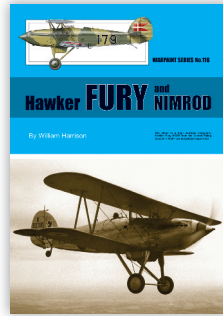


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'Hormone Optimisation helps you burn fat and build muscle'

MK personal trainer and nutritional advisor **Joana Todor Back** explains how a balanced diet and strength training lead to happy hormones...

Ever wondered why some people can eat anything and everything, while others only need to look at 'bad food' and they seem to put on weight?

It's all to do with your body's hormone balance. But the good news is that you can correct your hormone balance through Hormone Optimisation.

Here are the five most important hormones to reduce fat, increase muscle and improve performance...



STUDIO 44
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CORTISOL: The king of all male hormones. It keeps your libido up, helps you gain muscle, and boosts your energy levels, confidence and outlook on life.

It's also one of the first hormones to go as we age. So all guys over 35 should take steps to keep their testosterone levels high.

The best way to do that is by making sure you do lots of strength training and eat enough calories made up from a good balanced diet.

Eat plenty of beef, salmon, tuna, oysters, shellfish, milk/whey, eggs, green vegetables, garlic, basil and bananas.

CORTISOL:

This is our main stress hormone and having too much of it has a negative impact on our health and performance.

Cortisol is the one hormone to be blame for our 'love handles'. The best way to keep this hormone in control is by doing strength and conditioning workouts and using Magnesium Oil before bed – this is a total game changer in regards to our deep sleep patterns.

Eight hours of sleep is very important and not consuming caffeine after 4pm will allow the adrenal system to just slowly switch off.

GROWTH HORMONE:

Growth hormone plays a key role in burning fat and building muscle. It also helps your muscles, joints and tendons recover from workouts. Having good fats in our diet and doing strength training is important for this.

INSULIN:

Insulin is a funny one as it can have a positive or negative effect on the body. It plays a key role in recovery and

muscle growth but, if spiked too high, it leads to severe issues like diabetes and is also the major body fat storer.

The main insulin activators are carbohydrates – the more processed they are, the higher the insulin response and the more body fat we store.

LEPTIN:

Leptin is one of the main body fat regulators, it is the hormone that switches our hunger on or off. If leptin is kept high, fat burning becomes quick and your desired 6-pack will definitely be a possibility.

IN CONCLUSION:

Eat a balanced diet and do proper strength and conditioning. The more muscle mass we have, the leaner our body is and the more optimised and happy our hormones are. That brings me on to the topic of next month's column: Proper strength and conditioning.

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