



The #1 Secret to Effortless & Lasting Weight-Loss

By Emily Honeycutt, <http://www.emilyhoneycutt.com>

The calorie density (or energy density) of a food is a measurement of the average calories per weight (gram or ounce) of that food. Calorie Density is perhaps one of the main reasons people are so confused about diets. A lack of understanding about this key concept is one of main reason that some people have trouble losing weight (I know it was for me!). Once you master this key concept, it becomes much easier to make healthier food choices to help you lose weight, without being hungry.

Everyone knows that in order to lose weight we need to burn more calories than we consume. The way most people do this is simply to reduce their portion sizes, while occasionally adding in exercise (which is great). The problem is that most people continue to eat food that is similar in composition to the food they ate before they were dieting. The food prior to the diet was based on meat, dairy, eggs, white flour, sugar, with some fruits and vegetables (however, many people far overestimate how many vegetables and fruits they actually eat). Essentially, what most diets are telling us is that we simply need to eat less food (i.e. smaller portions) and control ourselves. The problem with this is that the hunger drive is extremely strong. It is, in fact one of our strongest survival drives. Add to that the psychological factor that the scarcer something is, the more we want it, and this adds up to make dieting, or “food restriction” a dangerous situation that will always be doomed to fail.





What Should I Eat to Lose Weight Without Being Hungry?

So, what is it that we don't know? How can we eat until we are comfortably full without obsessively counting calories, yet still achieve our optimal weight? The answer is by learning about Calorie Density. Calorie Density is simply the number of calories any food contains per gram. Sounds boring, right? It's actually really easy to apply to your food choices once you get the hang of it and you only need to know a few simple things. Certain foods are really high in calorie density, which means they will make you fat. They are so packed with calories and fat that even a small amount is really fattening, so stay away! Other foods are really low in calorie density which means you can eat a lot of them without getting fat. In fact, you could stuff your face with these foods all day long and still be skinny. The idea here is that foods that are rich in calories are not filling or satisfying if you eat a small portion. It takes so much of them to fill up your stomach, that it's really easy to over eat them. That's the reason we get fat. However, the foods that are low in calorie density are so full of water, fiber and nutrients and are so low in fat that we get full before we can overeat. This is one of the most important concepts that we need to understand when we're trying to lose weight and we're choosing to eat vegetables and beans instead of grilled chicken and yogurt.





What Foods Are Low in Calorie Density?

So, what is it that we don't know? How can we eat until we are comfortably full without olf you're looking for guidance on what types of foods you should consume each day in order to reach, but not go over your Calorie Target, it's essential to consider a food's calorie density. By choosing foods that have a low calorie density you can eat more food and feel full on fewer calories. This can be especially useful if you have a Calorie Target of 1500 calories or if you don't exercise very much.

Foods that are low in calorie density tend to be high in water and low in fat. Examples include fruits and vegetables. So for 50 calories you could eat a cup of strawberries (low calorie density) or one donut hole (high calorie density). It's easy to see that a cup of strawberries would be more filling, have less fat, and more vitamins and minerals than one donut hole.

So, when you're grocery shopping or out at a restaurant, what criteria should you use to help you determine if a food is high or low in calorie density?

Look for foods that are naturally:

- High in Water
- High in Fiber
- Low in Fat

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What Foods Are Low in Calorie Density?, Part 2

1. Foods that Contain Water

Does the food you're eating contain water? Think of foods like vegetables and fruits that naturally contain water like lettuce, watermelon and cucumbers. These foods are very low in calories due to their water content. In fact, they're mostly water! In contrast, think of raisins. They are a healthy food, but they are dried out. They are much more calorically dense because the water has been removed. It's very easy to overeat on raisins. Each raisin used to be a grape. Baked goods like muffins are even more calorically dense because they are made from flour, sugar and oil – all dried, powdered and processed ingredients – not naturally watery. Homemade broth-based (not cream-based) vegetable soups are also ideal for healthy weight-loss because they are filling and low in calorie density.

2. Foods that Contain Fiber

Fiber is one of the most important tools we have to help us easily and effortlessly lose and maintain a healthy weight. Foods that contain fiber provide more volume in your stomach. They take longer to digest and help you feel fuller on fewer calories. *Only whole plant foods have fiber.* Animal products and processed foods (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy, white flour, sugar, oil and alcohol) do not contain fiber.

Most people in the U.S. ingest about 10-12 grams of fiber per day. The Physician's Committee for Responsible Medicine recommends we consume 40 grams of fiber per day to reach our optimal weight and to prevent chronic disease. If we consume foods that do not contain fiber, it will be difficult for us to have room in our diet for fiber-rich foods. So, what's so great about fiber? Can't we just eat yogurt for breakfast, a grilled chicken salad for lunch, and beef broccoli for dinner and then take a fiber supplement? What's wrong with that?

Fiber from whole plant foods helps us feel full. It provides a feeling of satiety or satisfaction. It also sweeps out our digestive tract of excess hormones and carcinogens. ***For every 14 grams of fiber you add to your diet from whole plant foods, you can cut your calorie intake by 10% without even noticing.*** The fiber will fill you up and reduce your calorie consumption effortlessly. So, by swapping out beef for beans, you can easily drop pounds and increase health without sacrifice.