

# Building Wellness – FAT LOSS

---

“One should eat to live, not live to eat.”  
~ Cicero

---

Weight loss programs and fad diets that severely restrict major food groups and/or calorie intake do not work over the long term. Starvation diets do not and will not work to enhance your health. Even if you do temporarily lose some weight, the overall effect on your health and energy is lousy. Study after study has proven this as fact.

However, we should not let this fact lead us to believe that paying attention to calories is not important. If we need to lose body fat, then tracking calories is a valuable tool that will help us achieve our goal.

To lose body fat weight, we need to consume fewer total calories than our body burns each day for our energy needs. If you eat more calories than you burn, you gain body fat. If you eat fewer calories than you burn, you lose body fat.

So the difference between calories consumed and calories burned off is the important thing.

According to the USDA, which provides nutrition recommendations for the American public, adult males need 2000 to 2500 daily calories and women need between 1800 and 2300 calories per day for daily maintenance.

If you want to lose fat, a useful and simple guideline for lowering your calorie intake is to reduce your calories by at least 500, but not more than 1000 below your maintenance level. In order to lose one pound of fat per week, you would need to burn 3,500 calories *more than you consume*. *This calorie deficit can be achieved* either by calorie-restriction alone, or by a combination of fewer calories in (diet) and more calories out (exercise).

I want to emphasize that our goal should not be “weight” loss. Our objective is to increase muscle tone and lose body fat, transforming our bodies and not just dropping pounds. Muscle burns calories even when it’s just sitting there. Fat does not. In fact, for every pound of muscle you gain, you’ll burn another 50 calories a day.



## Body Mass Index (BMI)

BMI is a useful measure of fitness level and a very simple way to establish an objective baseline from which to measure your progress.

It is calculated from your height and weight. BMI is a good gauge of your risk for diseases that can occur with more body fat. The higher your BMI, the higher your risk for lifestyle diseases.

	BMI
<b>Underweight</b>	Below 18.5
<b>Normal</b>	18.5–24.9
<b>Overweight</b>	25.0–29.9
<b>Obesity</b>	30.0 and Above