

# BIKINI BODY

WITH SUMMER APPROACHING, BRITISH IFBB BIKINI PRO **MICHELLE BRANNAN** PROVIDES TIPS ON SENSIBLE, EFFECTIVE EATING  
PHOTOS BY NICOLAS PAUL



SIMON HOWARD

Spring is here and everyone is shaping up for summer. But with so many diets out there, picking the right one can be confusing. Don't get swept away by the latest craze; follow these guidelines to get in beach body condition.

## DON'T CUT CARBS COMPLETELY

I like to keep things simple. I don't agree with cutting out carbs, crash dieting or any other fad diets. For me, losing weight or body fat is a simple energy equation. If your input is greater than your output, you're not going to lose any weight.

You can shift the balance by slightly reducing the amount you eat, making a few changes to what you eat and increasing your daily activity. None of these options are too extreme.

Trying to shift the energy balance by diet alone is likely to require severely restricting calories, which can be pretty miserable and unrealistic, so I always recommend a good training plan alongside any nutrition plan.

## LEARN TO COUNT CALORIES

How many calories do you need per day? Individual requirements vary and finding the answer is a matter of trial and error. But the following equation is a good starting point:

Firstly, you need to calculate your basal metabolic rate (BMR), which is the amount of calories your body needs at rest.

BMR = Males: Bodyweight in lbs x 10 + (2 times bodyweight in lbs)

Females: Bodyweight in lbs x 10 + bodyweight

Then you need to account for any daily activity, sports and training and add that to your daily calorie allowance.

The figure you arrive at will be the amount of calories you need to maintain your current weight. As a rule, if you want to lose 1 lb a week you need to reduce your calorie intake by 500 calories per day—you can do this either by decreasing food intake or adding more exercise to your regime.

## GETTING THE RIGHT PROTEIN, CARBS AND FATS

I recommend consuming each day a minimum of 1 g protein per pound of lean bodyweight.

Beyond that it's more difficult to be prescriptive. Some people respond better to

a higher carbohydrate intake; others respond better to more fats.

I don't advocate cutting carbs completely because this can cause problems when you reintroduce them and result in the loss of lean tissue in the long term.

But it is safe and practical to lower carbohydrate intake for short periods when leaning down.

I recommend the following macro-nutrient splits:

**Normal:** 40% proteins, 40% carbohydrates, 20% fats

**Leaning:** 50% proteins, 25-30% carbohydrates 20-25% fats

## USE A CALORIES COUNTER

I find it useful to record my diet on a calorie calculator. There are many free calculators online that help you monitor what you're eating each day so you don't need to eat the same boring foods all the time.

Keep your metabolism high rather than simply cutting calories. Aim to eat five evenly spaced meals throughout the day.

This should also keep your blood sugar levels stable and prevent cravings. Managing your blood sugar and insulin levels is vital to prevent fat accumulating.

## THE DIET PLAN

Vary your foods and incorporate as many different protein sources as possible. Variety helps to ensure a nutrient-rich diet. Here's a daily guide:

## SUPPLEMENTS

- 1 x serving of fish oil
- 1 x Multivitamin with B vitamins and calcium
- 1 x Lactobacillus capsule

## BREAKFAST

Choose one of the following options:

- Protein pancakes: 30 g oats (dry weight),

## 20 QUICK REFERENCE STEPS TO A BEACH BODY

1. Don't skip breakfast
2. Double the green vegetables you are eating now
3. Drink a minimum of 3 litres of water a day
4. Don't confuse thirst with hunger
5. Learn to cook
6. Prepare your food ahead and carry it with you
7. Resistance train at least three times a week
8. Steer clear of processed pre-packed foods
9. Do not skip meals or become too hungry as this increases the chances of making poor food choices
10. Eat small servings
11. Eat frequently
12. Have a weekly cheat meal
13. Burn more calories than you take in
14. Limit the sugars in your diet
15. Don't drink calories: no juice, soda, or alcohol
16. Do not purchase or eat junk food
17. Get enough sleep: eight hours a night
18. Do daily cardio
19. Don't keep junk food in the house
20. Keep 'good fats' in your diet



GENE X HWAN/ORANGE

1 whole egg and 2 egg whites, half a grated apple or handful of berries and cinnamon

- Oats, whey and berries: 30 g oats (dry weight), 1 scoop whey protein and a handful berries
- Eggs on toast: 1 full egg, 2 egg whites and one slice granary bread
- 170 g Total Greek yogurt 0% fat, a handful of berries and 1 tablespoon of natural peanut or almond butter
- 80 g smoked salmon, black pepper, lemon juice and one slice granary bread

## SNACK

Choose one item from the approved snack list

## LUNCH

This should consist of a protein source,

vegetables, healthy fats and one complex carbohydrate.

- 1 x Protein: 150 g cooked weight protein source (choose from the protein list)
- Vegetable: At least 2 x handfuls green vegetables (asparagus, green beans, courgette, broccoli etc.) or mixed salad. **DO NOT** skip this bit
- Complex carbohydrate: Choose one item from the complex carb list
- Healthy fats: 1 tsp coconut oil or olive oil

## SNACK

Choose one item from the approved snack list

## DINNER

This should consist of a protein source, vegetables and one healthy fat.

- Protein: 150 g cooked weight protein—choose from the protein list
- Vegetables: At least 2 x handfuls green vegetables (asparagus, green beans, courgette etc.) or mixed salad. **DO NOT** skip this bit
- Healthy fats: 1 tsp coconut oil or olive oil

## PROTEIN LIST

- White fish (e.g. cod, tilapia, haddock)
- Skinless chicken breast
- Grilled salmon
- 4 egg omelette (1 whole egg and 3 whites)
- Turkey breast
- Tuna steak
- Grilled steak (twice a week)
- Venison
- Seafood—prawns, squid, lobster
- Mackerel
- Sardines

## COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATE LIST

- 1 x average-sized sweet or white potato
- 150 g brown rice (cooked weight)
- 1 slice brown granary bread or small pitta bread
- 200 g Puy lentils (cooked weight)
- 100 g quinoa (cooked weight)

## APPROVED SNACKS (try to vary each day)

- 120 g vegetable sticks and 2 tablespoons hummus dip
- 1 x apple or pear and 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 200 g low-fat, low-sugar organic Greek yogurt or cheese with handful of berries
- 2 whole eggs and 1 slice wholemeal bread
- 1 x Ryvita with 50 g low-fat cheese and 50 g smoked salmon

- Whey protein shake with water and 12 plain almonds
- Half an avocado and 100 g king prawns
- 2 rice cakes with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter

## CHEAT MEAL

Once a week allow yourself a meal of your choice, whatever you want. Remember, this is not a whole cheat day just one meal. This is so your body does not get used to your diet and also gives you something to look forward to.

**Michelle Brannan** is Britain's first IFBB pro bikini competitor. She won the 2012 British Grand prix and competed in last years Bikini Olympia in Las Vegas.