



# THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE BALANCED HABITS NUTRITION PROGRAMS

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# 1 Why this is so important...

*“What you eat.”*

It’s one of the most important ongoing decisions people make in their lives.

Make poor selections and they open themselves up to numerous diseases and increase your chances of experiencing a shortened lifespan.

In addition, being overweight can result in a lower quality of day-to-day life. People tend to have less energy, experience more problems sleeping and generally don’t look or feel as good as people who are at their ideal weight. To make things even worse, it can have a devastating effect on a person’s self-esteem and self-worth.

So the stakes are extremely high. Providing people with a solution is a responsibility and mission that I don’t take lightly. I understand the importance of “getting it right” and the positive impact it can have on someone’s life.

I believe I have got it right. I say this with confidence not only from my own experience, but the experience of the thousands of people who, not only have successfully lost weight, but have kept it off permanently as a result of the Balanced Habits nutritional programs.

But, of course, it takes more than anecdotal information to provide people with the proof that something works. People want to know that the science behind any nutritional program is sound and that it’s applied in a common sense way.

I will get to the specifics in a minute, but before I do, I’d like to quickly address some of the factors that have put us where we are in this country (and around the world) in terms of diet and obesity.

According to the latest figures from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 69% of Americans are overweight or obese. In Canada, 59% of people are either overweight or obese (according to Statistics Canada). Other countries are recording similar numbers.

Carolyn Fetters, the creator and owner of Balanced Habits, has an Associate Arts Degree in Adaptive Fitness from Orange Coast College and Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology from University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) as well as Continued Education in Fitness/Nutrition at Santa Monica Community College/ UCLA.

Carolyn's education and her 24 years of counseling in nutrition, make her uniquely qualified as a Nutrition Expert. As a lifelong runner and fitness advocate, Carolyn has a "been there, done that" resume. BH Staffs an Advisory Board with both a Nutritionist and Registered Dietician to ensure the programs are qualified, safe and effective.

So why are people getting fatter? The answer lies not so much in *how much people eat*, but *what they eat*.

The so-called “western diet” is the root cause of the problem. The western diet is characterized by a high quantity of red meat, sugary desserts, high fat foods and lots of refined grains.

And then there’s processed foods. Because they are so attractive in terms of convenience and ease of use, processed foods have become a huge part of people’s daily routines. Processed foods and the western diet have been linked to such diseases as:

- **Cancer** - Synthetic chemicals are known to have carcinogenic (cancer causing) properties. A 2011 review of how lifestyle affects your risk of cancer found that one out of every ten cancers may be linked to diet.
- **Heart Disease** - The 2008 Interheart study published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* showed that the risk of heart attack crosses geographic boundaries and correlates strongly to the so-called western diet. According to the study (which included data from five continents), the risk is 30% higher for those who eat a western diet than for those who adhere to a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. In addition, many processed foods still contain too much trans fat. Trans fats boost your bad cholesterol and hinder your good cholesterol.
- **Obesity** - Heavily processed foods are usually high in sugar, fat and salt and have a low nutritional value. The World Health Organization cites processed foods as one of the reasons why obesity levels and chronic disease have spiked around the world.
- **Diabetes** - A 2012 study posted on the American Diabetes Association website found that processed foods may contribute to the development of Type 2 diabetes.
- **Inflammation** - Studies show that what you eat can either fuel or cool inflammation which is a key driver of heart disease, diabetes and other chronic conditions.

A new study by the *University of Michigan* confirms what many have suspected all along...

Highly-processed foods, or foods with added fat or refined carbohydrates such as white flour and sugar, *are addictive*. Among the most addictive foods on the list were chocolate, pizza and French fries.

And, of course, there’s fast food - most of which is heavily processed. Some people question whether some fast food items actually qualify to be labeled “food.” Which isn’t really surprising since fast food, in addition to having a high calorie count, has very little nutritional value. Fast food has been associated with high blood pressure, bloating and puffiness, shortness of breath, depression, blood sugar spikes, obesity, high cholesterol, heart issues, headache and even acne.

To make matters worse, we are constantly being bombarded with advertising from the food industry designed to make their products look as tasty and nutritious as they possibly (and legally) can. And while the products may taste appetizing and make people feel like they are doing something positive regarding their diet, the goodness the product contains is often misleading and highly-inflated.

For example, people may think they're doing the right thing by buying low fat products, but what they don't realize is manufacturers make up for the lack of fat by putting in more sugar, salt, flour, or thickener - which can contain even more calories. Any benefits they receive by reducing their fat intake are basically canceled out.

The popularity of the western diet combined with the negative impacts of fast and processed foods, for many, make it nearly impossible to lose weight and extremely easy to gain weight. It doesn't take long for ten, twenty, thirty pounds or more to creep up on people before they even realize what's happened.

But here's another part of the nutritional challenge...

Knowing the best foods to eat can be confusing to say the least. The key is information. But educating your client is not enough...

*You must also inspire people to take action.*

And when you do, amazing things start to happen. People start to feel more energetic and alive as the pounds begin to drop off. They start to feel better about how they feel and look. Their whole point of view changes.

They feel great about the fact that they're someone who cares about how they look and feel. Someone who understands the importance of making wise nutritional choices for themselves and their family.

They start to develop the type of eating habits they are proud to pass on to other members of their family. Which leads to a long, happy and healthy life for all involved.

In short, they become unstoppable.



# 2 What your body needs to thrive and survive...

In the following section, I will give you a brief overview of what our bodies need from the food we eat in order to flourish.

I recognize that you may already have a pretty good grasp of it, so if that's the case, feel free to skip down to page 11 and the section titled "The KICK START and LIFE Programs."

The starting point to understanding nutrition is to understand macronutrients and their essential roles within the body.

Macronutrients are substances needed for growth, metabolism and other body functions. They provide the body with calories. A calorie is a unit of energy. Without calories (energy) we cannot survive.

The three macronutrients that our bodies need are protein, fat and carbohydrates. They are essential for health, growth, healing, and immune function.

Let's take a look at these one by one starting with...

## Protein

Protein is made up of smaller components called amino acids. There are 20 amino acids in total. Nine of which (Histidine; Isoleucine; Leucine; Lysine; Methionine; Phenylalanine; Threonine; Tryptophan; Valine) are considered essential due to the fact that our bodies don't produce them naturally.

There are two types of protein: complete and incomplete. Complete proteins contain all 9 essential amino acids



### How does protein aid the body?

Proteins play a key in building, maintaining and repairing body tissue. Proteins are also used to aid in the immune process.

### What foods contain protein?

Complete proteins come from animal-based food (meats, fish, poultry, milk, eggs).

Plant foods (legumes, whole grains, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables) contain incomplete protein (because, as mentioned, they do not contain all 9 of the essential amino acids). However, you can easily receive the equivalent of a complete protein by eating a healthy variety of plant-based foods.

It's worth noting that some proteins which come from plant-based foods (chickpeas, black beans, pumpkin seeds, cashews, cauliflower, quinoa, pistachios, turnip greens, black-eyed peas, soy for example) are complete.

Plant sources of protein have advantages over animal protein in the following ways: they are free of cholesterol and low in saturated fat. Plus they provide the body with dietary fiber and various antioxidants.

## What happens when you have too much protein in your diet?

Not enough protein in your diet is as harmful as having too much protein in your diet. Many chronic diseases (such as osteoporosis, kidney stones, kidney failure, gout, and possibly certain cancers) can be both caused and worsened by too much protein (particularly animal protein).

## Fat

Fat is essential for maintaining a healthy body. However it's important to eat more of the good fats and less of the bad fats.

Each fat gram contains nine calories. (Proteins and carbohydrates contain four calories per gram.)

## How does fat aid the body?

Our bodies use fat as a source of energy. The fat we do not use immediately is stored for future use. Fat promotes growth and development and helps maintain cell membranes. Plus, fat plays a vital role in the digestion of vitamins.

Fat also provides our bodies with protection which includes things such as insulation for body temperature and cushioning to protect your organs.

## What fats are good and what fats are bad?

Bad fats are saturated and trans fats. Here is a partial list of foods that contain saturated fats: fatty cuts of beef, pork, and lamb; dark chicken meat and poultry skin; high fat dairy foods (whole milk, butter, cheese, sour cream, ice cream); tropical oils (coconut oil, palm oil, cocoa butter). Trans fats can sometimes be found in fried foods, margarine, vegetable shortening, baked goods and processed snack foods such as crackers and microwave popcorn.

Good fats are unsaturated. There are two types of unsaturated fat: monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat.

You can find monounsaturated fat in foods such as almonds, pecans, pistachios, cashews, natural peanut butter, avocados, olives and olive oil.



You can find polyunsaturated fat in foods such as walnuts, salmon, tuna, mackerel, soybean oil, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds and flaxseed. Polyunsaturated fats (or essential fatty acids) cannot be produced by the body and must come from food.

A diet rich in saturated fat can drive up your cholesterol which could result in heart disease. Most nutrition experts recommend that you limit your saturated fat intake to 10% of your daily calories (or less).

## Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are the main source of energy in the human diet. The dictionary definition of a carbohydrate is “any of a large group of organic compounds occurring in foods and living tissues and including sugars, starch, and cellulose.”

### How do carbohydrates aid the body?

When your body needs energy the first thing it looks for is glucose from carbohydrates. (If for whatever reason no glucose is available, its next move is to burn protein tissue (muscle)).

But energy is not the only thing carbohydrates do for your body. Carbohydrates also regulate the amount of sugar in your bloodstream to ensure that your cells get the energy they need (among other things).

### What’s the difference between simple and complex carbohydrates?

Simple carbohydrates consist of one or two sugar molecules. Being that simple carbohydrates are very rapidly digested, they are the fastest source of energy

Here are some food sources that contain simple carbohydrates: sugar, corn syrup, maple syrup, honey, jam & jellies, candy, fruit and soft drinks.

Complex carbohydrates are made up of a bunch of sugar molecules strung together. They are sometimes referred to as “dietary starch.” They are often high in fiber. Complex carbohydrates commonly are found in whole plant foods which are generally high in vitamins and minerals.



Some food sources of complex carbohydrates are: green vegetables, whole grains, starchy vegetables, beans, lentils and peas.

### Do refined carbohydrates present a health risk?

Refined carbohydrates are processed grains. Food manufacturers strip away the bran and germ and pulverize the endosperm of the grain. The refining process converts whole wheat into white

flour and brown rice into white rice. This procedure removes a significant portion of the nutrients from the grain and almost all of the fiber content. Why do they do this? It makes the product easier to chew and digest. Plus it significantly increases the shelf life of a product (imagine what the ingredients they use to accomplish this are doing to your stomach!).

In his book *Eat to Live*, Dr Joel Fuhrman, M.D. writes about a six-year study involving 65,000 women. The study concluded that people with diets high in refined carbohydrates such as white bread, white rice and pasta were two and a half times more likely to acquire Type II diabetes compared to people who ate high fiber diets such as whole wheat bread and brown rice. The findings were replicated in a study of 43,000 men. It's no surprise that diabetes is the seventh leading cause of death by disease in America and incidents of diabetes are on the rise.

Fuhrman states flatly that starchy, white flour foods are not really “real food.” He points out that when the fiber and the majority of minerals are removed from a food, the body absorbs it too rapidly which results into a sharp glucose surge in the bloodstream. This forces the pancreas to pump out insulin faster to keep up. Excess body fat also requires the pancreas to pump out more insulin. It's this excess strain on the pancreas that, over time leads to diabetes.

But diabetes isn't the only risk we face. Because as Fuhrman writes “refined grains lack the fiber and nutrient density to satisfy our appetite, they also cause obesity, heart disease and significantly increased cancer risk.”

The message is obvious. Focus on reducing the amount of *refined* carbohydrates you eat. Zero in on unrefined carbohydrates such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables and beans.

## Micronutrients

Unlike the three macronutrients, micronutrients are necessary for the body in very tiny amounts each day. Micronutrients are commonly referred to as vitamins and minerals.

Micronutrients include such minerals as fluoride, selenium, sodium, iodine, copper and zinc and such vitamins as vitamin C, A, D, E and K, as well as the B-complex vitamins.

Consistently get the right intake of micronutrients and you can lead a healthy, productive life. If you don't, your life will be fraught with illness.

The good news is, if you eat right, getting a sufficient amount of micronutrients in your diet is relatively easy.



# 3

## Balanced Habits KICK START and LIFE

Here's a brief overview of our two main programs:



This four-week program takes place three times a year. It's a group format to encourage camaraderie and group participation for included cardiovascular opportunities to get people more active. Each week the participants receive a new weekly menu with family-friendly recipes and individual portion sheets, making the recipes more specific to supporting the participant in reaching their goals. Progress is tracked and reported at the culmination of the program.



Balanced Habits LIFE is a 3, 6, or 12 -month program that has the same goal as the KICK START, help people lose body fat and, more importantly, change their eating habits for life. It's very education-based and focuses heavily on life skills. And while it's the logical destination for people who don't want to wait for the next KICK START, it's actually much more than that. Another benefit for your clients is the one-on-one format offers a more personalized service with each participant having structure meetings with their own Balanced Habits Certified Food Coach throughout the entire length of the LIFE program they select.

Many of our clients use the KICK START to “get their feet wet” so to speak and lose some nagging weight and then move to Balanced Habits LIFE to really focus on transforming bad nutrition habits into good nutrition habits that last a lifetime.

Here are five reasons why the Balanced Habits nutrition programs have been so successful. They are...

### 1. Scientifically and nutritionally sound.

As I'm sure you're aware, there is no shortage of diets available in the marketplace. Some are more outrageous than others. The cabbage soup diet, the grapefruit diet, the banana diet, the baby food diet to mention just a few of the more “out there diets.”

Then there are the diets whose general theme is to deprive you of one of the three key macronutrients usually either carbohydrates or fat (diets that recommend low protein intake are rare).

Let's take a look at low carbohydrate diets first. The best known of these is the Atkins diet.

Other high fat, high protein, low carbohydrate diets include the Beverley Hill's diet, Protein Power, the Carbohydrate Addict's Diet, the Scarsdale Diet, Charles Hunt Diet Evolution, Quick Weight-Loss Diet, the South Beach Diet, the Dukan Diet and the Paleo Diet.

Dr. Atkins' diet is based on ketosis. Atkins writes in his book *Dr. Atkins' Diet Revolution*...

*"Ketosis is an indicator used at the Atkins Center as a marker for whether a person is staying on the diet...The Atkins diet is a lifelong nutritional philosophy...The important thing is you are in ketosis."*

So what exactly is ketosis?

In his book *The Food Revolution*, nutrition expert John Robbins writes that "ketosis occurs when there is an imbalance of fat metabolism, such as what occurs in diabetes and starvation."

When ketosis occurs the body begins to metabolize muscle tissue instead of fat.

Nowhere in the Atkins' diet literature does it list the consequences of extended ketosis which includes muscle breakdown, nausea, dehydration, headaches, light-headedness, irritability, bad breath, kidney problems, and the increased risk of heart disease. A potential consequence of extended ketosis in pregnancy is fetal abnormality or death. For a diabetic, extended ketosis could result in death.

Here's what the *American Institute of Cancer Research* wrote about the Atkins diet...

*"Atkins' diet can lead to the kind of rapid weight fluctuations that adversely affect the heart. Moreover, the breakdown of fatty acids that occurs during ketosis may also increase the risk of heart disease. One of the basic tenets of Atkins' diet is that sugar causes cancer. Such misleading pronouncements are essentially scare tactics, meant to direct the dieter towards foods on the Atkins' plan. Finally, nothing about this plan encourages the dieter to learn some very basic weight management strategies like portion control and serving sizes, let alone develop the skills necessary for a lifetime of balanced nutrition."*

Atkins once claimed that his diet "will correct most of the risk factors for heart disease."

A *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* found the exact opposite. Bad cholesterol (LDL) increased and good cholesterol (HDL) decreased in people who had been on the Atkins' diet for 12 weeks *increasing their risk of having a heart attack.*

The message here is clear. Be very cautious and consult your doctor before going on a low-carbohydrate diet.

Now let's take a look at low-fat diets...

As mentioned, low-fat or fat-free products often have as many or more calories as the full-fat versions. While you are eating less fat, there's a good chance you're also consuming more processed sugars and carbohydrates that have been added to the food item to make up for the lack of fat. Processed sugars and carbohydrates are generally high in calories and may eventually be converted into and stored as fat within the body.

*For weight loss, a low-fat diet may be less effective than a low-carb diet.*

A very low-fat diet can cause vitamin and mineral deficiencies in some people. As an example, people may be missing out on zinc and some B vitamins. Plus fat is necessary for the proper absorption of vitamins such as vitamin D, A, E and K, which are essential for the health of the eyes, skin, immune system, bones and teeth. As well as lycopene, which has been shown to be instrumental in the battle against prostate cancer.

An ultra-low-fat diet (less than 10% of calories from fat) may cause a deficiency of essential fatty acids (EFA). EFAs are required for the structure and function of the body's cell membranes and many other important functions.

A low-fat diet is usually high in carbohydrates. Some critics contend that a high carb diet is unnatural for humans leading to problems such as an increase in obesity, diabetes, and other health problems.

Diets low in fat and high in carbohydrates can also increase triglycerides in the blood which results in a decrease in "good" HDL cholesterol and has a negative effect on the size of "bad" LDL cholesterol. This, of course, can lead to heart disease.

With the Balanced Habits nutrition programs, we take a balanced macronutrient ratio approach.

So unlike some food plans that eliminate entire food groups, with our programs your clients won't have to make any *radical* changes to their day-to-day eating habits.

A balanced approach keeps their all important blood sugar level stable so they experience no sudden spikes of insulin which in turn makes you feel balanced throughout the entire day.

Besides a balanced macronutrient-ratio approach making nutritional sense, the other reason why this is key is that it's sustainable. It's a food strategy that moving forward client are able to stick with, not just over a few weeks, but for their entire lifetime.

## 2. Sustainable for a lifetime.

Besides the fact that it has to get results, the more important element of when it comes to adjusting how people eat is that, as I just mentioned, what your offer has to be sustainable for a lifetime. Which means it has to be easy to do. Because if it's not, people will simply go back to their old ways.

The absence of ease of use and sustainability are key reasons why the majority of people who go on a diet fail. In order to adhere to their new diet they often must follow a totally different eating plan than their family and friends. They have to make special meals



just for themselves. Plus they can no longer go out to a restaurant for a meal without putting a spotlight on themselves. The inconvenience soon becomes too great and they soon decide that it's easier to go back to their old way of doing things.

Another reason diets fail is people find themselves becoming too hungry. And because they are, they inevitably give in to temptation and go off their diet. The more they go off their diet, the less belief they have in it and less conviction they have to follow through with it.

Some diets even provide their clients with pre-packaged food. While this is convenient, the problem is eating pre-packaged food over the course of an entire lifetime is *not sustainable*.

In order for a diet to have the right impact on your life it has to be something people can continue to do for the rest of their life. If it's not, yes, people will lose weight, but they will more than likely find six months or a year down the road they've put it all (or even more) back on.

Here's why I'm so confident your clients will be able to sustain the habits they learn in the Balanced Habits nutritional programs over the course of their life.

First of all, unless people continually eat at fast food restaurants or the vast majority of the food they consume is processed, they will not find this a major departure when it comes to their diet. Which means that they won't stand out as "the person who is trying to lose weight" at the dinner table with their family or when out at a restaurant with friends.

As mentioned the Balanced Habits programs are about a balanced approach to macronutrients. They'll find they're able to consume *similar* foods to what they're used to (both our programs give them the flexibility to customize their menu based on foods they currently have or are used to buying) they just have to stick within specific guidelines in terms of *how much you eat*.

Will they ever feel hungry? There may be a few times they'll feel hungry, especially at the start. But once their body adjusts they'll find they hardly notice any out of the ordinary hunger pangs at all.

In fact, one of the things that I hear over and over from people after they've completed one of our programs is that...

*"I didn't think it would be this easy."*

### **3. Designed to allow you to make the best choices for you.**

Prior to the Balanced Habits programs, my husband and I offered a program called AMS Nutrition. With the AMS Nutrition program we had food separated into two columns: "Good Choices" and "Bad Choices."

It proved to be unsustainable or satisfying for the people who went through the AMS Nutrition program.

Why?

We found that telling people a certain food was a bad choice was really forcing them to make a decision before they were ready because often it was something they were used to eating and were not ready to give up. In being forced to do so, they would resist and sometimes quit the program. What I've learned is you can't impose your will on other people.

Instead we decided to eliminate the good choices and the bad choices. We decided to hand the power of choice back to the person who is actually going through the program.

We did so because from our experience, most people aren't going to do something until they're good and ready to do something.

That's when something truly remarkable happened and I feel it's the key to not only why the Balanced Habits programs work so well, but why they are sustainable for life.

What happens is that soon they'll decide for themselves what the healthy choices are and they'll migrate over to those choices naturally.

Because here's the thing...when they make the decision there's a better chance they'll follow through with it versus if someone tells them what to do.

Wouldn't you agree?

#### **4. Individualized to your specific body type and situation.**

The problem with many diets and another reason why people have so much trouble following them is that they take a "one size fits all" approach. Meaning they treat a 150 lb. (68 kg) woman the same way they treat a 320 lb. (145.1 kg) man.

Every *body* is different. They have different bone structures, different body fat percentages and so on. So what works for one person may not work for someone else.

Realizing this, we knew exactly what we had to do.

We take eight different measurements. With men we consider your bone structure. With women we consider your bone structure and where you are carrying your extra weight. With these measurements we are able to establish the body fat percent, the lean body mass (the muscles, organs and bone with zero percent body fat) and how many pounds of stored fat you have on your body.

With this information we are able to provide you with a meal plan that breaks down what you can eat, how much, how often and when. People love this because it really takes the guesswork out of eating healthy. Again, this is specific to you and your body.

#### **5. Calculated for maximum weight loss and hunger satisfaction.**

As mentioned in the above point, the meal plan you receive lays out how often you can eat throughout the day.

Why is how often people eat each day important?

For two main reasons...

1. Controlling their hunger. We want to make sure they don't go too long between meals and are suddenly hit with an overwhelming urge to eat something.
2. It's a way to give people more control over their metabolisms. Our goal is to teach a person's metabolism to adjust so it uses their body fat as a fuel reserve and energy source because if they don't give their body what it needs at regular intervals, their body thinks it needs to save fat for later use. On the flip side, if they give their body too many calories at one sitting, it will use as much as it needs and store the rest as fat. What we do is set them up on the sweet spot where their body uses the food they eat for two and a half hours or so and then starts to access the fat stored on their body for an hour or so.

This might seem a little confusing, but we make it really simple and easy to understand for you. With the formula we've developed it's possible to put together an eating plan for people that both minimizes their hunger and maximizes their weight loss.

In summary, what the Balanced Habits nutrition programs offer people is a balanced macronutrient approach. We customize each program based on their specific situation and goals. Plus, we give them a blueprint to follow that suggests exactly when they should eat, what they should eat and how much they should each throughout the day. Having said that, we give them the freedom and flexibility to customize their personal food choices and give them a platform that allows them to make gradual more healthy choices over time.

All this adds up to "not just another diet," but a nutritious sustainable eating strategy for life.

If you have any other questions that I haven't answered here, please do not hesitate to contact me. I want to make sure you get all your questions answered. You can contact me online here; by emailing me at [info@balancedhabits.com](mailto:info@balancedhabits.com); or by calling 657-231-6779.

Sincerely,

*Carolyn Feters*

Carolyn Feters  
Creator, Balanced Habits

