

# GABRIELE

## FITNESS & PERFORMANCE



## Your Mind is Making You Fat

By Tom Langton

A few weeks ago I had the opportunity to learn from one of the top strength coaches in the world. I spent a week in East Greenwich, RI at the Poliquin Strength Institute learning [Bio-signature Modulation](#) from Charles Poliquin. Bio-Sig (for short) is a method of testing body fat, then using those results to determine a basic hormonal profile (or biological signature) for each person and then use that data to target certain areas of the body and reduce unwanted fat.

The week long course covered testing procedures, nutritional planning, supplement protocols and the science of hormones and how they relate to body fat. Not to say that my brain was overloaded with information, but I filled 3 spiral notebooks and still feel like I missed at least 1/2 of what was taught. The one thing I want to share with you was something that was the baseline for most of what we learned. In simplest terms, there are ONLY 3 reasons why people get fat.

**1-Stress** - continue reading, I'll go deeper with this one

**2-Malnutrition**- This term does not refer only to people who are starving, a person can be morbidly obese and still fall into this category. To be malnourished you are either not getting enough of a nutrient, getting way too much or have a very displaced ratio of nutrients.

**3-Toxins** - These are found in the foods we eat, medications we take and the water we drink. We live in a toxic environment. A toxin can be defined as anything that is foreign to the human body and causes a negative effect. While in today's society, it is impossible to avoid ingesting some level of toxins, that number can certainly be drastically reduced with some of the choices we make everyday. Also keep in mind, that substances have varying effects on different people, "One man's bread is another man's poison"

Today, I want to focus on #1-Stress. We all have stress in our lives in one form or another. You may have stress because of money, your job, relationships, family issues, your children or maybe just the morning traffic, but it's there. So maybe you're one of the lucky ones and don't sweat anything on that list, just remember, there are other forms of stress. Too much exercise causes stress on your body, not enough sleep or a lot of poor quality sleep, can have a stressful impact on you as well.

Are you someone who gets stressed out very easily and lets it ruin their day and then takes it out on everyone they encounter?

Well, I hope not, but if you are, don't worry, there is scientific evidence to back you up. The human body is not designed to handle a lot of stress or should I say prolonged levels of stress. Humans are designed for "Fight or Flight" situations. The earliest humans only worried about 2 things, what they were going to eat and what might try to eat them, that is it.

The Fight or Flight principle refers to the release of a hormone called Cortisol. Cortisol is considered the "stress" hormone. Cortisol gets a bad rep in today's media because it is the cause of most

people's belly fat, but keep in mind that your body **MUST** produce this hormone to survive, its just the quantity of production that gets people in trouble. Cortisol is actually a low grade form of adrenaline. So short bursts of cortisol actually have positive effects on the body, like:

- **Increased memory function**
- **Increased Immune function**
- **Great burst of energy**
- **Lowers sensitivity to pain**

So lets go back to the caveman we talked about above and say he comes face to face with a sabre tooth tiger. He can stay and fight or choose flight and run, but either way, that burst of cortisol is going to help him solve his dilemma in a serious way.

The difference between you and the caveman is that once he either killed or got away from the tiger, the stressor went away and the cortisol production stopped. The problem with stress today is that it doesn't stop that easy. You will be worrying about your kids going to college for bout 18 years and your job will cause stress for however long you decide to work. It is this prolonged exposure to the cortisol that is making people fat and sick, here is what happens with this extended release of Cortisol:

- **decrease in muscle tissue**
- **decrease in bone density**
- **increase inflamatory response**
- **fat storage in the abdominal region**
- **blood sugar imbalances**

So as you can see, this is a pretty powerful and dangerous hormone in the body. There are many ways to reduce the prolonged production of cortisol, but the most effective way doesn't involve supplements or nutritional changes. The best way to control cortisol production, is to control stress levels in everyday life. It doesn't matter how much you work out or how clean you eat, if you are constantly worried about certain things and obsess over them, you are putting your mental and physical health at risk. I understand that it is impossible to live in this society and not have some levels of stress, but reduction is the key.

I wanted to leave you guys off with a little recomended reading list if this topic was of interest to you. The first book is call [The Cortisol Connection](#) and the other is called [Lights Out: Sleep, Sugar and Survival](#). I have read them both, learned a ton and enjoyed reading them. Also, please email me at [tom@gabrielefitness.com](mailto:tom@gabrielefitness.com) if you have any questions or comments.

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