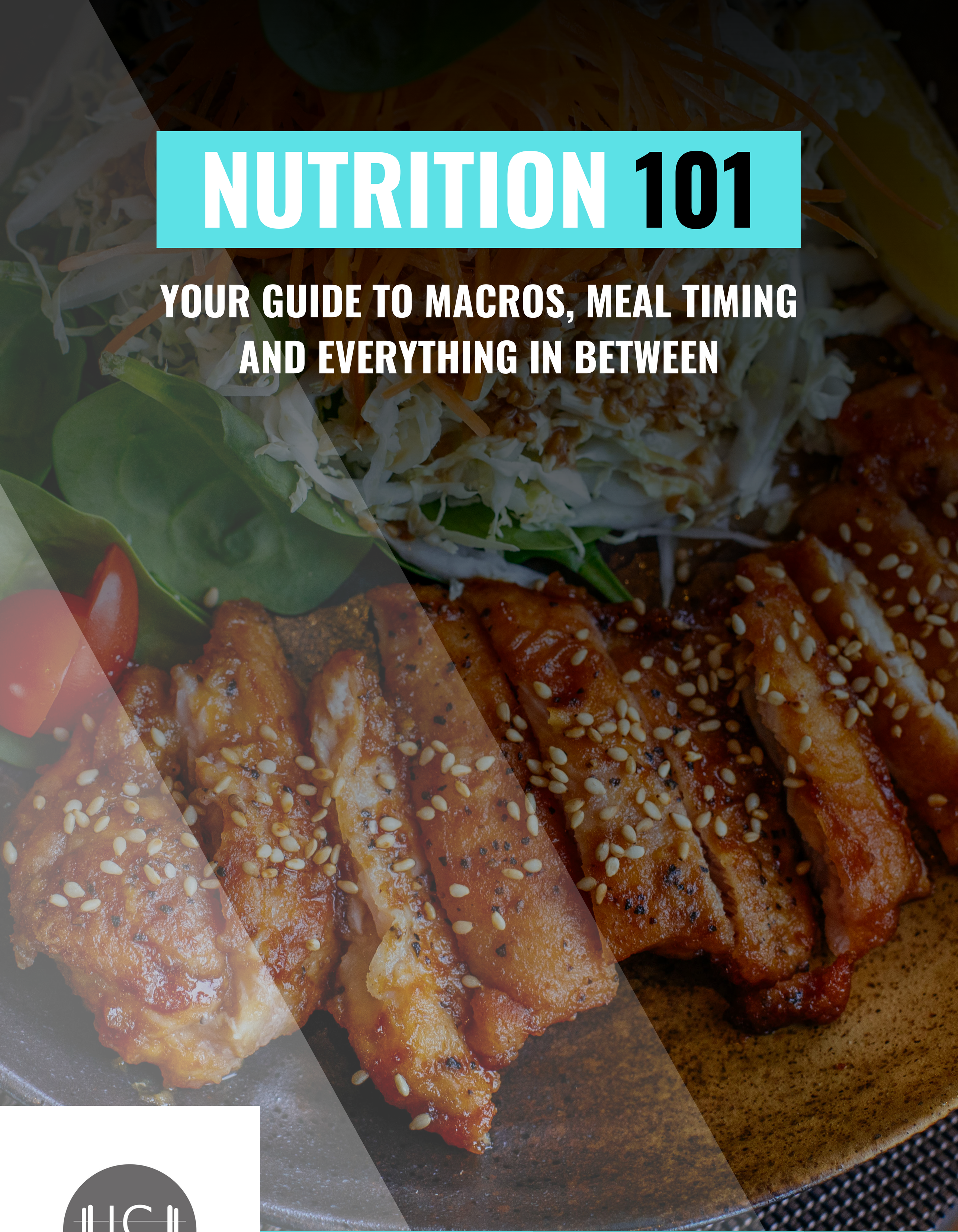
NUTRITION 101

YOUR GUIDE TO MACROS, MEAL TIMING AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN



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NUTRITION 101

GET STARTED

THE INTRODUCTION

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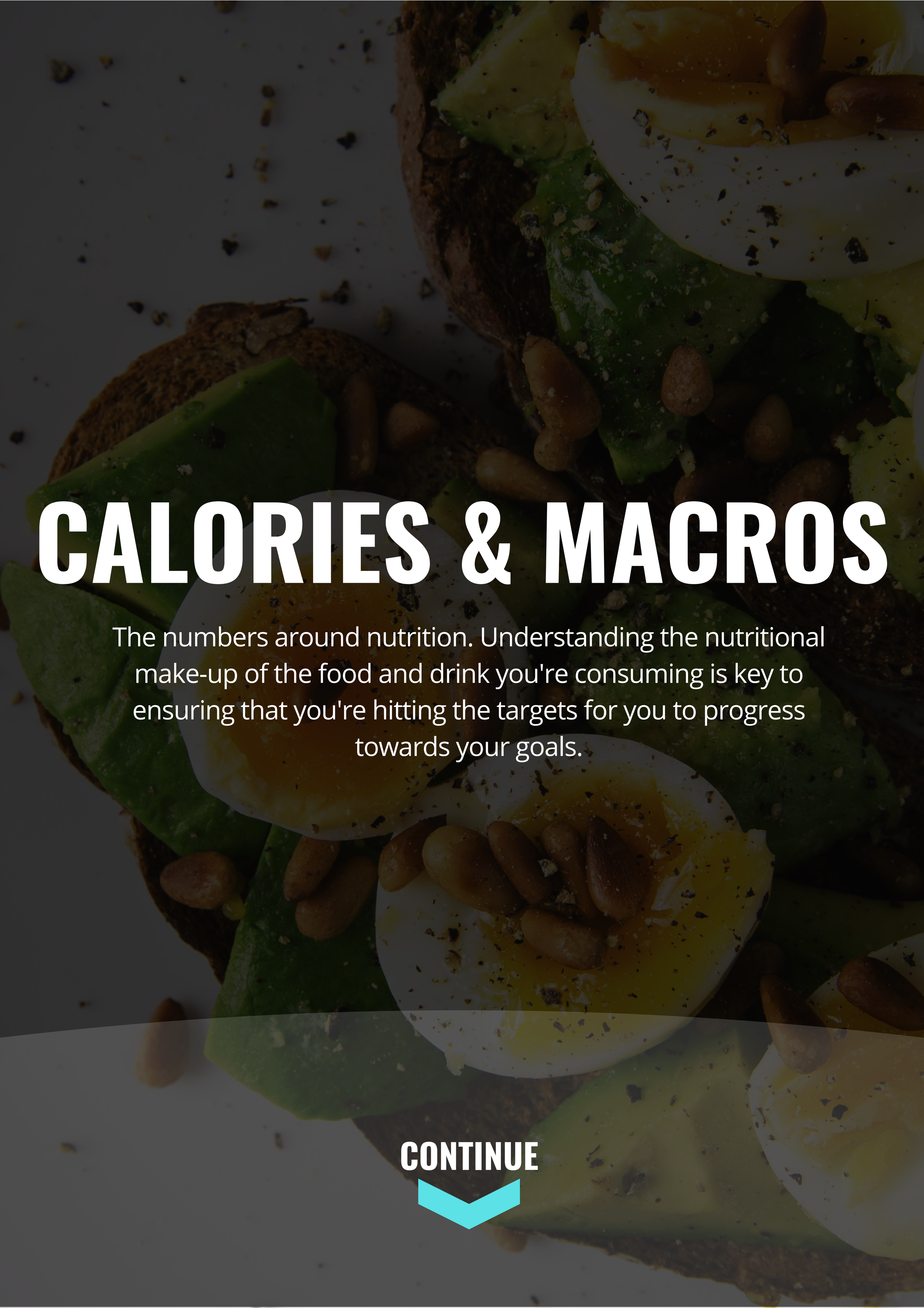
HEY!

Welcome to Nutrition 101 - the only guide you'll ever need to help you navigate all things food.

The purpose of this guide is to give you all of the tools required to manage your nutrition effectively. I'll be touching upon all the key principles surrounding food and drink, as well as ways for you learn the 'why' and 'how' behind any successful nutritional approach.

I'll be covering everything from calories, to macronutrients, to simple day-to-day structuring of your food. I'll be elaborating on all those dieting buzz-words you see dotted around social media, and ultimately helping you to adopt habits that will make dieting feel like less of a chore.



CALORIES & MACROS

The numbers around nutrition. Understanding the nutritional make-up of the food and drink you're consuming is key to ensuring that you're hitting the targets for you to progress towards your goals.

CONTINUE

CALORIES AND ENERGY BALANCE

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Calories are king when it comes to nutrition. Your ability to consistently eat an adequate amount of calories to satisfy your goal will be a key determining factor in how you progress. Fat loss is simple (not easy) - you must burn more calories than you consume. It’s the basic principle behind losing fat. You’ll hear most people refer to this as a calorie deficit.

When it comes to calories, you've got three choices;

1. **Maintenance Calories**
2. **Calorie Deficit**
3. **Calorie Surplus**

Let's start with maintenance calories. As the name suggests, consuming your maintenance calories will allow you to do just that - maintain. **It occurs when you burn the same amount of calories as you consume.**

If you want to lose fat, you'll need to be in a **calorie deficit**. Put simply, this is consuming **less** calories than you burn day-to-day.

Opposingly, a **calorie surplus** is required during a gaining phase. This requires you to consume **more** calories than you expend each day.

Understanding your current situation and from there deciding on your goal is crucial towards determining which caloric approach you take.

MACRONUTRIENTS

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Macronutrients constitute the general make-up of the calories you're consuming. The calories within a food/drink will be dictated by the presence of each macronutrient within said item. The four macronutrients, and their energy make-up, are as follows;

- **PROTEIN - 4KCAL/G**
- **FATS - 9KCAL/G**
- **CARBS - 4KCAL/G**
- **ALCOHOL -7KCAL/G**

Each macronutrient plays its own role within the body, and obviously within fat loss. Let's look into each macronutrient individually, and how you'd generally structure these within your diet.

PROTEIN

PROTEIN

Protein is essential for growth, repair, and retention of muscle. It's arguably the most important macronutrient where body composition improvements are concerned. General sources of protein are:

1. FISH
2. EGGS
3. DAIRY
4. TOFU
5. MEAT (RED & WHITE)

As a general rule of thumb, anywhere between 0.6-1.2g per lb of bodyweight is recommended, with the magic number of 1g/lb often utilised.

I'd recommend the lower end of the scale for those who are newer to tracking, or are carrying more body fat. 0.6-1g would be suitable. If you're leaner, are more experienced tracking, and are carrying more muscle tissue, 1-1.2g would be fine.

The foods that make up your protein intake should be mainly whole protein sources such as those listed above. You could also supplement where appropriate to top up towards your intake. You'll notice that some of your carbohydrate and fat sources do contribute towards your protein intake. These are of course contributory, but you should aim to consume >70% of your daily protein hit through actual protein sources where possible.

FATS

Dietary fats are essential for regulating hormonal function, as well as providing the body with energy to operate day-to-day. They are the most energy dense macronutrient, weighing in at 9 calories per gram.

Dietary fats can be sourced through...

1. DAIRY
2. EGGS
3. NUTS
4. SEEDS
5. OILS
6. MEATS (MOSTLY RED)

Requirements for fat intake is generally person dependent, but to maintain regular hormonal and cognitive function, I'd recommend a minimum of 0.2-0.3g of fat per lb of bodyweight. For example, if you weigh 150lbs, a minimum daily fat intake of 30- 45g is recommended.

CARBS

CARBOHYDRATES

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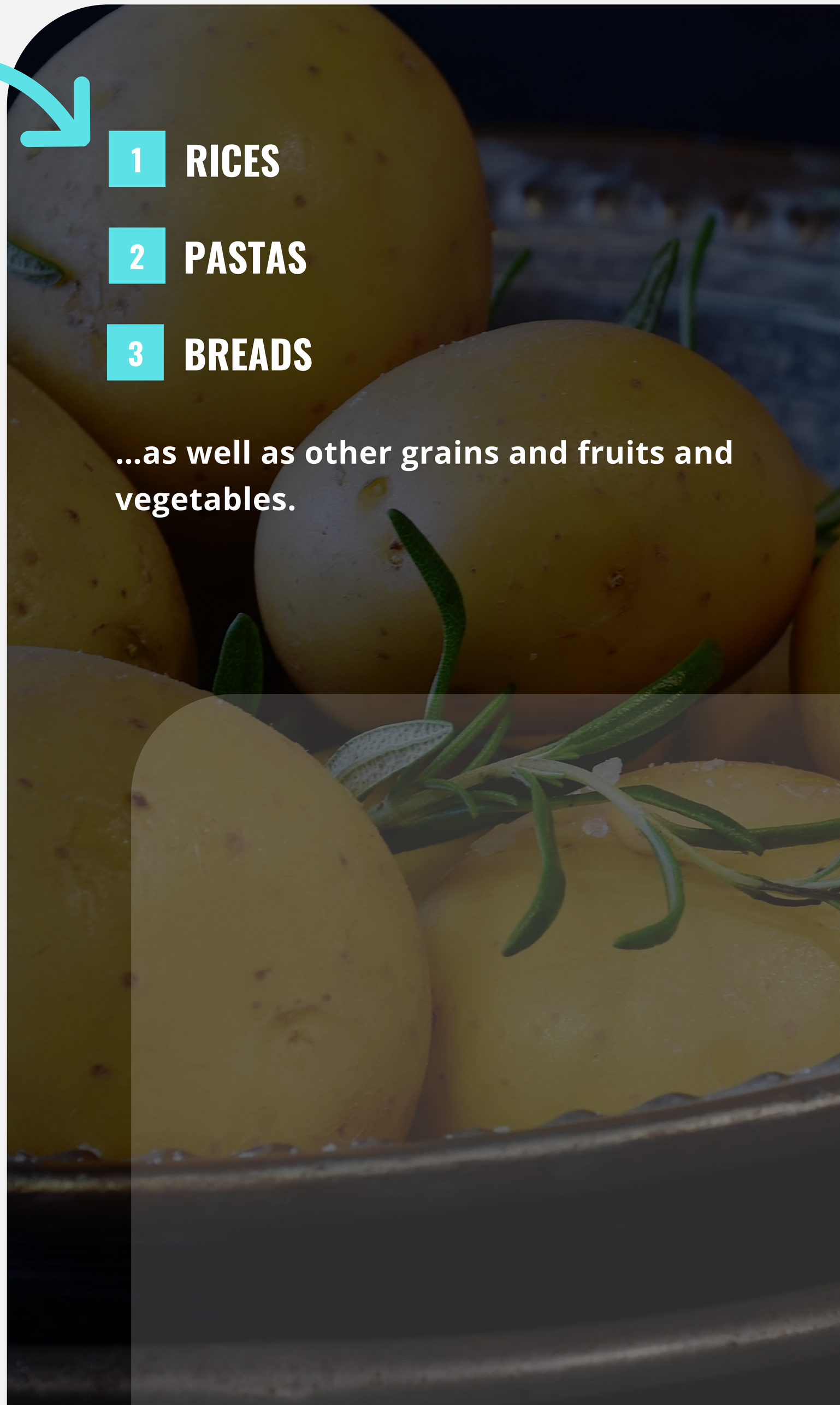
Carbohydrates are your body's main source of fuel and will also aid in your body's ability to recover after exercise. Ensuring you're fuelling your body with an adequate amount of carbohydrates across the day, and in particular around your training window, is key to keeping training intensity and recovery optimal.

They can be found within;



With carbohydrates being the most interchangeable of the three dietary macronutrients, there's no real set amount that's right to consume. The general rule-of-thumb is that carbohydrates will account for the calories left over once you've set out your protein and fat goals.

That being said, you may opt for a more carbohydrate-dense diet at the expense of some dietary fats, provided calories are kept the same, and you don't drop below the minimum threshold of dietary fats mentioned earlier in the guide.

ALCOHOL

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is classed as a macronutrient. Unlike the other three macronutrients, it doesn't provide any real nutritional benefit. Alcohol isn't particularly 'off-limits' when it comes to losing fat, but it is important to be conscious of the calories you're consuming when drinking it.

I'll elaborate further on tools you can use to accommodate alcohol later in the guide.

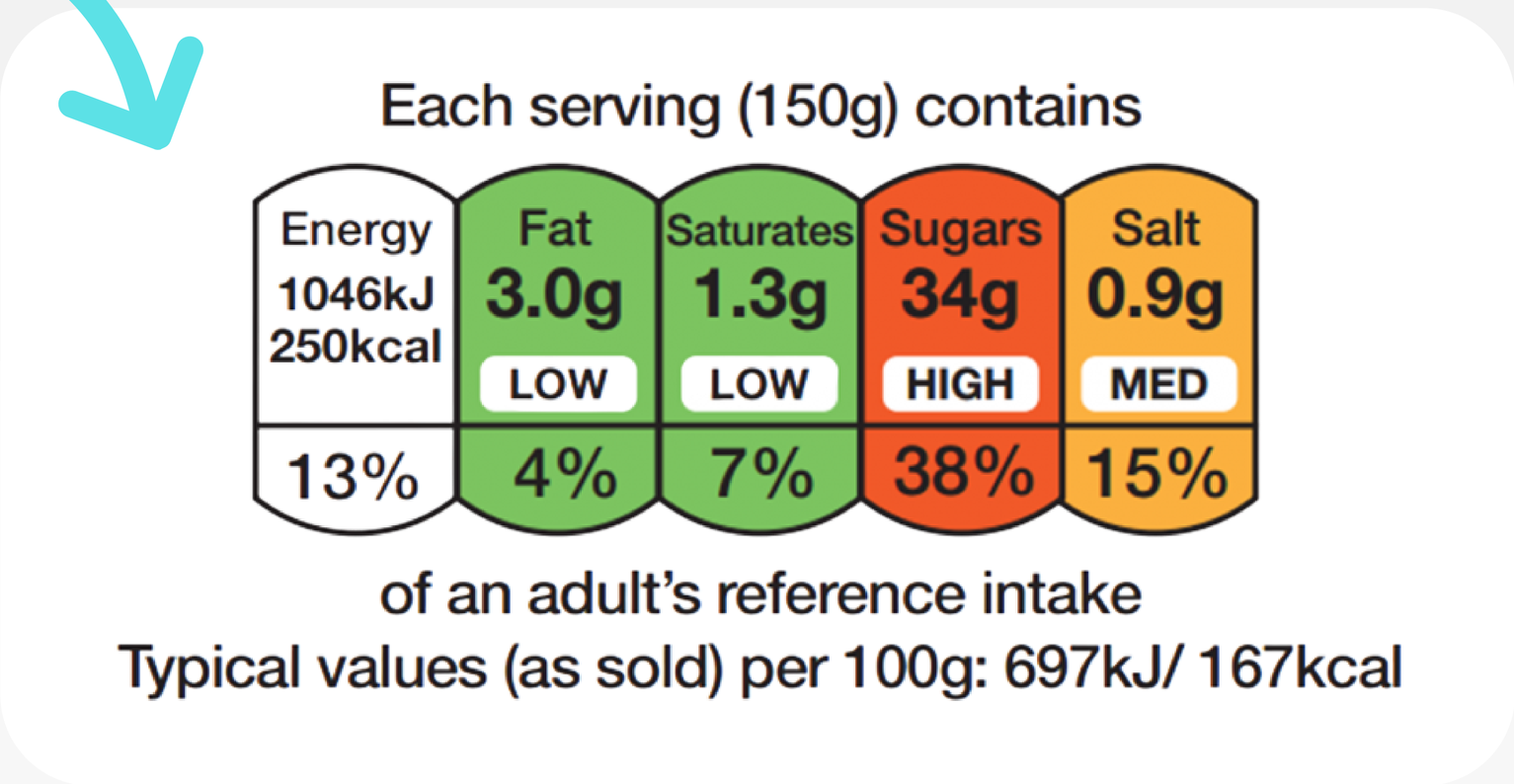
NUTRITIONAL LABELS

READING NUTRITIONAL LABELS

Being able to read nutritional labels and being conscious of the make-up of the food and drink you're consuming will help you to gain a better understanding of nutrition in general. Generally, your food/drink packaging will contain the following displays;

The nutritional values displayed are relevant to the recommended serving size above the traffic light system - in this case, 150g.

Values for calories, fats, saturated fat, sugars and salt are shown, with a coloured system used to



indicate percentage of daily targets used by said serving. The nutritional values displayed are relevant to the recommended serving size above the traffic light system - in this case, 150g.

Values for calories, fats, saturated fat, sugars and salt are shown, with a coloured system used to indicate percentage of daily targets used by said serving.

This system is only relevant to government guidelines, and isn't directly relevant to your individual needs.

Beneath the traffic light system, the energy content for a standard 100g serving is shown. This is usually detailed in further on the reverse side of the packaging.

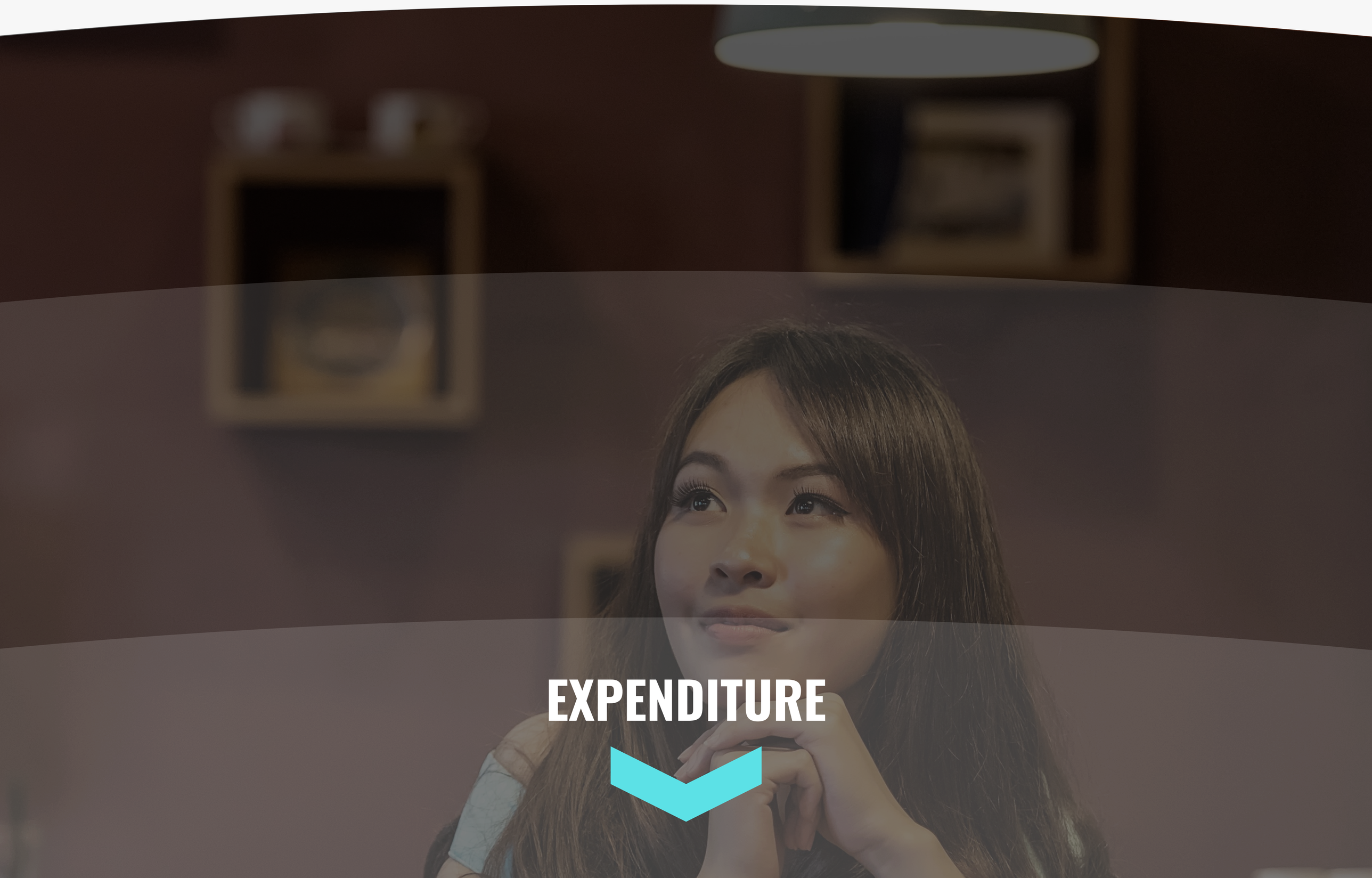
CONTINUE

The reverse of the packaging is similar in the sense that it provides a nutritional breakdown similar to that of the front, but with the added detail of fibre content, as well as values based on a standard 100g serving.

When tracking your nutrition via apps like MyFitnessPal, it's important to ensure that the figures on the app reflect that of the packaging.

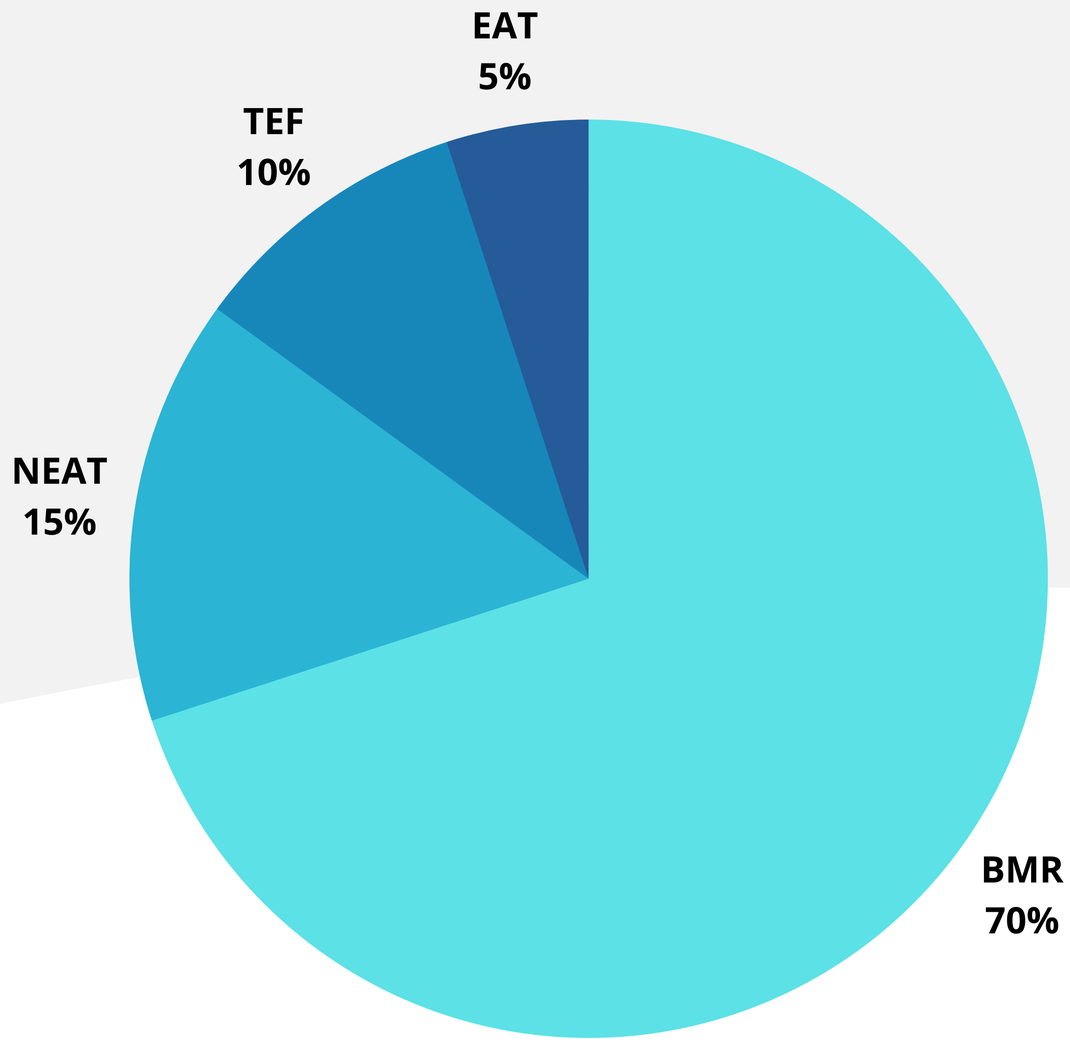
It's also essential that the serving size reflects that of the packaging, as well as accounting for difference in values between cooked and uncooked weight.

Typical Values	100g Contains	1 serving (27g)
Energy	1550kJ	418kJ
	370kcal	100kcal
Fat	0g	0g
of which saturates	0g	0g
Carbohydrate	93g	25g
of which sugars	93g	25g
Fibre	0g	0g
Protein	0g	0g
Salt	1.1g	0.3g



CALORIE EXPENDITURE

Although a lot less controllable than calories in, it's still important to gain an understanding on **calories out**. These are divided in sub-catergories, which all play their individual part in your daily expenditure. Combined, these become your TDEE (Total Daily Energy Expenditure).

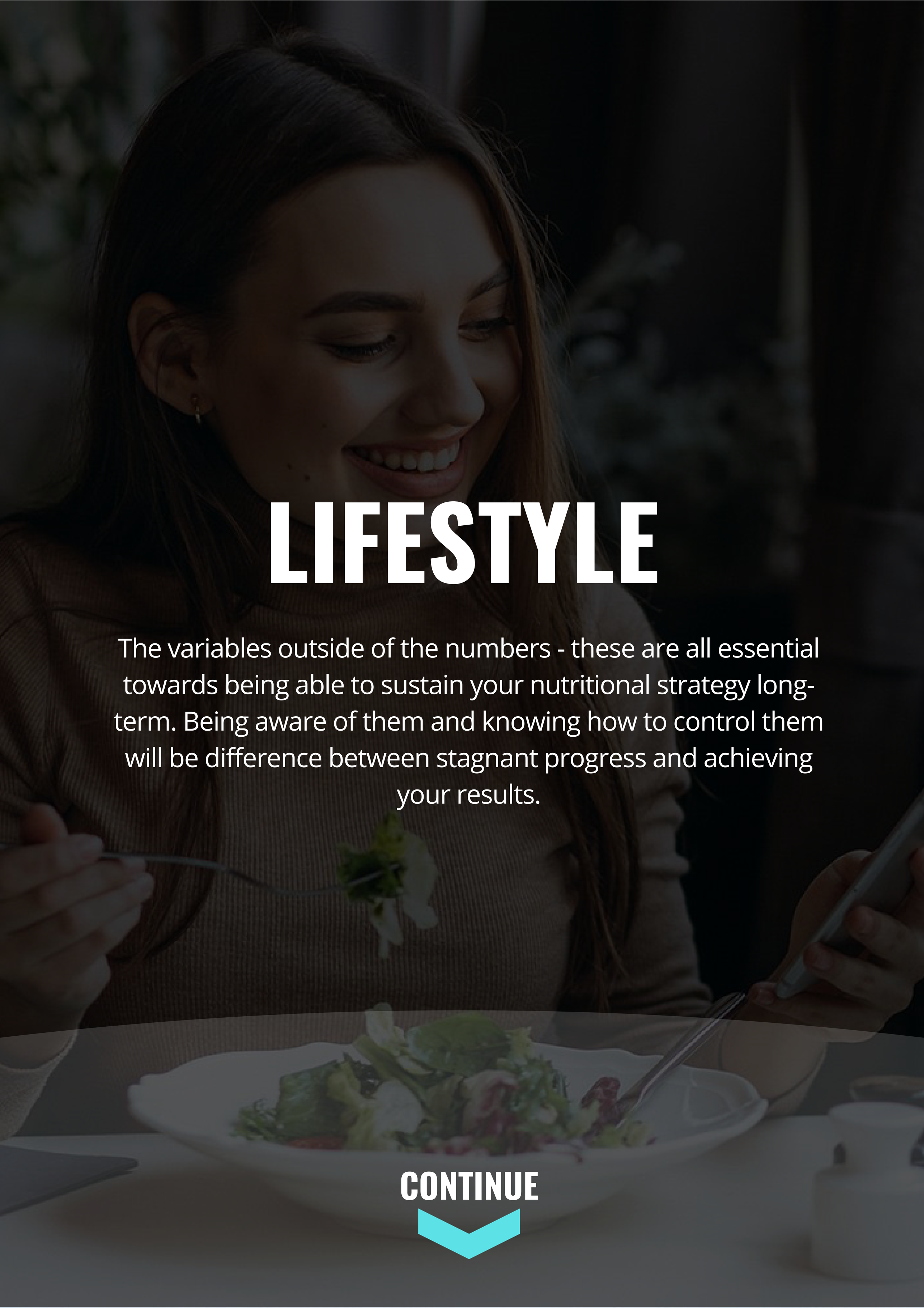


1. **BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate)** - this is the fuel your body burns to generally survive day-to-day. Breathing, vital organ processes and blood circulation are just a few components that contribute towards your BMR.

2. **NEAT (Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis)** - walking, fidgeting and other general movement forms fall under the category of NEAT, along with other unplanned forms of exercise.

3. **TEF (Thermic Effect of Food)** - the energy requirements to process food within the body would be classed as TEF.

4. **EAT (Exercise Activity Thermogenesis)** - unlike NEAT, EAT relates to energy expenditure related to planned forms of exercise like resistance training, sports, and cardiovascular training.



LIFESTYLE

The variables outside of the numbers - these are all essential towards being able to sustain your nutritional strategy long-term. Being aware of them and knowing how to control them will be difference between stagnant progress and achieving your results.

CONTINUE

MANAGING NUTRITION

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Nutrition is obviously the foundation of any successful regime - whether that's performance-based, aesthetic goals, or a combination of the two. It would be naive to assume that there won't be some nutritional sacrifice when it comes to achieving your goal, but that being said, finding a balance between harnessing progress and still enjoying your food and drink is key.

Your ability to be able to manage those two variables will be crucial towards short and long-term progress;

Go too hard, too soon, and you risk burning yourself out. You make progress, but struggle to sustain it

OR

You amble your way through without any effort. It's sustainable and doesn't feel like a chore, but becomes a lot less so when you aren't achieving progress.

As well as the initial management of nutrition from a personal control perspective, it's also important to manage the external factors that can impact on your ability to progress, such as;

1. **Appetite**
2. **Digestion**
3. **Social Occasions**
4. **Training & Recovery**

I'll elaborate further on these variables through the remainder of the guide.

APPETITE & DIGESTION

APPETITE AND DIGESTION

As with any nutritional approach, the beauty generally lies within consistency of execution each week, and the ability to adjust calories incrementally based on amount of progress.

If calories are consistently being hit, appetite is still in a good place, and you're digesting your food well - it's probably a good time to increase your food. However, if you're struggling to manage the food you're currently consuming, adding in an extra 200cals per day isn't going to do you any favours.

Similarly, when in a fat-loss journey, if appetite is sufficient, and hunger management is in a good spot, you could look to further reduce calories to harness progress. If appetite is causing issues and you find you're consistently hungry, it's probably worth assessing the food you're consuming rather than aimlessly pulling calories down.

For these reasons, your nutritional adjustments should generally be limited to 100-200cals per increase. These would generally be in the form of increased/decreased carbohydrates (25-50g). Protein and fats will generally remain fairly consistent, although you may eventually increase protein intake to either increase satiety (fullness) during a fat-loss phase, or to accomodate for trace protein for carbohydrates when these are increased during a gaining phase.

SOCIAL OCCASIONS

SOCIAL OCCASIONS

Social events happen - they don't discriminate against whether you're dieting or not. They shouldn't be feared either, as there's a way to still enjoy meals out and drinks whilst making progress towards your goals.

It obviously some effort and a sense of maturity to do so. Below are a few examples of how you can both prepare for and accommodate social occasions;

1

TIP 1

Prepare for your meal out by 'banking' some calories during the week. Let's say your calorie target each day is 2000 calories. Consume 1800 calories per day Monday-Friday, and you'll essentially have an extra 1000 calories to play with on Saturday. Ensure you're not undercutting your protein intake to save calories, and opt for an amount that is as least impactive on training and recovery as possible.

2

TIP 2

Be as active as possible during the week leading up to your social occasion. This doesn't mean hammering double-sessions everyday - it's simply an emphasis on the importance of your general activity levels. Get out for a few brisk walks, and make sure you're hitting your step target.

3

TIP 3

Make smarter choices when you're out and about, whilst still ensuring you're consuming things you like to eat. If you're simply ordering something because it's lower in calories, but you don't enjoy what you've ordered, you'll be more inclined to over-indulge elsewhere as a result. Ensure you're getting in a decent amount of protein, eat until you're full, and be realistic with what you're consuming.

4

TIP 4

If you're struggling to get the nutritional values for the meal you've ordered, try to find something similar in MyFitnessPal and track that in. Failing that, over-estimate the calorie-content of the food you've consumed, and work the rest of your day around it.

TRAINING AND RECOVERY

Your nutrition is obviously a focal component of improving body composition and/or strength progressions. For that reason alone, the food you consume shouldn't simply be x-amount of calories to lose fat/gain muscle. You should be treating food as a tool to fuel your sessions, and aid recovery between said sessions.

Your ability to rest and recover allows you to replicate intensity and execution week-on-week. Knowing when to pull-back and listening to your body is essential to long-term results. If you're consuming poverty-calories, you can't expect your body to muster up the energy to allow you to train with intent. You wouldn’t run your car on fumes, so don’t treat your body in the same vein.

Ensuring your nutrition is complimenting your recovery is important. Opting for nutrient-dense foods as readily and often as possible will ensure that your body has the nutrients it needs to repair and recover. Prioritise protein intake and ensure you’re consuming enough calories to warrant recovery.

Your recovery is essentially the foundation for which your progress will be built on. Progress will be short-lived if you can only manage a couple of weeks before your body gives up. Treat it with respect!

The aspects of nutrition mentioned within this guide are hugely important to whether you’ll progress or not. They’re the cornerstones of your fitness journey, and hopefully this guide can educate you to be able to manage your nutrition adequately enough to not only make progress, but to improve your overall lifestyle and help you to adopt healthier habits throughout all aspects.

FINISHED

NAIL THE BASICS, REAP THE REWARDS

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