
WHY DAILY ROUTINE IS SO IMPORTANT.



THE WEEKLY WAKEUP!

How to control your Circadian Rhythm.

Ahh routine, that daily grind that you dread returning to after 2 weeks on the source in Benidorm. That groundhog day feeling you get every morning when you wake up (usually by your child telling you they need the toilet) and go into autopilot as you begin your list of daily chores. As much as this routine may seem mundane, the fact you have a set routine will have a huge impact on your health, especially when it comes to hormone balance.

As a coach my mantra is:

‘You are a walking representation of your daily habits’ it’s the little things you do everyday that determine who you are, what you achieve and who you become.

Now I love this mantra mainly because its true and unforgiving! However, reading such a statement may resonate a feeling of ‘yeh whatever’ in a similar way that other statements such as ‘what goes around, comes around’ or ‘live, laugh, love’, may. The only difference is my mantra is not some bullshit Karen comes out with at her Christmas work party.

The fact remains, you are what you do every day.

So instead of making such a claim and expecting you to take it onboard like its mentioned in Psalms 23, I will explain on a hormonal level why routine in your day is so important.

Your body operates best in a state of homeostasis (a state of balance and normality), being in such a state allows your circadian rhythm to operate effectively controlling your bodies hormone release and regularity of function. If you haven't heard of your circadian rhythm before then it is commonly referred to as your body clock. It's the bodies natural means of telling time which controls the release of different hormones throughout the day. You can now appreciate that this process is far easier when you have a daily routine which your circadian rhythm can work with. Here's just some of the most influential hormones which are directly triggered and influenced by your daily routine:

1.Cortisol, this is what gets you out of bed in the morning, but to much can have a profound effect.

2.Testosterone, this is what triggers the development of red blood cells in the bone marrow and influences muscle repair and development.

3.Ghrelin, this is the hormone that makes you feel hungry.

4.Leptin, this is the hormone that makes you feel full after eating.

5.Melatonin, this is the hormone that makes you feel tired.

The list of hormones above play a serious role in your overall mood, productivity, energy levels, motivation, clarity of thought, ability to burn fat and build muscle as well as your susceptibility to getting pissed off! Your circadian rhythm is a BIG player when it comes to performing at your best every day, so looking after it is key and that all comes down to your daily routine.

If these hormones play such a BIG role in your daily health, performance and productivity then understanding them is key if you want to operate at your best. So here's a brief run through your some good daily habits and how they influence each hormone.

1. Setting a time to get out of bed every morning.

Its 5:30am your alarm is bleeping and you've rolled over and smashed it to give you another 5 minutes in the sack. Now are you hitting this because you have time to rest further or because you were monging out in front of the box too late and are now regretting that decision. If the answer is the lata then you need to address this as sleep is vital in achieving optimal results. When you wake up unrested your cortisol levels increase throughout the day. This causes stored fat to be pulled into the blood stream and stored in your alpha 2 fat receptors typically located around your lower abdominal area. It also causes muscle atrophy meaning you start breaking down muscle tissue. If your objective is to reduce your body fat and life a healthier, leaner and longer life then controlling the negative effects of cortisol is vital.

2.Lifting weight and regular exercise.

Its very easy as a busy dad to prioritise everyone and everything else in your life, you're a provider and want the best for your family. But not allowing time for you, to be the best version of you, is affecting you more than you realise. As you get older your natural testosterone levels start to drop by between 1-3% per year. This effects your red blood cell levels, your energy levels, your libido and your motivation to kick the shit out of life. So how do you mitigate against this natural reduction in testosterone? Simple, lift weights and keep your body weight down. Forcing weight through your muscle will increase testosterone production due to a requirement for your body to build muscle.

3.Eat at regular times of the day and reduce refined carbohydrates.

We evolved to smash rocks together and hunt for our food, yet these days we don't move, drink beer and snack on shit in front of the box. We didn't evolve to consume many carbohydrates and so doing so especially refined carbs (cakes etc) triggers dopamine release in our brain because our brain loves that shit. It also increase levels of Ghrelin in to the body causing you to feel hungry and so causing you to eat more. A diet high in protein, veg and good fats will keep Ghrelin levels low and so will stop you feeling hungry. This is a good thing if you want to reduce your body fat. If you are able to have a fairly set eating regime then your body will know when its time to eat and release Ghrelin at the correct times allowing you to remain in control of hunger feelings, reducing any temptation to snack and over consume on calories.

4. Eating more protein at set times of the day.

This is a continuation from my last point as by keeping Ghrelin levels low, you are automatically going to increase leptin levels. This is the hormone that tells you that you are satisfied and not in need of food at present. So, reducing carbohydrates and consuming minimal refined carbs along with a diet high in protein, veg and good fats will keep Leptin levels up and Ghrelin levels down. Synthetic Leptin is also the main ingredient in the 'weight loss' injection causing you to eat less, simply because you don't want to eat. However, creating this naturally is far better than injecting your arse with the synthetic stuff, as Ghrelin suppression is also not a good thing (you do need to eat). By having a feeding routine your body will also get used to releasing leptin at certain times of the day. This allows for controlled calorie intake and stable blood sugar levels.

5. Setting a time to go to bed and sticking to it.

This is the final daily habit you need to remain in control of and that is the time you go to bed. Your circadian rhyme loves regularity and no more than when you're going to bed. I can't express how important it is that you get your head down early and achieve a minimum of 7 hours sleep. However coaching busy dads, I know this is not always possible and in many cases, dads just struggle to sleep. By setting a time every night to go to bed, you are informing your bodies circadian rhythm of the time you intend to go to bed, so it knows when to release Melatonin, this is going to help aid a high quality and restful sleep. By having an erratic evening routine, you are not allowing this process to take place and so you will find you are going to bed wired and unable to drift off. This is also made worse by falling asleep on the sofa as your body knows its not in bed and so dumps a load of cortisol into your system to wake you up, making it even harder to go to sleep. By not prioritising sleep every night you are straight away making life so much harder for yourself the next day.

If you have had a shit day and want to mong out in front of the box eating refined carbs before falling asleep on the sofa, remember a shit end to the day is going to create a poor start to the next day.

Remember my mantra:

'You are a walking representation of your daily habits'.

Make sure you look after your circadian rhythm and choose your daily habits wisely.

**Regards
Coach James**