

# BLOG

**Basic Lifestyle  
Guidance Rx'd!**



# BLG - Basic Lifestyle Guidance: Rx'd!

Energy levels are all about balance: **getting enough stress** to stimulate the body and the mind; and **having enough recovery** to rebuild after that stress. Here is the whole checklist:

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## SLEEP



### **Aim for 8 or more hours each night**

We recover from both physical and mental stress when sleeping. If we tend to sleep less than we need that recovery is always interrupted. Especially important as an athlete.

### **Keep a dark bedroom**

Do your curtains shut out all distracting light? If there's disturbing noise, you can try earplugs, darkening curtains and perhaps add a sleeping mask too.

### **No blue light (screens, phone or TV) 1 hour before bedtime**

Blue-tinted light stimulates cortisol, just like sunlight would in the morning. Whereas red-tinted light (eg sunset, candle-light) makes it easier to get sleepy.

### **Keep regular times - follow the Sun**

Our bodies are adapted to what we call circadian rhythm, and generally we have most benefit from sleep between 22-04. If we're awake that time, cortisol/melatonin balance will be upset.

### **Meditate or read before sleep**

Or any other way that helps you calm down. Create a ritual/routine out of it, when you find a system that work for you. Meditation is good for getting stress out of our heads. Reading in candle-light may help in the same way: unplugging. Try [tarabrach.com](http://tarabrach.com) or [headspace](http://headspace.com).

### **Or write a diary to get rid of baggage**

If you have a tendency to worry about things and keep on chewing problems in your mind when going to sleep: write the problems down on paper and unload it from the mind. When it's on paper, you can deal with it in the morning if it feels relevant then anymore.

- For more reading on the subject: '[Lights Out: Sleep, Sugar, and Survival](#)' by T.S. Wiley, Bent Formby.
- Or this blog post on [jamesclear.com](http://jamesclear.com).

# NUTRITION

## Eat enough protein

Assuming you are moving some your protein intake should be about 1.5-2.3g/kg lean body weight. Lean body weight is excluding body fat (we've got a body fat scale at the gym, if you want to get a number on that). Say you weigh 80kg and have 17% body fat: your lean body weight is 66,4kg. In that case the protein intake is between 100g - 150g of protein/day. A steak of 150g contains roughly 35g of protein.

## Eat vegetables a bunch

Vegetables have low GI, contain fibre and vitamins and such to a much higher degree than starchy carbs; eat some fruit, little starch, no sugar. Making sure you eat enough protein will help a lot with reducing sugar cravings!

To add good micronutrients too have a lot of:

- Garlic (and/or onions in general)
- Ginger
- Cinnamon
- Chili
- Lemon/lime
- Apple-cider vinegar

## Eat cooked food

Cooking food before eating it is like kickstarting digestion of the food. It helps the gastric system; whereas eating raw foods a lot will be extra hard to digest. That said, salads are not bad, but eat steamed and roasted food most of the time!

## Plan and prepare your food

With a meal plan it's easier to stick to a healthy diet, whereas if you need to improvise food in the evening it's easy to grab an ice cream jug on top: a really good option is the fitmencook app to get you going. You pick suitable recipes, add to a weekly meal plan and click to add a shopping list: plan, shop, cook and you have all week's food in one no-brainer go. Makes a huge difference! ([fitmencook.com](http://fitmencook.com), and/or read [this article](#)).

## Drink enough water!

Hydration is important for digestion, blood flow and flexibility. Drink some 3L/day, or 0,0429 liter x Bodyweight (kg) according to WHO recommendations.

## Food Hygiene:

It's not just what you eat, digestion is as much about how you eat. Stress disturbs digestion, so eating in a calm state, and chewing properly will help a lot. Take the time to eat properly.

- Sit down to eat
- Smell it, see it (increases salivation, which is part of the digestive system)
- Chew the food: 40+ bites/mouthful, put down the fork in between
- Conversation - make food a social institution
- Cook your own food
- Low anxiety = don't stress about food, take ownership over your decisions, and if you sometimes eat cake and candy, that's fine: one time won't ruin your nutrition!
- Know the food (education, quality), helps appreciate it
- **For more reading on the subject:** '[CrossFit Training Guide](#)' on Nutrition pages 52-58 in the pdf.
- '[Enter The Zone](#)' by Dr Barry Sears.
- '[Catching Fire: How Cooking Made Us Human](#)' by Richard W. Wrangham.



# LIFESTYLE

## **Maintain your social connections and/or family relations**

Why is perhaps not something we need to explain more than that humans are herd animals: we need others to be happy! Take care of your friends, so that they might take care of you. : )

## **Practice some sort of Mindfulness**

Meditate, do breathing exercises, or work on visualisation. The brain needs to be practiced to be in the "here and now", especially as we're distracted by most everything (the thing in our pocket with all those cat videos). As a bonus meditation will reduce mental stress. Try [headspace](https://www.headspace.com), [tarabrach.com](https://tarabrach.com) or [calm](https://www.calm.com).



## **Play!**

Keep a sense of curiosity, and play in your life. It's a bit like this meme: "You weren't born just to work, pay bills and die". : )

## **Reduce Stress & Calm down**

If you can isolate the things that cause stress in your life that aren't giving you any return of invest: get rid of them! With impunity! And plan for free time to exist: you need both work and play to function best.

## **Don't road rage**

Tara Brach addresses this very nicely in one of the meditations called "metta" (loving kindness). We're all on the earth, so we need to share it. And being angry with people is usually of no help whatsoever: stop yourself when you notice feelings boiling over and calm down again. You don't have to react!

## **Read**

"Literature is to humans what science is to nature" one of my professors said at Uni when I started studying English Literature. If you want to understand yourself and others: read! Read outside your normal comfort zone every now and then. And if you can't focus on a book-book, try an audiobook on eg [audible](https://www.audible.com). And make it enjoyable: don't stress about it, and if a book is boring, just skip it and find a better one!

**NOW: take up your calendar and look at when you can share a dinner with someone/s you like! And then go to 'Calm' or 'tarabrach.com' and start your meditation practice!**

# TRAINING



**If you're just starting, aim for 2-4 sessions/week and increase gradually!**

As a runner the rule-of-thumb was to increase running kilometers with a max of 10% per week; you don't want to kill your will to work by overstraining. But over the course of a half year, the aim could be to build up to a 2 on, 1 day off, 3 on, 1 day off. Or 3 on 1 off. Personally I've had the best results with this 5 days a week plan!

**Change things around**

Keep things varied. If you do the same workout over and over, the body stops adapting to it, so you wanna shock it to keep getting stronger! Variation and intensity helps with that.

**Aerobic work is about keeping a**

**steady pace:** if you're just starting out, 45-60 minutes of walking 2 x per week is a good benchmark. For a more advanced athlete 10 x 500m rowing might be another option to aim for, with 2:30 min rest between sets, test and retest with a 2000m row as fast as possible every 3 months.

**Anaerobic work is about high intensity:** try CrossFit's shorter workout (sub 5 min) for examples.

**Strength is about progressively increasing weights:** Going from 10 reps to 6 to 3 to 1 repetition of Max Kilos, over a timeframe of 3 months may be a good start. You'll need all three.

**Move!**

The body works well when it's moved, when blood flow is good. Much of our work is about sitting down though, or not moving: so when we can, walk, stretch, rotate the shoulders, wrists, hips. Take short breaks at work for that (google 'pomodoro timer'). When possible take a walk outdoors for an hour, in nature is even better. Or practice yoga or similar.

**Active Recovery**

The days when you're not working out, take some 10 minutes to work on your flexibility (google: "Mobilitywod" for suggestions, or visit doyogawithme.com).

Our Athlete Screening includes a targeted program for what to work with.

**Fix Pain Straight away**

If you have lower back pain, or shoulder pain or similar, fix that. YOU are in charge of your own body. You might need the guidance of an Osteopath or Physiotherapist, but you need to do the work. Once the pain is not bad anymore: start strengthening your body so it cannot return.

**Train with friends!**

One of the main things that makes CrossFit work is that you have the community around you. You do a better workout when there's 9 other people around you sweating the same WOD, and it's easier to go to the gym, when there's people you like waiting for ya!

- For more reading on the training: '[Free+style](#)' by Carl Paoli
- '[Becoming a Supple Leopard](#)' by Dr Kelly Starrett.

**NOW:** take a paper and pen and write down a workout plan for the next month including some bloodflow work!

## “THE WHY”

If you have a clear outline for what to do, and why it's important for you, it's easier to stick to it until the new habits become just that: habits.

**Start thinking about what is important to you.**

What do you spend your time with? What do you like talking about? What makes you energetic or gives you tunnel-vision? What kind of things don't you ever need to be reminded about?

**Based on that moment of contemplation:**

1. Write down the 10 most important goals of your life right now.
2. Which 2 or tops 3 are the most important?
3. Focus most of your energy on those 2, and delegate or eliminate as much as possible of the unimportant things.



**As for the rest (food, sleep, training) they're all about Habits.**

If you want to stick to training, you can look at it in the same way as brushing your teeth; or getting rid of bad habits, such as smoking or candy-eating, you have to look at the habit loop:

1. State the goal, eg "Eating healthy": it means not eating candy except maybe on Saturday, and getting enough of protein. (Write down goal + what it mean exactly)
  2. Recognise your habit *triggers*: if you always snack in the evening when watching TV, then maybe somewhere there is the trigger. Is it hunger, or the TV watching?
  3. Create a *replacement* of that old habit: instead of candy you eat beef jerky, or you skip TV on weekdays and read a book instead, or you drink a smoothie of greens and protein. List several options to make sure you have a good one when it's time.
  4. Recognise *success!* Make a mini celebration every time you've made a new better decision; instead of eating the candy you ate three healthy meals, or when you did your 3 workouts that week: celebrate! Write it down in your diary.
- That whole 4 step routine is from: '[How To Build Willpower](#)' on wholelifechallenge.com, with additional examples to make it clearer.
  - '[The Power of Habits](#)' by Charles Duhigg explains the same thing in more depth.



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We're here to help you  
on your journey!**

