

How to Get Free of Belly Fat

An Exclusive Interview with Josh Bezoni, former Transformation Contest Judge for Body-For-Life

Craig: Hey, everyone. This is Craig Ballantyne from Turbulence Training and I'm here with my friend Josh Bezoni who has the website GetBellyFatFree.com. We're going to be talking about his nutrition program today.

Josh and I met just about last month. I saw him speak a couple years ago on his transformation contest, so we're going to talk about that a little bit to start here and then get into the nutrition stuff. Josh, welcome to the call.

Josh: Thanks, Craig. Thrilled to be on.

Craig: It's really good to speak with you again. Josh has a great seminar for a whole bunch of fitness guys and we all met down there and it was a really great time down in Austin, Texas. Thanks for doing that.

Josh: Yeah, it was great to have you and to meet everybody. We all have similar goals to help people. I like hanging out with people that like to help people.

Craig: It was really cool. Why don't you tell us about your experience in the health and fitness industry and a little bit about your transformation contest, then we'll get into some more details about that.

Josh: Sure. I started out as a personal trainer really young. Before I even got certified I've always been really interested in health and fitness. I lived in Iowa and I used to do a lot of Iowa teenage bodybuilding contests and power lifting contests and I was really into all that stuff as a youth.

Then I went to college and got a double major in Biology Nutrition. Right after college my first job was with a gentleman by the name of Bill Phillips, he wrote a book called **Body for Life** and he had a company called Body for Life, EAS is another one of his companies and Muscle Media, they're all together in one building in Golden Colorado.

While working with Bill, you've got to imagine I was right off the farm in Iowa, so to speak, my first day on the job I go down to the gym at EAS headquarters and John Elway is working out. You know, John Elway the famous football player, and Terrell Davis and Shannon Sharp and all these people. Then we also had a chance to work with Brad Pitt and Demi Moore and all these stars through Bill, but the cool things was we got to help millions of people through Bill's transformation contest.

It was just a great education, a great first place to begin working. Since then I started my own publishing and nutrition company, about 12 years ago now, so I've been doing this with a passion for quite awhile.

Craig: It was really cool, the connection with Bill. You had a connection with him that helped me get an interview with him and so a lot of people listening to this call have heard my interview with Bill about the transformations and some of them are pretty stoked about this stuff.

Josh, you have run quite a few contests in the past, so why don't you tell us your top transformation tips and when you do that keep in mind that there's a lot of beginners on the call who want a nice quick start and then there's also a lot of listeners who are in an advanced stage or ready to make that advanced transformation and they really want to get maximum results for those after photos. So, top tips for both beginner and advanced.

Josh: Well, I was a judge for a lot of Bill's contests, I was one of the transformation judges. He had a movie called Body of Work and I was actually one of the one of the judges in that movie. From a judges perspective the first thing is just to make sure your photos are clear and there's no clutter in the background, because judges don't even look at the photos that much if there's all this clutter and you can't see the transformation.

Craig: I would say for the beginner what are some of the things they can do, they're going from zero to 60 overnight, so someone who has been really struggling, they're eating fast food, they're overweight, they're tired, and all of a sudden they see this, whether it's my website or whether it's your website or whether it's a magazine.

They see this and they go, "Okay, I'm going to do this. That person looks just like me, if they can do it then I can do it." What are the first steps? Obviously they're going to need workout and nutrition programs, but what are the most important things that a beginner should do at the start?

Josh: A beginner should do this in my experience. We're all a product of our environment and most people's kitchens are a mess. I mean you go through most people's kitchens in the world today, or in America at least, and you find all this processed food and all this junk food, chips, frozen pizza, chocolates, ice creams, and it goes on and on. They're full of what I call obesity additives.

Obesity additives are basically manmade chemicals that a lot of science and research has shown add a lot of fat to the body and makes it very unhealthy and makes you susceptible to a lot of disease. Anyway, the first thing to do, the first step would be to go in your kitchen, get your family's support and make a family event out of it, or if you live by yourself do it by yourself, collect all that food.

You can give it away to some needy families or you can just get it off the face of the earth and replace it with foods that are from Mother Nature. I'm talking about foods with one or two, maybe three ingredients in them like lean meats, low fat cottage cheese, grass fed beef, free range chicken, organic foods if you can afford it, fruits and vegetables, healthy whole grains,

things of that nature, healthy fats and we can move more into that, especially certain nuts like pistachios and walnuts.

Then get yourself a great cookbook that's really easy to use and you can make quick healthy recipes. Doing that alone is a huge first step for most people.

Craig: Yes. I really like what you said there about making it a family event because so many people have very little social support. I'm going to put you on the spot here and ask you about it, this is one of the toughest questions that I'll ever get.

How can these people with no social support make a transformation? When they're doing this at home how can they get their family involved, their friends involved, what have you seen that has worked?

Josh: Well, to back up a little bit, if you don't have support you're right, your chances of succeeding are very small. I've seen it over and over again. It's even hard for me after having done this for the majority of my life to stick to programs if I don't have a workout partner or an accountability partner that I talk to quite a bit about what we're doing.

So, the first step is either get online at a website and try to find an accountability partner or somebody at your local fitness center or somebody that wants to go through this transformation with you where you can talk on a regular basis and say, "Hey, what did you eat today? Did you exercise today? Why didn't you exercise today?" To keep you accountable, to help keep each other accountable.

It just becomes twice as easy when you do that, so find someone, anyone, a close friend, someone from a community center, someone online, anywhere. Get at least one accountability partner and try your best to limit your time with negative people that tend to tell you that you can't do things and maybe kind of erode your confidence a little bit.

Craig: That's so powerful. You talked about those obesity additives and I want to go back to those. Are there certain foods that people are eating that people can get really hooked on and how can they get rid of those obesity additive foods, overcome those cravings, and what are some really good substitutions foods that they can get in that will get them kind of on the right path?

I know a lot of eating is really about routine and ritual. Like 8:00 at night American Idol comes on, I'm going to grab a bag of chips and sit in front of the TV. So, what can people do, what are some strategies that they can use to overcome this negative eating spiral?

Josh: I think a lot of it in the beginning is awareness. I think a lot of people are eating by accident, by that I mean they don't even really consider what they're eating or what's in the foods that they're eating. They're just doing like you said, they're sitting down grabbing their ice cream sundae or they're grabbing a bag of chips and they're eating without any awareness.

So, the first thing is just start checking out some food labels. Maybe jump online a little bit and look at CalorieKing.com or one of these other websites and just see what's in the food you're eating. It will shock you.

Here's an example. I was in New York City and they put all the calorie content in the menus, it's a required law in New York City. It opens your eyes to how many calories are in things. I thought I was going to eat a somewhat healthy meal and it had like 2,400 calories in it. So, education awareness first and foremost is important.

As far as obesity additives there's a very simple thing to do here. In my program Seven Day Belly Blast Diet that's coming up here I talk about obesity additives, there's seven of them. The first one, public enemy number one is sugar. It's what I call stripped carbohydrates. This is really America's number one problem, our number one problem in America anyway, I know you're in Canada. Are you in Canada right now?

Craig: I certainly am.

Josh: Okay. Canadians too, because we pass all this junk across the border and to a lot of other countries now too. Sugar, people are consuming huge amounts of sugar these days, like 173 grams a day. We're talking 140 pounds a year of straight sugar.

What sugar does when it enters the body is it causes a storage hormone called insulin to immediately grab hold of the sugar and either stuff it in muscle cells as energy or if the muscle cells are already stuffed full, which most people's are, it converts it to fat.

So, people are consuming this very toxic very negative thing called sugar and stripped carbohydrates, and what I mean by stripped carbohydrates are like white breads and these milled processed flours and things that are really bad and they act just like sugar in the body. Something very simple to do is reduce your sugar intake dramatically.

If someone did nothing else after this call but reduce their sugar intake The American Heart Association says 30 grams of sugar a day on average. When you consider a can of Coca-Cola has 40 grams all by itself, that's not a lot of sugar. So, I have a 30/30 rule, 30 grams of sugar and 30 grams or more of fiber a day, which most people aren't getting. That's another topic we can talk about.

But, if you follow the 30/30 rule and nothing else you can get tremendous results very quickly. So, public enemy number one is sugar. One quick note too on the Coca-Cola, 40 grams of sugar, 4 grams of sugar is a teaspoon, so drinking a can of Coke or any other soft drink, I'm not picking on Coke, is like taking 10 teaspoons of sugar and dumping it into a glass of water, mixing it up and drinking it. So, soft drinks, energy drinks, even fruit drinks out there, fruit juice are really not good choices for hydration.

Craig: While we're there why don't we cover real fruit and where that plays in, in your experience, for people getting results and also in your plan?

Josh: Real fruit is for the typical average person out there that's eating all this junk food and eating all this bad food real fruit is a great substitute because it's still sweet, but it has fiber, which kind of blunts this insulin effect I was talking about, an fruit is full of vitamins and minerals and vital nutrients and phytochemicals, which gives them their color and they're very important for disease prevention.

So, fruit I think is great. A couple pieces, a couple servings of fruit a day are fine. You've got some more advanced people out there that are maybe trying to get contest ready, they might want to start limiting their fruit intake, but as an overall health protocol you definitely want to have at least two servings of fruit a day.

Craig: To get those 30 grams of fiber is there some foods in there, you know when most people hear that word they go, "Oh my god, it's going to be some type of crazy Metamucil drink," what can they do to really enjoy the foods that they're eating and to increase their fiber intake? I know that the average American is getting 12 grams or 13 grams of fiber per day, which is significantly below what's recommended not only for fat loss purposes, but to avoid cancer, which is a really big thing.

Josh: Here's the deal with fiber and how it play a role in weight loss and everything else. A lot of people don't realize it, but back in the cavemen days we were eating 60 or 70 grams of fiber a day, so we were eating a lot of fiber. If you're eating a lot of fiber your digestive tract works as it's supposed to, you clear your body of what I call toxic waste.

In my program I tell people that they can lose up to 10 pounds in seven days. Now, that sounds impossible, but what I'm talking about and I clarify it is really excess water including this toxic waste that a lot of people have in their digestive tracts and including fat over seven days.

A lot of people that only are eating seven grams of fiber a day or eight, nine, 10 grams of fiber a day, their digestive tract holds onto this food they're eating in a very inefficient manner, so they have really pounds of undigested food. It's not a pretty topic to talk about by any means, but that fiber helps to cleanse out your system and it's very important.

It's also important for nutrient uptake. If you're taking in nutrients, but your digestive tract is just full of this toxic waste you're not going to absorb the nutrients like you should. So, getting at least 30 grams of fiber a day is going to help with that tremendously.

A lot of women talk about this pouch area and guys talk about this belly bulge, it's not all fat. You really need to take that fiber and you'll feel healthier, you'll absorb more nutrients, you'll have proper digestion, you won't get all this bloating and stuff, you won't be as likely too anyway unless it's a food allergy, but that's another subject.

So, yes, fiber is vitally important, 30/30, 30 grams or less of sugar unless you're an athlete, there's something I call sugar loophole unless you're exercising, which we can talk about, 30 grams or more of fiber.

Craig: Perfect. Just before we move along from this little topic here, what are some of the biggest food surprises out there, and I mean negative food surprises that there are in people's

diets? For example, I'll give you a little bit of time to think while I come up with one of my own. One of them is granola bars.

For example, the really tasty granola bars often have a lot of sugar, they're high in calories, yet I've never met a single person who gets full on one of those granola bars, so usually they end up eating two or there are two in a package and they eat both. The next thing you know they're 300 or 400 calories down and they're barely even satisfied.

What are some other nasty food surprises like those granola bars that I just mentioned?

Josh: Anything processed. The first thing that comes to mind is Lay's potato chips. You know the old commercial, you can't eat just one. People sit down with these bags of chips or even pretzels, which people think pretzels are somewhat healthy and really they're just refined flour.

What people should not think of is just calories. What people should be focusing on is nutrients, because your body is like a machine, it's like a car. If your car doesn't have enough oil in it the engine is going to lock up and you're going to destroy your engine. That's what people do every day. There's something like 160,000 deaths attributed to obesity and obesity related diseases in America alone every single day.

What these people aren't doing is they're not getting the nutrients they need to function properly long term. If you have certain nutrient deficiencies you're much more likely to get cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, the list goes on and on. So, rather than just look at calories you want to try to choose these natural food choices that are going to give you the most bang for your buck, there's going to give you all these nutrients and vitamins and minerals right in the foods without having to supplement your diet.

But, other things besides granola bars, a lot of people think tofu is healthy and it's not necessarily healthy. A lot of soy products out there, people think soy is really healthy and there are some estrogen problems with soy. A lot of people think milk is extremely healthy and I drink a lot of almond milk, but it has a completely different nutrition profile.

Milk has a lot of sugar in it, it's a different kind of sugar, it's lactose, it doesn't have as high as what's called a glycemic index, but a lot of dairy products aren't very good for you. Think about yogurt, if you grab a yogurt a lot of times they have 20, 30, even 40 grams of sugar in a yogurt. So, they have maybe eight grams of protein and 40 grams of sugar. You might as well go have an ice cream cone.

Craig: Yes, absolutely. That was a really great one there. The fruit in the bottom yogurt ones just have tablespoons of sugar in there. That's a real good one, I'm glad you caught that one.

When I was younger, when I was in high school I was like the pretzel, I used to eat those things all the time. Around 16 or 17 that's when I started working out and I'm reading the magazines and in the mid-1990's we're talking about everything was high carbohydrate, and that was back in the day when as long as it was low fat or fat free you were good to go, so I made a bad judgment call there eating too many pretzels and too much processed bread when I was in high school.

Josh: I did the same thing, I was totally deficient in essential fatty acid, which are extremely important, because I used to eat nothing but protein and carbs, and I used to just eat carbs that didn't have fat in them without realizing it.

It goes back to that idea that it's not just about reducing calories, it's about balanced food that fuels your body and it's about staying away from these obesity additives I talk about, this junk and these chemicals that can erode your health and your waistline.

Craig: Back then they were using that phrase, "eat clean," like they were using that phrase 20 years ago before it became a big book. So, that's why I really don't like the phrase, because it can just be so generic. Eat clean to a guy in the mid-1990's was rice and chicken breasts, which these days we know is not necessarily the best way to eat. You have to have healthy fats, which back in the mid-1990's eating clean included zero fat, so I really hate that phrase to be honest with you.

Josh: I do too. I ate a ton of white rice back in the day, and white rice is refined rice with the fiber taken off of it, so it absorbs much faster in the body and has very little if any nutritional value.

Craig: Yes. Why don't you tell us then what you're eating these days? Because I think a lot of people are always curious to hear what's the expert eating. So, maybe just run a couple of meals off. Let's start with your morning now and maybe when we get through a few other questions we'll talk about your afternoon and your evening meals. What is Josh Bezon's diet these days?

Josh: Sure. The first thing most people should do is they should get four or five quality meals and most Americans don't stray from four, five, or six meals for each breakfast, lunch, dinner. So, if you get four, five, or six in your rotation that you can always make quickly you're doing a great job and that you'll have the ingredients for in your home at all times. That's one important tip that you can do.

But, here's what I had for example this morning for breakfast. I made a protein pancake, I had a scoop of protein powder mixed with slow cooked oatmeal and I put some blueberries in there and a little bit of applesauce to give it some moisture and texture, organic applesauce, and I made blueberry pancakes, and I had with that some grapes on the side. That's what I had this morning.

Then I had a protein shake right before the call, almond milk with protein powder and a little bit of organic almond butter, it's like peanut butter but it's with almonds. So, that's what I've had so far today But, I'll eat five to six times a day right now because I'm trying to lose weight myself just like everybody else out there in the world. I go through stressful times and my weight will fluctuate, but the good thing is I know how to get it back in control.

That's just an example of what I'll eat today. Tonight I'll probably have grilled salmon and I'll have a medley of vegetables that have a lot of colors in it. People should try to eat the rainbow of food colors in a day. So, if you think about the rainbow and all the colors try to get fruits and vegetables during the day that cover that rainbow spectrum. Purple cocoa puffs don't count, it's got to be natural food.

Craig: So, not Skittles?

Josh: Skittles don't count.

Craig: All right.

Josh: You'll get the vitamins and minerals you need if you're eating that rainbow, so to speak, of fruits and vegetables.

Craig: You made a really great point that people should have the recipes and the ingredients for four to six meals. So, I've got my four to six breakfasts I can create any time, I've got my four to six lunches, I've got my four to six dinners that the family likes and that suit my program, and if the world is coming to an end and there's floods and I can't get to the grocery store at least I can make this and stay on track.

Are you going to have recipes in your program or where would you recommend finding some, or where would you recommend finding these four basic standard meals for each one of your main meals?

Josh: Well, my program The Seven Day Belly Blast Diet does come with a cookbook. I think the important thing with any meal is that it's fast, especially in today's busy world, and it's balanced. We can talk more about balance.

But, you can find cookbooks online. There are all kinds of great cookbooks out there. Eating for Life Cookbook from Bill Phillips is an old cookbook, you probably have some Craig, I don't know if you do or some of our friends like Mike Geary and people do.

The important thing is you find at each meal, like you were saying, four, five, six meals that you can just keep in your rotation and they're quality meals. Here's an example for breakfast for me, here's what I'll have basically every day of the week. I'll rotate between about three or four breakfasts and I love these breakfasts so it doesn't bother me.

I'll have protein pancake like I did this morning. I'll have an egg sandwich, which I use whole grain English muffin, an egg, a little bit of turkey sausage and a little bit of cheese, very low in sugar. I'll have scrambled eggs, natural eggs with higher Omega 3's.

Sometimes I'll do two eggs and two egg whites, but a lot of times I'll just eat regular eggs because they're not as bad as people think, they're actually very healthy for you. So, I'll have eggs with whole grain toast and maybe half a grapefruit. A lot of times I'll have oatmeal with a protein drink on the side. I don't eat just plain oatmeal, I put walnuts in it, I put blueberries in it.

So, those are some belly fat killing recipes I should say or meal ideas for breakfast. There's three or four of them right there and I just rotate them and it really takes all the conscious effort to think you have to come up with new recipes all the time.

Craig: That's great. Our friend John Romaniello has an interesting tip in one of his recent articles and he said that you shouldn't be afraid of just eating the same thing over and over again. I know that's going to work for certain mindsets. What are your thoughts on that? Who

does that work best for? There's certainly difference personality types that get into transformation contests, tell us a little bit about that

Josh: Sure. Well, it's hard to argue with John because he looks so good, such a muscular guy. Here's what I think on that. As long as the meals that you're eating are high quality balanced meals that cover the nutrients you need, otherwise you can eat yourself into a nutrient deficient state.

For example, if you're eating the same foods all the time that are low in vitamin C, it never happens anymore but you could be walking around with scurvy here in a couple months, which is a vitamin C deficiency that used to happen back in the old days.

But, yes, I think you should stick to the same meals, but they've got to be really balanced. If there's one thing I would change it's the fruits and vegetables, make sure you're getting different colors of fruits and vegetables quite often just to make sure you're getting that vitamin and mineral content and those vital nutrients that you need so much.

Craig: Very cool. Another great thing that you told me, I really like this quote that you gave me that said, "You can't outperform your confidence when it comes to weight loss." Can you explain what you mean by that?

Josh: Yes. I don't think you can outperform your confidence for long, some people can do it for a short amount of time, but I don't think you can outperform your confidence or your self esteem if you want to call it that in anything in life.

A lot of people have what I call confidence issues. If you don't consistently work to convince yourself that you deserve great things in life, whether it be a great paying job, your own business, a great marriage, a great body, if you don't convince yourself that you deserve those things you will never have them. That's very important.

So, in my program I spend a lot of time on this, because you can give someone the ultimate nutrition program, the ultimate diet, the ultimate exercise program, but if their self esteem and their confidence sucks, for lack of a better word, they're just not going to get results.

I've worked with so many people over the years, tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands of people and I see over and over again people who have low confidence, they just never get results. So, with them I don't even spend a whole of time on nutrition or exercise in the beginning, I spend a lot of time having them do simple little exercises like reminding themselves of great things that they've done in their life that they never thought that they were able to do.

I have them reminding themselves of characteristics that they like about themselves. That sounds a little foo-foey, but it's really important. All of us know people who say, "I'm going to start a business and do this," and they just never get around to it and their worst enemy is themselves. So, I spend a lot of time with that in the program. I know it's vitally important.

Craig: Very cool. You know what? I'll speak for the people listening on the call; they really appreciate that because it is super important to have that right mindset. A lot of people are

going to struggle and they may not succeed with their first transformation. We see a lot of people talking about that on my Facebook page and I like to point out that if you read the success stories of our winners it always seems to be their third, their fourth, their fifth, their 20th attempt to lose the body fat.

Is there anything you want to mention maybe on perseverance and give some great motivation tips to our listeners?

Josh: Yes. I've seen a lot of transformations in my day and persistence is really important, planning and tracking what happens is really important, and then making adjustments on the fly depending on what is and isn't working for you. Surrounding yourself with a group of likeminded uplifting people that can help you build your self esteem and keep you accountable and you can share with as well, its vitally important during any physical transformation or any transformation process in general.

My friend and mentor Bill Phillips in his new book talks a lot about kind of cleaning out your own closet in order to achieve and he talks about people who walk around with all kinds of anger towards people and resentment and shame or regret in their own life have a hard time achieving good things because they get in their own way.

So, if that is someone listening on the call they should definitely make every effort to try and rid themselves of those feelings, because the greatest achievers and performers I know of out there are people who are very full of gratitude, they're full of happiness. You can build those characteristics in yourself no matter where you're at today. It just takes some effort, it's like building a muscle.

I just wanted to point that out a little bit. You can overcome those things.

Craig: That was very cool advice, appreciate that. Now, you mentioned something there, you mentioned the phrase tracking. I'm going to ask you how important this is, how you see your transformation contest winners in the past how much time do they spend on tracking, what are they tracking, are they tracking just their nutrition, are they tracking their workouts, are they tracking even more than that? What is the most important information that we need to know about this topic?

Josh: What's the saying? If you fail to plan you're planning to fail. Right?

Craig: Yes.

Josh: There's nothing I've heard that's more important than that, it's so true. I write down what I eat when I'm in a program where I'm trying to get really fast results. I write down everything I eat, I've been doing that for the last month or so now.

Just the mere fact of writing down what you're eating has great effects. There have been scientific studies I've shown of people that just write down what they eat and hold themselves accountable if they write down everything they eat they lose weight.

So, tracking is extremely important. I think people should track their workouts, people should track what they're eating, people should track how they're feeling during these times, people should be tracking what works and what doesn't. The more the merrier.

Now, some people like me I'm not a planner by nature, I'm not a tracker by nature, I've never wanted to keep a journal or anything in my life, you can come up with systems that are very easy for you to follow. Here's an example, this is a little crazy I know. Back in the 1980's Richard Simmons of all people had a program called Deal a Meal, right?

Craig: Oh, yeah.

Josh: It gave people these little cards and when they ate what they were supposed to eat the card goes from one side of the wallet to the other. He made millions off of this idea. I remember watching this as a kid, my mom bought the program. I do something similar. I'll put anything in my pocket, like quarters, nickels, dimes. Quarters represent protein, nickels represent carbohydrates, dimes represent fat.

I'll put change in one side of my pocket and as I eat my food during the day I'll know I've got to eat a certain number of proteins, certain number of carbs, certain number of fat servings, each one is a portion, and we can talk about portions, but I'll move it from one pocket to the other. When the change runs out I don't eat anymore.

It sounds silly, but I do that. You can do that with something on your desk, you don't even have to write the stuff down if you know you're not going to be able to follow a program like that. Some people love to track everything and they'll get online and they'll track every little morsel and they'll look at the nutrition content and they'll track their vitamin C intake. God bless them.

That's not me, so I come with alternative approaches that I know will work for me like I just described. That's a little bit of a tip there.

Craig: That's pretty cool. Now, we've covered a lot of good stuff for beginners, but let's talk about the best way for people to determine how many calories they need. If they're going to that level, and I'm not even sure if in your program that people are going to need to because they're going to be focusing on those whole natural foods, but what are the best ways for people who are just getting started to get a good idea of how many calories they need?

Josh: Basic rule of thumb that we've always used in the past when we used to do a lot of calorie counting with athletes and other people that we worked with was if you're trying to gain muscle weight anywhere from 12 to 15 calories per pound of body weight. If you're trying to maintain and maybe lose a little bit of fat and gain muscle about 10 calories per pound of body weight. If you want to lose weight you take your body weight times the number eight.

That's a very simple way to determine how many calories you need and it's very general. Your age, gender, the amount of exercise you're doing on a daily basis, all of course affect that, but those are some general numbers. So, if you weigh 200 pounds and you want to lose a little bit of fat and maybe gain a little bit of muscle you're at about 2,000 calories a day.

Those are really general guidelines. The problem is I've seen over and over again most people won't track calories. People who are advanced and love to go to the gym and love nutrition will track their calories, other people won't. So, that's a challenge and why I recommend people count portions instead like I was talking about earlier.

The other problem is a calorie is not a calorie. There's something out there I call the calorie myth. The calorie myth is that every calorie no matter where it comes from is a calorie in your body and it acts the same way, but it's really not the case.

For example, if you have 100 calories of let's say chicken breast, your body will use 20 percent of those calories to digest the protein, because protein is a very complex molecule, very complex nutrient. So, 20 percent of the protein will be used to digest and assimilate those protein calories you just ate. Whereas white flour or sugar really doesn't have much of a thermic effect at all, your body will just absorb it and fat is pretty low also.

So, the stomach effect of food is also something to keep in mind. When you have something like slow cooked oatmeal about 10 percent of the calories that you consume will be used to digest and assimilate the food. So, there you go again, when you eat more complex natural foods that take your body work to digest you'll actually burn more calories in the digestive process, we're not talking about one percent or two percent, we're talking about as much as 20 percent.

In my new program I incorporate that as well. It's not just calories, it's not just this calorie myth, but it's actually combining foods the right way so you can help burn a lot of the foods you're eating just by combining them the right way.

Craig: Very cool. What else can we go over here? You mentioned one of your obesity additives, why don't you give us a couple more that are really important for us to discuss?

Josh: There's quite a few. Caffeine is another one. I have seven obesity additives, but caffeine is one of them. Caffeine is great, it can actually help with lypolysis or the breakdown of fat in certain amounts. The problem is you get these energy drinks out there that people are drinking by the gallons these days, not only do they have huge amounts of sugar, I think one of the energy drinks I looked at recently, Rockstar I think it was, had like 65 grams of sugar in a can.

Craig: Those cans are huge, yeah.

Josh: They're big cans, but people are drinking that stuff.

Craig: Kids drink that stuff, I mean adults you make your own choices, but kids are being cheated there.

Josh: Yes. Even Gatorade, the average American does not need the sugar in Gatorade. Granted, athletes who are refueling during the sugar loophole period I call it, and even people who are working out intensely can certainly indulge in something like that, but the average American shouldn't be using that stuff.

I was at the gym the other day and I saw this poor woman walking, she was probably 50 pounds overweight and I feel bad for people like, I used to be overweight in the past and I have a lot of empathy for them, she was drinking in front of her on the treadmill was a Gatorade and an energy bar. She probably walked for half an hour, she drank the whole Gatorade and ate the energy bar, because she needed energy while she was working out, that was her mindset.

Advertisers had convinced her that's what she needed. She probably consumed 600 calories while she exercised for 30 minutes and probably burned 120 calories, so people have to be super careful what they're consuming in the name of energy. Fat is energy. All this body fat around us, that's stored energy. We just have to tap into it, we've got to move our bodies, we've got to eat the right way, we've got to keep our insulin levels low, not eat sugar so that our bodies can release glucagon, which is a hormone that will burn that fat.

Anyway, I got a little of track there. Caffeine, people are consuming way too much of it and when you consume way too much of it then it actually makes a lot of people nervous, it makes them anxious. What do people do when their mood is out of balance? They eat. They eat foods to try to get back in balance. So, caffeine can actually make people eat a lot more than they should.

MSG, when you think of MSG you think of Chinese food and how they used to ban it. I remember in the 1980's and 1990's I used to go to Chinese restaurants and they had "NO MSG" signs up all over the place because it's not good for you, it had some ill health effects. Well, they still use MSG in a lot of processed foods these days.

Salad dressings, I go to the grocery store and I look at salad dressings and they have MSG. There's all kinds of studies on MSG where people who consume a lot of MSG products have much more tendency to be obese and they've linked it directly. So, MSG, which is a lot of processed foods, is a link to gaining weight, which is crazy but you've got to look at those food labels.

Another one is excess sodium. Our bodies need sodium to a degree, but in processed foods the manufacturers are adding so much sodium these days because we basically deadened our taste buds to sodium, so they have to add in tons of it so people think it tastes right. Sodium causes dehydration and people go to drink more. What do they drink? They're not drinking fresh water, they're drinking these energy drinks or they're drinking these Coca-Cola's that add more weight.

Those are a couple other obesity additives. Again, if people just wiped out these seven obesity additives or limited them and chose different brands of their favorite foods they'll lose weight. I have people that come to me and say, "Josh, I will not exercise. I will not change what I eat very much. I don't really want to do anything, but I do want to have some weight loss and I want to live healthier. What can I do?" I say, "Remove these seven obesity from your nutrition plan."

Low and behold they'll come back and they'll start to lose weight and they'll start to be healthier. It's not as dramatic as if you do exercise and if you change more things, but that alone you can get a good result.

Craig: Yeah, just getting that junk out first of all it eliminates a lot of food, to be honest with you. You're not going to have a lot of junk left if you get rid of even just the few that you mentioned there. Powerful stuff.

You mentioned a pretty cool phrase there, the "sugar loophole theory". I had not heard that one before.

Josh: Okay. So, The American Heart Association recommends that you consume on average no more than 30 grams of sugar a day. They realize that it's a terrible toxic ingredient and the average American is consuming upwards of 200 grams a day, so there's a huge discrepancy there.

Well, when you tell people they can only have 30 grams of sugar a day and there are other diets out there that tell people 10 grams or 15 grams a day, it's really just not reasonable in today's world. I recommend around 30 grams and it's still really tough for people, but I have something I call the sugar loophole and it's a trade off.

You can eat more sugar if you exercise. So, you have 30 grams of sugar a day, but if you exercise and depending on how long you exercise and the intensity level you get more sugar. So, it's kind of like a reward. It's funny to think about, but it works.

There's certain times during the day when your body is primed to handle sugar. Your body is much more primed to handle sugar in the morning than at night. After a rest your body is just more primed to handle sugar, and post workout. So, if you go and exercise intensely your body will take the sugar that you consume and it will drive it into muscle tissue and replace the energy that you just used. It will store it in muscle tissue as an energy source called glycogen.

So, that's the sugar loophole. If you want to enjoy more sugar you exercise. If you don't exercise you shouldn't be enjoying more sugar. It's a little trade off. And I go through the exact amounts in my program and how to combine it with protein and there's some faster absorbing protein like whey protein and the amounts that you should be consuming after a workout to help repair the damage that you did to your body during exercise. But, the little sugar loophole is kind of a cool way to get more sugar if you want it.

Craig: Okay, cool. I know some other coaches that have said, "I don't mind if my clients even have Skittles after training." It's pretty funny. He was talking about his figure competition girls, so it just shows you the power of exercise on sugar metabolism there.

Josh: It's funny you mentioned that, Craig, because I'm like a sugar addict as far as ice cream goes. I should go to Ice Cream Anonymous or something, I'm addicted to ice cream. I will do my very best not to eat it and I maybe have it once or twice a week, but when I have it I always try to time it right after a really intense workout. I know that that's a sugar loophole, that sugar is more likely to be stored in muscle tissue.

So, if you've got one of those things, chocolate or something that you're just not going to get out of your eating program no matter what, someone would have to tear it from your claws so to speak, think about eating it post-workout.

Craig: Well, you must have gotten rid of some of the sugar from your diet, so is there any overcoming craving tips you can pass on here?

Josh: Yes. I've had severe cravings. First of all, everyone in my family and in my extended family has been obese or morbidly obese at some point in their life, so I have terrible genetics. In addition to that I'm not a tall guy. If you've got somebody who is 6'4" they can put on 20 pounds and you can hardly notice, if you've got someone who is 5'7" or 5'8" you put on 20 pounds and you look like you put on 50.

So, just a service area idea there. Here's what I do to battle sugar cravings. I eat five to six times a day. There are studies that show that when you eat five to six balanced meals a day you balance your blood sugar levels and you don't get hungry and you don't get these wild cravings.

People come to me and they say, "Josh, I cannot stop eating. I'm craving food constantly." Low and behold I find out they're eating tons of sugar and they're only eating like two meals a day. Your blood sugar levels on a roller coaster ride and it causes these huge cravings, so you can balance that out.

Everything is about balance, it comes down to balance when it comes to the human body. It's always trying to reach homeostasis, it's trying to reach a balance. So, the way you help your body and the way you trick your body is to consume five to six meals a day with protein, slow absorbing carbs and healthy fats during those meals, spaced anywhere from two to three hours apart. You'll balance your blood sugar levels and it will help tremendously with cravings, any type of cravings.

I have people do this and 48 hours later they'll come back and they'll be like, "Oh my gosh, my cravings have gone down 75 percent," just by eating frequently throughout the day and eating the balanced foods at each one of their meals.

Another thing you can do is exercise. I think of exercise like a jack hammer when it comes to cravings. A lot of people crave foods because they're trying to reach a balance in their emotional state, they're depressed, they're stressed out, they're anxious, something is wrong and so they eat. If you replace that with exercise, which can release these feel good hormones you can really accomplish the same thing without feeding your emotions.

The other thing is water. Most people walk around in a state of mild dehydration. If your dehydrated your mind will send a signal to your stomach that says, "I'm dehydrated, I need something to drink," but your stomach really interprets that as, "I'm hungry, I want to eat more." So, if people drink enough water a lot of times their cravings will decrease.

So, take your body weight divided by two and that's how many ounces of water you should try to get a day. For me, I weigh about 180 pounds right now, so I'm looking at 90 ounces of water a day, which helped me tremendously with cravings.

The final thing is vitamins and minerals. If your body is deficient in a variety of vitamins and minerals your mind, your brain, will basically be screaming to your stomach saying, "Eat, we need more vitamins and minerals. We're dying over here." You'll go to eat and if you're eating

the typical American diet you'll eat foods that are completely void of the vitamins and minerals that your body is demanding, so you keep eating and eating because you're never giving your body truly what it needs, so your body keeps sending starving craving signals to your stomach.

Those things; water, eating fruits and vegetables, maybe taking a multivitamin to help with any vitamin mineral deficiencies, come from food first, food first is very important. What else did I say? Balanced meals two to three hours apart, and I might have mentioned another one, but those help so much with cravings.

Craig: That's good stuff. Here's just a little story about me. I rarely drink a diet soda, but if I drink a diet soda with caffeine it mid-afternoon or early afternoon I'll notice it in terms of dehydration and then I'll notice it I'm thirsty, but also eating more than I expect in the evening.

You just mentioned a couple there, being dehydrated and the caffeine being a problem, so people should just keep their eyes open for that. Are they drinking too much coffee throughout the day and not getting enough water? If they just make that switch will it help out with their cravings and being able to overcome that stuff?

Josh: Yes. Instead of these heavy energy drinks and these Starbucks with cappuccino shots that have 200 or 300 milligrams in them switching to green tea, which green tea has been shown in studies to be a very potent antioxidant which is very healthy for you and it also has been shown to increase the metabolism, so switching from these energy drinks and these coffees that are full of sugar and cream and all this junk that add belly fat and fat all over your whole body to something like green tea, doing that alone can help people with energy levels and long term energy levels because they're reducing body fat.

It does have some caffeine in there, but it's more like 50 milligrams instead of 300 milligrams, so you're not going to get that dehydration effect and that huge anxiety kick after you drink a green tea. So, that's another good example for people.

Craig: That is really good information. The final topic that I want to cover before we finish up our call here is, "What are your thoughts on cheat meals and/or cheat days?" Can these be good, is there a specific way to do a cheat meal that you recommend, do you have any specific suggestions on making these work? They're quite popular, the whole thought of the cheat meal and even the cheat day these days.

Josh: Well, I think Joel Marion who talks about cheat meals all the time is completely wrong. I'm joking of course, Joel is a good friend. Joel is right on. Bill Phillips used to talk about a cheat day all the time, even back in the 1990's.

There are a lot of reasons for a cheat meal or a cheat day. I tend to recommend cheat meals nowadays for a balanced approach rather than a whole cheat day, because I think it works well for people that have a busy schedule, like me. I'll have two to three cheat meals a week. So, if I'm traveling, which I do a lot, or I'm out socializing or I go to a business dinner I know that I can have a meal and not feel guilty about it.

Also, it's just a psychological trick to allow myself not to think I'm dieting. A lot of times I use cheat meals as a reward system as well if I follow my program and do everything I'm supposed to do for two or three days I reward myself, so it's nice.

But, from a metabolic standpoint there's a lot of science that shows that cheat meals or cheat days actually help. When you diet what can happen is your metabolism because of hormonal changes will actually begin to decrease, you'll start to naturally burn less calories. It's your body's response, it thinks it's starving is the very simplest way to say it.

Then when you sneak in a cheat meal or a cheat day every once in awhile your metabolism will respond and increase again, so if you do it strategically you can keep your metabolism humming along nicely without hitting those weight loss plateaus.

Now, in my new program called The Seven Day Belly Blast Diet I'm changing the calories every seven days and it goes through a cycle. It's not just a seven day diet and you're done, but every seven days we change the caloric structure of what you're eating in an attempt to trick your body into not hitting a weight loss plateau, so you keep releasing those calories so to speak. You don't really release them for no reason, but it's used for metabolic functions and produced heat and various other things, but to trick your body into not holding onto this fat.

So, yes, there's a lot of great science and it's really where diets should be going. If you're going on one severe calorie restriction if you're eating 3,000 calories a day now and you drop down to 1,000, after about a week your body is going to make all kinds of adjustments and it's going to become even more hard to lose weight in the future, plus you'll be burning muscles, which is a very bad idea because muscle is very metabolic.

So, long answer to a short question, cheat meals and cheat days are a great thing for losing weight.

Craig: Very cool, appreciate that. Sometimes the short questions do require longer answers. It's been really cool, a lot of really practical stuff, eye opening stuff especially about the obesity additives. Very sensible also, you got a lot of good judgment in there and I can certainly appreciate that this is going to help a lot of people. Thank you for being on the call.

Josh: Yeah. I want to thank you, Craig. Thank you for coming down. And just mention again that my Seven Day Belly Blast program, my diet, is going to be launched soon and might already be launched. It comes with food journals and it comes with cookbooks, and it comes with a step by step program where a lot of the things we talk about today might be really confusing to someone, but it lays it out in a way where it's basically "step one, step two, step three."

We get into a lot of supplements, which ones are bad, which ones are good and the science shows they're good. We get into a lot of weight loss scams out there, what you should avoid, what you shouldn't waste your money on. It just gives you a very balanced program that you can get very fast results.

As I mentioned before, some of my clients lost up to 10 pounds in the first seven days. 10 pounds of excess water, 10 pounds of this toxic waste that's in their system because they're not

eating enough fiber, and also fat. So, those three things are combined in the 10 pounds and if somebody is overweight and hasn't been active and they're eating very poorly it's not a stretch for them to be able to lose a significant amount of weight in seven days following like this.

Anyway, Craig, thanks so much for your time.

Craig: Absolutely. We really appreciate that I can't thank you enough for being on the call. We'll probably get feedback and maybe do another call in the future, Josh.

Josh: Cool. Take care.

Craig: All right, I appreciate it. Everybody, thank you for being on the call and we'll talk to you soon. Bye. Please visit Josh's website for more free information about getting rid of your belly fat for good. The link is: www.GetBellyFatFree.com