

Drop The Cheat Meal Guilt Trip - How Cheating Will Set You Free

I love that picture of The Rock!

Perfectly exemplifies the theme of our post! I'm taking a closer look at cheat meals and refeeds, the difference between the two, and when to apply them in your plan.

One of the things that holds a lot of folks back when it comes to nutrition, and what eventually leads to failure when they embark on a new plan, is that they get so caught up in being PERFECT on the diet that any deviation or mishap throws them off completely. We're kind of conditioned to think that you cannot cheat on a plan and have success, or that you have to be spot on 100% of the time to see results.

But, what if I told you that's not entirely true?

What if I told you that cheating on your diet SHOULD be a part of the overall plan, and will lead you to success.

Well hold onto your seat and prepare for being #mindblown... Cheating is a major part of the RoxStar culture when it comes to dieting, and we know how to do it well - and STILL see results... Let's dive into my recommendations on how to do this successfully.

Stop Calling It Cheating! It's NOT When It's Planned

Within the RoxStar culture, I try to ingrain in our clients a new way of thinking. Cheating has a negative connotation when that shouldn't be the case when attached to food and nutrition. When you PLAN for a temporary deviation, you know it's going to happen and that it's a part of the process.

So why call it a cheat - it's simply not.

Instead, start calling this planned deviation a FREE MEAL. Now in this way, we start conditioning our thought process in a way to EMBRACE having that meal and what it can do for us.

The primary reason behind a free meal is to allow for a temporary mental break from dieting (which helps you to stay compliant, and helps you to diet longer), it will boost metabolism for a short while since you'll likely be taking calories closer to maintenance with the addition of the meal.

This is SUPER important in the dieting process because it helps to boost hormones that regulate metabolism and fat loss, hormones that the body downregulates during periods of prolonged dieting (this is what causes plateaus to occur). So strategically enjoying a free meal has a dual purpose, and won't set you back if you don't make a bigger deal out of it than there needs to be.

Let Your Body Dictate How Often To Cheat

When it comes to planning the frequency of that meal, I often like to start clients out at simply once

a week. After I set a diet for that client, I'll have them follow it with very little deviation.

This is to lay a foundation for setting calories where we need them to be to get the job done in reaching their goals. After that two week period is up, I incorporate the free meal in there so we can automatically establish habits of flexible dieting.

So starting off once a week is a great start for almost everyone - regardless of your goals. Now, if you find you get a little too carried away with your free meal, move it to every other week. And once you feel like you have a better handle on things and can remain in control, you can then try once a week.

Do keep in mind one thing, **YOU MIGHT SEE THE SCALE JUMP UP A BIT AFTER THE FREE MEAL!**

This is NORMAL.

Think about it, you have an influx of carbs and sodium that you likely never eat on a daily basis. So this will cause a temporary shift in water balance. Allow your body to settle for a few days, and tweak what could be the culprit if you notice too much water retention, perhaps avoiding that food item or simply reducing the amount you have.

Failing To Plan Is Planning To Fail

I always suggest that clients enjoy their free meal on the weekend, although this is not set in stone. You can do it whenever you wish, as long as you stick to however many times a week that you have mapped out.

Another thing I always suggest, leave it as your final meal of the day because often this meal will fill you up, and you then don't have to worry about having to mentally try to get back on plan, and being compliant the rest of the day.

Leaving it as the final meal of the day will also give you that sense of being rewarded, and the brain LOVES that kind of reward conditioning thing.

You'll feel like you've accomplished hitting all the rest of your meals, and now it's time to simply enjoy something you've been craving. And that's a great way to end a week of dietary success.

The other suggestion I have for clients is that they either have the free meal at a restaurant, OR order take out. This way it remains as ONE SERVING, and you don't have leftovers around to tempt you later on in the week.

Getting yourself back on track is paramount to the success of your plan. So enjoying that meal, FINISHING it, and not having more lying around is the most intelligent course of action.

Remember, you have this meal to enjoy every week, so if you want more of your favorite free meal, that opportunity is right around the corner.

Aiming For Perfection Is Where You're Going Wrong

The final point I want to drive home is that perfection does not exist. It isn't real! So aiming for being so perfect on your plan that you don't leave room for when you have to, or do deviate sets you up for disaster in so many ways.

The goal with any plan is 90% compliance, so this leaves you with a 10% leeway to have those moments where you may fall off the wagon (planned or not) and not freak out about it.

Because you know that since you put in the work a great majority of the time, a little slip isn't going to have a huge impact.

Remember, your accomplishments in this body transformation game is all about the CUMULATIVE effects of your efforts.

So when you are on point a majority of the time, really hitting that 90%, then the little slips that you see cannot affect you in a negative way, you'll still see the results you're after. And this is not to say to lack discipline, you still have to put in the work, however, always look to the greater picture and broader perspective.

Remember, this is a lifestyle and you must always remain REALISTIC.

Things will sometimes be completely out of your control, and the skill to be able to bounce back, change course if needed, and stay on the straight and narrow is a skill that is developed over time. You can do it!