



# Lifestyle Guide for Gym Goers: Fuel Your Fitness Journey

Transform your body and performance with this comprehensive booklet to nutrition, recovery, and balanced living. Whether you're building muscle or shedding fat, success starts beyond the gym.



# Why Lifestyle Matters: Beyond the Gym



## Nutrition Foundation

Your diet fuels performance, repairs muscle tissue, and determines whether you gain or lose weight effectively.



## Recovery Essentials

Quality sleep enables muscle repair, hormone regulation, and mental clarity for sustained progress.



## Mental Balance

Managing stress protects your gains, maintains motivation, and keeps cortisol levels in check.

Training is just one piece of the puzzle. Proper habits boost energy, accelerate recovery, and sharpen mental focus. Tailoring your lifestyle to your specific goal—whether weight gain or loss—maximises your success and helps you achieve sustainable results that last.

# Meal Timing: When to Eat for Optimal Performance



## Morning

Start with protein-rich breakfast

## Post-Workout

Recovery meal within 60 minutes

1

2

3

4

## Pre-Workout

Carbs + protein 1-2 hours before

## Evening

Light dinner 2-3 hours before bed

Avoid heavy meals right before bedtime to improve sleep quality and overnight recovery. Your body needs time to digest properly whilst you rest.

## Eating Frequency

Consume meals to maintain consistent energy levels and support ongoing muscle repair throughout the day.

## Pre-Workout Nutrition

Focus on carbohydrates with moderate protein 1-2 hours before exercise to fuel your training session effectively.

## Post-Workout Window

Prioritise protein with fast-digesting carbs within 30-60 minutes after training to maximise recovery and muscle synthesis.

# Sleep Patterns: Your Secret Muscle Builder

1

## Target Duration

Aim for 7.5 to 8 hours of quality sleep nightly. This enables optimal muscle repair, growth hormone release, and metabolic function.

2

## Consistency Matters

Maintain a regular sleep schedule to improve metabolism, reduce unhealthy cravings, and enhance workout performance.

3

## Bedtime Routine

Create a pre-sleep ritual: limit screen exposure, avoid caffeine after midday, and keep your bedroom cool and dark.

**70%**

### Muscle Recovery

Occurs during deep sleep stages

**8hrs**

### Optimal Duration

For athletic performance

**2x**

### Growth Hormone

Peak release during sleep





# Stress Management: Keep Calm, Train On



## Mindfulness Practices

Incorporate meditation, deep breathing exercises, or yoga into your routine to lower cortisol levels and improve mental clarity.



## Active Recovery

Take light walks, especially in nature, to clear your mind and reduce tension without compromising your training recovery.



## Social Wellness

Prioritise meaningful connections and hobbies outside the gym to maintain balanced mental health and prevent burnout.

- ☐ **Why It Matters:** Chronic stress raises cortisol, which can hinder muscle growth, promote fat storage, and sabotage your weight loss or gain efforts. Managing stress isn't optional—it's essential for progress.

# Nutrition Basics for Weight Loss

01

## Create a Calorie Deficit

Aim for a moderate deficit of approximately 500 calories per day for sustainable fat loss of 0.5-1kg per week.

02

## Prioritise Protein

Focus on high protein intake (30-40% of total calories) to preserve muscle mass whilst losing fat.

03

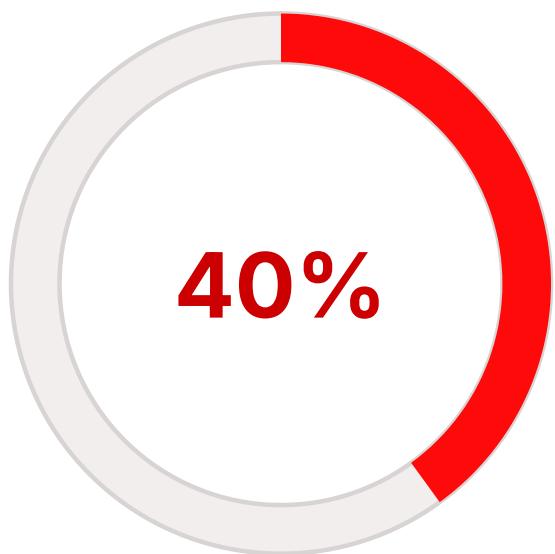
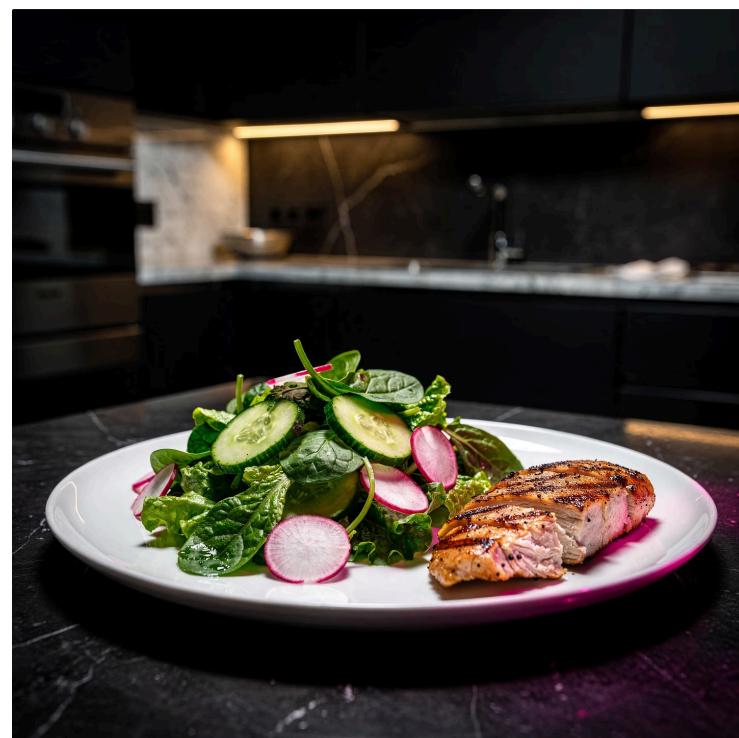
## Choose Nutrient-Dense Foods

Fill your plate with vegetables, lean meats, fish, whole grains, and legumes that provide maximum nutrition with fewer calories.

04

## Limit Empty Calories

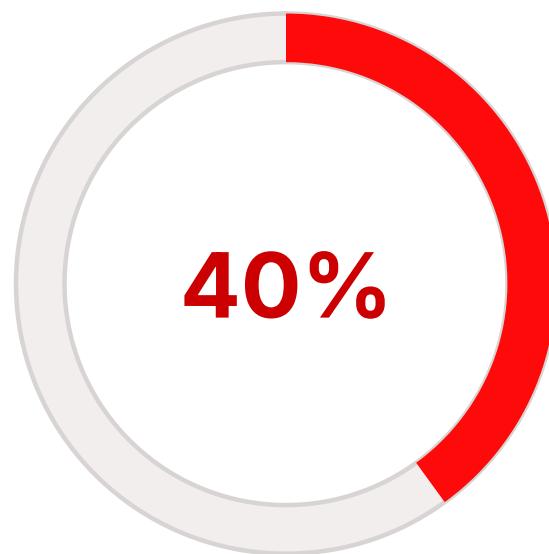
Reduce processed sugars, refined carbohydrates, and saturated fats that add calories without nutritional benefit.



**Protein**  
Of daily calories



**Carbohydrates**  
Focus on whole grains



**Healthy Fats**  
Essential nutrients





# Nutrition Basics for Weight Gain

## Calorie Surplus

Aim for 300-500 extra calories daily with balanced macronutrients to support lean muscle growth without excessive fat gain.

## Protein Priority

Consume 1.6-2.2 grammes per kilogramme of body weight to maximise muscle protein synthesis and recovery.

## Healthy Fats

Include calorie-dense options like nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive oil to reach your energy targets easily.

## Frequent Feeding

Eat regular meals and nutrient-rich snacks throughout the day to consistently meet higher energy requirements.

## Sample Foods

- Chicken breast
- Salmon
- Brown rice
- Sweet potatoes
- Whole eggs

## Protein Sources

- Lean beef
- Greek yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Protein powder
- Legumes

## Healthy Fats

- Almonds
- Peanut butter
- Olive oil
- Avocado
- Chia seeds



# 7-Day Meal Plan for Weight Loss

WEIGHT LOSS

CALORIE DEFICIT

## Day 1

**Breakfast:** Greek yogurt with blueberries and almonds

**Lunch:** Grilled chicken salad with quinoa

**Dinner:** Baked salmon with steamed broccoli and sweet potato

## Day 2

**Breakfast:** Oatmeal with banana and peanut butter

**Lunch:** Tuna wrap with mixed greens

**Dinner:** Stir-fried tofu with brown rice and vegetables

## Day 3

**Breakfast:** Scrambled eggs with spinach and whole grain toast

**Lunch:** Turkey and avocado sandwich

**Dinner:** Grilled shrimp with courgette noodles

## Day 4

**Breakfast:** Smoothie with protein powder, spinach, and berries

**Lunch:** Lentil soup with side salad

**Dinner:** Chicken breast with roasted vegetables

## Day 5

**Breakfast:** Cottage cheese with pineapple

**Lunch:** Quinoa bowl with chickpeas and roasted veggies

**Dinner:** Lean beef stir-fry with brown rice

## Day 6

**Breakfast:** Whole grain English muffin with almond butter

**Lunch:** Grilled salmon salad

**Dinner:** Vegetable omelette with mixed greens

## Day 7

**Breakfast:** Chia pudding with mixed berries

**Lunch:** Chicken wrap with hummus and veggies

**Dinner:** Baked cod with asparagus and quinoa

# 7-Day Meal Plan for Weight Gain

MUSCLE BUILDING

CALORIE SURPLUS

## Day 1

**Breakfast:** Omelette with cheese, spinach, and whole grain toast

**Lunch:** Chicken breast with brown rice and avocado

**Dinner:** Beef chilli with beans and sweet potato

## Day 2

**Breakfast:** Smoothie with protein powder, banana, peanut butter, and oats

**Lunch:** Turkey sandwich with cheese and salad

**Dinner:** Grilled salmon with quinoa and steamed broccoli

## Day 3

**Breakfast:** Greek yogurt with granola and mixed nuts

**Lunch:** Lentil curry with brown rice

**Dinner:** Roast chicken with roasted potatoes and vegetables

## Day 4

**Breakfast:** Pancakes made with oats and eggs topped with berries

**Lunch:** Tuna pasta salad with olive oil dressing

**Dinner:** Beef stir-fry with vegetables and jasmine rice

## Day 5

**Breakfast:** Scrambled eggs with avocado and whole grain bagel

**Lunch:** Chicken burrito bowl with beans and rice

**Dinner:** Baked cod with mashed potatoes and green beans

1

## Day 6

**Breakfast:** Cottage cheese with nuts and honey

**Lunch:** Quinoa salad with chickpeas and feta

**Dinner:** Pork loin with roasted carrots and parsnips

2

## Day 7

**Breakfast:** Protein pancakes with peanut butter

**Lunch:** Grilled chicken wrap with cheese and veggies

**Dinner:** Spaghetti with meat sauce and side salad



# When NOT to Exercise: Medical Conditions Requiring Caution

While exercise is vital for overall health, there are critical situations and medical conditions where engaging in physical activity can be detrimental or even dangerous. It's imperative to recognize these circumstances and prioritize your health by avoiding workouts or seeking professional medical clearance.

 <h3>Acute Cardiac Conditions</h3> <p>Avoid exercise if experiencing recent heart attack, unstable angina, or severe, uncontrolled heart failure. Strenuous activity can worsen these conditions.</p>	 <h3>Uncontrolled High Blood Pressure</h3> <p>Intense physical exertion can dangerously spike blood pressure. Consult a doctor to stabilize your condition before beginning a regimen.</p>	 <h3>Active Infections &amp; Fever</h3> <p>Exercise can prolong illness, weaken the immune system further, and in some cases, lead to complications like myocarditis. Rest and recover instead.</p>
 <h3>Acute Injuries &amp; Inflammation</h3> <p>Working out with an acute injury or severe inflammation can exacerbate the problem, delay healing, and lead to chronic pain. Allow time for recovery.</p>	 <h3>Severe Respiratory Conditions</h3> <p>Conditions like acute asthma exacerbation or severe bronchitis require caution. Ensure your breathing is stable and cleared by a physician before exercising.</p>	 <h3>Uncontrolled Diabetes</h3> <p>If diabetes is poorly managed or complications are present (e.g., severe neuropathy, retinopathy), exercise can pose risks. Medical evaluation is essential.</p>
 <h3>Recent Surgery or Procedures</h3> <p>The body needs time to heal after surgery. Follow your surgeon's guidelines for activity restrictions and gradually reintroduce exercise under supervision.</p>	 <h3>Severe Joint Issues</h3> <p>Acute flare-ups of arthritis or severe structural joint problems can be worsened by exercise. Seek advice for appropriate low-impact alternatives or rest.</p>	

- Important Reminder:** Always consult with a healthcare professional or your doctor before starting any new exercise program, especially if you have existing medical conditions, are recovering from illness or injury, or are pregnant. They can provide personalized advice and ensure your safety.



# When Medical Supervision is Essential: Exercise with Professional Guidance

For individuals navigating specific health challenges, embarking on an exercise or dietary regimen without expert oversight can pose significant risks. Certain medical conditions necessitate a personalized approach, where physical activity and nutrition plans are carefully curated and monitored by healthcare professionals. This ensures not only safety but also the effectiveness of interventions, preventing complications and promoting optimal health outcomes.

<b>Cardiovascular Diseases</b> Includes conditions like a history of heart attack, angina, or heart surgery. Exercise plans must be tailored to avoid cardiac strain and managed under cardiologist guidance.	<b>Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes</b> Especially with complications. Diet and exercise directly impact blood glucose; specific plans are needed to prevent hypo/hyperglycemia and manage long-term health.	<b>Obesity (BMI over 35)</b> High impact activities can stress joints and cardiovascular systems. Comprehensive plans from dietitians and exercise physiologists are crucial for safe and sustainable weight management.
<b>Chronic Kidney Disease</b> Fluid, electrolyte, and protein intake are critical. Exercise must be gentle and monitored, with dietary plans carefully managed by a nephrologist and dietitian.	<b>Liver Disease</b> Fatigue and metabolic dysfunction are common. Exercise should be low-intensity, and diet requires careful consideration of macronutrient balance to support liver function.	<b>Thyroid Disorders</b> Hypo- or hyperthyroidism can affect metabolism and energy levels. Exercise intensity and duration need adjustment, and diet can support medication efficacy.
<b>Osteoporosis / Bone Issues</b> Risk of fractures is high. Weight-bearing and resistance exercises must be carefully chosen and supervised to improve bone density without causing injury.	<b>High-Risk Pregnancy</b> Tailored exercise programs and nutritional guidance are essential to ensure the health of both mother and baby, requiring obstetrician clearance and supervision.	<b>Post-Surgical Recovery</b> Gradual reintroduction of activity and specific nutritional support are vital for healing and preventing complications, guided by the surgeon and physical therapist.
<b>Cancer Patients (Treatment)</b> Exercise can manage side effects and improve quality of life, but must be adapted to fatigue levels and treatment protocols, with oncologist and oncology dietitian input.	<b>Eating Disorders</b> Exercise and diet can be triggers or part of treatment. A multidisciplinary team (therapist, dietitian, physician) is crucial for a healthy relationship with food and activity.	<b>Autoimmune Conditions</b> Conditions like lupus or rheumatoid arthritis require exercise plans that minimize joint stress and manage inflammation, often during flare-ups and remission cycles.
<b>Chronic Respiratory Conditions</b> COPD or severe asthma necessitate careful monitoring of breathing and oxygen levels during exercise, with programs designed to improve lung capacity safely.		<b>Neurological Conditions</b> Parkinson's, MS, or epilepsy can affect balance, coordination, and muscle control. Exercise therapy needs to be specialized to improve function and prevent falls.

- Crucial Guidance:** Never initiate significant changes to your exercise or diet regimen if you have any of these conditions without prior consultation with your doctor. A team of healthcare professionals—including physicians, registered dietitians, and certified exercise specialists—can provide the necessary clearance, personalized plans, and ongoing monitoring to ensure your journey to better health is both safe and effective.



# Practical Tips for Meal Prep and Consistency

## Plan and Batch Cook

Dedicate time weekly to plan meals and batch cook proteins, grains, and vegetables to save time during busy weekdays.

## Portion Control

Use simple guides: palm-sized protein, fist-sized carbohydrates, and thumb-sized fats for balanced, consistent meals.

## Smart Snacking

Keep nutritious options readily available: nuts, fresh fruit, boiled eggs, and Greek yogurt for convenient energy.

- Hydration Matters:** Aim for 2-3 litres of water daily, increasing intake on training days or in warm weather. Proper hydration supports metabolism, recovery, and workout performance.

# Lifestyle Habits to Support Your Gym Goals

- **Meal Consistency**

Avoid skipping meals to maintain steady energy levels and keep your metabolism functioning optimally throughout the day.

- **Beverage Choices**

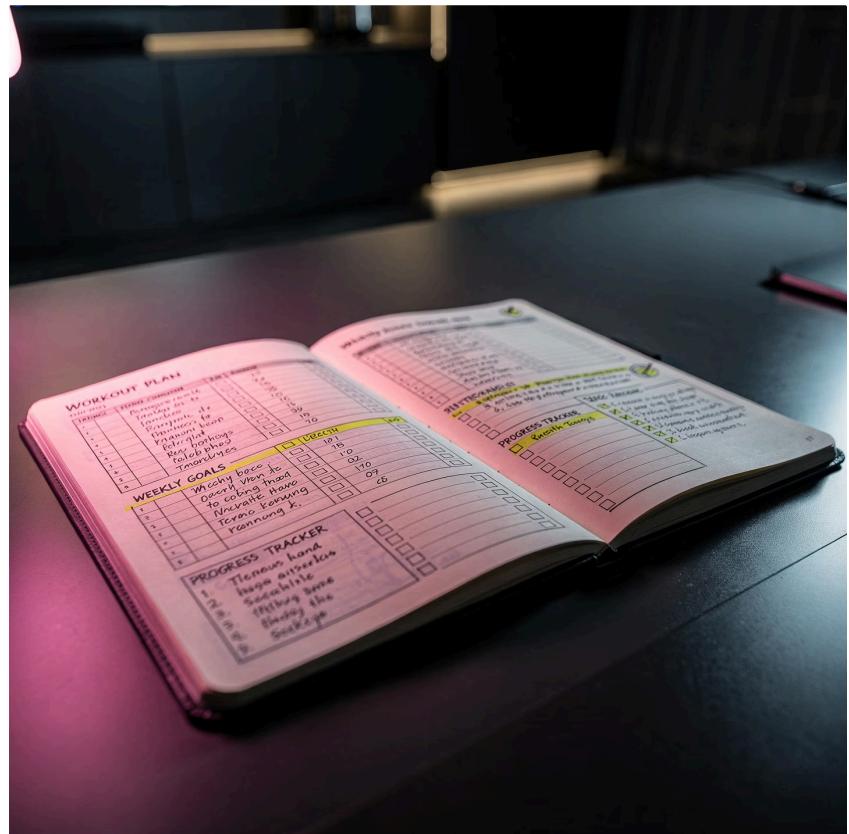
Limit alcohol and sugary drinks that add empty calories without nutritional value, hindering your progress.

- **Progress Tracking**

Use a journal or mobile app to monitor food intake, workouts, and how you feel to maintain motivation and accountability.

- **Flexible Adaptation**

Adjust your nutrition and training plan based on results and how you feel physically and mentally—progress isn't always linear.



**90%**

**Consistency**

Determines long-term success

**3L**

**Daily Water**

Minimum hydration target

**12**

**Weeks**

To establish lasting habits

# Your Journey Starts Now: Commit to Balanced Living



## Smart Nutrition

Fuel your body with purpose



## Quality Sleep

Prioritise rest and recovery



## Stress Management

Protect your mental health



## Consistent Training

Show up and put in the work

"Fitness is a marathon, not a sprint—consistency beats perfection every single time."

Combine smart nutrition, quality sleep, effective stress management, and dedicated training for optimal results. Use this guide as your foundation and personalise it to suit your unique lifestyle and preferences. Celebrate small wins along the way and keep pushing towards your goals every single day.

## Remember

- Progress takes time and patience
- Small daily actions compound into major results
- Listen to your body's signals
- Adjust your approach as needed
- Stay committed to the process



# Your Fitness Toolkit: Quick Reference



## Meal Timing

Every 3-4 hours

Pre-workout: 1-2 hours before

Post-workout: within 60 minutes



## Sleep Target

7.5-8 hours nightly

Consistent schedule

Cool, dark environment



## Hydration

2-3 litres daily minimum

More on training days

Monitor urine colour

## Weight Loss Focus

- 500 calorie daily deficit
- 30-40% protein intake
- Nutrient-dense foods
- Limit processed sugars
- Track progress weekly

## Weight Gain Focus

- 300-500 calorie surplus
- 1.6-2.2g protein per kg body weight
- Frequent meals and snacks
- Include healthy fats
- Progressive overload training

You now have everything you need to succeed. Take action today, stay consistent, and watch your transformation unfold. Your future self will thank you for the commitment you make right now.

# Book Your Consultation with Emedicard



Ready to take control of your health journey? Emedicard connects you with expert medical advice and personalized care. Schedule your consultation today and experience healthcare tailored to you.



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