



**125
RECIPES TO
KICK ASS**

**Lose Up to a Pound a Day,
Increase Your Energy,
and End Food Cravings for Good**



Bulletproof

THE COOKBOOK

DAVE ASPREY

**AUTHOR OF THE *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER
*THE BULLETPROOF DIET***



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*To my wife, Dr. Lana,
who tirelessly supports my crazy
biohacking in the kitchen . . .
and everywhere else.
Thank you, Lana!*

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INTRODUCTION

IF SUPERMAN SWEARS BY IT

The best way to learn about the benefits of becoming Bulletproof is to hear from someone who's had an amazing, transformative experience. Who more fitting than the actor Brandon Routh, who played Superman in *Superman Returns* and superhero the Atom on the hit TV show *Arrow*? He's an excellent model of Bulletproof living in a demanding, performance-based profession that requires peak physical and mental shape. Brandon is playing a superhero, and in a metaphorical sense, that's what biohacking is all about—achieving your own superstrength, and discovering abilities you didn't even know you had. Brandon is a great example of Bulletproof living because he's really felt the whole 360-degree change in every aspect of his life, from losing weight to improving brain function to better sleep and more meaningful social moments. Brandon discovered the Bulletproof approach right at a time when he was ready for an overall overhaul. He didn't really realize it at the time, but once he started experimenting, he was a fast convert and remains today one of our greatest champions.

Like any job, acting has heavy demands, but there are a whole host of factors that come into play with this particular profession. It takes a really high level of performance to be an actor. There's always a lot of pressure on set, along with marathon filming days, hot lights, intense personalities. When it's time to do your thing, you have to perform, literally and figuratively. You need stamina, energy, and all your mental capacity. You can't afford to feel weak—mentally or physically. Brandon's story can give you a picture of what it feels like to be Bulletproof in all the myriad ways he experienced his own transformation. Here's the story as Brandon told it when he visited as a guest on my podcast last year. It went something like this:

I got turned onto the Bulletproof Diet by my friend Adam Karell at a bachelor party of all places. He asked if I had heard about this approach of putting butter and coconut oil in coffee. I was skeptical but intrigued by what the blog post said about the benefits of good saturated fats. After reading more of Dave's blog posts and listening to a few podcasts, I was swayed. Two days later, I tried Bulletproof and I have not stopped since. It transformed my diet and my outlook on health, and it turned the light on in my brain that I didn't know was turned off. That's something that's hard to explain to someone who's not tried it, but it really woke up my mind. It changed my energy, my clarity in communicating with people, my sleep patterns—it just changed everything. Six months after starting Bulletproof, I landed a new Superhero role as Ray Palmer aka the Atom. Ray Palmer was to be a character full of fast-talking energy, quick wit, and charisma. My Bulletproof diet helped me cultivate the mental energy and freedom needed to play him

convincingly. Plus, I needed to be in great shape for the physical demands of the job, as well as for the visual demands—the dreaded shirtless scenes!

Prior to that, I had been experimenting with veganism because the food is so good, so pure, so clean. But you could only get it in vegan restaurants or by prepping it yourself. Most omnivore places aren't prepping produce that way. So I go to this party and I learn about Bulletproof eating, and I realize that there is another option for getting powerful, pure foods that would help me perform to my potential. Suddenly everything just came together. Another lucky coincidence is that, around that time, my wife and I were having conversations about how we wanted to approach nutrition with our nearly one-year-old son after a year of breastfeeding. Going Bulletproof helped us make the decision to introduce high-quality animal fats and proteins, and the results have been pretty astounding. He's thriving. He's very verbal and, at three years old, he has a very expansive vocabulary for his age group. We feel like his nutrition and the quality of his diet have played a big part in that.

So let's talk about all the ways becoming Bulletproof affected my life—because it really did change every aspect of my being for the better. The first thing I noticed was that it changed my cravings. Suddenly, I was steering clear of Dave's "suspect foods" and eating all this high-quality fat, and I just didn't crave sweets anymore. It really reset my body, too, so that if I didn't get enough fats, I'd start craving sweets again. With this new style of eating, I didn't need to snack, I didn't feel unsatisfied, and I really trusted my system to tell me what was what. Now I typically go seven to eight hours totally satiated and fully energized. When I used to get hungry, I'd get cranky, as many people do. Now, I don't have the hunger cravings, and I don't have the accompanying grumpiness. The first thing you'll notice about becoming Bulletproof is that it puts everything in better balance.

I also quickly noticed a dramatic change in my energy. It's shifted so much that it's actually changed my social demeanor. I used to be an introvert at parties; I would rather observe conversation than join in. Now, it's a total role reversal. I'm eager to engage, and my friends make fun of me because I won't shut up. I'm just bursting with energy and my mind is alert and active all the time.

And if the energy was an amazing revelation, imagine how I felt about the weight loss. I lost over 20 pounds in the first four or five months. I had been working hard and working out regularly, but it was the change in my eating that really dropped the weight. It's amazing to imagine that I starting adding high-quality fats into my diet and then watched my body fat start melting away. I also had strength gains while eating more high-quality fats and fewer carbs. As I became Bulletproof, I actually regained some youthful stamina that I assumed I had outgrown.

During this time, I also cut out drinking. I learned that, unfortunately, beer is one of the worst alcohol choices because it contains gluten and a specific mold called ochratoxin A, the same mold toxin that is commonly found in foods like coffee and chocolate. It affects the human body's performance because it causes oxidized DNA damage, disrupting cell membranes and inhibiting the optimal functioning of mitochondria. For this reason, beer is one of the worst alcohol choices.

Up to this point, beer had been my drink of choice. But once I cut it out, I started feeling so much energy, I didn't even want it anymore. Now that I've cut out gluten, I can feel the toll it takes on my body—migraine headaches, bloating, brain fog, and low energy for days after consuming it. I've come to realize it's a Kryptonite food—not doing anyone any favors. I mean, I'm not an absolutist. I will have a drink once in a while, but if I do, it's usually vodka or another distilled spirit, which are the cleanest options out there.

The next thing I noticed was my cognitive function, and in particular, my memory. As an actor, I have to memorize lines. That's my job. Before I went Bulletproof, sometimes I'd have bad days, brain fog, and fatigue. But now, it just comes so easily. That brain fog is all cleared up and memorization is just no big deal.

Last, but not least, I feel like becoming Bulletproof has even transformed my subtle awareness and my sense of spirituality. These days, it's almost as if I have the concentration of a Zen monk. I'm more self-aware, more patient, less judgmental. I also have more meaningful internal dialogue about my feelings as they arise, and I find myself to be exceedingly calm about interacting with and appraising other people. Being Bulletproof isn't just about the body and the mind—although you'll feel those things profoundly. The whole thing goes deeper than that. It has the ability to shift you at your very core.

I'd like to close with a direct quote from Brandon, from that podcast, which really underscores the transformative nature of this work.

Pay attention to your fear. Fear stops us from doing a lot of great things. I've had to find where the fear resides in me. Even though I've been fairly successful in my career, fear creeps in, doubt, self-doubt as an actor. How you present yourself to the world, what do other people think of me? I found that fear doesn't serve me when I find it. When I have the awareness to look back, when I take responsibility and find the gratitude, sometimes I find the fear underneath there. That just helps me open up and just experience more and share more and have a happier, upgraded existence.

Hearing Brandon speak about his experience with going Bulletproof just makes me feel elated. This guy is as close to a superhero as it gets. He achieves that level of performance every day—mentally and physically. Since he's an actor, he's really the perfect case study. And the fact that he credits the Bulletproof Diet with helping him be his best is just the greatest reward for me, personally.



CHAPTER 1

THE BULLETPROOF PRINCIPLES

Maybe you're reading this book and already biohacking your way to Bullet proof living. You may listen to every episode of Bulletproof Radio, read every word on the Bulletproof blog, and constantly refine your program to achieve optimal performance. You may even decide to skip straight to the recipes because you've seen the incredible results the Bulletproof approach offers, and you just can't wait to get straight to the delicious Bulletproof food. And that's OK. However, whether you're new to Bulletproof or an experienced biohacker, take the time to read this opening chapter as a reminder of why we do what we do, and a refresher for the basic principles that define being Bulletproof.

First and foremost, this is a cookbook, a collection of Bulletproof recipes designed to make eating within the plan easy and satisfying, not to mention enjoyable. But before we roll up our sleeves to get into ingredients and food preparation, I'd like to underscore the foundational ideas that informed the creation of the recipes and also answer some common questions about the Bulletproof Diet. If you're new to all things Bulletproof, this chapter will give you a solid orientation to the philosophy, research, and goals that lead to the Bulletproof state of high performance. These are lessons with the power to change your life. Becoming Bulletproof isn't a quick fix or a fad; it's a new way to understand your physical state and tweak it to bring out unforeseen levels of energy and functionality.

It's not about being invincible. It's about adding so much to your energy and willpower reserves that you feel you can "bring it" no matter what life brings your way. For me, when I weighed 300 pounds, I honestly felt I didn't have that strength or control. Now, my joy and potential feel limitless. Becoming Bulletproof is about your true resilience, and realizing that you can do anything you set out to accomplish.

So before we get into recipes, let me outline the top tenets of the approach, and boil it down to basics to help organize the most important takeaways. The following sections will give you a good 101 understanding of what it is we're doing here, and why it works. From the top, here are the most common questions I'm asked about the Bulletproof Diet.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BULLETPROOF?

Becoming Bulletproof is, in the simplest terms, about making you the most powerful being you can be, in terms of physical performance, brain power, and all-day energy. That means getting the very best out of your body and brain, all of the time. When I

started this quest, I weighed 300 pounds. And while I was a fabulously successful entrepreneur in Silicon Valley, my physical and mental state was in sad shape. Because I had a background in tech, I understood the concept of hacking in a very real way. I had personal experience encountering barriers and boundaries and learning how to decode and work around them. So I employed that same approach in trying to figure out and conquer my weight problem and foggy brain. I believed on a gut level that there were ways to decode my system and create workarounds that would give me greater control over my system—not to outsmart it, but to understand its inner workings and optimize the functionality that my body, in its best state, could deliver.

As it turned out, this approach changed my life—and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people after me. All of my methods are driven by the idea that we are constantly refining and learning about what works for us personally, and making small tweaks—just as one does in technology—to make our bodies smarter, stronger, and more robust. There is no magic bullet. But if you can reset your body to cut your cravings, you'll change the state of your body and mind.

WILL THE BULLETPROOF DIET HELP ME LOSE WEIGHT?

Yes, being Bulletproof is a way to lose weight. It transforms the body into a lean, efficient, energetic machine. But that's really only a side effect of getting your body to operate in its most efficient state. Did I want to lose weight? Hell, yes. Is that why most people try the Bulletproof Diet in the first place? Absolutely. But is that what we're really doing here? No. Becoming our best, most powerful selves means fine-tuning every system in the body, from metabolism to detoxification to brain power. And when we do that, we lose excess weight because our systems are acting as they should. They are working at max capacity while burning energy efficiently and consistently. In essence, weight loss is a byproduct of making the body function optimally. I won't lie—it's the byproduct that most of us care the most about. But a thousand other good things are happening that make the weight loss possible. That's why becoming Bulletproof creates a noticeable upswing in brain function and energy levels. That's why people report feeling amazing—the best in their lives—when eating this way. So yes, weight loss is an awesome thing. But it's not the only thing. And it's not the thing that defines Bulletproof living. Bulletproof is much more concerned with holistic success, measured by performance across a number of bodily and brain functions.

HOW DOES THE BULLETPROOF DIET WORK?

The Bulletproof Diet doesn't work like most diets—there's no calorie counting because when you stop eating foods that make you weak, you'll actually be able to hear the hormone hunger signal from your body, and you won't experience food cravings. You don't have to attempt to magically work out more than you eat, which creates unsustainable biological stress for most people. And let's remember, famines and labor camps are not great ways to build willpower or resilience. Instead, choose

foods that have the right kind of energy, but are also lowest in the things that slow you down, and highest in nutrients. Then, you eat them at the time when they will do the most for your body and mind based on circadian biology. This is a far cry from most “healthy” diets, which focus on decreasing the amount of energy in your food while increasing the amount of nutrients and totally ignoring the effects of antinutrients.

The Bulletproof Diet partially falls into a category broadly known as ketogenic diets, though my plan has fewer ketones than a full-on ketogenic diet. (For you science geeks out there, it’s a cyclical ketogenic diet with nutrient timing!)

You’ve probably heard of plans like the Atkins Diet and the Paleo Diet, which also fall under the ketogenic umbrella, but make no mistake: The Bulletproof Diet is different from those popular programs, for reasons I’ll get to shortly. The thing that lumps these approaches into a single category is the way that weight loss is achieved, namely by a process called ketosis. Ketosis is a state wherein your body burns fat instead of carbs. When you think about it, this is a pretty simple proposition. Your body typically burns carbs, turning them into sugar for energy. But if your body is out of carbs, it will go to Plan B: fat burning. It’s a natural function, and one that your body would employ in a natural way depending on your circumstances. If you found yourself in a situation where you were deprived of carbs, your body would know what to do, and would find an alternate energy source (read: your stored fat). The Bulletproof Diet is built around creating a ketogenic state in order to burn fat stores for energy rather than using carbs. When you carb-load, you’re stockpiling your body with extra energy to use, but in the absence of those carbs, your body will burn fat, so you become leaner in the process.

IS KETOSIS SAFE?

When I was initially discovering the power of ketosis for myself, I’d heard about the so-called Eskimo diet, where almost no calories come from carbohydrates, and most calories come from fat. Nutritional alarmists will often confuse a state of metabolic ketoacidosis from diabetes with the completely natural form of ketosis from diet—it’s a natural state in which the body rests. Full ketosis is used to treat epilepsy and cancer, even in kids, with great safety. In this state, your body creates carbs from proteins. For some people, this is optimal and they stay in this state for prolonged periods. For other people, like me, it makes me feel run down. This is why, for ultimate resilience—and especially for women—I recommend cycling in and out of ketosis. I recommend eating some carbs as it stresses the body to create carbs from protein. With my recommendation, you get the best of both worlds. And my recommendation is still less suggestive of a ketogenic state than most paleo diets recommend.

When I began studying ketosis, I wanted to see what would happen if I entered a ketogenic state and stuck with it indefinitely—or for three months, as was the case for me. Guess what? It wasn’t good. The Inuit people subsist primarily on protein and a huge amount of fat. They live on delicacies like whale blubber and seal jerky. And good for them; they are genetically predisposed to function this way as they’ve evolved with this diet for centuries . . . and they live on packed snow. We, in everyday America, however, have not. After eating nothing but protein and ridiculous amounts

of fats for three months, my body started malfunctioning. My sleep quality went away. My eyes and sinuses were superdry all the time. I started getting headaches. Because I didn't have enough carbohydrates to manufacture the mucus that lines a healthy stomach, I developed food allergies to my favorite foods as soon as I added them back in. I'm still working to hack the food allergies I developed by eating that way, and making great progress. Clearly for me, this state of prolonged ketosis was a terrible idea. I know that having experienced it firsthand, and I've seen lesser versions of these symptoms—especially sleep and energy problems—in a good number of Bulletproof followers who stay in ketosis for long periods, though not all of them. This is why the Bulletproof approach advocates moving in and out of a ketogenic state, always being mindful of how and when we eat carbs for added energy. For the vast majority of people, I do not advocate putting your body in a ketogenic state indefinitely.

What I do know is that you can use ketosis as a tool, in measured, regular bursts, to bring out some amazing fat-burning and brain-revving potential. That is what being Bulletproof is all about: biohacking your way to the sweet spot where your system thrives and continually outperforms itself without causing damage or detriment to your systems.

ABOUT FOOD TOXINS

People think that man is the main source of toxins, but Mother Nature is pretty good at making toxins too—it's the natural way some living things protect themselves from being eaten in the wild. Animals and plants accumulate toxins, be they manmade or originating organically. So if you're eating butter and meat from an animal that only ate grass, there may be no toxins, but if you're eating industrial-feedlot meat, the fat in that food concentrates many of the chemicals we spray on food as well as the toxins that some plants and fungi make as a natural defense system to prevent animals from eating them. For more information about how Mother Nature makes these toxins in our soil, check out the free documentary that I've released at moldymovie.com.

SO HOW IS THE BULLETPROOF DIET DIFFERENT FROM THE ATKINS AND PALEO PLANS?

The Bulletproof Diet recommends 6 to 11 servings of veggies a day. “Whoa” you're thinking. “That's a ridiculous amount of veggies.” And you're right. Some people have a hard time adjusting to eating this many servings of veggies because it so far exceeds what we've become accustomed to in the sad state of an American diet devoid of nutrition. I'm advocating more veggies per day than most other programs, and even some vegan diets! The FDA recommends 5 servings of ½ cup (or 2½ cups per day). But please note, they treat fruits and veggies as the same thing. This is a flawed approach, because fruit is mostly sugar, while vegetables are mostly nutrients and fiber. I recommend 9 servings of veggies a day and potentially a lot more. So my plan suggests at least three times more than the FDA recommends. That's important to remember, because while we're asking you to skip carbs, in measured cycles, we're also flooding your body with the amazing nutrients nature provides, and teaching you

how to identify and limit carb-heavy, starchy vegetables, except when you want your body to have healthy carbohydrates. So that's the first way Bulletproof living is different from the Atkins plan.

Atkins and Paleo are both considered “low-carb high-fat” (LCHF) diets. Atkins focuses on a high-protein, high-fat eating plan to trigger ketosis, but doesn't focus on the type of fat or protein. Paleo also advocates a high-protein, high-fat diet, but it does pay attention to the *type* of fat and protein, which is a major improvement. But it's also high enough in protein to trigger inflammation, and the impact of cooking techniques isn't a part of the diet, even though it affects how you use your food.

The Bulletproof Diet is also an LCHF diet, like Paleo and Atkins, but it has components that set it apart entirely: namely, a focus on eliminating cravings by controlling food toxins, and eating the right foods at the right times, not to mention significant differences in Bulletproof cooking methods. People forget that cooking is a form of food processing, and you can “process” food in your own kitchen and accidentally turn it from something nutritious into something that will make you crave sugar. This should be a no-brainer, but plenty of other diets don't really take this aspect of the formula into consideration.

Other plans know that by introducing ketosis, the body will burn fat, and so they figure, mission accomplished. But if you're burning fat that's full of food toxins, you're going to experience fatigue and cravings . . . totally not Bulletproof!

The Bulletproof Diet also differs from the Atkins and Paleo diets in its attention to toxins, or antinutrients. As I was hacking my own performance, and losing 100 pounds, I learned a lot about the toxins that exist, naturally and unnaturally, in our food supply. Besides all the manmade toxins that have entered our food chain via pesticides and manufacturing processes, there are also naturally occurring antinutrients that, while they won't kill us, can slow down or compromise our natural system functions. Take kale, for example. The darling of healthy eaters everywhere, kale is enjoying its moment in the sun. It's all the rage in salads, juices, pastas, you name it. Every hip restaurant has kale somewhere on its menu, and most markets now offer an array of heirloom varieties. Here's the thing. Kale isn't always good for all of us. It's a goitrogenic food, which means that in its raw form it interferes with iodine uptake and can cause enlargement of the thyroid (this is where the term goiter comes from). It can slow your thyroid function, which is a bad thing because your thyroid controls your energy levels.

Fortunately, most of us will never experience this side effect. You'd have to eat kale in large amounts to see this come to pass. That said, with the obsessive embrace of kale in recent years, plenty of people do drink a glass of kale juice and eat a kale salad or two every day. If you already have compromised thyroid function, this could very well lower your performance even more. More worrying, kale is high in oxalic acid, a compound that prevents most animals from eating raw kale because it increases the kidney load. Excessive oxalic acid is tied to gout and even a condition where oxalic acid crystals form in your vagina, making sex painful. This is why the Bulletproof plan is on a spectrum. I highlight certain foods that have the potential to cause nonoptimal effects, like kale. It doesn't mean it will cause serious injury, but it does mean your body has to work that much harder to process what it perceives to be a low-grade poison. This is why I recommend skipping—or specially prepping—what I call

“suspect foods,” acknowledging that they contain a meaningful amount of antinutrients.

Another example is quinoa. People freak out when I say to avoid quinoa! After all, it’s recently been touted as nature’s perfect superfood. Like kale, it’s enjoying its 15 minutes. But research shows us that quinoa is coated with saponin, which is a common cause of food allergies. When we consume saponin, it can create small holes in the membrane of cells in your gut and it can irritate the immune system. The saponin is there to protect the grain from fungal infection, but when we remove the saponin (by processing and rinsing with water), the quinoa is vulnerable to mold growth, and mold makes a host of well-known toxins that make humans weak. Like all grains, quinoa is susceptible to spoilage, which is why I recommend choosing rice instead—it’s the least likely to spoil.

So when I advise against incorporating quinoa, it’s not because I’m some guy who thinks quinoa makes you fat or something; it’s because I’ve flagged it as a food that can compromise your system from optimal function, so I’d prefer to find other foods that are easier for us to process and contain fewer likely antinutrients. In Bulletproof lingo, quinoa is a “suspect food”—it’s not on the Kryptonite list, but it’s far from a superfood. Blindly loading your plate with it won’t get you the results we seek.

The third reason the Bulletproof Diet is different than other LCHF diets is that we pay attention to the way we prepare food, as that can change the chemical makeup of the ingredients. Food preparation can make food taste better. Sometimes it makes food’s nutrients more absorbable. But sometimes food is cooked to the point of making it inflammatory or even carcinogenic. Excessive cooking or heat not only strips food of its nutritional value, it actually causes it to become actively harmful. This is a huge deal, so you’ll notice in my recipes that I’m particular about which foods are eaten raw and which are prepared using what methods. Again, this isn’t some flight of fancy; this is based on research that indicates that we can debase foods to a harmful state. And you don’t have to do it perfectly . . . a little raw kale won’t hurt you. But a lot is not a great idea. Knowing this helps you make better food choices, and makes you a better cook.

One of the latest culinary trends in recent years is molecular gastronomy, or modernist cuisine. This approach applies biology and science to cooking, using lab techniques to change the nature of food into surprising textures and flavors—it’s precisely changing the chemical compound of foods for maximum flavor, no matter what. As with all top-tier cuisines, it’s done in a dazzle-you dog-and-pony show that elicits *oohs* and *ahhs* for a big wow factor. And some of it tastes pretty amazing, too. But here’s the thing: I don’t care if it tastes amazing. Food that is overprocessed and engineered in a factory or in your kitchen, treated as though it’s a lab element, often is so damaged by the processing that it tastes good but makes you weak. It loses its essential nature, becomes inflammatory in nature (which means you get cravings when you eat it), and adds toxins into the mix based on the processing it undergoes. The good news is, you don’t have to choose between food that tastes fantastic and offers you incredible results in terms of boosted energy and optimal performance. My recipes are as flavorful as they are functional.

The Bulletproof approach is all about using a precise understanding of food chemistry so that we can prepare food that delivers maximum nutrition and minimum

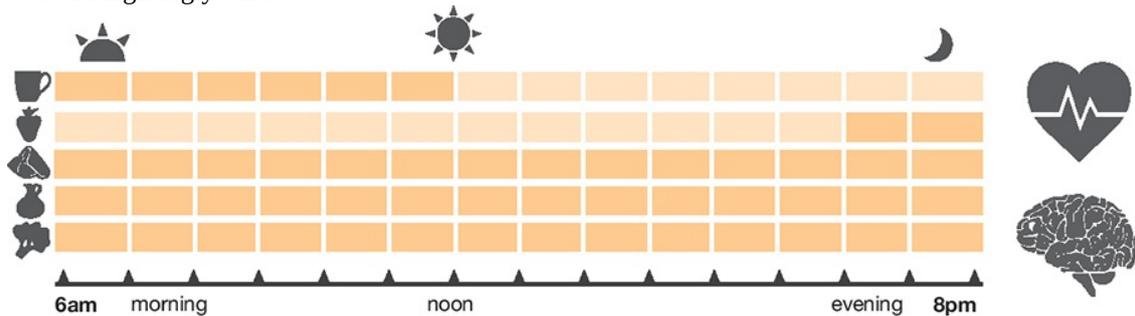
inflammation, and tastes great too. The Bulletproof approach is all about cooking to achieve a state of wellness for greater performance. The end result of using my recipes should be that you feel amazing, have increased energy, and enjoy an anti-inflammatory meal that tastes fantastic. Eat amazing foods, prepared the right way, and get ready to feel a real food high.

WHEN TO EAT

The Simple Bulletproof Diet

Designed to reduce body fat, enhance mental performance, and prevent disease while leaving you satisfied and energized.

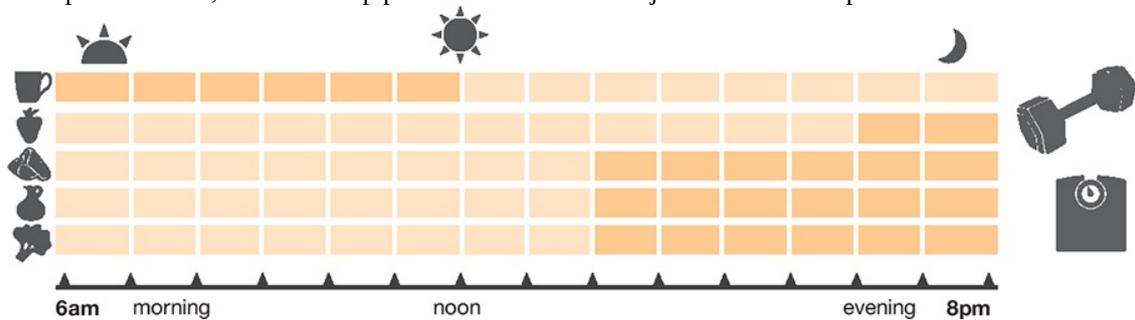
Eat when you're hungry, stop when you're satiated, and try not to snack. Target 50–70% of calories from healthy fats, 20% from protein, 20% vegetables, and 5% fruit or starch. For optimal results, follow the dark portion of the diet and limit fruit or starch consumption to 1–2 servings per day in the evenings to avoid high triglycerides.



Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting for Fat Loss and Focus

A biohack that makes it possible to lose fat, while increasing mental focus and energy, without cravings.

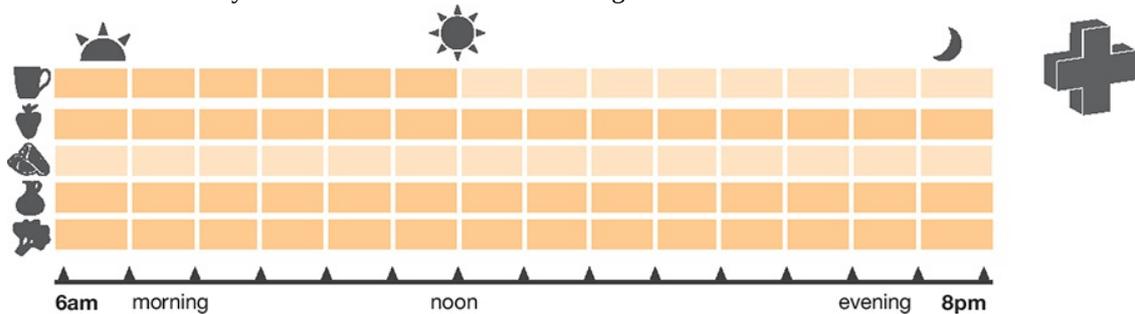
You start by consuming a cup of Bulletproof Coffee in the morning. The healthy fats give you a stable current of energy, and the ultra low-toxin Bulletproof Coffee beans optimize brain function and fat loss. For optimal results, follow the top portion of the diet in conjunction with this protocol.



Bulletproof Protein Fasting

A biohack used occasionally to get a greater reduction in inflammation.

About 1–2 times a week, limit your protein intake to 15–25g to help cleanse your inner cells without muscle loss. To keep you full and energized, consume a cup of Bulletproof Coffee in the morning and have high fats and moderate carbs throughout the day. For optimal results, follow the top portion of the diet and limit carbohydrates to the afternoon and evening.



DOES THE BULLETPROOF DIET RECOMMEND FASTING?

Yes and no. If fasting means starving yourself and eating nothing for days, that's not a part of it. Instead, the Bulletproof Diet helps you avoid some types of foods at certain times so you can get the benefits of fasting without the energy crashes. The way the Bulletproof Diet works best is to adopt the recommended Bulletproof Roadmap of foods (go to www.bulletproof.com/diet-roadmap-poster to get the Bulletproof Diet Roadmap downloadable poster), use the recipes in this book, and then practice two occasional types of fasting to kick-start weight loss, reduce inflammation, detox your cells, and supercharge your results. The two types of fasting I recommend are Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting and Bulletproof Protein Fasting, both of which I detail below.

BULLETPROOF INTERMITTENT FASTING

Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting requires far less willpower than any other type of fasting. In fact, it requires none at all. This technique is popular in biohacking circles because it not only promotes fat loss, it also builds muscle, fights disease-causing inflammation, and builds up your body's resilience by burning more fat, which helps the body produce less insulin. The main idea behind traditional intermittent fasting is that you eat all your food for the day in an 8-hour period, then fast the rest of the time. Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting, on the other hand, is a fundamentally new and different idea I originated, and it solves the problem of regular fasting. With traditional fasting, you might skip breakfast, have a late lunch at 2 p.m., and eat dinner before 8 p.m. The rest of the day you wouldn't eat, and you would likely get hungry and weak around 11 a.m. when you're working a normal job. For people who have a significant amount of weight to lose—like more than 30 pounds—fasting can be distracting and can affect mental and physical performance, which is why Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting (see [a sample day](#)) is such a great solution for getting the benefits without the negative side effects.

If you're a busy entrepreneur or a student, and you're really relying on your mental power being in top form 24/7, you will probably find with traditional intermittent fasting that you are hungry and tired at 11 a.m., which stresses your adrenals to keep your blood sugar up. By adding Bulletproof Coffee (with no protein or carbs of any kind) during your "fasting" time, you can experience a complete lack of hunger and full-power energy while getting the benefits of an intermittent fast. The cool thing is that an all-fat breakfast (like Bulletproof Coffee) won't make your body think it's broken the fast, so you get the benefits of the fasting without feeling deprived. It's awesome!

Now let's talk a little bit about why Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting works better than traditional intermittent fasting. It's because of mTor, a major mechanism that increases protein synthesis in your muscles. Both exercise and coffee raise your energy while simultaneously inhibiting your muscle-building mechanism (that's the mTor) for a short while, causing it to "spring back" and build even more muscle as soon as you eat something.

Therefore, in order to build muscle you must suppress mTor; the muscle building happens when the mTor surges after being suppressed. So anything that helps you push it down hard means it will surge even harder, which in turn helps you gain muscle. Ways to suppress mTor include intermittent fasting, exercise, and coffee or, on a lesser scale, chocolate, green tea, turmeric, and resveratrol. So guess what? Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting can make your mTor bounce back. When I started playing around with this concept and figured out how to maximize my mTor suppression, I went from 300 pounds to a lean machine with a six-pack in 18 months, despite consuming 4,000 calories a day with no exercise. Plain intermittent fasting doesn't use coffee, so it only hits one, or possibly two of the three possible mTOR suppressors. Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting works better because it can use all three mechanisms: intermittent fasting, exercise, and coffee.

The next reason Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting is superior to regular traditional intermittent fasting is because one of the ingredients in Bulletproof Coffee increases the speed at which you go into ketosis, fueling your brain and helping you maintain a ketogenic state, even in the presence of some carbs in your diet. We use XCT oil, which works because it spikes molecules called ketones in the blood the fastest and highest. Ketones are produced by the liver from fatty acids during low food intake periods. A momentary spike in these ketones suppresses hunger, so while fats like coconut oil and plain MCT oil don't spike it enough to fully feel this effect, XCT oil does the trick as it contains C8 and C10, an optimal combination of fatty acids. It creates ketones because it is metabolically unique as a fat, and some parts of the brain prefer fuel from fats to that derived from carbs.

For all these reasons, it just makes sense to add Bulletproof Coffee to the equation. It's easier, and far more pleasant to do a Bulletproof Intermittent Fast than a plain fast. I've done plain ones and enjoyed them to be honest, but they are even more enjoyable with Bulletproof Coffee. Besides, coffee increases your metabolism by up to 20 percent. So for my money, Bulletproof Intermittent Fasting—with coffee—is vastly superior in terms of satisfaction and results.

BULLETPROOF PROTEIN FASTING

Protein fasting means that one day per week, you eat almost no protein—no more than 15 grams. The reason we do this is because when the body doesn't have any protein, it induces autophagy—or, literally translated, self-digestion. Yes, that's just what it sounds like. It means your body uses the enzymes that were intended to digest protein to digest waste inside your cells instead. Our cells accumulate waste and toxic junk, which slows us down and causes aging. When we biohack our way into autophagy, we fight back, clearing away this bodily waste and giving our cells a new lease on life. Suddenly, your body feels lighter, and your brain feels brighter.

I recommend you add a protein fasting day to your regular Bulletproof eating once a week. If it makes it easier, choose the same day each week and just get into the habit of skipping protein that day. Once you get the hang of it, Bulletproof Protein Fasting just becomes another part of your routine, and one that brings great benefits when you're biohacking your system. Here's why: Protein fasting improves cellular repair function. The enzymes from your pancreas and liver, besides removing toxins, remove debris from your cells. Protein fasting improves mitochondrial function, because

autophagy is the sole known mechanism for replacing mitochondria. And when your cells are functioning better, so will you. Protein fasting also upgrades your brain's ability to drain waste through the glymphatic system and promotes better sleep—another key way to improve your mental and physical performance.

You're probably asking how you're going to get energy and feel full if you're cutting out protein, but remember, you can get plenty of energy and satiety from good fats. Start your day with Bulletproof Coffee for a hit of healthy fats and caffeine, and then eat high fats and moderate carbs throughout the day. You'll find sample meal plans for protein fasting days in the appendix. For best results, limit the carbs to later in the day, which improves sleep quality. It may sound simple enough, and it will be when you get used to it, but be aware: Protein lurks in unexpected places. Broccoli? There's protein. You'll also need to be careful about serving sizes. Anything with less than 1 gram of protein can be labeled as 0 grams according to the FDA—so watch the amount of any foods that may contain protein, even in small amounts (vegetables and even coconut milk, for example), which may contain trace amounts not listed on the label.

When you commit to Bulletproofing yourself, protein fasting is one of the most powerful tools in your arsenal. It's also great because you can use it in a routine way, like once a week, or when you're feeling sluggish, or when you have compromised immunity. Use this tool to give your cellular function a boost when you need it most. Autophagy is also required to maintain muscle mass, as it inhibits muscle breakdown in adults, so it has the dual benefit of making your system perform better while your body looks better.

As with any sort of dieting or fasting, going overboard will likely have adverse effects on both your body and your brain. If you become chronically protein deficient, your body will suffer. Over time, insufficient protein will cause decreased immune function, muscle mass, and bone density, as well as reduced endurance. When I first started experimenting with protein fasting, I tried reducing my intake to 25 grams per fast day. But when I pushed further, I discovered that limiting my intake to 15 grams per day really produced the miraculous results I wanted—as long as I did it in limited bursts. In no time, I reduced abdominal inflammation and lost my muffin top. (And yes, even biohacked Bulletproofers are prone to the dreaded muffin top once in a while!) Protein fasting feels like a deep clean that reinvigorates my whole body, right down to the cellular level. The trick is to biohack autophagy in short, temporary bursts for 24 hours at a time. That way, you get all the benefits without the negative side effects.

Like just about everything I advocate, Bulletproof Protein Fasting is not black and white. Everyone will have their own response to it at varying degrees of application. I recommend trying different amounts of protein to see what works best for you. That's the essence of biohacking—learning what works best for your body. I would caveat this to exclude pregnant women, for whom I don't think fasting—either intermittent or protein—is a great idea. If you're eating for two, nutrients need to be delivered steadily. You can always biohack that baby weight after a healthy birth.

BULLETPROOF PROTEIN FASTING

Bulletproof Protein Fasting is a biohack to get a greater reduction in inflammation and to kick-start weight loss. For new readers and routine followers of the Bulletproof Diet alike, it is a day of protein fasting once each week, where you eat virtually no protein: limit your protein to 15 grams or less per day. To keep you full and energized, consume a cup of protein-free [Bulletproof Coffee](#) in the morning and have near-zero protein, high fats, and moderate carbs throughout the day. For optimal results, limit carbohydrates to the afternoon and evening.

SO WHAT SHOULD I BE EATING?

The Bulletproof Roadmap is your go-to guide for the best possible foods for a high-performance diet. I mention the web link below each roadmap graphic in [Chapter 2](#) for anyone who is newly discovering the Bulletproof way of life. We'll talk more about how to approach eating and apply these principles in the coming chapters.

This roadmap is your Bulletproof bible. Take a look at the graphics in [Chapter 2](#) to familiarize yourself with the whole ecosystem of Bulletproof eating. I've organized the foods into categories so you can easily assess which foods are optimal, and which ones are just average or potentially a poor choice. Foods from the top end of the spectrum are your best choices for your health and performance, your brain, and your body. Foods in the middle portion of the spectrum are "suspect foods." Depending on the sourcing, freshness, your own personal tolerance and food allergies, and any processing that the foods have undergone, they can be detrimental in some cases, and are probably best avoided on a regular basis.

The foods in the bottom zone are the most toxic and inflammatory, and should be avoided if at all possible. This doesn't mean that you can't ever eat the foods from this part of the spectrum. It simply means that if you decide that you want to eat those foods, you should be aware that they aren't the best foods for performance and will likely have some bad consequences, and that you should do everything you can to biohack yourself to protect your brain and body from the toxins in these foods, and to increase your resilience and ability to bounce back from the bad effects.

Getting high-quality produce and meats is essential for ensuring that you're feeding your body with good nutrients, and avoiding harmful toxins and additives. Grass-fed beef and lamb; wild-caught fish; pastured pork; and organic fruits, vegetables, and grains are all things you should be striving to eat as much as possible. People complain that these foods cost more than industrial or commercially farmed versions, but it is far cheaper to eat high-quality, toxin-free foods and to perform at a high level than it is to eat low-nutrient foods with additives and chemicals, and be spending an arm and a leg on medicine and doctor visits because you are sick all the time. If that's not convincing enough, the higher quality foods even taste better and will give you far more satisfaction when eating them!

HOW MUCH SHOULD I EAT?

There is no calorie counting or food measuring on the Bulletproof Diet. Instead, we focus on eating the right foods to supply your body with the nutrients and energy that it needs to function properly. Your body will tell you when you need more of something, and you should eat when you're hungry, and stop when you're full. The