

# WORK OUT, PIG OUT SAMPLE

A Year of Losing Fat, Gaining Muscle, and Eating Lots of  
Ice Cream

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CHAD V. HOLTKAMP

## SAMPLE COPY

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### ***Work Out, Pig Out: A Year of Losing Fat, Gaining Muscle, and Eating Lots of Ice Cream***

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Published by Briefcase Media Group, Chicago, Illinois

First edition published July 2015

Kindle ISBN 10 - 0-9966885-5-2

Kindle ISBN 13 - 978-0-9966885-5-0

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Cover concept by Carrie Holtkamp

Cover design by Bart Mellen

Editing by Jim Dempsey, Novel Gazing

Proofreading by Archangel Ink

Author photograph by Jenny Januszewski-Mendoza

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***Work Out, Pig Out*** is the first book in the **Home Gym Strong** series. While I'm busy cranking out the next installments, you can get find out right away when they're all set for release.

Visit [chadvholtkamp.com](http://chadvholtkamp.com) to stay in the know.

You can also visit [HomeGymStrong.com](http://HomeGymStrong.com) and follow my workout adventures on a more frequent basis.

Book publishing is all about reviews, and I'd love it if you would head over to Amazon and leave a review.

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*To my wife, Carrie, my best friend and partner on so many amazing adventures in food, wine, and workouts, surf, sun, and sand. We've had quite a ride so far, and I can't wait to see what's still yet to come.*

*And to my dad, Raymond Holtkamp, for showing me the value of getting things done, heat or cold, rain or shine.*





## Introduction

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I'm not an athlete.

I'm not a bodybuilder.

I'm not a trainer.

I'm a married, 40-something professional who sits in a cube on the 26th floor of an office in downtown Chicago, commuting an hour each way to work every day.

And I'm obsessed with working out.

And eating ice cream.

The gooier, the nuttier, the chocolatier the better.

I also semi-obsessively track what I eat and all of the workouts on my iPhone and have done so on a daily basis since November 2010.

Why? I suck at math, but I have a thing for numbers and journaling. I have this gift (or is it a curse?) that allows me to remember dates and events in near-photographic detail. I'm sure that logging all my workout info helps me retain that. Plus, if I find a workout or eating program that lets me lose fat or put on muscle, it's nice to be able to go back and see how I did it.

Reading through the rest of this book you'll be amazed at all the crazy and, some would say, stupid things I do and eat. You'll probably ask why? In the simplest sense, it's because I have nothing else to do.

My wife and I met late in life, so kids aren't really in the cards for us. That translates into having a LOT of free time to work out and eat, and we do that a lot. We also go to the beach several times a year to escape Chicago and indulge our love of swimming, sailing, and snorkeling. And we like to look good doing it. And when you look good, you feel good.

Looking at me, you'd never think I was fat. When I compare myself to the average American, I'm not. But, if you check the actuarial tables or the dreaded BMI scale, I'm overweight by about 20 pounds.

I'm not a huge bodybuilder with massive muscles, and I've honestly never wanted to be that way. I'm not a skinny marathoner either. Though I've worked out with barbells for squats, bench press, and deadlifts since 2007, I just have average muscles for someone who has been tall and lanky his entire life.

If I lift heavy and eat enough to try to put on extra muscle, most of it goes to my belly, and I end up fat. Then, when I burn off the flab, I'm back to where I started before trying to get big. It's one vicious cycle.

In college, I stopped any athletic pursuits. The mountain biking craze was big back then and, although I spent my summers working in a bicycle shop, I didn't care about being outside. I just wanted to write for *Spin*, the music magazine, and be Robert Smith from The Cure. I spent my time indoors, away from the sun, devouring new CDs, playing my trusty 12-string acoustic, and writing really dark lyrics. Heredity caught up with me, and I went on meds for high blood pressure at 20 years old.

When my mom died from a heart attack in 2008 at age 65, I didn't want the same thing to happen to me. My ongoing goal is to get off the blood pressure meds and live to be over 100. When we were kids, a friend's Ouija board said I'd live to be 96, so I'm trying to beat that. And that's why I'm obsessed with working out and getting lean and getting strong.

It's like the guy in *Lost* who kept pushing the damn button over and over just because he was afraid of what would happen if he stopped. Except, I know what happens when I stop.

In 2009, I got in amazing shape while I (and the majority of Americans) looked for a job. Then, on my birthday that year, I interviewed at a firm Alex P. Keaton would have admired. I landed the job and worked almost 60 hours a week for the next nine months. I loved it, but I barely had enough time to eat and sleep and see my girlfriend (now my wife).

Work-out? Um, no. I drank mochas with heavy cream, ate Potbelly sub sandwiches on a daily basis, and gorged on a ton of ice cream at night when I got home. I got fat and bloated and felt like crap.

Worst of all? My clothes barely fit me towards the end. And when you're 6'4" and wear a suit and tie every day to fit in with the Masters of the Universe, buying clothes sucks. Nothing off the rack is made for my size. Once I do find something that fits or have it custom made, I wear it forever. Yes, vanity is the essential truth of why I do all this.

Later, in 2010, I got engaged, lost that job when they moved it to New York, found my current job, and launched into the diet and exercise adventures that led up to this book.

If you're anything like me, you scour the Internet for workout tips and tricks, all the while subscribing to a thousand email lists touting the next big secret exercise breakthrough. Some of them are legit, but a lot of them are just the same thing with a different spin.

This book is about how I spent 2014 doing a lot of the crazy things these emails tout as getting you in the best shape of your life. That's what you want, right? To be able to go to the beach and proudly take off your shirt and have a six-pack bulging in the sun? To get that way while only spending 30 minutes a day and being able to eat whatever you want all the time. Right?

Nice fantasy. The reality will slap you into next week. It takes more work, and dedication than most people are willing to give or hours in a day than they're willing to devote. It's not easy, especially if your day job isn't as an actor being paid millions of dollars to look buff on screen.

Actors have the full-time staff to cook their meals, design their workouts, and provide the underground pills, potions, and powders they conveniently leave out of the magazine articles about how they were able to get in the best shape of their careers.

It's tough for the average person. And, for every step towards that goal, there are always a few steps back. It's an endless cycle, and I've been doing it for ages, only to end up back at square one at the beginning of every year. It's February 2015 as I write this, and I just looked back at my notes from February 2011. Sadly, I'm about the same size as I was then, still trying to get back into the amazing shape I was in before my wedding in the fall of that year, and even then I didn't have a six-pack.

Dan John, a famous strength coach, once wrote that people should aim to lose about a pound a year. That seems laughably easy, right? Re-read the above paragraph and the rest of this book to see just how right he was.

If you want to try any of the things that I did in 2014, be my guest, but my lawyer will probably have me insert some disclaimer here so I'm not held liable for anything stupid a reader might do.

## Introduction

This is my story, a chronicle of all the crazy workout and diet hacks I explored throughout 2014, the highs and the lows, and all the ice cream in between.



## Chapter One: January 2014

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*6'4"*

*241.8 pounds*

*43.5" chest*

*38" waist*

**E**very year I tell myself not to do it.

Every year it happens anyway.

I gained over 20 pounds and nearly 3" on my belly during Christmas week.

That may seem like a lot. For the average person, it is. For me? It was par for the course.

My wife and I stayed with her family in Florida and lived it up. Her mom spoiled us every night. Ribs, prime rib, pizza, queso, eggnog, brandy, wine, and beer. I ate as much as I could, but I still wasn't able to keep up with the leftovers.

I also had the added bonus of an injury. I'd hurt my left shoulder going for one more rep on the bench press a few days before we left for the holidays. I thought some rest and all the extra food would help heal it, but not a chance. In my mind, only continued rest would help.

We got back to Chicago on a Saturday between Christmas and New Years in 2013. The ground was barren brown ugliness when we landed at O'Hare, in contrast to the lush green palm trees in Florida. I stepped on the scale the next morning, weighed in at those measurements, and vowed to clean up my diet and get back on track. Just like every other year. It's easier said than done. Just like every other year.

Not having any snow on the ground was a simple blessing, lessening the overall contrast with the paradise we'd just left.

It stayed that way for a few days. Then the flakes started flying around 2:00 P.M. on New Year's Eve. By late afternoon, a full-blown snowstorm had socked Chicago. We'd planned a fun night out but ended up with a calm night in.

Alone together on New Year's Eve, we chowed down on chips and queso and champagne and watched Rob Lowe narrate *The 80s: The Decade That Made Us*, barely staying awake for a kiss at midnight to ring in the New Year.

## **WEEK 1 - JANUARY: New Year Gluttony**

New Year's Day continued the season of gluttony as we had brunch reservations downtown at Shaw's Crab House. After a quick hit on the treadmill — almost overdoing it with the desire to burn off as much of the excess in advance — we kept to our plans despite the heavy snow.

We bundled up like Nanook of the North and trekked to the bus and train. Once we got downtown and back above ground, we caught a cab over to the restaurant, all wrapped up in our functional, not fashionable, winter gear.

And what a spread they had. Almost too much to describe. Sushi and oysters in one room, then meat and veggies and lobster and prime rib and tenderloin in another, with still another room just for desserts! It was an orgiastic display of



food, and we were diving headfirst into celebrating the New Year, our waistlines be damned.

Despite all the excess calories, I managed to lose about seven pounds by the 3rd and got back into the hour-long, steady-state cardio mode. My shoulder was still in pain, so my plan was to take a few weeks off from weights and just focus on cardio. I didn't know what else to do. I had to let it heal.

## **WEEK 2 - JANUARY: Polar Vortex, Gut Fuel, Foam Rolling**

I kept to that plan, even as we were kept homebound by not one, but two different snowstorms over the first week of the New Year, dumping a few feet of snow. Then the brutal cold came in full bore that Monday, with -20°F air temps and much lower wind chills.

Our offices were closed, but we still worked from home, layered up in bulky wool sweaters and stocking caps even inside the house. It wasn't fun, and the term "polar vortex" became annoyingly overused. It wasn't just Chicago though. It was cold everywhere, even in Florida.

Normally I grill in any weather — snow, sleet, or rain — but the subzero temps were tough, and I buckled to the elements. I ended up just baking our slabs of meat rather than firing up the grill. After filling the house with smoke, I realized I should've just said screw it and grilled outside anyway.

And the snow kept coming. And coming. And coming. Thankfully, we lived in a townhouse complex and didn't have to shovel. At least that was saving my shoulder. I didn't care what I was eating either. I was just trying to stay warm, fueling my gut with chips and queso and ice cream. It wasn't the best combo for weight loss, but it sure was tasty.

I started foam rolling for my shoulder, putting two tennis

balls in a sock and trying to knead the heck out of the knot. Over the course of a few days, it seemed to be working, at least a little bit. I was still in pain, waking in the middle of the night whenever I rolled over on that shoulder. I hadn't been sleeping well anyway, but that just added to it.

### **WEEK 3 - JANUARY: Jamaican Quest, Rapid Fat Loss, Kettlebells**

Even with my junk food diet, the treadmill/cardio work managed to shed about 14 pounds by the next weekend, down to 227. My belly was still fat at 37.75", so the water weight was disappearing, but the blubber was barely budging. I couldn't continue like that. I wouldn't continue like that. And I knew just what to do. Lyle McDonald's Rapid Fat Loss diet (RFL), a protein-sparing modified fast where you eat nothing but high-protein, low-fat, and low-carb foods.

Every April, my wife and I escape the never-ending Chicago snow for Caribbean beach vacations. It gives us something to look forward to on the long, cold Midwestern winter nights. In March 2012 and January 2013, the RFL diet worked like a charm leading up to trips to Punta Cana and Playa del Carmen, so I was going to do it again. I was going to attack the fat, full force.

On top of that, I'd signed up for a kettlebell class with StrongFirst on the 18th at Burr Ridge Kettlebell Club. The instructor was Joe Sansalone, who I later learned has a killer series of YouTube videos breaking down the kettlebell swing. He also has enough certifications to fill the rest of this page.

As we sat on the cold rubber mats, he had us go around and say what kettlebell experience we had, along with any injuries he might need to know about before having us do any work for the day. After that, Joe proceeded to teach us the basic hinge pattern, then the deadlift, then the basic swing.

I'd already been to a workshop the year before with Dan John at *Rebell Strength & Conditioning* in Lincoln Park, and I'd been through these techniques in a private kettlebell lesson with Paul Lyngso, the owner of Burr Ridge Kettlebell Club, the prior September.

That had inspired me, and I bought the book and DVD set called *Enter the Kettlebell!* by Pavel Tsatsouline, the chairman of StrongFirst. He is often credited with bringing kettlebell workouts into the mainstream in the U.S. I'd also picked up a DVD on *Mastering the Hardstyle Kettlebell Swing* by Mark and Tracy Reifkind. And, on Black Friday, I got a heck of a deal through Amazon on Punch Kettlebells from Art of Strength. I ordered a killer setup of double 12 kg, 16 kg, 24 kg, and 32 kg kettlebells, along with two 4 kg Kettlebell Buddies.

I'd resisted the urge to use them, but I'd been reading the books and watching the DVDs, learning the movement patterns, and practicing the hinge test. I'd also bought Pavel's new book, *Simple & Sinister*, before the holidays and read all about his barebones new program of kettlebell swings and Turkish getups. I even did some practice moves on the getup with a shoe during our Florida trip, while my shoulder injury was still at its worst. And after all that?

My hinge still sucked.

I was in dire need of remedial help...

I had to get my form right before even thinking of picking up and swinging a heavy kettlebell.

Joe then taught us the getup and demonstrated, or rather "showed off," with a 48 kg bell. That's roughly 106 pounds in American. We were in awe. I hadn't done the full sequence of the getup until that point and was wary of putting a 100-pound ball of iron over my face. I wisely settled on starting light with the 12 kg bell. I'm sure it looked pretty silly, me being 6'4" and 225 pounds, waving around a tiny kettlebell. But for someone just learning the lift, it worked great.

I had trouble with the sweep of the knee, but it was still a fun maneuver to learn. After 30 minutes of practice, my shoulder seemed to be loosening up and feeling a lot better. All the books raved about how it does wonders for your shoulders, so I guessed they were on to something.

After lunch, Joe taught us the press. It wasn't on my list of things to do just yet, but I still wanted to learn the basic mechanics. That's the great thing about StrongFirst, they really focus on drilling the basics and correcting those until they're automatic. Joe showed me what I needed to work on, and I got some great feedback. All in all, it was a great workshop. There's nothing like spending eight hours learning the basic moves.

That night was a friend's birthday party in Rogers Park. Of course, it was snowing — yet again — so the drive back to the city took over an hour. My wife was already at the party, so I just had to shower and drive over. Our friend really, really likes nuclear-spicy chili, and his latest batch that night was no exception. We paired it with a chili chocolate cake my wife had made, and it went well together.

I ate with abandon and stuffed myself silly on chili, chips, and cheese, cake, and cookies; all washed down with red wine and beer. I knew the next month was going to be nothing but baked chicken breasts and low-fat cottage cheese. I was going back on the RFL diet. Lyle's book has the complete details on how to set it up, but I'll include the highlights here. I'd recommend buying the book outright to get the full scoop.

RFL is so not fun. It's actually brutal. Brutal, but effective. I can usually strip off fat pretty quickly. I lost 16 pounds and 3" of flab in the four weeks I was on it in January 2013. It works, but it's so not fun. I'm repeating myself, but yeah, it's so not fun. But it works. And that's all that matters.

At the end of that diet, I tell myself that I never want to go

through it again. And I remember that for about nine or ten months before I start packing on the pounds for the holidays, ending up right back where I need to go on it again.

#### **WEEK 4 - JANUARY: Coffee, Kettlebells, Carbs**

By Monday morning, I'd recovered enough from the birthday party pig-out to try my newly learned kettlebell skills, working on light swings and half-getups. After a few weeks of inactivity, I needed to use my arm, or it was never going to get better. The getups had seemed to help over the weekend, so I figured I might as well. I added in some foam rolling and simple hanging from the pull-up bar, to see what would happen.

The first week of RFL doesn't work well with lots of activity. Your body is getting used to the extreme lack of food, which in my case is at the high end of the diet's calorie target. I was only taking in between 1000-1200 calories per day, tops. You need to let the diet take care of the fat loss rather than killing it with a lot of activity.

I went with the swings, getups, and hangs in the morning since the weights were still light and didn't seem to count as much activity. Midweek, I'd planned to have a free meal, a diversion from the diet and a chance to eat whatever I wanted for dinner, within reason. Then I'd treat myself to a bigger five-hour carb refeed on Saturday night.

The rest of the time was chicken breast alternated with an eye of round steak. And broccoli with soy sauce. And coffee. Lots and lots of coffee. I was getting loads of caffeine. A nightcap of low-fat cottage cheese before bed would tide me over to the next day.

The initial results? I lost nearly an inch in the first week, though my weight stayed about the same.

CHAD V. HOLTKAMP

It was working as per usual.

END OF SAMPLE

To find out what happens next, as well as throughout the rest  
of the year, please visit [Amazon](#).