



DIET BREAKS

THE KEY TO SUSTAINABLE FATLOSS

DIET BREAKS

Have you ever tried a diet which started really well? You're **dropping weight**, your clothes are fitting better, **your confidence increases**. Then all of a sudden the scales stop moving, so you start eating less and training even more until the scales begin to move again. This fat loss continues for a while until it happens again and the scales stop budging, but this time, when you start eating even less again the scales don't move. This is something we hear all too often and is why we created this guide to show you how to keep burning fat and moving towards the body you've always dreamed of.

One thing that most people miss when they start a period of restricted eating is adding in diet breaks. Diet breaks are one of the **BEST** things psychologically when you're dieting, they also work to increase your metabolism and keep you burning fat the longer you've been dieting.

THE SCIENCE

DIET BREAKS

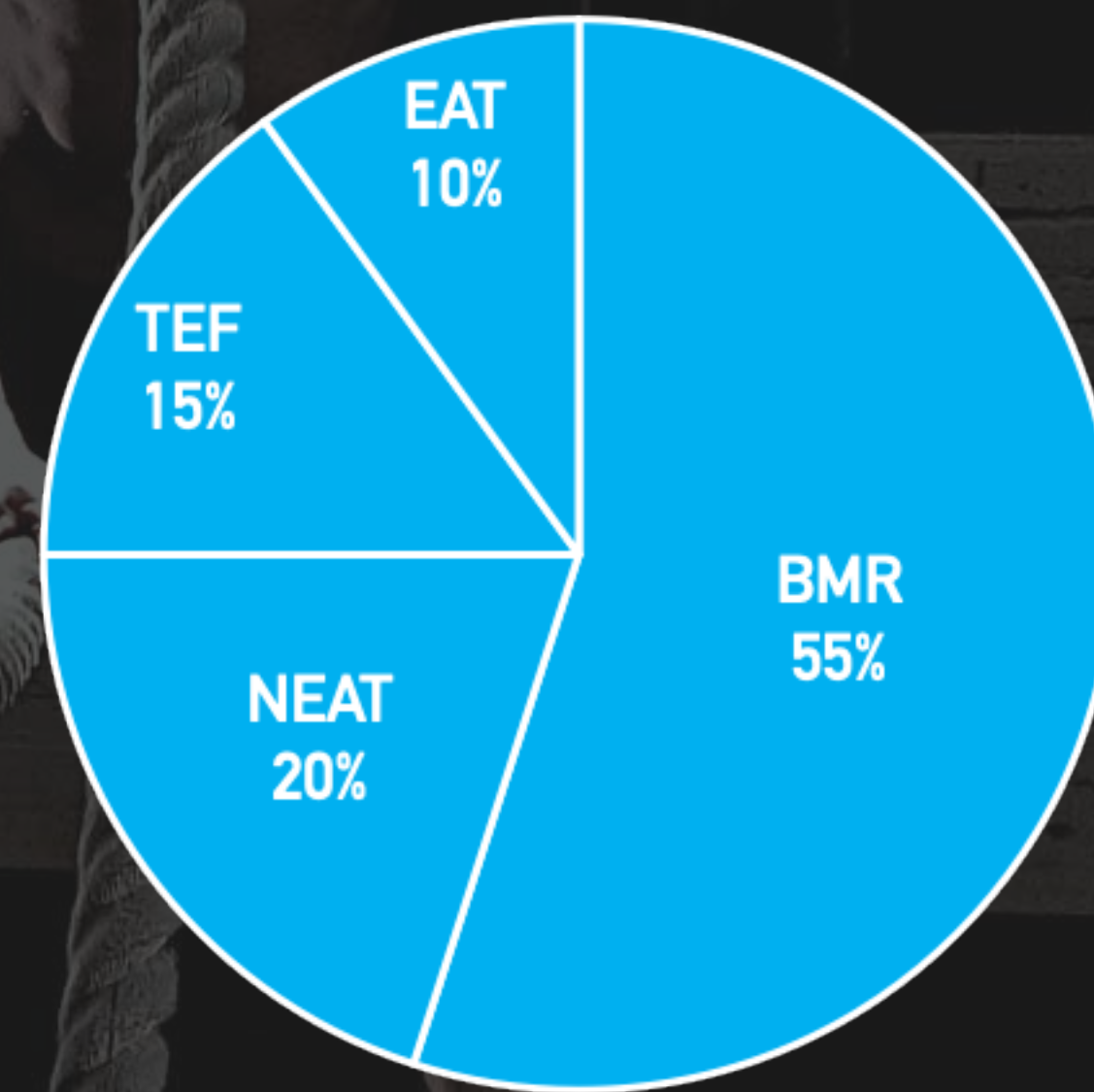
Before we get into what a diet break is, it's important to understand the components of metabolism and how these change during energy restriction

Resting metabolic rate (RMR) generally composes 60-75% of total daily expenditure and is a function of your muscle and active tissue. As weight loss causes a reduction in weight, RMR generally reduces via the loss of metabolically active tissue (muscle).

Adaptive thermogenesis (AT) this metabolic alteration successfully minimises the energy deficit via reduction in energy output. Think about it like this, your body is trying to stay alive. If your fat loss keeps occurring your body adapts and start reducing the fat loss to keep your fat which is effectively an insurance policy against famine.

Exercise activity thermogenesis (EAT) energy expended from sport/ training activities. You subconsciously try to move less to save energy.

Non exercise activity thermogenesis (NEAT) energy expended from activities that do not include sleeping, eating or training. This generally starts to reduce as you lose bodyfat and weight. Your subconscious starts to down regulate how much movement you do to conserve energy (fat stores).



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The adaptive response to energy restriction. Over the course of a diet, total daily energy expenditure will decrease in response to the reduction of a decrease in calories. This results in a reduction in the energy deficit, which can cause plateaus in weight loss if a reduction in energy intake or an increase in activity level doesn't occur.

Now that we've covered some of the science I think it's important to explain it in a way that is understandable and actionable. As you diet and increase your energy deficit your body is trying to bring you back to homeostasis (weight stable). Your energy deficit reduces via changes in hormones & changes in metabolism which lessens your ability to drop bodyfat. The body is sneaky right?

What exactly happens?

- **Thyroid hormones reduce (T3 & T4)** – thyroid hormones play a major role in regulating energy expenditure. This results in a significant decrease in energy expenditure.
- **Reduction in leptin** – Low levels of leptin results in an increase in hunger.
- **Decreased testosterone**
- **Increased cortisol** – reduces the ability to break free fatty acids



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What should start becoming clearer and clearer to you is that the body does not want you to lose fat. Reducing your body fat stores is you losing your energy stores that maybe needed if you ever go through a time of famine (something that no longer happens to us). Your body is trying to keep you alive, your metabolism is not broken, its actually very efficient at keeping you alive because that's the number one goal of the body... survival.

Now this is where it gets fun...

We've got to trick the body into allowing us to continuously drop body fat.

This is where diet breaks come into play.

DIET BREAKS

What is a diet break?

A diet break can be categorised by a period of energy restriction followed by a period of increased energy intake.

Diet breaks have been shown to significantly increase weight loss as opposed to continuous dieting (think dieting for 12 weeks straight). Research has found that REE is maintained to a higher level in groups that include diet breaks as opposed to dieting consistently and total fat loss is greater for the diet break groups.

It also makes dieting much easier, knowing every 3 weeks you get week of increased eating

This is why we recommend them for general population.

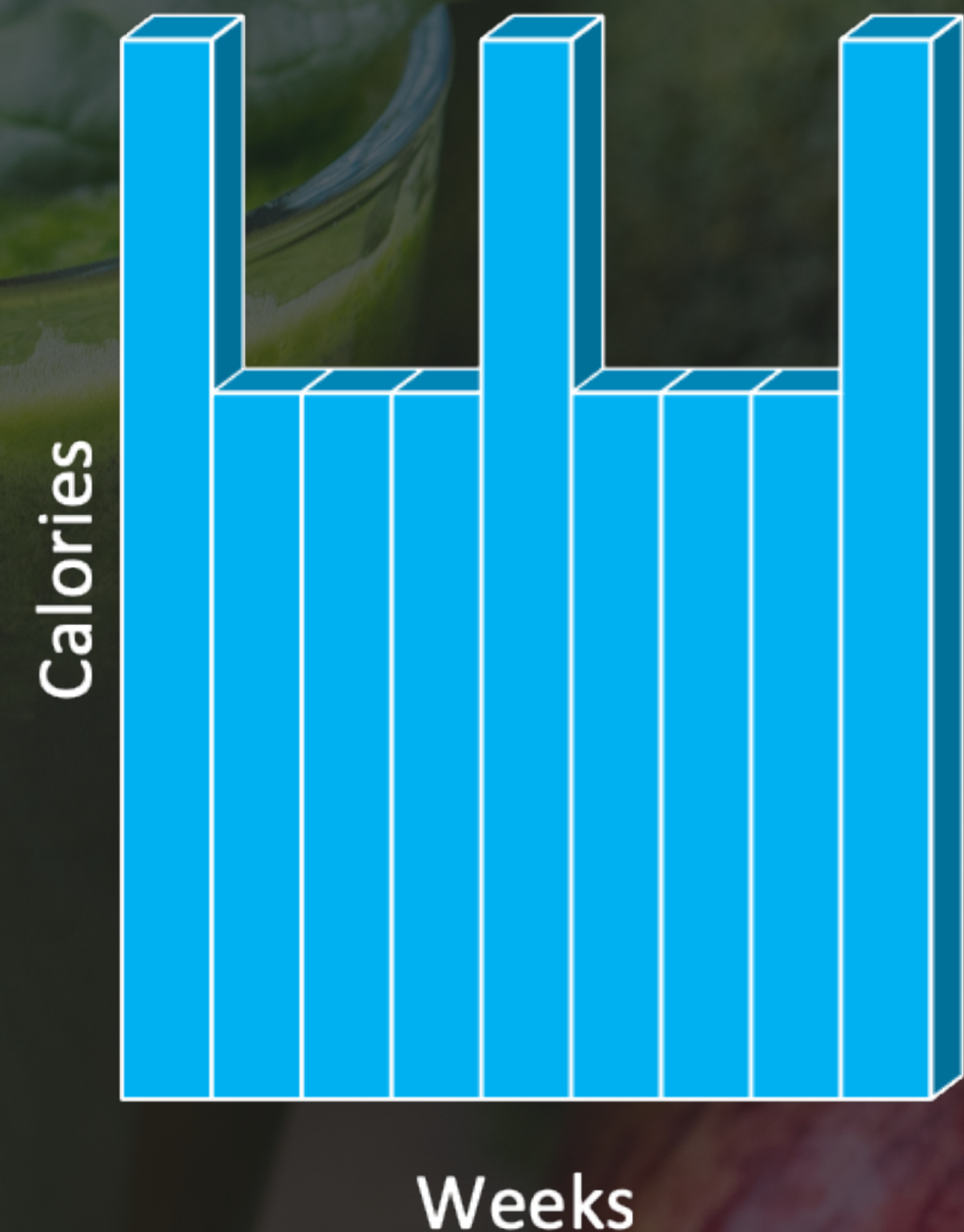


Figure 1: Illustrates how restricted eating is followed by a week of eating at maintenance works.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

Every 3rd week you are going to implement a diet break which will be a period of 7 days eating at your maintenance calories.

HOW?

1. Open MyFitnessPal
2. Click “More” > “Goals” > “Nutrition Goals” > “Calories, Carbs, Proteins And Fat Goals”
3. Change your calorie goal
4. Add 500 calories to your current calorie target.
5. Eat at these calories for the next 7 days
6. Once 7 days finishes change this back to “lose 200/500g a week”

WHATS NEXT?

1. Know that your diet break is coming up. Stay strict because you'll have 7 days of higher eating soon!
2. Enjoy the 7 days of higher feeding but don't fall off the bandwagon. It's not an excuse to over eat! Stay disciplined so you maximise the 6 weeks.
3. Take action! We've said it before and we will say it again, the more action you take the more likely you are to get the results you're chasing.

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got"