



Month 4

Hero Nutrition Habits

How 'Bout Some Fun Legal Stuff?

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Hero Habits — Month 4

Over the past three months you've been following six Base Habits. Here they are again:

Base Habit #1 — Eat at Least Four Times Per Day

Base Habit #2 — Have Two Fists of Protein With Every Meal.

Base Habit #3 — Only Eat Bread, Rice, Potatoes or Other "Starchy" Carbs With Your First Meal Or With a Meal Immediately After Your Workout.

Base Habit #4 — Only Drink Beverages That Contain 0 Calories

Base Habit #5 — Pick One "Fat" and Add it to Every Meal

Base Habit #6 — Consume a Protein/Carb Workout Shake

Also, last month I introduced an Extra Habit.

Extra Habit #1 — Take 10 Grams of Creatine Every Day

Nearly every one of my clients has followed the above habits with a lot of success. If you've been consistently practicing every one, your body should look and feel a lot better.

For your final month on the Hero program, I'm going to introduce three more Extra Habits. As long as you're following the above six Base Habits, you can take or leave the following recommendations.

The choice is yours.

Extra Habit # 2 — Drink Two Cups of Green Tea Every Day

Besides water, green tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world. What's so great about tea leaves anyway?

Well, without getting into too much science, there's an extract in green tea that has a lot of important benefits. It's called epigallocatechin-3-gallate. (But we'll just call it EGCG for short.)

Along with caffeine, EGCG helps increase thermogenesis. This means you'll burn more calories simply by drinking green tea.

One study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that 270 mg of EGCG significantly increased resting metabolic rate over a 24 hour period when compared to caffeine and placebo.

Now there are studies for and against everything, and with enough digging I'm sure you could find some research to show that green tea doesn't have any fat-burning benefit.

But I'm willing to bet you won't find *any* study that says green tea is bad for you.

The bottom line: tea has a bunch of supportive research and is correlated to lower body fat. Plus, if you make it with real tea leaves (available in any health food store), it tastes amazing.

Extra Habit # 3 — Switch To Eating Only Organic Fruits and Veggies

(The following is an excerpt from an article with nutritionist Jonny Bowden.)

Studies on organic vs. non-organic food are all over the map, with some studies showing no nutritional differences, some showing a lot. And different studies investigate different sets of nutrients, so they're hard to compare.

For example, one study found that organic vegetable soups contain almost six times as much salicylic acid (the active ingredient in aspirin) compared to nonorganic vegetable soups. And research in 2001 found that organic crops had higher average levels of twenty-one nutrients including vitamin C and iron.

Other studies haven't shown much difference in nutritional composition. Interesting, not one study has

ever shown that conventionally grown food is better than organic — the best they can do is show it's no worse.

However, this misses the point. We don't really eat organic food simply because it has more nutrients, though that's very possible and hotly debated. We eat it because of what it doesn't have: poison.

Conventional crops are grown with a massive amount of pesticides and, no matter what they say, some of it remains on the crops and winds up in our bodies. Make no mistake, some of this shit does wind up on organic crops, but there's a lot less of it.

Consumers Union did a study in 2002 analyzing three large data sets of twenty major crops and found that conventionally grown samples had pesticide residues way more often than organic, and that the amounts of pesticides were higher in the conventional crops 66% of the time.

So I think much of the debate about the nutrient content of organic vs. non-organic is unfocused. You could say omega-3's are useless because they don't prevent divorce, but that's not why we eat them, is it? And we eat organic food primarily to minimize our intake of the crap they spray on regular food, not because it necessarily has more vitamin C.

Note from Nate: If cost is an issue, don't worry about buying organic. It won't make or break you.

Still, I feel better knowing the food I put in my body is as healthy as it can possibly be. That's why I wash the shit out of my fruits and vegetables, especially things like apples, peppers, tomatoes, and anything where I eat the skin.

Let me put it this way: if you're strapped for cash and have a hard time just getting enough food and paying your bills, don't worry about buying organic. But if you're out frivolously spending money on iTunes, movies, and beer, you can probably afford to switch to organic fruits and veggies.

Extra Habit # 4 — Read the Omnivore's Dilemma by Michael Pollan and/or Watch Food, Inc.

Want to know how to eat in a way that's healthy, rewarding, and also good for the environment?

Pick up a copy of [The Omnivore's Dilemma](#) or watch [Food, Inc on Netflix](#). (It's on the "watch instantly" feature.)

The phrase "You are what you eat" is so clichéd that it gets glossed over.

Still, it's incredibly important.

Congratulations!

If you're reading this at the beginning of your fourth month, you've had a solid 12 weeks of training and following your nutrition habits.

How closely have you been following your habits?
How hard did you work in the gym?

If you've been on point, I want to thank you for giving it your all and kicking ass.

And if you've slacked a little, I want you to know that I understand. Life gets hectic and there are a bunch of shiny things out there competing for our attention.

But still.

If you don't have the body you want, it's your fault.
(I'll stand by that rule forever.)

Take an honest assessment and ask yourself if you've *really* tried hard on this program.

If the answer is "no", "maybe", or "I'm not sure", it's time to buckle down and get shit done this month.

Look over your six Base Habits and make sure you're following them every day.

Your Hero body is waiting to be uncovered.

Get to work.

- Nate