



PRIMAL LIFE

# THE PRIMAL LIFE FOUNDATIONS

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5 STAGES TO STARTING YOUR  
PRIMAL LIFE TODAY



# DISCLAIMER

The information contained in this document is provided as an educational resource. It is designed to help you understand the process of fat loss, and the associated dietary and training strategies. It should not act as a replacement for the relationship you have with your doctor or healthcare professional. Any information provided within this document is not deemed as medical advice or prescriptive. If you have any concerns about your health prior to starting the programme, you must contact your doctor or healthcare professional immediately.



# NUTRITION

Stage 1 of the Primal Life formula will look at nutrition and provide a simple, no-nonsense guide showing you what foods to eat more of and what foods to keep to a minimum. It can be hard to know what foods to eat and what to avoid at the best of times, with so many faddy diets and a veritable glut of information about nutrition online, not all of it accurate! This can put people off before they begin and leave them feeling like no matter what they eat, it will be the wrong thing.

The simple core philosophies we use with all of our clients can work for you no matter what your goals are, whether you wish to lose excess fat, or change your body composition completely. Whatever your aims are, a stage by stage nutritional overhaul is the place to begin.

The first thing to look at is the quantity of food you are eating. It may sound counterintuitive, but the best way to lose body fat is to eat more food. Not just eat more of everything, but to eat more of the right kinds of food. Most people who come to us either aren't eating enough good quality nutritious food, or just plain not eating enough food in general.

We eat food to provide our bodies with the energy that they need to function properly. After food is digested, it moves through the body and is either used for energy and essential bodily processes, or stored for later use. Therefore, the body needs a certain amount of food per day to stay functioning, depending on your activity levels. And yes, it also means you NEED a "healthy" amount of body fat!

If you often feel fatigued, if you have cravings for certain foods, if you feel irritable, have muscle pains or struggle to complete a workout, these are all signs that your body is not firing on all cylinders. These symptoms can occur when you follow a very low-calorie diet. Every day, your body still needs nutrition - to keep your heart pumping, your liver detoxifying, your muscles moving, and your brain thinking, remembering and keeping a handle of the numerous physiological processes that happen in the body all the time. All of these things are essential for fat loss as well as keeping your body running smoothly.

If people follow a low-calorie diet for too long, the body can begin to rebel after a period of not getting what it needs. This is when you hit a plateau, stop losing weight, and find yourself rebounding and putting the weight back on. This is not a suitable long-term plan, and will be tough on your body for little reward and often result in poor physical and mental health! It's NOT how we work at Primal and it's not how you will be working moving forward.

# How you should be eating

Weirdly enough, losing body fat is actually quite easy. Within the first few weeks of following our programme, clients often say that they aren't finding it as hard as they expected. As with anything, doing something that you can enjoy isn't a chore - cooking and preparing healthy, nutritional food can be fun! Seeing real results in your body weight and composition is a great motivator too. And we all enjoy a boost in energy, mental focus and mood. When you eat more nutritious food, this will have a positive effect on all aspects of your life - you will sleep better, work better, play better and have more energy.

Begin by following these simple steps:

1. Avoid eating processed foods. This includes biscuits, cakes, sweets, cheap sliced meats, ready meals, crisps, etc. Doing this first step will most likely lead to improvements in your body composition right off the bat. These foods do not offer much nutritional value to your body and therefore do not fuel your essential bodily processes. They can also contribute to inflammation and cause the body to retain water.
2. Start eating 3 to 4 meals a day (we love fasting but if this is the start of your journey then let's build up that metabolic engine first). Men may want to go for 4 meals and women should aim for 3 meals per day. You can have your meals at any time that is convenient for you and your lifestyle, but you should aim to have them within 3-5 hours of one another.
3. Each meal you have should contain protein. This can be either lean protein eg. chicken, turkey, white fish, or fatty protein, such as beef or oily fish like salmon or mackerel. A good rule for portion sizing is going by roughly the size of your palm. Protein is good for helping you feel full and satisfied at meals, and will also help your muscles to recover, maintain and grow. The more muscle tissue you have, the more energy you will need to fuel them - this is an important component of weight loss.
4. Eat some vegetables with each meal. Don't worry about counting them at this point. Vegetables are a rich source of vitamins and minerals which are required by every part of the body to function well. A vitamin deficiency can lead to unpleasant effects such as skin problems, brittle nails, fatigue, and tingling in the hands or feet. Including plenty of vegetables in your diet can reduce or eradicate these symptoms. Phytochemicals which are found in vegetables can help to protect us from disease - vegetables are also rich in antioxidants, which can protect cells from damage.
5. Include a portion of fats with each meal (unless you are having a fatty protein). Fats sound unhealthy but they are essential for the body too - they are used for manufacturing hormones, supporting bone growth, the immune system and the health of all cells in the body. Fats are also important for transmitting nerve signals that create muscle contractions, which of course you need to lose excess fat and to shape your body. Go for fats like coconut or olive oil, seeds, nuts or avocado. Be mindful of portion sizes - a portion of oil or seeds would be half a tablespoon, or half of an avocado.



6. Don't avoid all carbs. Many people think that when losing fat, carbs are the enemy, but when consumed in moderation, carbs will not lead to weight gain - consuming too much food and not moving enough leads to weight gain. Not all carbohydrates are created equal - a 40 gram portion of brown rice or 140g sweet potatoes is much more nutritious than white bread or pasta. Try having carbs as part of one of your daily meals, preferably the last meal of the day as carbs can help you to sleep better. Just mind your portion sizes to ensure you aren't consuming too much in one sitting.

7. Avoid foods that cause you gas, bloating, or stomach irritation. This is almost a no-brainer - some people find certain foods disagree with them and lead to digestive discomfort - common offenders are dairy, greasy foods, eggs, nuts or in some cases gluten. If you suspect a certain food is giving you trouble, cut it out of your diet for 2 weeks and see how you feel. In addition to reduced stomach problems, you may also find you sleep better and have more energy.

Follow this guide for the next 21 days, and monitor your progress by weighing yourself every Friday morning. The next stage of the Primal Life Formula is going to be all about exercise, including what type, how much and for how long. This formula is one that we share with all of our clients - we hope you find it useful. Stay tuned for Stage 2!



# TRAINING

This stage is another essential part of the Primal Life weight loss formula. While nutrition is important, exercise is also essential for shedding those excess pounds, and also improving your general fitness and mobility, improving your body composition, and building new muscle tissue. In this stage we will show you what kinds of exercise you need to do to lose 10 pounds!

Much like the minefield of questionable fads that is the dieting world, there is a lot of information available regarding different kinds of workouts, often prompting more questions than answers. It's very easy to end up doing completely the wrong type of training for your own personal goals.

You might be wondering; should I be doing cardio? Is running bad for you? What about weight lifting? Will weights make me bulky? It does depend slightly on what your body goals are, but if as long as you are wanting to lose body fat and become stronger, then we have the right plan for you. All of our clients follow the Primal Life formula and find it to be scalable as they progress, but also sustainable.

## How to change your body shape

Shedding excess fat is an important part of getting into shape and improving your body's composition. The answer to this is muscle building. Nope, forget about turning into Arnie, we didn't say bodybuilding! Building muscle helps to shape your body differently, improves your posture, and also helps to burn more calories - muscle tissue burns calories even when you are resting, so the more muscle tissue you have, the more fat you will burn passively. How do you build muscle? By lifting weights, either using resistance machines at the gym or by using dumbbells and similar equipment. Safety is very important, so please ask the Primal Life team or check out some videos on correct form and the dos and don'ts of lifting before you begin exercising.

## How to exercise

We have put together this simple yet effective programme for you to follow for the first 21 days. It may seem basic, but it should be all you need to begin. Stick at this and you will notice the weight coming off. Also, we want to ensure you can follow this programme effectively before moving onto more complex workouts.

The table below shows each individual exercise in column A, then the reps for this exercise in column B (this is how many times you repeat the action, i.e. one lift and lower = one rep), then column C shows how many sets you should do, i.e. how many times you should perform the recommended reps for this exercise. Column D shows the 'tempo', which indicates how long it should take you to perform one 'rep', or repetition. For example, a tempo of '3010' describes both the up 'part' and the 'down' part of an exercise - means 3 seconds down, then 0 seconds rest at the bottom, then 1 second up, then 0 seconds rest at the top. This counts as one complete rep.



EXERCISE	REPS	SETS	TEMPO	REST TIME
A1 Dumbbell goblet squat	10-12	2-3	3010	20 secs
A2 Dumbbell shoulder press	10-12	2-3	3010	60 secs
B1 Barbell deadlift	10-12	2-3	3010	20 secs
B2 Lat pulldown	10-12	2-3	3010	60 secs
C2 Dumbbell rear step lunge	10-12	2-3	3010	20 secs
C2 Cable face pull	10-12	2-3	3010	60 secs
D1 Plank	until failure	2-3	n/a	60 secs

So, to begin you are going to alternate between exercise A1 and A2, performing 2 to 3 sets of 10 to 12 reps, taking 20 seconds rest in between each set. Then take a longer rest of 60 seconds before moving on. Then repeat for exercises B1 and B2, and so on until you are finished.

If you are wondering what the hell a ‘cable rope face pull’ is, don’t worry - we don’t expect you to be familiar with these names right away! Ask our team members or check out online videos showing exactly what each exercise is, and the correct way to perform it. Make sure you do this before beginning your workout, so you are fully familiar with each one.

## Cardio

Cardio is short for cardiovascular, which refers to the circulatory system of the body including the heart and blood vessels. Doing ‘cardio’ just means that you are doing an exercise that is designed to strengthen the circulatory system. The heart is a muscle too, and needs to be exercised to prevent it from becoming weak. Cardio is an important part of fitness, just like lifting weights - it is essential for heart health and also increasing stamina and endurance. At first you won’t use up that much energy when lifting weight, so we recommend you add in three cardio sessions every week to boost your energy expenditure and help shift that excess fat.

We recommend that on your workout days, you follow each weight training session with 20 minutes on the treadmill or cross trainer. You can also do your cardio at a different time during the day if that fits in better with your lifestyle. Take a 25 minute walk on Sundays to mop up that extra bit of cardio and you're all set.

If you want to take it up a notch, try doing cardio sprint interval training - run fast for 20 seconds, then take it easy for 40 seconds, then repeat 10 times.



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Weights 40 minutes		Weights 40 minutes		Weights 40 minutes		
20 minute walk		20 minute walk		20 minute walk		25 minute walk

And that's it! If you are thinking that this schedule looks pretty sparse, don't be fooled - this is all you need to begin using the Primal Life formula! Check out our videos on the upcoming Primal Life Youtube channel - as well as learning proper technique and form for your lifting, there's lots of tips and tricks to help you on your journey. Stage 3 of the Primal Life formula is all about sleep and its importance for a healthy mind and body.





# SLEEP

Another important thing for losing weight, is surprisingly, sleep. We always ask our clients about their sleeping habits, and people are often surprised, but sleep is so important for the body and mind to function properly. Before we go further, take a look at these questions:

1. Do you regularly get less than 7 - 8 hours sleep per night?
2. Are you often exhausted when you get home at the end of the day?
3. Do you often feel 'wired' or unable to relax in the evening?
4. Does it take you more than 10 minutes to go to sleep?
5. Do you find yourself waking up in the middle of the night?
6. Do you wake up feeling tired every morning?

If the answers to at least 4 of these questions is yes, then your sleeping habits could probably use an overhaul! If you are wondering why we are so concerned with sleep, its because poor quality sleep has a negative impact on your whole body. One of the most important functions of sleep is hormone regulation, including growth hormone, melatonin, cortisol and insulin. If you want to lose weight and get into shape, you must ensure that these hormones are not unbalanced in any way.

## Melatonin

You may have heard of melatonin - the sleep hormone. This is produced in the body by the pineal gland to regulate your sleep-wake patterns or being awake during the daytime and asleep at night, aka the circadian rhythm. The body only releases melatonin at night when it is dark, and stops when it is light. This was great for sleep regulation before we had electric lights, tvs and smartphones, but in modern times, all these things can disrupt the release of melatonin, adversely affecting the quality of your sleep. Waking up in the middle of the night can also disrupt melatonin production, especially if you turn a light on. If you do need to get up for some reason, try and keep light levels as low as possible.

## Cortisol

Cortisol is a hormone that is secreted by the adrenal glands, and is closely associated with stress. When something triggers your body's 'fight or flight' instinct, production of cortisol is the response. The result is increased blood sugar levels, giving you a quick burst of energy that our ancestors may have needed to run away from or fight off any threats. Cortisol is also produced in the morning to help us wake up, and gradually decreases throughout the day as part of our circadian rhythm. If you find that you are tired in the morning and wide awake at night, this could mean that your cortisol production is back to front, disrupting your circadian rhythms.



Unlike our ancestors, we stay up late, surrounded by electric lighting, eating and drinking into the night, watching television or other screen based entertainment. This means that our cortisol levels are higher in the evening, making it harder for the body to relax and 'switch off' in preparation for sleep. Extra cortisol produced by poor sleeping habits or elevated stress levels can have many adverse effects on the body, including headaches, digestive upset, anxiety and depression, weight gain and memory problems.

## Growth hormone

Growth hormone, AKA somatotropin, plays an important role in the body's development, and stimulates muscle and bone growth, as well as cell reproduction and regeneration. Growth hormone is also important for burning fat as it is part of a process called lipolysis, which (to put it simply) is the breaking down of fat to create energy. The first two hours of sleep is when most of the growth hormone is released, but if your sleep is disrupted, then you will not release enough of this hormone for optimum fat burning and muscle development. Unsurprisingly, if you have poor sleep, you will struggle to lose fat!

## Insulin

Most people know insulin is the hormone that controls your blood sugar levels, but what you may not be aware of is how closely it is tied in with sleep. If you do not get enough good quality sleep, your blood sugar levels will increase, and the body will have to produce more insulin to manage the excess sugar. If your blood glucose levels are not properly regulated and is not used for energy, the glucose can be stored as fat. Poor sleep for a prolonged period can even lead to insulin resistance, or pre-diabetes.

Follow the steps below to ensure you get the best sleep possible - this will not only help with fat loss, but it will help to boost your mood, concentration and memory, give you more energy, and generally improve your everyday life.

1. If you feel wide awake in the evening when you are trying to sleep, try supplementing with magnesium. Magnesium glycinate is the best as it will be absorbed most efficiently by the body. Take 100 - 500mg of magnesium when you have your evening meal to help regulate your circadian rhythm.
2. Don't drink coffee or other caffeinated drinks after 1pm. If you have to have that energy boost, have it in the morning.
3. Practise gratitude. Before you go to bed, acknowledge five great things that you have done, or that others have done for you.
4. Stick to a regular routine - go to bed at roughly the same time every night, ensuring you get at least 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep.
5. Take a warm bath around half an hour before your bedtime to help relax your body and mind. If you have sore muscles, adding 250g of Epsom salts to your bath for a soothing 20 minute soak.





6. Avoid having light sources in your bedroom at night - TV standby lights, flashing clocks, and other light sources can disrupt your sleep. Install blackout blinds or curtains in your room to make sure it is as dark as possible.
7. Try to avoid using your mobile phone 2 hours before bed - if you have to use it, install a blue light filter.
8. Don't underestimate the power of selective supplements - drinking a cup of chamomile tea or using CBD before bed can have a profound impact on your sleep.
9. Do you have issues with snoring in your sleep? Try using nasal strips to open your nasal passages and enjoy a more restful, undisturbed sleep.
10. Do you find that noise often disturbs your sleep? Try using earplugs designed for sleeping in to help you get the best sleep you can

.Many of our clients have problems with sleep - after taking the time to correct poor sleep habits, they lose more body fat, their workout performance increases, they have more energy and they find their mood is also improved. The Primal Life formula isn't just about losing weight - it will help you to improve all aspects of your life. Look out for stage 4, which is all about mindset and its importance when making a change.



# MINDSET

Having the right mindset is probably the most important part of the Primal Life formula. The reason it's not at number one is because it can take some time for people to understand how vital it is to changing your life and your body.

If you want to lose that excess weight and keep it off, you need to make long term changes to your lifestyle and habits. This can take some time, as lifelong habits are hard to break - if this was easy, there wouldn't be a billion-pound industry based around breaking these habits! It will take some time to adapt to a new way of living, but you can do it, and we are here to support you in every step of the way.

For a lot of people, experiencing health problems, such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, anxiety etc. can be the catalyst for making this change - for others its dissatisfaction in how they look. A lot of folks follow strict diet and exercise plans for a few weeks, but then fall off the wagon and back into their old habits again. This is what happens when diets are too restrictive and exercise plans too intense for beginners. To make a long term change, you need to develop long term, sustainable habits - after all, you didn't get overweight or sick within a matter of weeks, so it will take longer than that to fix it!

Mindset is not an issue we take lightly - here at Primal Life, we have been doing this for more than 10 years, and we would not bring it up if we didn't think it was vital. You might be reading this and feel like you aren't ready to look at your lifestyle critically and make changes - this is what we call a fixed mindset. If you have an open mindset, this means you are open to new ideas and information - you accept there are things you don't know, but are willing to learn in order to make that positive change in your life. Not to get all 'woo' about it, but it is essential that you come at this formula with an open mind!

## Seeing progress will help

Being able to see yourself progressing and watching your body change is a hugely important part of this stage - if you are going to have the motivation to carry on, you need to see changes happening. This means that you must commit to the Primal Life formula for at least 5-7 weeks - this will give you enough time that you will see a real difference from when you started and this will spur you on to continue. If you aren't committed, you won't see the results and you won't carry on - this is not a criticism, this is just human nature!

It sounds strange, but we can often gauge someone's level of commitment to working hard for that crucial 5-7 weeks when they first talk to us - the language they use, their tone of voice and general attitude will give it away. Take a look at these four common mental stumbling blocks below. If you can overcome each one of these, you will have the best chance of success.





1. You are experiencing the negative effects of being overweight and/or out of shape, but these negative effects are not affecting your life enough for you to make the effort to change.
2. You feel that the rewards, i.e. weight loss, feeling stronger, more energy, better body composition, are not enough. This could be due to not having a tangible goal, or 'reward' to work towards. Beginning a training programme because you feel like you should, with no clear goals in mind, is setting yourself up for failure.
3. You feel like you have no time to change. Of course everyone has different levels of responsibilities in their life that cannot be avoided, work, family, etc. but if you never prioritise your body goals, then you will never find the time. Try writing down everything that you do in a day, then assign each thing a level of priority. You will always focus on the things that are most important to you, and if getting in shape isn't that important to you, it will never be a priority.
4. The people that you spend the most time around are the same shape/activity level as you. This creates a comfort zone that can be hard to break out of. Conversely, surrounding yourself with people who are doing well at something, or staying in shape, this can have a positive effect and will inspire you. A good example is a client of ours who begins training, starts losing body fat and getting into shape. After a few months, her husband gets in touch and wants to do the same. Witnessing other people succeed can be a powerful motivator.

We hope this stage will help you to see how important mindset is to achieving your goals. Knowing what you want to achieve and why is the first step, then taking a critical look at your lifestyle and what you need to change to make this happen is the next. Visualising the benefits of being in shape and healthier can help, as well as having clearly defined, measurable goals. We hope you found this stage to be helpful - the fifth and final stage of the Primal Life formula is all about digestion.



# DIGESTION

You might think that we have everything that you need to lose excess weight covered in the first four stages of the Primal Life formula, right? Well, almost but not quite! We take a holistic look at your entire lifestyle rather than just diet and exercise. Taking into account every aspect of your life, from cooking to sleep patterns, will help to build a plan that is sustainable for the long term and will help you to stick with it.

It is possible for people to follow our diet and exercise plans and still find that those excess pounds aren't coming off. They might try to kickstart their weight loss by training harder or reducing their calorie intake, but if they have digestive issues, this still may not work.

Digestion occupies a significant part of the body and uses a lot of the body's energy, so it follows that digestion has an important role to play in weight loss. The digestive system begins when we eat food - digestive processes begin to break food down as soon as you put it in your mouth. Food is then broken down further and eventually, the digestive system delivers it all over the body to support the vital organs, nervous system, brain, heart, lungs, and so on. If the body's digestive system has a problem, then this can cause problems for any part of the body as it cannot run as effectively. You may experience feelings of fatigue, poor mood, difficulty sleeping, and your blood sugar levels can be affected too, leading to your body storing more glucose than it needs to in the form of fat, and can make it harder for you to build muscle.

Not a lot of people think about digestive health when they want to lose weight or get in shape, as it's not something they think about in general - take a look at the questions below to identify any potential digestive issues you may have.

1. Do you often suffer from bloating when you eat a meal?
2. Do you suffer from excess gas?
3. Do you regularly have loose stools (diarrhoea)?
4. Do you often suffer from constipation?
5. Do you frequently feel fatigued after eating a meal?
6. Are there any particular foods that cause you severe discomfort when you eat them?

If you said 'yes' to three or more of these questions, it could be possible that you have some digestive issues - the only way to find out for sure is to visit your doctor and they can run some tests on a stool sample to find out what is causing problems.

Ruling out any serious health problems, digestive problems can often be relieved by adding some fairly basic supplements into your diet.





Try these tips to help remedy any minor digestive issues:

1. Take a broad-based enzyme supplement with each meal. Common digestive issues like bloating, gas or indigestion can be caused by the body not producing enough of the right digestive enzymes to completely break down your food. These are available from most health food shops.
2. Take five grams of glutamine in water, 3 times a day. Glutamine is an amino acid that is used for maintaining intestinal function and supporting the immune system. It can also help to protect intestines and promote healing of the delicate intestinal lining if it is damaged. Also if the body requires more glutamine than usual, e.g. while recovering from injury or illness, it may break down protein stores to access glutamine stored in the muscles, which of course we don't want!
3. Take a probiotic supplement in the evening. A good quality probiotic should give you 10-20 billion live bacteria per dose. You need good bacteria in your digestive system to help process the food you eat, and certain things can cause the levels of these good bacteria to drop, such as illness, stress, use of antibiotics, and a poor diet. Taking a good quality probiotic supplement will help to support your digestive system as well as your immune system.
4. Take a tablespoon of apple cider vinegar, twice a day. Yes, vinegar! It may sound unusual, but apple cider vinegar is thought to have many benefits to health, including reducing heartburn. It seems counterproductive to consume acid to solve an acid problem, but apple cider vinegar can help by supporting the natural production of stomach acid.
5. Avoid eating foods that are causing you irritation. If you find that foods such as eggs, nuts, gluten, dairy products or certain vegetables like onions cause you digestive issues, cut them out of your diet.

Digestion is such an important bodily process, so it makes sense that any problems with digestion can have an effect on the whole body - addressing digestive issues can not only help with weight loss, but can also improve sleep quality, skin health, mood, recovery from exercise, and more.

We hope that this holistic way of looking at the entire body, and the Primal Life formula, is helpful to you. The better you take care of your body, from the outside to the inside, the more it will reward you with looking and feeling better. If you have any queries at all, or you wish to go further and see what else Primal Life can do for you, get in touch with us at [primallifegym.com](http://primallifegym.com) or email us at [info@primallifegym.com](mailto:info@primallifegym.com).

