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Everyday Diet  
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Advice for  
Permanent  
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MATT MORSIA



# THE 24/7 BODY

Matt Morsia (MattDoesFitness) is the UK's No. 1 Fitness Vlogger, with over 240 million views on YouTube. A former athlete, PE teacher and personal trainer, he is known for his funny, honest and informative fitness advice and videos, and for his hilarious son Luca and wife Sarah. He has attempted some of the world's hardest, most extreme and most unusual training and diet regiments. From the Rock's workout to the Navy Seals fitness test, he shares what works, and what doesn't. Drawing on cutting-edge sports and nutritional science, Matt dispels the myths, fad diets and workouts, to provide viewers with incredible results that last.



THE  
24/7  
BODY

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MORSIA



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Note to readers: This book is based on my personal experiences and learning and has been compiled as general guidance on the specific subjects approached, and I hope you may find some of my approaches useful. I'm not a nutritionist or a medical professional and this book is not a substitute for professional nutritional, medical or healthcare advice. If you have a mental health issue, an eating disorder, or are considering starting a diet, I'd strongly advise that you go and see a specialist for professional advice immediately, as you may require medical help. In terms of changes in nutrition, you should first talk to a doctor or registered dietician. Please consult your GP before changing, stopping or starting any medical treatment.

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For Sairs, Luca and the new arrival



## CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: I Have an Eating Disorder	11
CHAPTER TWO: Trying to Lose Weight is Stupid	37
CHAPTER THREE: How to Eat Doughnuts and Not Get Fat	61
CHAPTER FOUR: Stop Using Your Injury as an Excuse	77
CHAPTER FIVE: How to Get Bigger, Fitter, Faster and Stronger	101
CHAPTER SIX: Why Social Media is Ruining Your Life	131
CHAPTER SEVEN: Your Genetics are Everything	163

CHAPTER EIGHT: Supplements Are a Waste  
of Money 189

CHAPTER NINE: Motivation isn't a Real Thing 215

CHAPTER TEN: This is It 237

REFERENCES 254

INDEX 257

# **INTRODUCTION**

I can't believe they're letting me write a book. Like, an actual book. This is ridiculous. My GCSE English teacher is going to absolutely kick off. It probably won't even be that good to be honest. I can barely speak, let alone write. In fact, why did you even buy it? What were you thinking?! That was a joke. It's probably going to be the best thing anyone's ever written. Nice one for buying it, much appreciated. Anyway, now that the awkward first paragraph is pretty much sorted, let me explain why I wanted to write this. Oh, and if at any point I come across as a massive narcissist, I apologise. I'm not actually a massive narcissist. I don't think I am anyway. It's just really hard to write a book, some of which is about yourself without sounding like a bit of a dick.

So, as a former PE teacher, athlete, personal trainer and now one of the biggest fitness YouTubers in the world (aka

a weirdo who gets paid to film themselves doing stuff), the most common question I get from followers and even people in the street is, 'How do I get a body like yours?' (great start with the whole not coming across as a massive narcissist thing). People will almost whisper it, as if I'm going to usher them into a dark alleyway and reveal some kind of mystical secret. I think they're expecting to be told that they need to drink 23ml of maple syrup eight times a day while reading the complete works of Shakespeare to their auntie's hamster. Or something equally ridiculous. Other times they want me to outline a protocol of supplements, with the inference that I must be taking steroids or other drugs, because having a decent physique without chemicals is now seen by most as almost impossible.

People are always looking for some elusive quick fix, and I feel like a constant source of disappointment when I offer up my fairly simple and not particularly sexy advice. The truth is that, despite everything you have been told, there is no secret. No magic supplement or superfood; no esoteric or excessive routine that in a short space of time and with minimal effort is going to transform your body. Unfortunately, that's not how it works, and even if you are able to follow a crash diet and lose loads of weight in the space of a few weeks, I guarantee you will eventually put it all back on and then some.

This is one of the reasons why I've held off from writing a book about fitness and the body for so long – because, despite what most people on social media and in the fitness industry would have you believe, the most effective methods of losing fat, building muscle or 'toning up' are actually very simple. So simple, in fact, that after reading this book you'll be capable of doing them yourself. Just wait and see.

Now don't get me wrong, social media *can* be awesome. But as someone who has a degree in Sports Therapy and Exercise Physiology and has competed internationally in both athletics and powerlifting (with over fifteen years' experience as a sports coach and personal trainer), I find the abundance of absolute shite being promoted by many 'fitness influencers' infuriating. That noise only adds to the already crazy confusion of messages that we have been fed about the body from the fitness and diet industries, as well as the conflicting information that the government and even doctors have given us over the years. It is extremely frustrating to watch all of this play out, knowing that there are millions of people following terrible advice and, as a result, not managing to improve their health, fitness or body composition.

This book is my attempt to shatter all of those myths and clear up this wealth of misinformation. Eating McDonald's doesn't make you fat. Eating a salad won't make you skinny.

Doing sit-ups won't get rid of your belly fat and losing loads of weight in a couple of weeks isn't a good thing. I could go on but hopefully you get the point. So many of the things we've been brought up to believe are completely false and this is one of the major reasons why people struggle to change their bodies and achieve their fitness goals.

Just to be clear here – I'm not going to change the way you look and feel in two weeks. If that's what you're after then put the book down and go and try a few more of the 'cutting edge' fat loss methods you discovered in *Heat* magazine. Then, once you've realised that they don't actually work in the long run, come back and read this book. I don't want to sound overly dramatic, and I'm not necessarily going for the 'tough love' approach, because I have a lot of empathy for people struggling with diet and body shape, but if you're not ready to accept that genuine change comes from a more permanent reframing of your habits and behaviour, then you're not ready for this book. The reason it's called *The 24/7 Body* is because finding an equilibrium and happiness in your body isn't something you can just dabble in. It's not a temporary state. It has to become a way of life. Forever.

Now, before you sprint in the other direction, I'm not in any way suggesting that you have to turn into some kind of monk to have a great body and be healthy and happy. I am

living proof of that. If you've watched any of my YouTube videos, you'll know that I frequently eat 'crappy' food – I always have, and honestly, it's why I will never compete in bodybuilding or embark on any career that requires me to completely eradicate junk food from my diet. Krispy Kremes and Pizza Hut are *way* too important to me to let that happen. I truly believe that any diet that says you can't have doughnuts, pizza or chocolate is doomed to failure. And I actually think it's dangerous to label any particular food as 'bad' or tell people they should avoid it at all costs, because, as well as being untrue, this is often a one-way ticket to an eating disorder.

Now obviously you can't eat crap all day every day and expect to build the body of your dreams. But at the same time, eating junk food every now and again won't stop you from achieving your goals. Ultimately it comes down to moderation. It might be the most boring word in the dictionary, but with a solid understanding of the power of moderation, you can transform its meaning from boring to liberating. Moderation means that you can eat what you want (within reason) while keeping fit and healthy. You don't even have to think of it as 'falling off the wagon', because it's part of the wagon. It *is* the wagon. *You* are the wagon. (Sorry, that's way too many wagons for one paragraph.) Applying words like 'cheating' or 'sinning' to the

food you eat is ridiculous. I'd argue that it's these kinds of words that have ruined our understanding of balanced eating and cause a lot of emotional issues when it comes to our eating patterns.

I also didn't want this book to be yet another cheesy manual that sounds nothing like the author on the front cover. We've all read those sorts of books and felt massively disappointed, and it would be my literal nightmare to have my name attached to anything like that. I am hugely appreciative to you for picking up this book and for giving it a go. I am also hugely appreciative of my audience online for supporting me. It's really important to me that this isn't just another fitness book churned out to make some money. I have over fifteen years of experience in this field and I've dedicated a huge amount of time to research, consulting hundreds of studies and pieces of academic and scientific literature. Anecdotal evidence can be extremely useful, but I want you to know that I won't tell you something unless I know it to be true and have evidence to support it.

On top of that I also wanted to give you an insight into some of the challenges and difficulties I've personally been through when it comes to pushing my own body to change – for both good and bad. It's still a taboo to talk about some of the issues I'll address, particularly when it comes to eating disorders, but I know from my experience with thousands

of clients that these kinds of issues are massively prevalent. Being open with this kind of thing can be a challenge, but there will be people reading this book going through something similar and I want you to know that you are not alone. I also think it's really important to understand that the way someone looks isn't always a good indication of their overall health (or knowledge) – something that's worth remembering when we're scrolling through social media.

When it comes to training and exercise, this book won't offer a one-size-fits-all plan, because that would be selling you another lie. Coming up with a generic programme which anyone can follow goes against pretty much everything I believe in and, more importantly, it doesn't work. There's no way you can create a plan that is optimal for an overweight sixty-year-old woman and an underweight twenty-year-old man. Anyone who tells you otherwise is mugging you off. If I have 100 different clients, they will follow 100 different plans. In terms of diet, even the concept of a 'plan' itself is flawed. That is, it suggests something that will tide you over for six or eight weeks and then it's over. You can just go back to your old life. And that is exactly what is wrong with the messages that we are fed by the fitness and diet industries. Instead, I want to give *you* the knowledge and the skills to empower *yourself* to make permanent changes to your life. It sounds ridiculously

cheesy but it's true. By understanding the concept of energy balance (energy meaning the calories in food – I'm not talking about star signs) and basic physiology – how your body works and reacts to exercise – you won't need to be constantly flicking through the pages of this or any other book. It's about understanding how to live your life in a more healthy, sustainable and happy way – and how to maintain that forever.

Right, introduction done. Sick. Let's get stuck in to the good stuff. I really hope you love this book by the way – I genuinely believe it will help a lot of people. Also, if you have any questions or want to ask me about anything you've read, you know where to find me.

(I'm talking about YouTube or Instagram by the way. Don't come to my house. That would be weird.)

Matt



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **I HAVE AN EATING DISORDER**

Seeing as you're literally reading my book, I feel that I should probably take this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself, just so you know I'm not an absolute serial killer. In fairness, if I was a serial killer I probably wouldn't tell you about it due to the whole prison thing, so I guess you're just going to have to take my word for it. I suppose my first task is to make you trust me on a level that goes beyond just the way I look, and the best way to do that is to give you a bit more of an idea of who I am and the journey I've been on to get here. (On a side note, when someone uses the word journey to describe anything other than an actual journey – like driving to Aldi for example – it makes me want to punch them in the face, but as I'm writing an actual book I'm going to have to write dorky stuff like that from time to time. Soz about that.)

Anyway, I think that in order to show you what I've learnt, how it's helped me and how it could help you too, I should give you a bit of my backstory. Now, unless you're an absolute superfan (aka a weirdo), you might not be waiting with bated breath for my entire life story, but don't worry – nearly everything I'm going to mention here will lead back to specific learnings which will help to anchor my fitness and nutrition philosophies. Getting to know what I've put my body (and stomach) through will hopefully provide some useful context for all of the ideas I'm about to share with you, because I am my best case study.

So, let's start from the very beginning. I have always been a sporty person. As a kid I was massively active, and my elder sister and I would spend our evenings playing with the other kids on our road until we were dragged in for dinner. When I say playing, I mean participating in a series of highly competitive races against one another, whereby anything went – bikes, rollerblades, skateboards – it was an absolute free for all. And when I say participating, I mean desperately trying to win every single race as if our lives depended on it. Actually, on reflection, that was probably just me. You see, for as long as I can remember, I've always been desperate to be the best at everything I do, whether it was winning a race with my mates, or eating my cereal first. Literally *anything* I was involved in became a competition.

Once my younger brother (I have two, but the nearest one in age to me) was old enough to get involved, he became my new ‘training partner’ and we’d do everything together. I remember walking to the nearest park every day after school to play football with the older kids, and even at that age desperately wanting to improve and being obsessed by the process of getting better at stuff. By the time I was eleven (my family had moved down from London to Kent at this point and I was just starting my third stint at a new primary school), I was already the quickest in my school year and would regularly win the weekly bicep showdown. In hindsight, this was fairly weird, but it essentially involved a few of the bigger/stronger boys comparing the size of their biceps and the winner of the contest being decided by the nearest dinner lady. It has to be said that, at the time, I took a huge amount of pride in this title. Anyway, that year I started playing for the school football team and I totally fell in love with it – my whole family are massive Arsenal fans – devoting every spare minute to playing football and getting better at it. I progressed pretty quickly as a footballer and an athlete, and after getting into the local grammar school, which was really sports-orientated, I made a big jump and began playing for the county.

Although I’d say I took football seriously, I think, like a lot of teenagers, I had some serious failings when it came to my

motivation. At the time, I loved to stay within my comfort zone and could be easily intimidated by anything outside of that. I had all my mates around me at school and in my club and I just didn't ever feel up to pushing myself beyond that and meeting new people. Some of that was laziness, but I do think a lot of kids hold themselves back from opportunities because they lack the confidence to take the next step.

By the time I reached fifteen, I'd also started doing athletics. It all began with an inter-house tournament where they were short on people and I ended up being drafted in to do the long and triple jumps. I was quick, but I'd never really jumped before, so I was surprised when during that first competition, I broke the school triple jump record which had stood for over twenty years. It was a bit of wake-up call really, and I remember everyone saying it was a big deal, but I still considered myself a footballer and had big aspirations to play professionally.

It was while I was at sixth form that my focus began to transition to athletics. I was still playing football, but as I started training for triple jump at the local athletics stadium in Ashford, I was picked up by a coach who helped me put together my first proper training plan. I actually remember rushing home to tell my parents that I'd given my phone number to an old man I'd met at the track and then being confused when they weren't immediately delighted for me.

At the same time, I was on a run of football-related injuries, which culminated in an ankle sprain brought about by a game we used to play at school. It essentially involved seeing who could jump (and land) from the highest step, and being the pathologically competitive individual that I was, I decided it was a good idea to jump an entire flight of stairs – which inevitably ended badly. Unfortunately, I was due to travel to the US on the school football tour a few weeks later and so ended up playing most of the games using only my weaker but non-injured left foot. This was the final straw for me. I can remember being constantly frustrated that I was never fully fit and it got to the point where I realised I was going to have to choose between athletics and football, and in the the end triple jump won.

What I liked most about athletics (aside from the fact that I was quite good at it) was that the outcome was almost entirely dependent on me. If I trained hard I would do better; if I didn't, I wouldn't improve. I can remember sometimes getting impatient with football, because we'd often lose, even if I'd played really well. I loved my mates, but we weren't a brilliant team. I'm not saying that I don't like the camaraderie of team sports, because I really do, but there's something deeply satisfying about knowing that what you put in as an individual, you'll get back. When I decide to do something, I'll typically do it wholeheartedly and, if it's

sport-related, I'll train as much as I need to get better. If I'm not getting better, or at least in a position to control whether or not I *can* get better, I'm not interested. I like knowing that I'm in control of the outcome and I love being able to see that progression.

I think lots of the successes I've had in both my sporting and subsequent careers have stemmed from my abnormal obsession with tracking progress. I'm basically a sporty Rainman. Whether it's seeing that progress in a numerical sense – watching your results get better and better – or seeing growth happen physically, it has always been a huge driver for me. As kids, my younger brother and I would play the *Championship Manager* computer game for hours on end. During the school holidays, it wasn't uncommon for us to put in a twelve-hour shift, and I loved working on a long-term strategy and seeing my team grow and get promoted. It was exactly the same with athletics, and that's one of the things that made it perfect for me. I had training diaries for absolutely everything and I wrote down every single tiny detail, whether it was how far I jumped, how fast I ran or how much I lifted. I would constantly monitor and analyse my progress, making sure I was moving forward, doing more and getting bigger and better. I still get a huge amount of satisfaction and gratification from seeing my progress now and I think that really links to what I'm doing on social

media too, where there is so much data for me to look at and work out ways to improve. Wanting to keep tabs on things is definitely part of my personality.

Weirdly, this part of my psyche was generally limited to things of a sporting nature and I didn't really apply any of that attitude to school. By all accounts, I was a pretty smart kid, but I was just not fussed with academics. I suppose the big problem was that I knew from a really young age that I wanted to do something physical in my future, so the rest of it all felt like a waste of time. This didn't mean I didn't work really hard at school. When it came to sport, I was so driven – I was constantly training, and I performed really well in the sporting arena – but we still don't really value that in the same way as we would a straight A student, at least in this country. If sports were held in higher esteem in schools and prioritised in the same way as, say, maths or English, it could be transformative for millions of children – especially if there was also adequate education around nutrition and fitness.

After school, I got a place on a Sports Therapy course at the University of Kent, which was about an hour's drive from home. I lived about fifteen minutes from the athletics track, so this meant that I could train every day, though in hindsight it also meant that I missed out on a lot of the non-academic side of uni. It was always, 'I've got to go