

# LEGION®

THE ONLY SUPPLEMENTS YOU NEED TO GET THE BODY YOU WANT.

## THIS IS THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO THE IIFYM DIET



What if I told you that dieting didn't have to suck. That you could lose fat and gain muscle without having to starve or deprive yourself. That you could eat the foods that you like every meal, every day, and never have to battle with hunger or cravings.

And what if I told you that those meals could even contain...gasp...carbs, and...shriek...sugar.

Best of all, what if this "diet" were less of a diet in the way that most people think, but more like a sustainable lifestyle that you could enjoy for the rest of your life?

Well, these are the promises of the IIFYM Diet.

Freedom to eat what you want. Freedom from arbitrary rules, restrictions, and rigmarole. And freedom from the anxieties and worries that plague dieters everywhere.

Can it deliver, though? Is IIFYM really the cat's pajamas? Yes.

**The principles of the IIFYM Diet, when properly applied, allow you to get the body you really want eating the foods you really love.**

### **WHY IS IT CALLED THE "IIFYM" DIET?**

Well, it's short for "If It Fits Your Macros," and while the method has been around for decades, the term has only caught on in recent years.

Lo and behold, as far as your body composition goes, you really can eat whatever you want so long as "it fits your macros."

I'm speaking from experience, here, too, as I've been using the principles of IIFYM for years now.

I've also worked with thousands of people of all ages and circumstances, and emailed with thousands more that have applied what I teach in my books (which advocate flexible dieting) to build their best bodies ever.

### **HOW DOES THE IIFYM DIET WORK?**

At bottom, the IIFYM Diet is based on five simple principles:

## 01. How many calories you eat is more important than what you eat.

You don't gain weight by eating the "wrong" foods, and, by the same token, you don't lose weight by eating "clean." You gain weight by eating too much food, and you lose weight by eating less food than your body requires to maintain its current body weight.

Yes, I'm talking about calories, because they matter— a lot.

You see, your body needs a certain amount of energy to do everything it needs to do every day to stay alive, and it must get that energy from the food that you eat.

You can measure these amounts of energy in calories, with one calorie representing the amount of energy required to heat one kilogram of water one degree Celsius.

Now, the relationship between how much energy you're eating versus burning is known as "energy balance." Energy balance is incredibly important because it alone determines whether your weight goes up, down, or stays the same.

If you eat fewer calories than you burn, you're in a state of "negative energy balance," also called a "calorie deficit," and this results in weight loss.

If you eat more calories than you burn, you're in a state of "positive energy balance," or a "calorie surplus," and this results in...you got it...weight gain.

When you feed your body less energy than it needs to survive, it has to get that additional energy required from somewhere. And where do you think it goes first?

That's right—your fat stores.

And when you feed your body more energy than it needs, what do you think it does with a portion of that energy surplus?

Yup, it stores it as body fat for future times when energy isn't so abundant.

This is why, if you want to gain complete control over your body composition, then you need to control your caloric intake. End of story. That's true regardless of what foods you eat, too.

If you eat too much of the "cleanest" calories in the world, you'll gain weight, like clockwork. If you restrict your calories and eat nothing but junk, though, you'll drop pounds.

There's a catch here, though: you don't want to merely lose or gain weight. You want to lose fat and not muscle, and gain muscle and not fat.

And when that's the case, a calorie is no longer a calorie. Some are far more important than others, which brings us to our next point...

## 02. How those calories break down into macronutrients is just as important.

In the realm of body weight, calories are king. There's no arguing that.

Macronutrients, though, rule the more important domain of body composition (what your body weight is comprised of in terms of muscle, fat, bone, water, and so forth).

"Macronutrients," or "macros," refers to three types of nutrients that your body needs large amounts of to stay alive:

- ✓ Protein
- ✓ Carbohydrate
- ✓ Fat

You can look at your food intake in terms of calories, but you can also look at it in terms of macros, because one gram of protein and carbohydrate both contain about 4 calories, and one gram of fat contains about 9.

So, for example, you could simply aim to eat 2,000 calories per day any which way, or you could be more precise and aim for 200 grams of protein (~800 calories), 200 grams of carbohydrate (~800 calories), and 45 grams of fat (~450 calories).

This distinction is important because these nutrients do very different things in the body.

Protein, for example, is vital for preserving and building muscle mass. Carbs fuel your workouts, and indirectly aid with muscle growth, as well. Fats are needed for many things, ranging from absorbing the nutrients you eat to creating various hormones and keeping your hair and skin healthy and more.

All this is why your macros matter. A lot. Just as much as your calories.

If all you paid attention to were your calories, you'd probably make the same mistakes that most people make—too little protein, too many junk carbs, and too little healthy fat—and suffer the same fate (skinny fat with nutritional deficiencies).

So, I've been throwing shade on "clean eating" because it guarantees little in the way of fat loss and muscle gain. That doesn't mean you shouldn't eat plenty of "clean" foods, though...

### 03. Get at least 80% of your calories from minimally processed, nutritious food.

Many people think the IIFYM Diet is all about eating copious amounts of junk food while still, “somehow,” having abs.

Well, the truth is this: Just because you can get ripped eating oodles of junk food doesn’t mean that you should.

The reality is food is far more than just “macros.” It also provides our bodies with dozens of vital micronutrients that are needed to keep us healthy, happy, and performing our best.

That’s why the IIFYM Diet can be a boon or bane, depending on how it’s used.

Will hitting the drive-thru or pizza joint every now and then, or eating a bit of sugar or “empty calories” every day hurt you in the long run? Decidedly not. But will allotting a large portion of your daily calories to nutritionally bankrupt fodder? Absolutely.

Slowly but surely, you’ll develop micronutrient deficiencies that can contribute to all kinds of health problems, impair mental and physical performance, and even blunt muscle gain by interfering with your body’s ability to recover from your workouts.

In that sense, “clean eaters” get a lot right. They may not understand why they struggle to improve their body composition, but they do understand the importance of nourishing their bodies.

Hence, this third rule of thumb—get at least 80% of your calories from nutritious foods, like these:

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|---|---|
| ✓ Avocados  | ✓ Baked potatoes                                      |
| ✓ Greens (chard, collard greens, kale, mustard greens, spinach) | ✓ Sweet potatoes                                      |
| ✓ Bell peppers  | ✓ Bananas   |
| ✓ Brussels sprouts  | ✓ Berries   |
| ✓ Mushrooms   | ✓ Whole grains like wheat, barley, oats, , brown rice |
|   | ✓ Yogurt  |

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|--|--|
| ✓ Eggs   | ✓ Lentils, peas                                |
| ✓ Seeds (flax, pumpkin, sesame, quinoa, and sunflower) | ✓ Almonds, cashews, peanuts                    |
| ✓ Beans (garbanzo, kidney, navy, pinto)                | ✓ Salmon, halibut, cod, scallops, shrimp, tuna |
|  | ✓ Lean beef, lamb, venison                     |
|  | ✓ Chicken, turkey                              |

There are many other “healthy” foods that could go on the list, and your list may look totally different, but you get the idea.

If it’s a fruit, vegetable, grain, starch, or protein that you have to prepare and cook yourself, it’s probably good to eat.

#### 04. You should eat foods you enjoy every day.

You’ve probably heard that the best diet is the one you can stick to. There’s a lot of truth in that old gnome.

No matter how “perfect” a diet might sound on paper, if you can’t stick to it consistently over the long term, it’s not going to work for you. Period. That’s why IIFYM is a blessing for so many people.

When you can eat foods you actually like, every meal, every day, and when you can include some indulgences, you don’t feel like you’re “dieting” in the traditional sense.

Sure, you might be eating a little less or more calories than you’d like (depending on your goals), but on the whole, it’s a relatively smooth, painless experience. In time, you simply forget that you’re “on a diet.”

So, if all you’ve known thus far is some form of restrictive dieting, which, by the way, puts you at a greater risk of developing nutrient deficiencies and eating disorders, then you’re in for a treat with the IIFYM Diet.

Instead of depriving yourself for months and then flaming out in a week of gluttonous bingeing, you get to enjoy yourself along the way, heading cravings off before they can cause problems.

#### 05. Your meal timing should fit your schedule and preferences.

When you eat doesn’t matter nearly as much as many people believe.



You can get the body that you want eating eat 3 or 8 meals a day, eating a large breakfast or skipping it, a la intermittent fasting, and eating as many carbs at night as you'd like.

The goal, then, when you're setting up your meal plan, is first and foremost to make sure it fits your daily schedule and eating preferences.

You want to make sure that you're eating more or less the way that you like, and that you're not alternating between "uncomfortably stuffed" and "starving."

Now, if you're looking to gain muscle as quickly as possible, there are a few other things you should know.

- ✔ Studies show that eating about 30 grams of protein before and after workouts can help you gain muscle and strength faster over time.
- ✔ There's evidence that eating a significant amount of carbs post-workout can help, too, mainly by reducing muscle breakdown rates.
- ✔ Eating about 30 grams of a slow-digesting protein like egg or casein before bed can help speed muscle recovery.

Basically, it's smart—but not vital—to have a bit of protein before you work out, a bit after with some carbs, and a bit before you go to bed every night.

## **HOW TO USE IIFYM TO GET THE BODY YOU WANT**

Now that we've covered the underpinnings of the IIFYM Diet, let's look at how to turn them into an actionable plan.

Regardless of whether you want to lose fat or gain muscle, there are just three steps:

- ✔ Calculate your calories.
- ✔ Calculate your macros.
- ✔ Create a meal plan.

Let's see how this plays out for both losing fat and building muscle.

## How to Use the IIFYM Diet to Lose Fat

As you know, the only way to lose fat is to eat fewer calories than you burn.

That's why the first thing that you have to do when you want to get leaner is calculate how many calories you should eat every day.

And to do this, you need to know approximately how many calories you're burning every day, otherwise known as your "total daily energy expenditure," or "TDEE."

You can calculate this yourself using something like the Katch McArdle formula, or you can simply use the [calculator that I've built in this article](#).

The next step is calculating your calorie deficit. I recommend a moderate calorie deficit of 20 to 25%. This is large enough to burn significant amounts of fat without causing unwanted side effects associated with "starvation dieting." So what this means is you want to set your daily calorie intake to 75 to 80% of your TDEE.

You want to set up your macros. Here's how to do it right:

- ✓ Eat 1 to 1.2 grams of protein per pound of body weight per day.
- ✓ Eat 0.2 to 0.25 grams of fat per pound of body weight per day.
- ✓ Get the rest of your calories from carbs.

And that leaves us with the final step: create a meal plan. We recall that this mostly entails creating meals that you'll like to eat, and that, on the whole, fit your macros.

## How to Use the IIFYM Diet to Gain Muscle

When you want to lose fat, you eat less than your TDEE. When you want to maximize muscle growth, you eat a bit more.

A slight calorie surplus allows your muscles to grow as efficiently as possible, so, when you want to maximize muscle growth, you should eat 10 to 15% more calories than you burn.

The macronutrient breakdown for "lean bulking" is different as well:

- ✓ Eat 1 gram protein per pound of body weight per day.
- ✓ Eat 0.3 grams of fat per pound of body weight per day.
- ✓ Get the rest of your calories from carbs.



## THE BOTTOM LINE ON THE IIFYM DIET

Every so often, there's a new spate of headlines proclaiming that "diets don't work." That no matter what method people try, they simply can't lose weight and keep it off.

Hell, you've probably experienced this yourself.

Well, it's true...to a point.

Most diets suck, and for several reasons:

- ✔ Most have you eat far too few calories, which leaves you feeling miserable.
- ✔ Most have you eat far too little protein, which accelerates muscle loss.
- ✔ Most severely restrict the foods you can eat, which makes it damn near impossible to stick to.

That's why a new approach is needed. One that allows you to control your body composition with ease, eating foods that you actually like.

And that's what the IIFYM Diet is all about.

Real science. Real supplements. Real results.  
Get the results you want when you shop our line of bodybuilding,  
pre-workout and weight loss stacks and supplements.

[Shop Supplements Here](#)

**YOU SHOULD BE GETTING MORE FOR YOUR SUPPLEMENT MONEY.**