



Timely Information for Personal Success

Believe it or Not, Fat can be Your Friend

By **Tim Lencki**

I know what you are thinking: *“Fat has been a little too friendly with me lately. I want out of this relationship!”* Too bad it wasn’t as easy as “unfriending” someone on Facebook....just click “unlike” and you’re done. LOL.

Don’t be so quick to click “unlike.” Fat is essential for your body to work correctly. Let’s help you understand why fat, to a degree, should be your friend.

There are two types of fat – saturated and unsaturated. Saturated fat is bad because it raises your level of bad cholesterol (LDL). These types of fat are found in beef, bacon, butter and cheese. Unsaturated fat is the good kind because it may actually help reduce your cholesterol. You will find these fats in nuts, seeds, soybeans, avocados, olives and canola oil.

Let’s examine four ways that eating the “good” fats can benefit you (and become your friend again).

❖ **Eating fat can slow your digestion** – When you eat fat at each meal, the digestion of carbs and proteins, along with the fat, are slowed. This helps stabilize your blood sugar. Stable blood sugar helps your body stay in balance, which allows you to feel better.

❖ **Eating fat causes you to release stored fat** – When your body sees that this essential nutrient is being restricted, it will do everything it can to protect it. What this means is that when your body senses that no fat is coming in, it will stop releasing stored fat. This is not a good thing! This is your

body’s way of protecting you from starvation because fat has more than twice the energy of carbs and protein.

❖ **Fat is needed to absorb certain fat-soluble vitamins** – Vitamins such as A, D, E, and K are essential, and they *can’t* be absorbed by your body without having fat in your diet.

❖ **Consuming fat provides essential fatty acids** – These fatty acids include Omega 3’s. They lower blood pressure and cholesterol, improve brain function, reduce joint pain/inflammation and contribute to overall health of your skin, hair and nails.

With these four reasons, hopefully you’ve changed your mind about having fat as your friend. Good fat, that is! ■

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Healthy Recipe: Roast Chicken & Sweet Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons whole-grain or Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1-1/2 pounds bone-in chicken thighs, skin removed
- 2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 large red onion, cut into 1-inch wedges

NUTRITIONAL VALUE:

- Calories per serving: 408
- Carbohydrates: 34 g
- Protein: 27 g
- Fiber: 5 g
- Fat: 17 g
- Saturated fat: 4 g

DIRECTIONS:

- ➊ Position rack in lower third of oven, preheat to 450 degrees F. Place large rimmed baking sheet in oven to preheat.
- ➋ Combine mustard, thyme, 1 tablespoon oil and 1/4 teaspoon each salt and pepper in small bowl; spread the mixture evenly on chicken.
- ➌ Toss sweet potatoes and onion in bowl with the remaining olive oil and salt and pepper. Carefully remove baking sheet from oven and spread the vegetables (i.e. onion and sweet potatoes) on it. Place chicken on top of the vegetables.
- ➍ Return pan to oven and roast, stirring vegetables once halfway through, until they are tender and beginning to brown. A thermometer inserted into a chicken thigh should register 165 degrees F, 30 to 35 minutes.

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Questions and Answers

Eating Late in the Evening

Q: *Can I eat late in the evening and still lose weight?*

A: The answer is yes! In fact, it shouldn't be a matter of "can" I eat, but "what" should I eat?

The important thing to understand is that proper eating throughout the day will contribute to weight loss. Eat in a way that creates homeostasis (balance) in your body. Balance in your body means sustaining stable blood sugar. When your blood sugar is stable it's difficult to store fat. In fact, you actually *release* fats to be burned off when blood sugar is stable.

Sustaining stable blood sugar can be accomplished, in part, by eating the proper amounts of proteins, carbohydrates, and fats AT EACH MEAL throughout your day. So by eating a balanced meal containing each of these macronutrients later in the evening, your blood sugar will remain stable and you won't be as likely to store fat. ■

- Tim Lencki

Muscle: The Magical Weight Loss Secret

When we hear about building muscle and weight lifting it's often associated with bodybuilding and doesn't get people (especially women) too excited.

The truth is it *should* get you excited! Muscle and your metabolism (the rate at which your body burns fat) are intricately linked. Muscle burns fat, so the more muscle you have, the higher your metabolism. This is a good thing!

Now I know what some of you may be thinking, "*I don't want all that bulky muscle, it doesn't look good.*" Understand this, one pound of muscle is approximately three times *smaller* than fat! This means that if you build muscle and lose fat, you actually become smaller and more toned. This is just a guess, but I would think most people would be happy with that outcome.

My suggestion is to do all you can to build muscle mass. If you are new to strength training, I've got good news: It will be much easier for you to build muscle. For those of you who have been strength training, it's harder to build muscle, though not impossible. You just need to change up your routine frequently in order to shock your body into growth.

The best way to get started is by contacting a certified personal trainer to design a program for YOU. Do it right the first time! A program can be designed no matter where you choose to work-out. The right advice can go a long way in saving you time and wasted effort. ■

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