

Lean Gains

Jonathan S. Lee

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Both a scientific overview and blueprint for implementation, this work examines strategies for weight loss and muscle maintenance.

Lean Gains by Jonathan S. Lee offers readers an overview of the science behind losing fat while maintaining, or even gaining, muscle mass. The brief book is also a blueprint for implementation, detailing how the author himself used these science-driven strategies to shed pounds and body fat.

Although they share a title, the book is not related to the well-known website, LeanGains.com, that is a source of information on intermittent fasting. However, both the book and the site focus, at least on the most basic levels, on eating and exercising with fat loss and muscle gain or maintenance in mind.

Lee has an educational background in nutrition and basic medical sciences, and a long-standing personal interest in diet and exercise. This book emphasizes the efficacy of a hybrid diet and exercise program, while asserting that no single program will be right for everyone. Using this model, Lee varied his exercise routine, employed different training models, and shifted the balances between his carbohydrate, fat, and protein intake depending on the day of the week.

Most of the book is spent covering the effects of genetics and hormones on how the human body stores fat, and explains the effects of overeating, calorie-restrictive dieting, and cyclical dieting. Lee then addresses nutrient categories and training regimens. While clearly written, the content of these portions may well be basic background knowledge for any serious fitness enthusiast, while holding little interest for those looking for straightforward advice on eating and exercising, which is covered in detail in the book's remaining pages. The book's reliance on stock photos also tends to erode the seriousness of its research-driven material.

References are meticulously outlined for those who want to learn more about the science behind these eating and exercise recommendations. A clearly marked table of contents also makes it easy for those less interested in the technical details behind dieting and working out to skim and scan earlier sections and focus on the latter portions of the text, where an easy-to-digest numbered and bulleted summary of key points is included, ahead of an overview of the pros and cons of some dietary supplements. The book finishes with a detailed description of the diet and exercise plan that worked for Lee, including easy-to-read charts and daily meal outlines.

Lean Gains presents a basic background for science-minded people interested in the hows and whys of weight gain and muscle mechanics, as well as a clear how-to for those who want to try hybrid eating and exercise plans.

CHARLENE OLDHAM (April 17, 2017)

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