be cooked, and by the time you're ready to eat, you'll have downed hundreds of calories that are already on their way to your fat cells.



HAVE A COUPLE OF MEALS READY

So what am I asking you to do? Spend hours in the kitchen? No, just the opposite. If this begins to feel like a marathon cooking program for you, you'll stop this program in a heartbeat. I want you to learn to have meals ready quickly. Preparing meals before you need them saves you tremendous time and money, and anyone with minimal cooking experience can be prepared.

In this program, I'm going to suggest that you always have a couple of meals ready at any given time. That's all you need to do. There are some people I know on this program who prepare a week's worth of the right kind of food. They pop a dozen chicken breasts and/or fish fillets on the grill, put ten baked potatoes in the oven, boil beans and steam vegetables on the stove, make a salad, store the food they're going to eat those first three days in the refrigerator and put the rest in the freezer. After three days, they take the food out of the freezer, let it thaw overnight and reheat or microwave it the next day. Voila! They have a meal!

Let me tell you how I prepare meals. The night before, I make a protein-carb meal replacement drink (see today's Slimdown Tip) and put that in the refrigerator for my first meal in the morning. Often that same night, I may prepare for the next morning's second meal by cracking open eggs and putting the egg whites in a bowl with chopped vegetables. All I have to do is throw the concoction on the stove to make an egg white omelette. I also pull food out of the freezer (something like a grilled piece of lemon-pepper chicken with some rice and steamed broccoli), thaw it and carry that meal out of the house with me in a little plastic container.

Be sure the container you choose to bring to work is microwave-proof, just in case you'd like to heat it up. The last thing you want is a meltdown.

Trust me, once you get into the habit of bringing your own food with you each day, it's no different from making sure you have your car keys. There are truck drivers on this program who are on the road so often that they carry coolers full of North-quality food. That way, they can get their meals in all day long.

“But Larry,” you’re saying, “this is not exactly what anyone would call gourmet eating.”

Well, think about your meals and your snacks on a typical day. How many of them last longer than 10 minutes? How many of them do you remember 10 minutes later? How many of them are magnificent gourmet feasts?

You’ll have plenty of opportunities to eat glorious, low-fat meals. But also remember that the 21-Day Slimdown, at its core, is a regular eating program. I’d rather you have prepared basic foods that you can use for some of your daily meals instead of grabbing some doughnuts in the morning or potato chips in the afternoon. After days and days of those snacks, the weight creeps up on you. To reshape your body, you have to keep injecting it regularly with better fuel, not junk.

YOUR DAY 5 EATING GUIDE

For Day 5, I want you to prepare a meal you will eat later in the day. Let’s make it easy. Grill some extra chicken today, then use some of it for Meal 2 (which you’ll see below) and some for Meal 3.

MEAL	EATING GUIDE
BREAKFAST	Try a breakfast shake. Put ice and a banana in a blender with one packet of a meal replacement product (see today’s Slimdown Tip). Add a little skim milk. Blend until the concoction is creamy.
LUNCH	A grilled chicken sandwich with lettuce and tomato is a great choice for lunch, or you could try one of the salads in the Cooking Guide, such as the Fiesta Bean and Corn Salad. Sprinkle in some chicken for your protein.
SNACK	Drop by the grocery store, buy a couple of small bags of crunchy vegetables, and you have your afternoon snack.
DINNER	For dinner, try a pasta without oil or butter, sprinkle it with slices of chicken you prepared earlier today and add a fibrous veggie of your choice.
SNACK	Try a non-fat ice cream bar.

YOUR DAY 5 WORKOUT

Today, we take a big step forward and boost the number of 60-Second Workouts. This time, try to do four or possibly five workouts. Pick any five you wish, and make sure to include one or two 60-Second Workouts that are in the stretching section of the Exercise Guide.

It's also time for your second of three walks for the week. You'll walk 15 to 20 minutes. Did you know that sucking in your stomach as you walk is a type of sit-up that over time can tighten your stomach muscles? When walking, lightly swing your arms and keep your elbows bent at a 90-degree angle. This swinging motion alone will help you walk a little faster and will certainly burn more calories.

EVENING PEP TALK

Don't lose patience. We're still adding all the building blocks to the 21-Day Slimdown. Every little thing you're learning to do now will pay off in a big way later. Here's something to think about. Did you know that each time you drop 10 percent in your body weight, your incidence of heart disease decreases by 20 percent?

That's right. More than 900,000 Americans die of heart disease every year. The reason so many die from heart disease is because of their high levels of cholesterol, which is mainly caused by excess fat. With every extra pound of fat you take in, you're adding a lot of extra blood vessels in your body – miles of them. These blood vessels drain away the very blood other organs need. Foods with a high amount of fat can also clog your arteries, which makes it more difficult for blood to circulate.

Every little thing you can do to knock fat out of your body is a great, great victory. You must never forget this. The grim reality is that, over time, fat can kill you. Nearly 90 percent of the 11 million Americans suffering from diabetes have what doctors call type 2 weight. Did you know if you are an overweight woman, you have a much greater chance of contracting uterus, womb, ovary and breast cancer? Did you know if you're an overweight man, a high-fat diet puts you at greater risk for prostate and colon cancer?

Give yourself a pat on the back. You're doing far more good for yourself than you even know.

Slimdown Tip:

Meal Replacement Products

One way to ensure you get in all your meals each day is by relying on powdered meal replacement products that you blend in a glass with iced water and a piece of fruit. In the past, you had to hold your nose to get these drinks down your throat, but now they taste great and provide a good balance of protein and carbohydrates. You can get them at almost any grocery store.

Clearly they shouldn't be a major part of your eating program. You should always look for something to eat. Studies show that if you don't actually get something to chew between your teeth, you'll never feel full no matter how many meal replacement drinks you have per day. Still, I have no objection to them compared to some of the other high-fat foods you can eat. Moreover, the protein in these powders serves as a nice alternative if you get tired of so many protein dishes during the day.

