

# How To Achieve Lasting Weight Loss, Vibrant Energy, and Unshakable Confidence



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# Introduction

Welcome to a transformative journey toward sustainable weight loss, improved health, and greater vitality.

In this ebook, we'll explore a Functional Medicine approach to weight loss, to understand and address the root causes of your weight struggles.

Unlike conventional methods that often rely on restrictive diets or temporary fixes, Functional Medicine views weight gain as a complex issue influenced by a combination of factors such as hormonal imbalances, inflammation, poor gut health, stress, and environmental toxins.

By digging deeper into your body's unique needs, we can uncover the underlying imbalances that may be hindering your ability to lose weight effectively.

In the pages that follow, you'll learn how to nourish your body with real food, reset your metabolism, and adopt mindful habits to become the happiest and healthiest version of yourself. Let's begin your transformation!





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# Common Weight loss Challenges

# Hormonal Imbalances

Insulin Resistance: Elevated insulin levels can make it difficult to burn fat and can lead to increased fat storage, especially around the abdomen.

Thyroid Dysfunction: Hypothyroidism (underactive thyroid) can slow metabolism, making it hard to lose weight despite efforts.

#### Cortisol Imbalance:

Chronic stress elevates cortisol, promoting fat storage, particularly in the abdominal area, and increasing cravings for sugary or high-fat foods.





## **Gut Health Issues**

#### Dysbiosis:

Imbalances in gut bacteria can affect metabolism, fat storage, and cause inflammation, which can hinder weight loss

#### Leaky Gut:

Increased intestinal permeability can lead to inflammation, immune responses, and food sensitivities, making it harder to lose weight.

#### Poor Nutrient Absorption:

If your gut isn't absorbing nutrients properly, your body can remain in a state of perceived deprivation, affecting metabolism and cravings.

#### **Chronic Inflammation:**

Inflammation can interfere with metabolic processes, making it harder to burn fat efficiently. Common triggers include poor diet, food intolerances, or toxins in the environment, and may lead to weight retention.



# Chronic Stress and Emotional Eating

Chronic stress increases cortisol, which promotes fat storage, often around the midsection. It can also lead to emotional eating, particularly of high-calorie, comfort foods that hinder weight loss.

# **Poor Sleep Quality**

Sleep deprivation disrupts hunger hormones (ghrelin and leptin), increasing cravings and appetite. Lack of sleep also raises cortisol levels, making fat loss more difficult.



## Blood Sugar Imbalance

Frequent blood sugar spikes and crashes from poor dietary choices can lead to insulin resistance, making it harder to burn fat and control cravings.





# Mitochondrial Dysfunction

When your cells aren't efficiently producing energy, metabolism slows down, leading to weight gain or difficulty losing weight.

# **Food Sensitivities**

Sensitivities to common foods like gluten, dairy, or sugar can trigger inflammation and hormonal disruptions, contributing to weight gain and bloating.

# **Nutrient Deficiencies**

Deficiencies in essential nutrients like magnesium, vitamin D, or B vitamins can affect energy production, hormone balance, and metabolic rate, which all impact the ability to lose weight.

# Toxin Overload

#### **Environmental Toxins:**

Exposure to toxins (like heavy metals, pesticides, and plastics) can disrupt hormones and contribute to weight gain by impairing metabolism and fat breakdown.

#### Fat-Stored Toxins:

Toxins are stored in fat cells and if they are released too quickly, this may contribute to metabolic complications.



In a Functional Medicine approach, addressing these underlying challenges holistically with targeted nutrition, lifestyle changes, and sometimes supplements can help overcome obstacles to weight loss and lead to long-term success.



#### CHAPTER TWO

# The Science behind Weight Loss

The mechanisms behind weight loss involve a combination of physiological processes that regulate how the body burns fat, utilises energy, and maintains homeostasis. Here's an overview of the key mechanisms that drive weight loss:



#### **Caloric Deficit**

#### Energy Balance:

Weight loss primarily occurs when the body is in a caloric deficit, meaning it burns more calories than it consumes. The body then turns to stored fat for energy to make up for the caloric shortfall.

#### Basal Metabolic Rate:

Your BMR is the number of calories your body needs to maintain basic physiological functions at rest. Increasing physical activity or reducing caloric intake below your BMR leads to a caloric deficit and weight loss. strategies.

# Fat Metabolism (Lipolysis)

#### Fat Breakdown:

In a caloric deficit, the body breaks down triglycerides (stored fat) in adipose tissue through a process called lipolysis. Triglycerides are broken down into free fatty acids and glycerol, which enter the bloodstream to be used as fuel.

#### **Energy Production:**

The free fatty acids are transported to cells, particularly muscle cells, where they enter the mitochondria and are oxidised (burned) to produce ATP (energy), carbon dioxide, and water. By understanding and addressing these mechanisms, you can develop more sustainable and effective weight loss

#### **Hormonal Regulation**

#### Insulin:

Insulin regulates blood sugar by facilitating glucose uptake into cells. Elevated insulin levels (from high carbohvdrate consumption or insulin resistance) can inhibit fat burning and promote fat storage. Lower insulin levels, achieved through dietary modifications (e.g., lower-carb diets), promote fat breakdown. creating calorie deficit, enhancing fat metabolism, regulating hormones, and optimising gut and metabolic health.



#### Leptin:

This hormone is produced by fat cells and signals the brain about the body's fat stores. It helps regulate appetite and energy balance. Leptin resistance, common in obesity, disrupts these signals, making weight loss more challenging

#### Ghrelin:

Known as the "hunger hormone," ghrelin increases appetite. When you lose weight, ghrelin levels often rise, making you feel hungrier and making it harder to maintain a caloric deficit.

#### Cortisol:

Chronic stress elevates cortisol levels, which can promote fat storage, particularly around the abdomen. Reducing cortisol through stress management can support weight loss efforts.

## Increased Energy Expenditure

#### Thermogenesis:

The body uses energy to produce heat, a process known as thermogenesis. There are three main components:

# Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR):

Energy used for basic bodily functions like breathing and maintaining body temperature. can slightly boost metabolism.



# Thermic Effect of Food (TEF):

Energy expended to digest, absorb, and metabolise food. Protein has the highest TEF, which which can slightly boost metabolism.

#### **Physical Activity:**

Any movement increases calorie expenditure. Exercise, especially highintensity interval training (HIIT) and resistance training, can significantly raise energy expenditure and promote fat loss.

## Muscle Preservation and Building Lean Mass

#### Protein Metabolism:

Adequate protein intake helps preserve muscle mass during weight loss. Muscle tissue is metabolically active, meaning it burns more calories at rest than fat. Preserving or building muscle through resistance training can enhance fat loss by increasing resting energy expenditure.

#### Amino Acids:

When dietary protein is consumed, amino acids are used to repair and build muscle. This is crucial because losing muscle during weight loss can slow metabolism, making further fat loss more difficult.

# Fat Adaptation (Ketosis)

#### Ketosis:

In a low-carbohydrate or ketogenic diet, the body shifts from using glucose as its primary energy source to burning fat for fuel. The liver converts fatty acids into ketones, which can be used by the brain and other organs for energy.

#### **Enhanced Fat Burning:**

Ketosis can increase fat oxidation (fat burning), making it an effective method for weight loss, especially for those with insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome.

## Gut Health and Microbiome

#### **Gut Microbiome:**

The gut microbiome plays a role in weight regulation by affecting digestion, metabolism, and even appetite. A balanced microbiome with a diversity of beneficial bacteria can promote healthy digestion and weight management. Dysbiosis (gut imbalance) can lead to inflammation and weight gain.



#### Short-Chain Fatty Acids (SCFAs):

Beneficial gut bacteria produce SCFAs from dietary fibre, which can help regulate metabolism and fat storage, contributing to weight loss.



#### **Metabolic Flexibility**

#### Ability to Switch Fuel Sources:

Metabolic flexibility refers to the body's ability to efficiently switch between burning carbohydrates and fat for energy. A metabolically flexible body is better able to burn fat when in a caloric deficit. Insulin sensitivity, regular exercise, and balanced nutrition support this flexibility.

## Reduction in Inflammation

#### Chronic Inflammation:

Inflammation can interfere with metabolic processes and hinder fat loss. By reducing inflammation (through an anti-inflammatory diet, stress management, and gut health optimisation), the body can improve its metabolic function and ability to burn fat.

#### Detoxification

#### Toxin Release:

Environmental toxins (e.g., plastics, pesticides) are stored in fat cells. During weight loss, fat breakdown releases these toxins into the bloodstream, and they must be properly detoxified by the liver and kidnevs. Supporting detoxification through proper hydration, fiber intake, and nutrientrichfoods can assist the body in eliminating these toxins, which may improve weight loss outcomes.



#### Summary

Weight loss is driven by creating a caloric deficit, enhancing fat metabolism, regulating hormones, and optimising gut and metabolic health. By understanding and addressing these mechanisms, you can develop more sustainable and effective weight loss strategies.

#### CHAPTER THREE

# What to Eat to Lose Weight

Losing weight healthily is about nourishing your body with whole, nutrient-dense foods that support fat loss, metabolism, and satiety. Here's a simplified guide on what to eat:

#### 1. Prioritise Protein

- Why: Protein preserves muscle, boosts metabolism, and keeps you full longer.
- Best Sources: Chicken, fish, eggs, Greek yogurt, lentils, tofu.
- How Much: Aim for 20– 30g of protein per meal (palm sized portion).

#### 2. Load Up on Fibre-Rich Vegetables

- Why: Fibre promotes fullness, stabilizes blood sugar, and supports gut health.
- Best Sources: Broccoli, spinach, berries, beans, whole grains.
- Tip: Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables.

## 3. Include Healthy Fats

- Why: Fats support hormones, increase satiety and reduce inflammation.
- Best Sources: Avocados, olive oil, nuts, seeds, fatty fish.

 Tip: Include healthy fats in each meal, but watch portion sizes.

# 4. Choose Low-Glycaemic Carbs

- Why: These carbs provide steady energy without spiking insulin.
- Best Sources: Sweet potatoes, quinoa, oats, legumes.
- Tip: Keep carbs to about a quarter of your plate

#### 5. Stay Hydrated

- Why: Water supports metabolism and helps control hunger.
- Tip: Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily.

# 6. Avoid Processed Foods and Added Sugars

 Why: Processed foods spike insulin and lead to overeating.  What to Avoid: Sugary snacks, sodas, refined grains, and packaged foods.

## 7. Practice Mindful Eating

- Why: Eating slowly and mindfully helps prevent overeating.
- Tip: Focus on your food without distractions, and listen to hunger cues.

# Conclusion

For sustainable weight loss, focus on whole foods—lean protein, fibre, healthy fats, and low-glycaemic carbs while avoiding processed foods and sugars. By eating mindfully and balancing your plate, you can lose weight effectively while maintaining a healthy, balanced lifestyle.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

# Mindful Eating for Weight Loss

Mindful eating helps you lose weight by tuning into your body's hunger and fullness cues, avoiding overeating, and making intentional food choices. It's about slowing down, savouring your meals, and listening to your body. Here's how it supports weight loss and practical steps to start:

# 1. What is Mindful Eating?

- Definition: Eating with full awareness, focusing on the experience of food without distraction.
- Key Aspects: Slower eating, savouring each bite, and recognising physical hunger vs. emotional cravings.

# 2. Why Mindful Eating Helps

- Prevents Overeating: Slow eating allows your brain to recognise fullness before overeating.
- Reduces Emotional Eating: Helps you distinguish between true hunger and emotional triggers.



 Improves Digestion: Eating slowly supports better digestion and nutrient absorption.

# 3. How to Practice Mindful Eating

- Eliminate Distractions: Eat without TV, phone, or computer.
- Slow Down: Chew thoroughly, take smaller bites, and pause between them.
- Listen to Your Body: Eat when hungry, stop when satisfied.
- Engage Your Senses: Notice the flavours, textures, and smells of your food.

# 4. Managing Emotional Eating

- Pause and Reflect: Before eating, check if you're truly hungry or responding to emotions
- Find Alternatives: Engage in non-food activities like walking or deep breathing if you're not actually hungry.

# 5. Handling Cravings

- Acknowledge Cravings: Recognise cravings without immediately giving in.
- Delay: Wait 10 minutes to see if the craving passes.
- Mindful Indulgence: If indulging, do so in small, satisfying portions.

# Conclusion

Mindful eating helps you naturally control portions, reduce emotional eating, and enjoy food more. By paying attention to your body's signals and savouring each bite, you'll support weight loss while feeling more satisfied and in control of your eating habits.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# Overcoming Barriers to Weight Loss

Losing weight often means navigating personal, emotional, and environmental challenges. Here's how to tackle some of the most common obstacles that can stand in the way of progress.



- The Challenge: Many people turn to food for comfort when dealing with stress, boredom, or difficult emotions.
- How to Overcome: Identify emotional triggers and track patterns in a food journal. When reaching for a snack, pause to check if you're truly hungry, if not, go for a walk, meditate, or call a friend.

# 2. Lack of Time

- The Challenge: Busy lifestyles make it hard to plan meals and fit in exercise, leading to reliance on fast food or skipping workouts.
- How to Overcome: Prep healthy options weekly. Choose high intensity workouts lasting 20minutes and take short walks a few times a day.



# The Challenge: Cravings for sugary, processed, or high-

- calorie foods can derail weight loss efforts.
  How to Overcome: Eat balanced meals with protein, fibre, and healthy
- fats. Satisfy cravings with small, mindful treats such as fruit, nuts and yoghurt.

## 4. Hormonal Imbalances

- The Challenge: Hormones like cortisol, insulin, and thyroid hormones play a key role in weight gain, and imbalances can make it harder to lose fat.
- How to Overcome: Consult a healthcare provider to address hormonal issues.
   Support hormone health with a balanced diet, stress management, and proper sleep.

# 5. Lack of Motivation

- The Challenge: Staying motivated can be hard, especially when progress is slow or you feel stuck.
- How to Overcome: Set small, achievable goals to maintain momentum. Track progress and celebrate wins. Find a support system to hold yourself accountable.

## 6. Unrealistic Expectations

- The Challenge: Expecting rapid results or aiming for an unrealistic weight can lead to frustration.
- How to Overcome: Focus on overall health, not just the scale. Celebrate steady progress and personalise your approach to fit your lifestyle.

## Conclusion

Overcoming these barriers are essential for sustainable weight loss. By tackling emotional eating, managing time, and setting realistic goals, you can stay on track. With patience, consistency, and a personalised approach, you'll make progress while improving overall health.

# **Discover Nutritional Therapy**

Unlike generic diet plans that often overlook individual needs, my nutritional therapy programme provides a thorough assessment of your unique health profile, including your medical history, dietary habits, lifestyle factors, and specific weight loss goals.

I offer tailored nutrition advice that targets the root causes of your weight struggles, whether they stem from hormonal imbalances, emotional eating, or nutritional deficiencies. This individualised approach empowers you to develop sustainable eating habits, moving away from temporary quick fixes that often lead to frustration and relapse.

With my expertise, you'll benefit from ongoing guidance and support, ensuring you stay accountable throughout your journey. I provide practical strategies to help you navigate common obstacles, such as cravings, stress, and time management challenges.



Together, we'll work to keep you motivated and focused, ultimately leading to long-term success in not just weight loss, but also improving your overall health and well-being.

Book a 30-minute discovery call with me to understand how I can help you on your path to weight loss success!

