



Eating to Get Leaner and More Fit

To get leaner and lose bodyfat (but keep your muscle mass), you need a combination of eating an average of 300-400 fewer calories (but not skimping on protein) on a consistent basis while burning 300-400 more calories a day with an extra 30-40 minutes of walking, cross-training, cycling, or lifting most days. Here are tips on getting leaner while staying healthy and fit:

1. Eat regular meals and snacks, preferably 5-6 times per day. Each time you eat, your body goes into a calorie-burning mode, and metabolism bumps up. The key is choosing balanced meals with plenty of fruits and veggies along with lean protein. Skipping meals equates to telling your body to slow calorie burning down, which is exactly what you DON'T want to do.
2. Choose smaller portions. Be aware of the amount of food you eat. Switching from a Big Mac, Biggie Fries, and Large soda to a Grilled chicken sandwich, small fries, and small soda saves you about 500 calories. Do that each day, and you've shed a pound in a week.
3. Shoot for a balanced plate: 1/3 protein, 1/3 grain, 1/3 fruit and veggie. Add extra veggies, vegetable soup, salads, etc. that offer a lot of nutrients, but are low in calories. Fruits that are lower in calories include berries, melon, and citrus fruits like oranges, grapefruit, and tangerines.
5. Keep your calcium intake up. Calcium may facilitate fat burning with weight loss. Get at least 3 servings (1 cup milk or yogurt = 1) per day. If lactose is a problem, consider a calcium supplement.
6. Cut down on extra fried foods and sweets. You don't need to totally cut them out, but try fruit for dessert a couple times a week or choose apple slices instead of fries once a week when eating out. At night, choose "single portion" sweets like a fudge bar, fruit bar, or 100-calorie pack.
7. Keep tabs on what you're drinking: 24 ounces (3 cups) of regular soda, juice, juice drinks, punch, or Kool-Aid gives you an extra 350-400 calories a day. Some 100% juice is fine, but consider more calorie-free beverages if you are trying to get leaner. Choose mostly skim milk, water, iced tea, or low-calorie drinks.
8. Periodically keep track of what you are eating and drinking. Athletes who are aware of the food they are taking in tend to eat healthier. If you are trying to eat more fruits and veggies, track them. Try to eat at least 3 fruits and 3 veggies every day. Once you begin tracking them, you'll be more apt to remember to eat them! You'll find you can get a plan going more easily that way.
9. Lastly, know that **all foods** fit into any plan. Your favorite foods can always be part of a healthy eating plan! Just make room for the healthier ones, too!

Two – day sample meal plan for getting leaner

Day #1:

Breakfast:

1 cup Cheerios or Wheaties or other whole grain cereal + 1 cup skim milk
1 banana or 1 apple or 1 cup melon or other fresh fruit
1 cup orange juice or other 100% juice (preferably with calcium)

Lunch:

2 slices 100% whole wheat bread with 3 ounces turkey, ham, or roast beef
1 orange or other fresh fruit
1 cup baby carrots or other fresh veggies
2 cookies or 1 granola bar
1 cup skim milk + extra water

Snack:

1 energy bar (i.e. Luna, Pria, or Kashi bar) + extra water

Dinner:

3-4 ounces grilled chicken (i.e. 1 grilled chicken breast with BBQ)
1 cup pasta or rice or potatoes or corn or peas
1 cup steamed broccoli or other veggies or salad/lite dressing
1 cup fresh fruit or 1 apple or orange or banana or ½ cup of canned fruit
1 cup skim milk + extra water

Snack:

3 cups “lite” popcorn + extra water or iced tea or Crystal Lite

Day #2:

Breakfast:

½ cup (about 2) scrambled eggs
2 slices whole wheat toast / little peanut butter
1 orange + 1 cup skim milk or skim/chocolate milk mixed

Lunch:

1 peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole wheat
1 cup baked Doritos or other chips
1 apple or banana
1 cup skim milk + snack size candy bar + extra water

Snack:

1 cheese stick + 3 cups Lite popcorn + water

Dinner (i.e. fast food):

1 hamburger or grilled chicken sandwich or veggie burger / easy on the mayo
1 side fruit (i.e. mandarin oranges, apple slices)
1 side of chili or small fries
Water or iced tea

Snack:

Smoothie: 1 lite yogurt cup + ½ cup frozen unsweetened strawberries + ice / 3 graham cracker squares

**Plans above are for an average of 1,800 to 2,000 calories per day. Most high school female volleyball players need an average of 2,000 to 3,000 calories per day to maintain weight when training.*