

DAY 9

PERFECTING YOUR MORNING MEAL



WEEK 2

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Now that you've had a great cheat meal, let's get back to work.

That's always the way to get back on the program after a "cheat." You never say to yourself, "Well, I may as well keep cheating for another few meals since I've already blown it today." However, if you overindulge, you haven't blown the program. All you have to do is pick right back up where you left off.

The old saying that breakfast is the most important meal of the day is true, especially on the 21-Day Slimdown.

If you're not willing to go for that first breakfast meal (and I know more people don't eat breakfast than do), you are not going to get lean on this program. There is a still-pervasive myth that you can lose weight if you wake up hungry and then hold off eating until lunch. That's just not true. You've got to start feeding your body early, and you've got to feed it a balanced combination of foods. If you miss that first meal, you are under-eating, and as I've told you, under-eating always leads to overeating, which usually happens right at lunch.

Of course, there are those who do like to eat breakfast, but it's either a massive fat-laden meal, which is always easy to choose at breakfast (eggs, bacon, hash browns, toast with butter, pancakes with syrup and a big glass of orange juice) or it's a very unbalanced one (an all-carbohydrate, sugary muffin, a couple of pieces of fruit or a bowl of sugary cereal with milk). This kind of meal causes great fluctuations in your blood sugar levels, which then cause you to have cravings for mostly fat or sugar.

If you are the type who loves to order the big eggs-and-bacon extravaganza, just remember that those breakfasts contain more than 1,000 calories, half of which are fat calories.

(Again, I'm not asking you to count calories, but just keep in my mind that an average meal should be about 300 to 500 calories depending on your size and gender. You might be thinking, "Hey, but I can work off a big breakfast all through the day doing housework, sales calls, whatever." Sorry, that's a big myth. Remember the science: If you overload your body with calories, no matter what time of the day it is, those excess calories will head to your fat cells.

HOW TO EAT IN THE MORNINGS

One of the biggest complaints I hear from people who don't know my program is, "Larry, I'm not sure I'm right for the 21-Day Slimdown because I don't like to eat egg whites, which I always hear you suggesting." I will say this until I'm blue in the face: If you hate a certain food that I suggest in your daily Eating Guide, you don't have to eat it. If you hate egg whites, don't eat them. There are plenty of other foods to eat. What's more, if there is a food you especially love, like bacon, don't think you can never again eat another piece of bacon. That's ridiculous. Of course you'll eat it, regardless of what anyone says.

All I want you to do is come up with a few ways to not rely on the fattier foods as much as you have in the past. I want you to have days where you cut down from three pieces of bacon to one piece or mix egg whites with whole eggs to remove a few fat calories. Substitute low-fat Canadian bacon or fat-free ham for regular bacon. There are terrific, low-fat morning meals such as the Cheese Grits and Egg Muffins offered in the Cooking Guide.



I recognize that you might not always get in the perfect protein-starchy carb balance in Meal 1 – it is sometimes very difficult to get in that protein – but it is important to at least get a protein in one of your first couple of meals. Whenever you get a good protein-starchy carb meal at the very start of the morning, you've set up your body to get leaner and leaner as the day goes on.

Without enough protein early in the day, your body will experience protein shortages that cause your blood sugar levels to fluctuate, which will then lead to often uncontrollable cravings for more fat or sugar later in the day.

YOUR DAY 9 EATING GUIDE

MEAL	EATING GUIDE
BREAKFAST	Four to five egg whites or an egg substitute product with chopped veggies and 1 cup of oatmeal. Just to remind you: If you don't want eggs, then pick one of the Meal 1 items listed throughout the other days. And for a special fully balanced meal, try the Power Muffins that are listed in the Cooking Guide.
LUNCH	A bowl of low-fat chili. Add ground turkey breast and beans.
SNACK	Eat a turkey sandwich with a side of My Special Fries (recipe listed below).
DINNER	Four pieces of shrimp (grilled or boiled) and one California roll sushi.
SNACK	One grilled chicken breast, one medium-sized sweet potato with a butter substitute, and steamed veggies. One of the easiest chicken dishes is Leslie's Easy Chicken, found in the Cooking Guide.

MY SPECIAL FRIES

After microwaving, boiling or baking a potato, shave the potato into thin pieces. Cover a cookie sheet with foil and lay out the pieces. After putting the potato slices on the foil, sprinkle with spices like garlic powder, paprika, salt and pepper. Put the potato slices in the oven and broil until brown and puffy. Flip them over with a spatula. Broil some more. Pull out the sheet and you have perfect, non-fat fries.

YOUR DAY 9 WORKOUT

1. Five 60-Second Workouts.
2. For extra credit, try to do three Active Rest exercises. Either get in some yardwork, clean your living room windows or walk around the house while you talk on the phone.

EVENING PEP TALK

Tonight, we're going to talk about another way to keep your mind focused on your goals. Do you remember when you were a kid and you cut out magazine photographs or bought posters of your heroes and heroines? Although you didn't know it, what you were doing was envisioning a future for yourself. You were giving yourself an image of what you'd like to be. You can do the same thing in this program. I have suggested to people that they cut out a photo of someone whose body they admire. I'm not saying to find a photo of the perfect beach body. Get a photo of an attractive person who obviously takes care of himself or herself.

Will the picture itself give you a better body? Of course not. But it will give you a focus. Seeing someone else who has done the things you dream about can be a great inspiration for you. You could put the picture on your refrigerator and stare at it every morning as a way of helping to put a mental image of what you want to be in the forefront of your brain.

This process is called visualization. Another way to do this is to write down the way you think you'll look and what kind of clothes you'll be wearing. Write down the way you notice other people admiring you for the effort you made to change your body. Write down the positive, confident feelings you know you will gain if you have that better body.

By visualizing this image of yourself over and over, you are doing nothing less than reprogramming your mind. You are imprinting upon your subconscious the fact that you are someone who is going to achieve whatever you set out to achieve. You will turn your dream into a reality.



Slimdown Tip:

Stay Away from Fat-Burning Powders

At every health food store are products that advertise themselves as “fat burners.” The products are a form of powder or juice that are supposed to help you burn off fat and increase your energy. Some products even boast they can absorb fat. Read the fine print. At most, they absorb three grams of fat – that’s about half an eyedropper. Compared to a high-fat meal where you get 60 grams of fat, the benefit is tiny. The other fat-burning products are filled with additives that might have some slight impact on how lean you are, but the only people who will see the results from these products are those who are already extremely lean with little body fat. In the end, you’ll never be sure what you’re getting. One organization studied 300 of these products and found nearly a quarter of them had no fat-burning ingredients whatsoever. Moreover, they caused side effects such as high blood pressure and heart palpitations.

So why chance it for so little reward?