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# THE BUSY MOM'S SIX-PACK GUIDE

**11 DIET  
HACKS  
THAT WILL  
GIVE YOU  
SEXIER ABS**

*(Even if You're Too Busy!!)*



**PRO ATHLETE TURNED MOM (OF TWO) NATHALIA  
MELO SHARES HER SECRETS!**

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*As a mother of two and someone who is incredibly passionate about staying fit and healthy not only for our bodies but also for our minds, I have made it my personal mission to help moms and give them the tools to live a fitter and healthier lifestyle in ALL stages of their life by simplifying the process and making it easier to stick to.*

*I started training at a very young age, and I've always been passionate about everything related to staying fit and healthy. That passion has landed me several magazine/newspaper covers and articles like*

**COSMOPOLITAN, MUSCLE AND FITNESS HER'S,  
OXYGEN, FITNESS RX, MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT, THE  
DAILY MAIL, TO NAME A FEW.**

*The commitment and discipline to my fitness regimen has also won me big awards like the prestigious Olympia competition, where I took the first place trophy in the Bikini division.*

*Being a trainer for nearly 15 years, it is fair to say that for most of my life, I've had a good grip on my training regimen...that was until I found out I was pregnant.*

*Learning to adapt my training during and after pregnancy was overwhelming, so I dove into countless articles, books, and research papers about training and nutrition. Ultimately, I decided to further my education and become a Pre and Postnatal Certified Trainer, to help me refine my understanding of how the body changes during these stages of women's lives.*

*So, I have made the mistakes and learned the things that DO work, so moms don't need to break their heads trying to figure it all out. I've done the legwork for them!*

# BEFORE WE GET STARTED....

I want to say that having a grasp of my Nutrition is NOT something that has always been easy for me. I have said before that I come from a family where my mother was frequently trying the next fad diet: The vegetable soup diet, the salad only diet, the fruit only diet.... You name it, I probably tried as a young teenager.

As I got older I became more and more curious about how fat loss and muscle gain actually worked, but ***I was always getting confused with the amount of conflicting information out there:*** "If you don't have breakfast you won't be able to lose weight", and then five minutes later find an article saying: "Skipping breakfast is the best thing you can do to lose weight".

Things then got that much more intense when I started competing in bodybuilding competitions and the eating regimen became more strict than I had ever experienced before. A rigid eating schedule with very little room for deviation, very little seasoning allowed, very limited flexibility, and quite honestly... I knew that way of living had no long term sustainability.

After having my son (first child), I knew that a strict lifestyle was not going to be healthy nor sustainable, and most importantly I didn't want to live that way anymore. ***I knew there had to be a better and easy way to stay in good shape without obsessing over every little bite of food I took.***

I wanted to have the freedom to go on a date night with my husband without guilt over eating "out of my plan", and I wanted to be able to share ice cream with my children without feeling guilty and try to overcompensate by spending hours on the treadmill.

Now, fast forward to several years and I have been able to transition from being on that very strict eating regimen as a former professional athlete to a more flexible approach to my nutrition. What's more, even with doing this, I have still been able to maintain a physique I am happy with and confident in, and this is after having 2 babies by c-section within a 14-month span!

In fact, I am now only 3lbs away from the weight I used to compete at, and back then, I was never able to maintain this level of "leanness" due to the extreme restrictions during preparation for a competition. The extremes were very drastic, so I could never find my balanced (and sustainable) happy place as far as my nutrition and body shape went.

***Now, I won't lie, I have made a lot of mistakes (haven't we all?) but eventually I was able to find what worked best for me.*** When I found that happy spot, I started trying it out with my clients, and the more I worked with moms from all different backgrounds, shapes, and walks of life, the more I realized that I had actually been able to create a very simple system that WORKS. I have filled my plan with tips and strategies that even the busiest moms can follow, not just me.

So today I am going to be sharing with you my top 5 nutrition tips that have allowed me to continue having a very similar physique to what I had when I won the most prestigious bodybuilding competition in the world (The Olympia). And even better, I did it all after having 2 kids, having MUCH less time on my hands, and having a serious shift of priorities.

***If I can do it, so can you!***

**LET'S DIVE INTO MY TOP  
11 NUTRITION TIPS.**



# TIP 1: FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOU SHOULD BE EATING

**One of the biggest struggles busy moms have when it comes to nailing their nutrition is figuring out how much they should be eating.** At times they are being told they are eating too much, and other times they are told they are eating too little. So how much should you be eating?

There are many ways which you can use to find out this number, but for the sake of simplicity today we are going to go over one that is super easy to do.

You begin by eating like you normally do and tracking everything you ingest (literally EVERYTHING!) using a food tracking app such as MyFitnessPal for two weeks, and also track your weight for the duration of the 2 weeks. At the end of the 14 days add all the calories you ate for those days and divide by 14, and that will be your average daily calorie intake.



It is also important to weigh yourself when you start this process, and again at the end of it. (and a few times in between)

If your body weight has not changed at all, then the average daily calorie intake number you got is your maintenance calories or the number of calories you need to maintain your weight.

***In order to lose weight, you need to be in a calorie deficit, which means removing some calories from the maintenance amount.***

# TIP 2: FIND ONE THING YOU CAN STICK WITH

The biggest issue I see as a coach (and, if I am being honest, something I have done in the past as well) is good ol' diet hopping! (Yo-yo dieting...ahem!)

I have talked in a few blogs and social media posts about growing up in a household that was all about fad diets. My mom has tried every diet that has ever existed, and I've watched her results be short-lived...over and over again.

Low carb one month, vegetable soup diet the next week, fruit diet the week after, just to name a few!



Now that I am an expert in the field of nutrition and fitness for moms, I can see why nothing worked for her and why I see nothing working for so many busy moms in the long run. ***The problem is that most of these diet strategies are not sustainable at all.***

So, before you start a new diet that makes you cut all the things you love out of the menu, it is important to ask yourself if you can see yourself following that regimen 3 months, 6 months, or even 1 year down the road. If the answer is no, then the diet might not be right for you.

## TIP 3- DIET AUDIT

Can you accomplish your fitness goals even if you DON'T track your calories? Absolutely.

In the same way, you can save money without having a budget.

***However, it is important to understand that when you don't do ANY tracking you're pretty much going in blind to the fat loss/toning up process.***

So, what is a diet audit? Does it mean tracking calories forever?

Absolutely not! Although some people are very data-driven and like to keep a close eye on their numbers, you don't need to feel like you have to do it all the time.

However, if you want to know what your next step needs to be in order to get you closer to your goals, you will need a diet audit, which means tracking your caloric intake for some time (1-2 weeks) so you can clearly see where the extra calories are coming from and where you can cut back.

Most people grossly underestimate how much they eat and how many calories different serving sizes have, so this is a very important step to bring more awareness and knowledge when it comes to your portion sizes.



## TIP 4- PLAN AHEAD

**"Fail to prepare, prepare to fail"** is probably a saying you've heard plenty of times before. However, when it comes to achieving your goals and staying sane as a busy mom, **planning is probably the most important thing you can do.**

This has worked time after time for me, and every client that I have worked with in my nearly 15 years of experience who has had incredible results says what helped them significantly was to plan ahead.

"Winging it" and not being prepared day after day will put you in a position where you are just so hungry that you will go for food items that don't align with your goals. This leads to a feeling of failure, which then makes most people give up.



## TIP 5- COOK IN BULK

Cooking in bulk goes very well with the previous point of planning ahead. If you plan your week, you can make one bulk meal that can be used for future meals as well. Or if you don't want to eat food items that have been precooked for more than a few days, you can do this 2 times a week.

This will not only save you tons of time when you are trying to get everyone ready and out of the house, but it will also save TONS of money as there will not be as much wastage.

I love using our barbecue grill, crockpot, and an air fryer to cook things in bulk.

***Budget tip- Buy vegetables that are in season as they are likely to be less expensive.***



## TIP 6-STRUCTURED FLEXIBILITY

The term "structured flexibility" might sound a bit contradictory, but before I go ahead and explain to you what this is I would like to tell you that this is probably the number one reason why I have been able to maintain my physique since having kids. Especially after my experience as a world champion bodybuilder that led me to a very unhealthy relationship with food.

Whenever we talk about eating healthily and losing weight people automatically think about eating only "clean foods" (aka nutrient-dense foods) all the time without any deviation...EVER!

The fitness community for a long time has done a great job vilifying food groups and screaming from the rooftops that if you ever for any reason deviate from only eating healthy foods...then you will never have success, EVER.

The problem with this all or nothing mindset is that it makes people not only look at food as good vs bad but also feel like a failure for not being

I don't know about you, but I love a good glass of wine on a date night with my husband or a scoop of ice cream with my children, and when I realized that I could have these things (in moderation) and still crush my fitness goals, it was a game changer.



# TIP 7- HAVE NUTRIENT DENSE FOODS AVAILABLE IN YOUR FRIDGE

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***Nutrient-dense food is the opposite of calorie-dense foods, which means they are rich in nutrients and significantly more filling.***

I am a huge snacker, and I LOVE practicality. So I need to make sure that I don't reach for the chocolate bar or cookies that are ready and immediately available to be eaten straight away. What I do to counteract this is I keep my fridge stocked with chopped fruits, pre-grilled chicken breast, and frozen vegetables that can be easily defrosted in a couple of minutes. That way I have the convenience of a ready-made snack.

This is a great tip, especially for those seasons of life where prepping food and packing it ahead of time might not be on your list of priorities. This option is the second best thing!



# TIP 8-CHECK MENUS AHEAD OF TIME

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I often see people who are scared of going out for dinner and completely ruining their diet efforts and lemme tell you...I was one of those people!

And, although I don't recommend that my clients go out to eat all the time, especially in the beginning when they are still trying to figure out what works best for them...it would be unrealistic to tell someone to avoid eating out altogether.

Eating out is part of the way we celebrate many things, and the moment we make that a "no go EVER", the plan becomes unrealistic and unsustainable.

***So, my tip is to check out the menu ahead of time so you can budget your calories*** (I talk more about calorie budgeting under tip 11) and by checking the menu ahead of time you are also setting yourself up for success by avoiding "hungry decisions". "Hungry decisions" are when you order the biggest and most calorie-dense foods on the menu just because you are hungry.



# TIP 9- ORDER DRESSINGS AND SAUCES ON THE SIDE

This tip is very self-explanatory, and it will definitely help you have more control over the number of calories you are consuming.

In restaurants, they want to add as much flavor as possible to the food, and this normally comes at a cost: extra calories.

So, by ordering sauces/dressing on the side ***you get to control how many extra calories you will be consuming.*** You get some flavor, but not all the calories/sugar/salt that comes with an entire portion of sauce/dressing!



# TIP 10- KEEP IT SIMPLE

One of the biggest reasons why people can't stick to a plan is because they overcomplicate things from the very beginning. "calorie cycling", "carb cycling", "keto", 'intermittent fasting"...

***How about we start with the most simple things you can do, which won't radically change your day to day life, such as reducing portion size.***



Once the basics like portion control, more water intake, better sleep, increased exercise intensity, etc. stop working, then we can start to explore the more "advanced" strategies.

***But, when you are first starting it is crucial that you try to keep it as simple as possible so you can STICK to the plan.***

When you overcomplicate things, you're more likely to experience burnout, and that's the enemy of long term success.

# TIP 11 - BUDGET YOUR CALORIES

I feel like many people get the concept of "calorie budgeting" a bit wrong, so I am very excited to go over this technique that I use all the time and it really helps me stay in good shape year-round.

The concept of calorie budgeting is this: when you know you have an event, or a get together with friends where you know you will be consuming more calories than usual, you shave off some extra calories during the other parts of the day.

NO! I am NOT telling you to starve yourself all day so you can have that extra glass of wine or slice of pizza.

## ***The idea is a bit like this:***

**Breakfast-** If you normally have 5 egg whites, 2 slices of bread, and a teaspoon of butter, you can shave off some calories by only eating 3 egg whites, 1 slice of bread, and no butter.

**Lunch-** If you normally eat 8oz chicken, 1 cup of rice, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  avocado. You can save some calories by eating 5oz of chicken,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of rice, and 1 tbsp of avocado.

By the time you get to your special event, you will have some extra calories to play around with, and instead of going 1500 calories over your caloric needs...you might only go 700 over, because of your budgeting of calories throughout the day.

And remember, one day of going over your calories a bit won't break you, just like one day of watching what you eat won't have you suddenly fit! It's all about balance!

# (BONUS) TIP 12-DRINK WATER

***Did you know that 37% of people mistake thirst for hunger??***

What this means is that many times when you think you are hungry, you are actually just thirsty. Water can be a great tool to help you on your weight journey...it's filling and calorie-free, not to mention great for your health as well.

## ***A few tips so water can help you:***

1. Drink water when you feel hungry, just to make sure you're actually hungry and not thirsty. (This is especially true if it's the afternoon and you're about to reach for a snack after just having lunch an hour prior.)
2. Drink water before a meal (20-30 mins prior to eating).
3. Sip on some water throughout your meals, as this will also allow you to slow down your eating speed. This is essential for mindful eating and recognizing when you are full.



As you can see, taking control of your diet and a more fit lifestyle (Aheem, six-pack abs!) does not have to be as complicated as so many make it out to be.

It feels refreshing to know it's all so relatively simple, right? I hope you feel that same sense of relief and that "Hey, I can actually do this!" feeling that I and so many others get.

If you are ready to take the next step, and access the exact blueprint I used with my training and Nutrition... don't worry! I got you covered gurl!

**Check out my 28 Day Tone Sculpt, and for the next 72hrs, you can get this program for 50%OFF! So, instead of \$79.99, this program can be yours for \$39.99! But, remember... this special is only valid for the next 72hrs!**

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*Nathalia Melo*



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