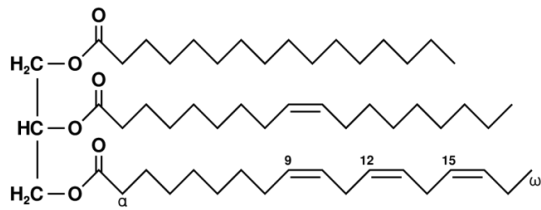


REVERSE DIETING



EAT MORE—LOSE WEIGHT

Sounds *crazy* right? How could eating MORE calories, lend to fat loss?

Well, believe it or not, there's a whole lot more to the body composition equation than calories in vs. calories out.

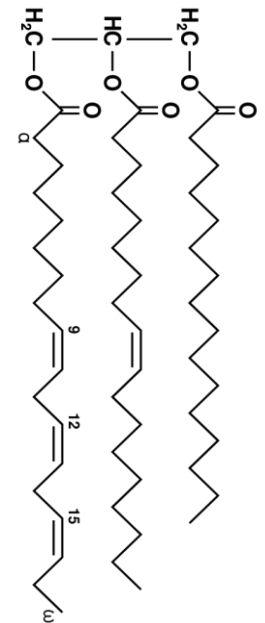
Let's dive deep into how calories, macronutrients, and your training can rebalance your hormones, increase your metabolism by incredible amounts, and make the changes you've been working so hard to see!

What is reverse dieting?

A proven method to increase your metabolism and help balance your hormones, reverse dieting is exactly what it sounds like. If someone says they're on a diet, you could assume they're restricting calories and systematically lowering their food intake. On a reverse diet, you do the exact opposite, systematically increasing.

Sounds strange right? Could you really eat more and lose body fat? The answer is a resounding yes. It doesn't make sense logically but, I'm not here for logistics, I'm here for science. Scientifically, reverse dieting not only makes sense but, it's a plain and obvious solution for individuals seeking weight loss and have been dieting for 6 months or more with diminished results.

On a reverse diet, you start where you are (all diets should begin this way) and systematically (that means slowly and according to a plan), increase your calories and balance your macronutrients in concert with a weight training program that matches your increased caloric intake.



What happens when you diet for fat loss:

Adaptive Thermogenesis

When you begin a fat loss diet, no matter if it is intelligently designed by a fitness professional or certified personal trainer, what we will almost inevitably observe is *adaptive thermogenesis*. This is the process by which the body regulates your energy expenditure due to the decrease in energy intake (less calories).

Adaptive thermogenesis is achieved by increased mitochondrial efficiency (great from a survival perspective, terrible from a fat loss perspective), and hormonal alterations that will favor decreased energy expenditure (you'll be more tired), decreased satiety, and increased hunger; none of which make fat loss easier.

Hormonal Responses

If you've ever experienced hormonal issues or changes, you know how powerful they are. For those of you who don't know, take my word for it, they are **extremely** powerful. For example, think of anabolic steroids. They can take an average effort in the gym and produce incredible results whereas without them, the results would be forgettable at best. Now while taking exogenous hormones such as a steroid will wreak havoc on your body and possibly have life altering results, optimizing your hormones naturally is totally safe and in contrast, very healthy!

When you begin restricting food your body isn't considering your cosmetic fat loss goals, all it is focused on and will ever focus on, is keeping you alive and being efficient at what you consistently do. In response to your new diet, there are a few hormonal changes you can expect. The following are hormones that control your metabolism, mood, hunger, and fat loss and how they respond to dieting:

- **T3 – Thyroid Hormone (triiodothyronine)** – known to play a direct role in regulating your metabolism. When an increase in T3 is observed so to is an increase in metabolic rate (that would mean more fat loss). T3 and T4 are regulators of heart rate and thermoregulation.



Thermoregulation plays a big role in fat metabolism. “Burning” body fat for energy is a mechanism of thermoregulation. When on a diet, an individual will likely see a reduction in T3 hormone production and thus suffer not only less fat burning due to decreased T3 but also, an effort to resist fat loss by the body. This is your body’s effort to preserve it’s energy stores (i.e. fat).

- **Leptin (The satiety hormone)** – You know that seemingly instinctual signal you receive when you’re getting full? That’s *leptin*! Leptin works on the hypothalamus and blocks our hunger hormone (ghrelin) and thus, our brain tells us to stop eating. In obese people, decreased leptin sensitivity has been observed despite having plenty of energy stores and high levels of leptin, making overeating not only more common, but almost expected because they do not receive the signal that they are full. An obese person may try to diet but, over restriction of food can also cause leptin suppression meaning, *less satiety* and *more hunger*. This is true for all of us, not just obese individuals.
- **Insulin** – One of the most studied hormones, insulin isn’t important to understand just for diabetics. Insulin plays a massive role in many different systems in our body. In terms of fat loss, this hormone prevents muscle protein breakdown and regulates the metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids, and proteins (your macros). It is also anorexigenic, meaning it tells you when you’re full, like leptin. When you restrict food too much for too long, your insulin levels decrease meaning you metabolize less of your food for fuel, thus storing it as fat, and you’ll require more food to feel full.
- **Testosterone** – Yes, men have more of this hormone, but it plays a very big part in the bodies of both sexes. Apart from promoting muscle building (great for your metabolism), testosterone may play a role in repressing adipogenesis (creating new fat cells) though more study is needed to identify the exact mechanism. Also, changes in fat mass (such as fat loss) have been inversely correlated with testosterone levels. That means, even if your diet is working, it may need to be reversed for a period of time to see further results and break a plateau.
- **Cortisol (The Stress Hormone)** – Whether stress be physical (like from exercise) or psychological (like from kids or bills), it will cause an increase in this glucocorticoid which has been shown to influence macronutrient metabolism and muscle protein break down, as well as, block your full signal from leptin. Over restriction or long term restriction causes a rise in and persistence of cortisol that will not only negatively impact fat loss and muscle building but, will also have major health effects.
- **Ghrelin (The Hunger Hormone)** – When you get hangry, thank ghrelin. This hormone is secreted when your body senses it is in an energy deficit. Restrict your calories for too long or at too extreme of a rate and you can jack up your ghrelin levels and expect to be overeating all of your meals.

If you actually read all that, you probably realize now why so many people start diets and never make it past the three month mark. Their body fights the fat loss with all of the above hormones and you’ll never outwork or out-diet your hormones. What’s more, studies show that even after stopping a fat loss diet, individuals seeking to just maintain their current physique can experience hormonal resistance for up to a year, depending on the extremity of their fat loss efforts.

In the period shortly after cessation of a restrictive diet, the body attempts to return back to pre-diet fat mass levels in a phenomenon called post-starvation obesity. As you can see, if you don’t know



what you're doing, or if you listen to someone who doesn't actually know what they're doing, the cards are very heavily stacked against you, and we haven't even talked about UCP-1 expression, proton leak, or mitochondrial energy downregulation.

While we can't outwork our body's natural protective metabolic tendencies, we can **out smart** them. *This is where **reverse dieting** comes into play.*

How does reverse dieting work?

I'll spare you from all the nerd stuff a second time. Basically, all the negative effects outlined above, are reversed with a reverse diet. That said, it's important to understand, reverse dieting is best done before you dig yourself into a hormonal hole. It works regardless but, the best way to approach body recomposition is with shorter stents of dieting and reverse dieting. This way, you can maximize the benefits of optimized hormones before they start to work against you.

Who is it for?

If you've **been on a diet for over 16 weeks, have hit a plateau, are experiencing poor health/hormone function associated with under-eating and over-exerting, and/or if you are an avid yo-yo dieter**, you may need to try reverse dieting.

Reverse dieting is best done for those who **know** they have been on a calorie restricted diet. That means you've been tracking your food and you've gone lower and lower and seen less and less results. If you haven't been tracking your macros or at least your calories, you may need to get your macronutrient profile in order before you try reverse dieting! Download our FREE [Counting Macros 101 here](#).

Here's the thing, it's scary eating **more** when you want so desperately to lose body fat. That's why it's important your *training, sleep, and hydration* are in order or else, even if you reverse diet correctly, you might not get the full benefits.

On that note, make it a goal to go to bed 2 minutes earlier every night or 10 minutes earlier each week. It may not seem like much, which is kind of the point, but within a month, you'll be getting an extra hour of sleep at night. Sleep is one of the most underestimated factors when speaking of weight loss. **It is absolutely essential.** As is your hydration. Better hydration means better sleep, better performance, better health, and thus better hormone function and **fat loss**.

If done right, there's a chance you could even *lose weight* while reverse dieting. That certainly isn't uncommon!





How to Reverse Diet

First things first: are you tracking your macros? If your answer to that question is no, stop reading, go to www.upliftfitnessohio.com/shop and download our completely **free** *Counting Macros 101* so we can get you tracking your food like a pro. If you aren't tracking your macros, there's no way to reverse diet and no way to tell if you even need to.

If you have been tracking your macros and you've decreased in calories systematically, yet you haven't seen any results, your first step is to **get consistent**.

Preparation

1. Hit the same macro targets for at least 1 week without any days of bingeing.
2. Be sure that you are getting enough protein – 0.8g/pound of LEAN body mass to 1.2g/pound of LEAN body mass for women and 0.9g/pound of LEAN body mass to 1.5g/pound of LEAN body mass for men. Lean is stressed for a reason. If you are 300lbs and 50% body fat, you would need around 150g of protein for a man, not 300g. If your protein intake is lower than suggested, do not increase it all at once to hit your target. Instead, increase total grams per day by 10-15 week over week.
3. Be sure you are tracking your food intake correctly and consistently. It isn't uncommon for an individual to not track meals they believe to be “bad” or not in accordance with their diet as though if they don't track the meal, it somehow doesn't count towards their daily macro goals. This untracked “bad” meal or day, over time, can become a hindrance to your fat loss goals. Address tracking discrepancies first before continuing with reverse dieting.
4. Be consistent with your training. Again, reverse dieting will work regardless but, it can be done much more effectively and correctly if you are consistent and tracking your workouts. Also, that means weight training, not cardio but, we'll get to that in a minute.
5. Pick a start and end date. Reverse diets should be done for **no less than 8 weeks** and **no more than 24 weeks**. The longer you reverse, the faster your metabolism will become so long as all guidelines are followed and food choices are primarily whole foods. Do not reverse for 4 weeks and quit. Stick it out. There's a difference between *slow* and *systematic*.
6. Understand where calories come from. A calorie is *a measure of energy*. Our energy comes from food. The chemical structure of that food allows us to group it in to Fats, Proteins, or Carbohydrates (Macronutrient). Each food group gives off a certain amount of energy referred to as *calories*:

Grams	Fat = 9cal/gram	Carbohydrates = 4cal/gram	Protein = 4cal/gram
1g	9 calories	4 calories	4 calories
5g	45 calories	20 calories	20 calories
10g	90 calories	40 calories	40 calories
100g	900 calories	400 calories	400 calories

*It is not essential but can prevent confusion if you understand calories are the measure of energy gained from food and that you can calculate your calories if you know your macros.

7. In your best DJ Casper voice yell “Reverse! Reverse!”



Reversing Your Diet

Nutrition

1. Increasing Protein Intake – If your protein intake is not optimal, increase it by 10g/day each week until it falls within the suggested range.

2. Increasing Carbohydrate Intake – Increase carbohydrate intake by 5g-15g/day each week for the duration of the reverse diet.

Starting Carbohydrate Intake	Increase of grams/day each week
30g-75g	5g-10g
80g-150g	10g-15g
160g-200g*	15g*

*This is not a typical starting range for a reverse diet. Consult a fitness professional before reverse dieting if your carbohydrate intake is within this range. You may only need to optimize your macronutrient profile.

3. Increasing Fat Intake – Increase fat intake by 0g-5g/day each week. Only increase fat intake if total grams per day are 50% or less than carbohydrate intake.

Example of **when to increase** – Carbohydrate Intake 85g/day → 95g/day. Fat Intake 40g/day → 45g/day
In this case, fat intake per gram is *less* than carbohydrate intake per gram ÷ 2.

Example of **when not to increase** – Carbohydrate Intake 70g/day → 75g/day. Fat Intake 40g/day → No increase until carbohydrate intake = 80g/day.

In this case, fat intake is *greater* than carbohydrate intake per gram ÷ 2.

Increase Fat Intake if: (Fat ≤ Carbohydrate ÷ 2)

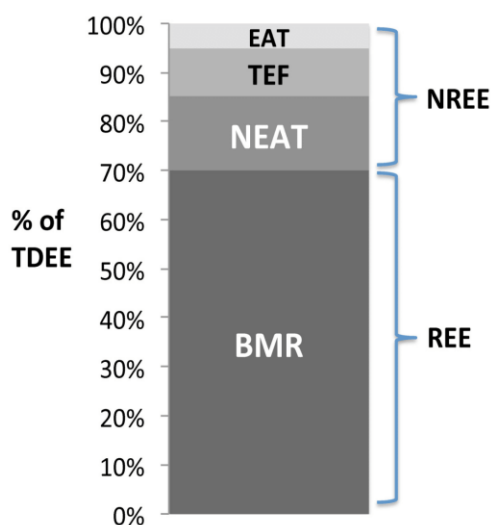
4. If you increase **Fat, Protein, and Carbohydrate** intake *all within the same week*, consider allowing 2 weeks before increasing food intake again. The larger dietary change may take longer for your body to adjust. This is also dependent, on sleep quality & consistency and hydration.

Sample Reverse Diet – Female 185lbs @ 29% body fat = 131 pounds lean body mass (Goal Protein Intake: 0.8 X 131 = 104g protein/day 1.2 X 131 = 157g protein/day) **Goal Protein Intake = 104g-157g**

Reverse Dieting	Fats	Carbohydrates	Protein	Calories
Week 1	70g	60g	100g	1270
Week 2	70g	70g	110g	1350
Week 3	70g	80g	120g	1430
Week 4	70g	90g	130g	1510
Week 5	70g	100g	135g	1570
Week 6	70g	110g	135g	1610
Week 7	70g	120g	135g	1650
Week 8	70g	135g	135g	1710
Week 9	75g	150g	135g	1815
Week 10	80g	160g	135g	1900
Week 11	85g	175g	135g	2005
Week 12	85g	190g	135g	2065

If you were to increase your calories by 800 per day all in one swoop, you would undoubtedly gain body fat, however, with a systematic approach with reverse dieting **and** the proper training protocol, you may experience one or more of the following:

- **No or minimal weight gain** – Seeing the scale fluctuate 2-5lbs is completely normal.
- **Body recomposition** (Gaining muscle at the same rate you lose body fat; no change on scale but change in looks)
- **Increased metabolism** – If consuming more calories and staying the same weight your BMR is increasing (see below).



Components of the Metabolism

- **Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR)** – Also known as resting energy expenditure, your BMR is the calories burned due to things such as organ function and respiration. You do not work these calories off like you would with NEAT or EAT. As you can see, your BMR makes up the bulk of your daily calorie burn. When an individual expresses they have a “slow metabolism” they typically are speaking of their BMR. A reverse diet increases your BMR naturally and thus, greatly increases your fat loss potential.
- **Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT)** – Picking up dog food, carrying a bag of groceries, getting in and out of your car, brushing your teeth; these are all examples of NEAT. These are the calories you burn throughout the day through activity not pertaining to a workout.

Figure 1
Components of total daily energy expenditure (TDEE). BMR = basal metabolic rate; NEAT = non-exercise activity thermogenesis; TEF = thermic effect of food; EAT = exercise activity thermogenesis; REE = resting energy expenditure; NREE = non-resting energy expenditure. Adapted from Maclean et al., 2011.

- **Thermic Effect of Food** – The digestion process requires energy to complete. AKA calories must be burned in order to digest food. Some foods are more easily digested than others. The difficulty or ease of digestion determines the thermic effect. For example, protein is much more difficult to digest and thus requires more energy than an easily digestible carbohydrate.
- **Exercise Activity Thermogenesis** – Calories burned during a workout. As you can see, this typically accounts for very little of your calorie burning. You can also conclude why it doesn't make much sense to try and outwork your diet and why it makes more sense to increase your BMR through **reverse dieting**.

What if I gain weight?

First off, **weight gain**, and **fat gain** are not always related. There are dozens of factors that influence body “weight”. It's possible to gain muscle at the same rate as you lose fat and see no change in the scale. It's possible to gain muscle and lose zero fat (still a big win!) and see the scale go up. It's also possible to lose muscle and gain body fat (bad) at the same rate and see the scale stay the same. That's three very different scenarios all with zero weight loss yet, as you can see, they would have three very different results on body composition.



Point is, **don't look at the scale**, it's a very bad measurement of what is going on with your body. *It's just a **piece** of a big equation, not the final answer.*

Let's make sure we're completely clear before continuing. Reverse dieting is meant to increase your BMR and overall metabolism to make your maintenance calories much higher thus increasing your capacity to diet later on. This is very often needed because of poor diet practices and bad training principles; too often see those seeking to lose body fat only eating 900-1200 calories per day!

At that point, there's no lower you can safely take your food intake. Not to mention you're just going to dig an even deeper hormonal hole and as we established earlier, you'll never win the fight against your hormones.

That's where a reverse diet comes in. Be sure to keep this in mind! Your goal for the next 8-24 weeks is not to be all slim and trim! Your goal is to increase your metabolism to allow for a fat loss in the future. Does it suck to hear that it's going to be 4 months before you can actually diet? Maybe, but, it sucks a lot less than constantly losing money buying fat loss pills, cleanses, and shakes, that value profit over long term sustainable progress. That can be a very hard and discouraging place to be.

By reverse dieting the right way, you're not only going to build muscle, increase your metabolism naturally and thus be in position to experience **real, lasting results** in the future but also, and possibly more importantly, you're taking responsibility for your health & body composition. That's a big freakin' deal and **we're proud of you**. Responsibility = freedom.

You're making the decision to do things the right way, not the quick/easy, way that never gets anyone anywhere so, throw your scale in the trash. It's a number. Just like 67 is a number and the number a scale spits out shouldn't mean any more to you than 67 does.



Training

Having a training program that coordinates with your increase in calories is essential for your success. **You must prioritize weight training** and use proper training principles and technique. If you need a beginner focused or advanced program, see Uplift Fitness, or ask us about hiring one of our personal trainers (highly recommended).

Initial Considerations

- Record workouts for 2-3 weeks before beginning reverse diet and training program.
- Understand the following term; **Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)** – rating each set on a scale of 1-10. You will want to train in a fashion that allows you to give an effort of 7-8 on most sets.



Reverse Diet Training Overview

The following training program does not contain exercises. We suggest doing compound movements and using free weights as much as possible. Relying on isolation exercises and machines will not give you the proper stimulus. It is always important to train within your means. You are responsible for using proper form and technique. If you have more questions about your training, contact Uplift Fitness.

	Rep Range	Total # of Sets/Workout	Rest Time Between Sets
Week 1	1-4 on Compound Movements & 6-8 on Isolation Movements	12	1:30-3:00
Week 2	1-4 on Compound Movements & 6-8 on Isolation Movements	13	1:30-3:00
Week 3	1-4 on Compound Movements & 6-8 on Isolation Movements	14	1:30-3:00
Week 4	1-4 on Compound Movements & 6-8 on Isolation Movements	15	1:30-3:00
Week 5	6-8 on Compound Movements & 10-14 on Isolation Movements	14	1:15-2:00
Week 6	6-8 on Compound Movements & 10-14 on Isolation Movements	15	1:15-2:00
Week 7	6-8 on Compound Movements & 10-14 on Isolation Movements	16	1:15-2:00
Week 8	6-8 on Compound Movements & 10-14 on Isolation Movements	17	1:15-2:00
Week 9	12-15 on Compound Movements & 15-20 on Isolation Movements	15	0:30-1:15
Week 10	12-15 on Compound Movements & 15-20 on Isolation Movements	16	0:30-1:15
Week 11	12-15 on Compound Movements & 15-20 on Isolation Movements	17	0:30-1:15
Week 12	12-15 on Compound Movements & 15-20 on Isolation Movements	18	0:30-1:15



Special Considerations for Cardiovascular Training

If you are currently doing more than 10 minutes of cardiovascular training per day **OR** more than 30 minutes of cardiovascular training per week, please consider the following.

Decrease cardiovascular training time by 25% each week.

Excessive cardio sending a signal to the body to get efficient with energy (calories) and will slow your metabolism (the opposite of our goal). Not only that but, it will blunt the signal from weight training which should tell your body to use the excess calories to build muscle and not use the extra food to add body fat. **Keep cardio to a minimum or none at all.**