

**11 Ways to Start a Healthier Lifestyle Now!**

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by Jack Wilson

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# About the Author

I started my journey to a healthier lifestyle right after I hit rock bottom. My family had a few hard years which began with the death of my ill grandmother and was followed up by equally trying family circumstances. This inevitably lead to shoveling down any food I could get a hold of, stuffing myself until I was uncomfortable, and literally eating my feelings right off my plate.



# About the Author (Continued)

Then when I was thirteen years old I got a terrible case of pneumonia and had to be hospitalized for five days over Christmas. When the doctors took my measurements and weight I was speechless. I stood five feet and four inches tall and tipped the scales at a staggering 187 pounds. I was made fun of and bullied in school, but it was right then when I saw the numbers in front of my face for the first time that I thought I was hopeless.

Then something happened. In just five days in the hospital I lost seven pounds. I thought, “Seven pounds that fast?! What could I accomplish in a month or two if I actually tried to lose weight?” So what started as the worst Christmas and illness of my life to that point, turned out to be the first step in pursuing weight loss by learning to live a healthier lifestyle.

I started small and simple by eliminating crumbly components of my diet. I cut back on my portions and started eating more fruits and vegetables. I cut out junk that I had been consuming like cookies, cake, pizza (which was almost impossible) chips, sodas, and other high calorie snacks. I started playing basketball and football with my friends at any chance I could get. I took a weight training class in highschool where I found out I couldn't do a single pull up, and I struggled to run an 11 minute mile. Now I can do 25 pull ups without stopping, and my fastest mile is 5 minutes 41 seconds.

# About the Author (Continued)



**Here I am Now!**

# About the Author (Continued)

I started to enjoy cardio, I joined the swim team, and I even made the track team. You know the best part about participating in all these sports? I didn't have a single athletic bone in my body, and I still don't! Ask my friends and they'll tell you, "Jack is a workhorse when it comes to competing in anything physical, but he looks like an awkward duck when it comes to sports." I didn't care if I was good though. I was in it for the enjoyment of exercise and the wonderful community that came with it. I keep up with those sports for the same reasons today.

None of this story is to brag. It is to show you that if I can do this, you can! Hard times, genetics, athleticism, and the bullies were all against me and I overcame them. A new you isn't as far away as you think. Through this great challenge and tribulation I lost weight, gained a passion for exercise and healthy eating, and was transformed forever. I built an unshakeable foundation of discipline and self motivation, and for the first time in my life I had confidence in myself. Pursuing a healthier lifestyle made over my life and gave me an excitement for living that I had never experienced before. I want to help you do the same. The following pages contain tips and tricks that I used to lose weight, and tools that I continue to utilize to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

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# Welcome!

## This is me now!

What if you could see significant weight loss in just weeks?

What if you feel and look better without making massive dietary sacrifices?

What if you could get in better shape with only 1-2 hours of exercise a week?

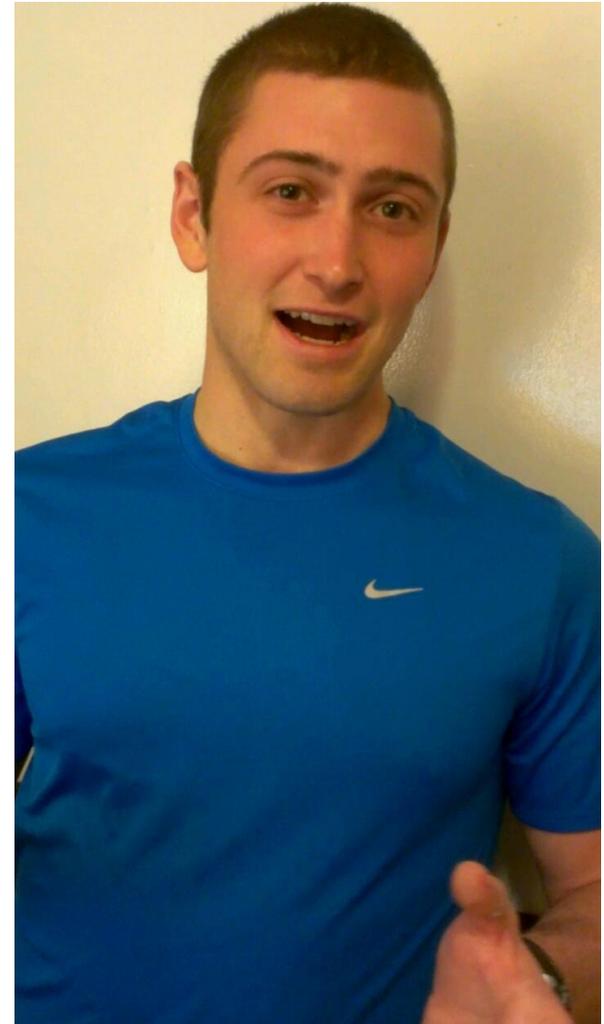
Welcome to my obsessive and wonderful world of experimentation in diet, exercise, and lifestyle change.

I've loved exercise, eating, and setting quantifiable goals since I took my first weight training and conditioning class in high school. This was the gateway to a fascination in diet and exercise experimentation. Since then I've been in search of the most efficient and sustainable ways to see significant improvements in the way my body looks, feels, and performs. As a certified personal trainer and published health writer, I am always looking for new effective alternatives to lose weight, improve strength, gain lean mass, run faster and farther, or anything else that my clients may be interested in.

In this guide I have put together 11 simple methods to which you can start living a healthier lifestyle right now. Whether you want to lose weight, have more energy, or have the tools to exercise anywhere, I want to get you off to a good start. This guide will get you there.

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Wilton (ACE Certified Personal Trainer) [@timothywilton](#)



# 1. Drink More Water

I feel like this goes without saying, but I can't begin to stress enough that water should be a foundational component in your daily routine. Less than 10 years ago I was 40 pounds overweight, and miserable. When I set out to start losing weight, I began reading about water and the importance of hydration in weight loss, so even though I hated water I started drinking lots of it. Now I consume roughly one gallon (128 fl. ounces) per day.

One major factor that I discovered through my reading and personal experimentation is that much of the time I thought I was hungry and would snack, I was actually thirsty or dehydrated.

To prevent unnecessary snacking, I started keeping two bottles of water: 1) in the fridge at home to keep 20-32 ounces cold at all times and 2) on my person at all times either in a bag or backpack.

Other ways to moderate your food consumption with water is to drink at least 16 ounces, 15-20 minutes before a meal. Drink at least 2-3 glasses over the course of your meal, making sure to take a drink after chewing and swallowing each bite. This is a way to steady your pace of eating, get full faster, and aids in digestion. Check out these sources for more info. Here are some additional sources on water in weight loss that you may want to check out.

- [http://www.dietsinreview.com/diet\\_column/01/drink-up-what-water-can-and-cant-do-for-your-weight-loss/](http://www.dietsinreview.com/diet_column/01/drink-up-what-water-can-and-cant-do-for-your-weight-loss/)
- <http://www.pureandhealthy.com/blog/2010/08/hungry-you-could-be-confusing-it-for-thirst/>

## 2. Eliminating Choice by Planning

In staying dedicated to physical activity and healthy eating choices for almost a decade I have realized the value in eliminating choice. At the beginning of each week (or end of the prior) I plan 6 days a week for when and what kind of exercise I am going to be doing, being sure to accommodate my work and social schedule. I put those slots into my calendar like I would for any meeting, work obligation, lunch, or appointment. Write them down, type them in, highlight them, set an alarm for it, set another alarm, and don't give yourself the option to NOT do it. You have to take choice (making exercise optional) out of the equation and make exercise a mandatory piece of the new you.

Start by blocking out 20 minute time slots three to five times a week for some moderate-vigorous activity. You can see considerable improvement in your health by just adding one hour of vigorous activity per week. I have found that before work, immediately after work, right before dinner, or 2-3 hours before bed are optimal times depending on your schedule.

Need more tools to motivate yourself? Check out How Ramit Sethi improved his gym attendance by 300% with a few simple changes.

<http://www.iwillteachyoutoberich.com/more-tests/here-is-the-book/15-Life-Hacks.pdf>

The best part is, it doesn't have to be that demanding of your schedule. As mentioned prior, I recommend 3-5 days of 20-30 minutes per exercise per session.

Make sure to keep your workout vigorous so that you are in motion the entire time. Techniques and tools that I use are swiss balls, resistance bands, back-packs, bulgarian bags, doorway pull up bars, and most importantly your own bodyweight. If you need ideas for exercises or workouts, there are a million good channels and videos on youtube that you can check out for free.

# 3. Chew and be Social

When I was overweight I used to inhale my food, literally inhale it. My average meal time was around 10 minutes, unless I was at the buffet and then I may have eaten three more full plates over another 10-15. Either way, I was miserable after I was done cleaning my plate(s). No joke, my friends and family would have to slow me down by saying things like, "It's not going to run away...Breathe!...Chew.... Enjoy it!" and of course, "you don't want to choke!"

Some may call this a bit nosy, but I would rather call my social research "quietly studious." I have taken the liberty to passively observe consumption behaviors of my friends and family over the last 2 years to see if/what correlations exists between eating habits and weight. Now that it's out in the open, do you want to know what I noticed? 85-90% of my acquaintances, friends, and family members who are underweight eat the slowest. This is no coincidence. They take their time to chew, sip, talk, listen, enjoy their food, and focus on the social aspect of eating. You should take at least 20 minutes to eat your meal. I've found that making it a game to pace my eating works for me. I set a timer on my phone or watch for 20 minutes and check the clock once or twice during the meal to modify my pace. Think you will look weird disrespectfully distracted? Your friends and family probably check their phones for notifications AT LEAST once or twice during a meal, they will most certainly excuse you

Eating at home? Find something to do to pace out your eating. Watch a 30 minute show, read some of the book you are working on, browse the web, or get a little work done on your laptop. There are plenty of simple things you can do to slow your tempo.

Another tip for eating out: when you do, plan on getting a box. The typical American restaurant has blown up portion sizes so much that the average entree is enough for two people. So why not make it two meals, get your moneys worth, and avoid being miserably full for hours after a meal. I've also seen friends ask for a box when their food is brought out, to load half their meal into immediately. Don't worry about your friends or family giving you a hard time about it. Let them know what your goals are and that you are trying to be healthier. If they make fun, just smile back. You are the one who is going to be looking great in no time.

# 4. Plan Your Meals

I mentioned earlier how important it is to eliminate choice throughout your day, particularly with exercise. This principle also applies to eating. You know what your schedule looks like in a typical day/week in the life, though I do realize that some days are crazier than others. I have found that planning exactly what and when in your day you are going to eat makes this easier. It can be hard at first to deal with pizza or donuts getting brought into the office or the spontaneous cupcake delivery on someone's birthday, but don't deviate and stand strong. Do not give yourself the option to give in. If you feel like you absolutely need to be eating something to keep you occupied, keep healthy snacks at your desk like fruit, vegetables, nuts, and seeds.

I recommend eating four balanced meals throughout the day spaced 3-4 hours apart. Eating four meals at that frequency keeps you from getting super full or starving which prevents mindless snacking, over-fullness, and midday crashes. This will help prevent sugar cravings during the work day.

So your simplified daily meal plan may look something like this

7:30 am-Wakeup

8:00 am- Breakfast

11:30 or Noon- Lunch

3:00 or 4:00 pm- Afternoon meal (or 1st dinner as I call it

7:00 or 8:00 pm- Dinner

I would say plan to eat breakfast every morning (I do), but if you are not a breakfast person don't worry about it. Feel free to have a healthy breakfast substitute like a smoothie. If you really don't like consuming in the morning at all, there is plenty of great research out there on how skipping breakfast (referred to as Intermittent Fasting) may be a great strategy for weight loss and fat loss

Check out <http://www.precisionnutrition.com/intermittent-fasting> by Dr. John Berardi for more information on that.

# 5. Set Goals and Rewards

There's no point going into any lifestyle change unless you have some goals laid out for yourself. I believe in using various kinds of goals and rewards to keep yourself motivated. Where do you want to be in your health in a month? Next month? in 6 months? Next year? How would the healthier future you be telling you how to eat and exercise today? What steps are you taking to get there?

Goals are like people, they come in all shapes, sizes, and varieties. Daily goals are great for exercise and dietary changes and can be made simple. Examples of daily goals may be: stop snacking during the day, cutting out the afternoon cookies and cupcakes, running or walking at least 15 minutes, resistance training or yoga for at least 20 minutes, eating 300 calories under my daily budget or recommended allowance, losing the midday latte, or trying a new healthy recipe for dinner tonight.

Long-term goals will help you set your daily and weekly short term goals. Major goals will help you create the smaller steps necessary to achieve those greater accomplishments

Don't worry, they are closer than you think. Examples of long term goals may be: Complete a couch to 5k program, lose 20 pounds by the Summer, building up to run/jog/walk 10 miles in a week, work up to do 50 pushups or 50 situps without stopping.

These long-term goals for sculpting a new you will help you place the first building blocks in place. To show you how I would break it down, let's take losing 20 pounds in 4 months. That's 5 pounds a month---1.2 pounds per week---1.2 pounds = 4,200 calories---4,200/7 days in a week = -600 calories a day. So to break down the math, that simply means that you need to net (calories eaten - calories burned by exercise) 600 calories less than the calories necessary to maintain your weight. To find out what your approximate daily calorie budget is, Google Search "Calorie Calculator" or check out this one.

(<http://www.calculator.net/calorie-calculator.html>)

# 6. Start Tracking

After you set your goals, it is time to start tracking your progress. It's time to take a few extra minutes out of your day to tally up your calorie intake and calories burned during the day. Back when I took my first conditioning and weight training class in high school we tracked all of our lifting progress on grids with pen and paper, and kept a food journal. Now that we are out of The Stoneage we have evolved to applications, websites, smart phones, and tablets. Technology has made it so much more convenient to track your progress. If you prefer pen and paper though, feel free to do so! Some of my favorite trainers still take a journal everywhere to track their/clients' progress.

If you do take the technological route, I have some great recommendations. If you have a Google/Gmail account, Google Drive spreadsheets are a great way of tracking your consumption or workout activity. I use Google Drive in conjunction with Loseit.com, a great website for tracking your progress in eating and exercise.

It will customize your daily calorie budget based on your current weight and your goal weight. They have a massive database of foods, recipes, and about any restaurant that you can think of so that you know how much you have eaten. They have another database for all kinds of different exercises from biking to zumba.

I believe that tracking is a necessary way to keep yourself conscientious of your eating and activity. When you see your performance increase, your weight go down (or up), an improvement in endurance, run that extra mile, burn those calories, or cross that finish line, you'll be encouraged to keep going. Look back on what you have accomplished and relish in it, the checkered flag is in site.

Here are a couple application recommendations

<http://www.myfitnesspal.com/>  
<http://www.loseit.com/>

# 7. Get Enough Sleep

This may sound rudimentary, but sleep is one of the most overlooked and underrated pillars in your personal health. It affects everything you could possibly think of: attitude, energy level, cravings, hunger, fullness, decision making, work efficiency, training capacity, and much more.

When Chris Hemsworth (*Thor*, *The Avengers*) was asked what the key was to getting in such great shape for his role, he said that the secret was in getting plenty of quality sleep. Sure he probably had a personal trainer a daily chef at his beck and call, but there is unrealized value in what he is saying about sleep. Too much or too little sleep makes you sluggish and throws off your hormone regulation. Specifically disrupting the hormones ghrelin and leptin which tell your brain when it is hungry and when it is full. This is why a lack of quality sleep can lead to overeating, followed by overfullness.

Lack of sleep impairs your decision making. When you get tired you not only crave food for energy, you crave junk food.

Personally speaking, when I'm tired I can't make a decision to save my life, and my stomach becomes either a bottomless pit or I lose my appetite completely. Sometimes I've even started mindlessly stress eating. A true combination for dietary destruction.

Check out this article for more on sleep and how it affects cravings.

<http://www.fitsugar.com/Tired-People-Crave-Junk-Food-Study-Says-23528067>.

To prevent this from happening, make sure to get 7-8 hours of sleep per night. Keep in mind, you know your body best. Ask yourself how much sleep do you need to feel great and function optimally? If you don't know, start right now and track your sleep for the next two weeks. Make sure you are staying consistent with your bed time, keeping it within 30 minutes to an hour of the same time each night. Try waking up at different times, track how you feel and your productivity throughout each day, analyze your observations, and stick with what works best for you.

# 8. The Importance of Accountability

This does not mean that I want you to join a gym. If you want to, it is a great place to stay motivated and build community. Conversely, I understand that it can be intimidating and inconvenient for a lot of people.

I do believe that accountability through a community, group, class, or partner is essential to keep you trucking on the way to meeting your goals. It adds an element of enjoyment, encouragement, and competition which making a lifestyle change as a lone wolf lacks.

The great thing is, there are tons of ways that you can find accountability through community. Joining a gym or already a member? You could always hire a trainer to work with you one-on-one, or take the cheaper route of doing small group training sessions with a friend or two.

A lot of gyms now offer FREE group fitness classes for all tastes from yoga and spins to Zumba.

Joining a boot-camp in your area is a great, affordable solution as well. You and a friend can probably find a boot camp that meets in your town for around 5 dollars a session. It's a cheap way to join a community, stay inspired, and maintain motivation.

Want to go cheaper? Look for running, walking, and cycling groups in your hometown. These groups are filled with people just like you, who get together weekly to be social while enjoying some fresh air and exercise.

Other ideas include: Getting some buddies to play some pick up \_\_\_\_\_, commit to workout a few times a week with a friend, or complete an online workout set or workout DVD collection with you (ever heard of P90x?). My personal favorite is getting in "Check this out" or "Who's the bigger badass?" texting wars with my fitness buddies. Do a workout that shows them what you are accomplishing. Use theirs as your next workout, or motivation to top them.

# 9. Calorie Quality: Fill up on the Good Stuff

I'm not going to be like every other health writer and author out there and tell you that carbs are the enemy. I believe that depending on the lifestyle you lead and health goals you pursue, they can be either a help or a hindrance. If you are training for a distance event or some hard core lifting, you are probably going to want some quality carbohydrates to aid you in training and recovery. If you are dedicated to losing weight with diet and exercise, you may want to check out some other effective ways to fuel the body.

If weight loss or leaning up is your goal, I've had great success for myself and several other clients in cutting out gluten and processed carbohydrates, and replacing them with leaner calorie sources.

After reading *Master Your Metabolism* (Jillian Michaels) and *4 Hour Body* (Tim Ferriss) I realized the importance of the quality of the calorie you are consuming. I started replacing processed and unprocessed grains (cereal, bread, bagels, oatmeal) with lots of beans, lentils, and vegetables. I cut out dairy due to the high calories and sugar content, and weight started coming off. I wasn't working out more. I actually cut my weekly exercise time in half! It didn't just work for me, several other clients and friends I've made these recommendations to saw similar results. Check out some of their testimonials on my website here

<http://trainerjack.com/ClientTestimonials>

# 10. Forget Cooking! Start Prepping

Unless you already enjoy it cooking can be something that is really intimidating not only to start, but also to branch out and keep exploring so your palette doesn't become disinterested to some of the same flavors. Cooking and eating is where many drop off when it comes to taking the first steps in your new, life changing walk in nutrition and fitness. Everyone I know loves a home cooked meal, but few enjoy creating and assembling their own meal because of the time and inconvenience that it taxes your already busy/on-the-go lifestyle.

But what if I told you that you can start making great tasting meals without ever learning how to really cook? What if I told you that the average time I take in creating great, flavorful meals is 10-15 minutes at tops (aside from flash frozen or frozen beef, pork, or poultry). I would like to cordially invite you to a quick tutorial into the arts pre batching and stir frying.

**Ever used a crockpot?** I just bought one brand new for 29.99, and with a minimal amount of prep and effort this kitchen wizard can be the perfect vehicle for making a weeks worth of meals or more.

Just throw in some beef, steak, chicken, pork, beans, vegetables, lentils, and some fun or favorite seasonings for unbelievable flavor with minimal caloric cost. Sunday night is my batching time for the week. I'll typically buy 5-7 pounds of fresh chicken or pork (whatever is on sale) from the refrigerator section at the beginning of the week. I'll take it home, rinse in cold water, and then add some olive oil (not essential, but great for flavor), soy sauce, or worcestershire into the crockpot. Then I'll throw in some seasonings (salt, pepper, cumin, oregano, crushed red pepper, and other choices like jerk and cajun are some of my favorites) and set the crock pot on low and let it do all the work overnight. I would recommend a minimum of 8-12 hours depending on what/how much you are prepping.

# 10. Continued...

Feel free to add your favorite beans, lentils, and vegetables into the batch, or simply prep them as side items throughout the week. I use canned and frozen vegetables for convenience, but go for fresh if that is in your taste and budget.

**Don't be alarmed by the words stir fry.** It is something that could be hardly classified as real cooking by its ease and prep time, it produces the best taste. It's your ticket to making five star restaurant tasting meals, without ever really learning how to cook. The reason it will become your other meal prep partner is because it minimizes time spent on preparing the food, and maximizes flavor. This is solely the way that I cook meals if you count crock pot preparation as pre-batching. All you need is a sauce pan or wok (size depends on the number you are feeding), some olive oil, chicken, vegetables, or both, and your seasoning set mentioned earlier. The cook time is under 10 minutes, and the step by step instructional as provided by stir fry expert Grace Young is here... <http://www.thekitchn.com/how-to-stir-fry-chicken-cooking-lessons-from-the-kitchn-171737>

# 11. Splurge Every 7-10 Days!

To me, this entire guide to your healthier new lifestyle has been the fun part. To you, this is where the real party begins. Every 7-10 days you should take a vacation from your diet, and when I say vacation, I mean sparing no expense and going all out.

**Example:** On my typical vacation day or cheat day my goal is to consume a bare minimum of 3,000 calories. Just last week I started the day with a bacon, egg, and cheese sandwich and then capped off a near 4,000 calorie day with an entire large cheese pizza, a handful of chocolate, and a peanut butter banana milkshake.

This sounds terrifying, but just try it for a day on a weekend this month. If you are a little bit scared, don't worry! Mathematically, you would have to consume an entire 3,500 calories over your caloric budget to gain a single pound of fat. For the average person, that would be a total of 5,500 calories in a day which you will not likely hit, and I wouldn't recommend going for on your first go around. But just try it and see what happens to your weight throughout the rest of the week.

Now if you check the scales the night of or morning after your splurge day, don't be surprised the scale shows that you've gained ridiculous weight overnight. I've been testing this protocol now for two years and the least gain I've seen is 3 pounds, the most has been 8. \*(Reference Ferriss or another health site for water retention and why this happens. For example, at the end of this recent Saturday in which I consumed 4,000 calories I jumped from 164 the morning of my cheat day (before any consuming anything) to 171 the next morning. A whopping 7 pounds in about 24 hours. Want to know what I weighed Monday morning just a day after cracking into the 170's? I was back to 165 pounds, and I guarantee you I will be 163 or 164 by Wednesday.

To answer a question you may be pondering...

(Continued on Next Page)

# 11. Continued...

## How the hell does that even work?!

To summarize the unnecessary scientific jargon for this physiological response, it's as easy as this: over time, your body can and will adapt to how you are training and feeding. In order to keep your resting metabolism from dropping as a short or long-term result of changing your lifestyle eating habits, you should splurge every once in awhile. This splurge day shocks your resting metabolism into overdrive throughout most all of the following week. This is a measure to prevent your metabolism from dropping, or at best, staying the same from week to week ( the side effects that may occur without incorporating a splurge day).

This is also an effective way to kill cravings. Anything you may crave throughout the week, write down on a piece of paper, type into a notepad, and keep it in your billfold or purse. On your splurge day, go a little crazy with it! That's how I've annihilated my passion for pizza and pancakes, my sweet tooth for brownies and ice cream, and what I once thought was an unslakable hunger for burgers and fries. Everyone of those guilty pleasures, crushed by as many splurge days as it took.

For more notes and details on the art of splurge days check out Tim Ferriss's *The 4 Hour Body*.

# In Closing

## **I would love your input!**

I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to read my book and I really hope it helps you in your lifestyle transformation. If you have 2 minutes, I would love your feedback on where you are in your own personal health. This is so I can better help you in consulting, research, writing, and developing products for the future. All it takes is answering 1 question, and emailing the answer to me at [trainerjackw@gmail.com](mailto:trainerjackw@gmail.com). Also, this is a great way for me to keep in touch with you to see how your progress is coming along!

### **1) What is the biggest problem in your health and fitness?**

Thank you again!

Sincerely,  
Trainer Jack

<http://trainerjack.com/>

# Disclaimer

The information presented on this website is intended for general informational purposes and cannot answer personal health related questions or problems. The information presented here should not be used to diagnose, treat or cure any medical condition or problem. If you are experiencing any health related problems, please consult your health professional or emergency medical personnel.

The information presented here should not be considered medical advice or imply that any personal action should be taken. You should first discuss any physical, lifestyle and dietary changes with your health or medical professional.

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