

So, Your Ambition Is to Become a Circus Fat Lady?!

Part I

by Ken Hutchins

Ken Hutchins wrote this article in 1998. Its theme is based up the pretense that you desire to become as fat as possible as quickly as possible. This, of course, is exactly opposite of what most of us desire from a program designed to enhance our appearances. By taking a backwards view of fat-loss principles—namely how to gain fat—we may obtain insights that normally go unappreciated. This is a picture I have painted for my clients for several years. Although it is written from a woman’s perspective it applies equally to men.

Pretending

You are a 40-year-old woman who needs money—big money. However, you must get big to get the big money. A renowned movie producer contacted you and offered you one million tax-free dollars to star in his film about a circus fat lady. You accepted the role with one requirement in addition to your acting talent: You must weigh 300 pounds. The problem is that you presently weigh only 150 and your part is to commence filming in 6 months.

The fact that you signed the contract presumes that you want the money enough to disregard the inconveniences of being so large at a height of 5 feet, 6 inches. You accept the problems of being hot incessantly, the discomfort of clothing, the disapproving looks of other people, having difficulty moving, the health risks and the plastic repairs that will be required when you take the fat off, if you ever can. These are no small problems.

There are also the personal costs of your clothing and food to obtain and then maintain the size required for the part. All of these considerations are to be dealt with; however, one large doubt remains: Can you meet the producer’s 6-month deadline? Can you gain 150 additional pounds of bodyweight—mostly fat? Do you, at least, possess the potential to store this much fat?

So you have heard that I had an advanced program for gaining fat and you seek my advice. I cannot actually predict your potential unless you tell me that you have been so large before. But assuming this is your first time, I really have no way of knowing your fat potential.

[Is it not strange that we are discussing potential fatness as though it were an asset like IQ or music or athletic ability?]

What I can do is design a regimen to maximize your fat acquisition. I can induce you to acquire fat as fast as possible. What regimen might you think this to be?

As I ask you this, I expect to hear a most common answer. This answer is a natural conclusion, as most people possess a limited knowledge and experience considering the subject at all.

You guess that I will coerce you to eat incessantly and eat the most fat-laden and calorie-rich foods to be found. [I also find this ironic, since most already-over-fat people deny that they eat too much or much at all.] I admit that this is a step in the right direction, but that it will not encourage optimal utilization of your fat cells’ potential.

Different cells (tissues) of the body can be stimulated to respond in their own specialized way. In other words, what they are specialized to do can be exaggerated by supernormal stimulation.

Skeletal muscle cells will maintain a norm of size and strength given their *normal* exposure to the *normal* demands of their *normal* environment. Above-normal stimulation—a higher intensity of work—stimulates muscle cells to become larger and stronger. That is, they adapt to do more of what they are specialized to do—produce force. Of course, being stimulated and being allowed to respond to the stimulation by the limitations of the body’s biological resources are two different things.

Certain epithelial cells on the finger, hand, and foot pads are thicker and tougher than the skin in other parts of the body because they are the first line of contact with abrasive surfaces. However, once exposed to a supernormally abrasive intensity, they will thicken and toughen beyond their norms. Note that although a mere increase in the volume of abrasive activity may be deemed *increased intensity*, volume (and force) have limits beyond which the body loses more tissue per stimulation than it can replace between stimulations.

Bone has a similar stimulus-response mechanism, although its specialization is for a different purpose. Our issue here, however, is fat. Fat is a kind of specialized tissue. Other cells do indeed store energy to some extent, but with fat cells, the storage of energy in the form of lobular fat is its forte.

Fat cells are very efficient at storing energy. While muscle cells—the most active cells of the body— consume approximately 35-40 calories of energy per pound per day to passively exist, fat cells burn only 2 calories daily per pound.

And while muscle cells are growth-responsive to intense activity—exercise—fat cells are oblivious to exercise. They have no *exercise receptors* whatsoever. This should be a sobering fact to all those excessive-compulsive types who religiously pump some parts of their bodies in the desperate attempt to *force* fat away from those areas.

But fat does indeed have receptors to some stimuli. The most effective of these stimuli induces fat cells to do what fat cells do best—*store fat*. And just what is this stimulus?... *Starvation!*

Yes, if you want to make a fat cell grow, you must alternately stimulate it with starvation, then provide the body with food that can be converted and stored as fat.

With exercise we desire to shock the body with an intensity which it interprets as momentarily life threatening. The result is that the body gears up to meet a supposed survival demand.

With a dietary regimen designed to diminish fat, we do not desire to shock the body. If we reduce calories either too much or too fast, the body reacts conservatively to preserve fat, to become metabolically more efficient—if it can—and to lie in ambush, so to speak, to grab any slightest foodstuff it can pack away—albeit, after the body has converted it to fatty acids, if not already in a suitable form.

Realize also that the fat storage process is very advanced in our species. If not, we would not have survived the last Ice Age. Indeed, those who could not respond to alternating spells of feast and famine with long-term fat storage did not survive. Such adaptive response also had to occur early in life. In today’s society our frustrations with overfatness becomes most marked with the onset of middle age. Back in the time of the last Ice Age (15,000 years ago), our present-day middle-aged man would have been considered an ancient. Few people lived until their 40s. Therefore, to survive, an individual must have acquired significant fat much earlier in life than we typically do now.

The regimen I am about to explain, admittedly, is extreme and bizarre, but I am trying to make a point of principle. Such clinical control is what research requires in order to be valid. Such clinical control is also the missing element from almost everyone’s personal dietary habit and exactly why most people fail to lose fat, although here we are attempting to do the opposite.

The regimen is conducted in a controlled room—jail cell, hospital room, etc. At first, it continues for three days and then repeats:

Day 1: Fast—Ingest nothing but water and vitamin pills.

Day 2: Fast—Ingest nothing but water and vitamin pills.

Day 3: Feast—Awaken at 8 a.m. to eat. Continue eating all day, concentrating on low-fat foods (mostly complex carbohydrates with a modest amount of protein) until just before you go to bed at midnight. Then eat high-fat foods for your last-ditch attempt to saturate your digestive system. You naturally become drowsy, fall asleep, and we connect you to intravenous glucose to let sugar cruise through your body all night as you sleep.

Days 4, 5 & 6: Repeat cycle.

Note that we used low-fat foods for most of the feast day of a fat-gain program. Why?... Because we are interested in the body’s absorption of as many calories as possible. Since fat is the last food to leave the stomach, and since the fat in a meal greatly determines your satiety, we want to avoid fat until the last possible burst of calories into the system. Although fatty foods carry the greatest number of calories, they would merely kill your appetite if incurred before the last minutes of Day 3.

An eating contest was reported in one magazine over 15 years ago whereby a typically-sized, middle-aged housewife consumed over 100,000 calories in one day. The runner-up, a male contestant, ate over 80,000. It is, therefore, not too farfetched to reckon that I could coerce you to eat 40,000 calories over the 16-hour period of the feast day.

If we see that fat acquisition is slowing or unsuccessful after some time, we will upgrade to a longer fast— perhaps 3-4 days.

Assuming this concept to be valid in some related form, note what it implies to us who desire to lose fat—that starving merely primes the fat cells to perform their specialization better... that low-fat foods are not necessarily the boon to leanness... that skipping meals favors fatness, not leanness... and that many people, particularly women, who started another starvation diet approximately every eight weeks starting around age 16, are actually fatter today than if they had not addressed the problem at all.