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## In This Issue:

[What it Takes](#)

[My Story:  
Two  
Experiments,  
17 Weeks &  
73 Kilograms](#)

[Body  
Management](#)

[Client of the  
Month Feb  
2008: Aurora  
Dreyer](#)

[FIT Teen  
Spotlight Feb  
2008:  
Stephen  
William  
Woodworth](#)

[The Rep](#)

[FIT  
Announcemen  
t](#)

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## Featured Links:

[Free Nutrition  
Log](#)

[Book: The  
World's  
Healthiest  
Foods](#)

[FIT's Nutrition  
Forum](#)

## What it Takes

by Johnny Nguyen

Robert Atkins, Barry Sears, Nathan Pritikin and all the rest of the diet gurus have their ideas. Over the years I've learned a thing or two from them, but the dietary advice that I value the most is the one my mom gave me: Eat lots fresh fruit and vegetables to keep you vibrant, and eat nuts and meats to make you strong. This advice is so simple that it sounds boring in the face of cutting-edge science.

So how can scientific literature support diet plans that virtually contradict each other? The Atkins Diet, for example, goes toe-to-toe with the Pritikin Diet, the first beating the carbs out the second while the second strangling the fats out the first. The answer, it seems, is that almost every dietary plan works, but the caveat is that you must be consistent and committed.

The thing is, almost everyone with average intelligence can read a book about a diet, understand its philosophy and decipher its strategy. Unfortunately, in a culture of plentiful and endless choices, committing to and following one thing isn't easy.

To turn a diet plan into a dietary habit (which is the essence for success), one must work hard; as such, many people claim this intensive work is not congruent with a "normal" lifestyle, complaining that it's not ideal and isn't worth it. And so for these same people a decade goes by and many are still searching for something "ideal."

It hasn't escaped me that people often do not have the luxury of time to devote entirely to a fitness or dietary program. Work, family, and all those life events can leave barely room for a breath, much less a detailed grocery list, effort in preparation, cooking and following healthy recipes, and a hawk-eye attention to what goes into the mouth. And some are lucky to fit two workouts in per week; six days per week would be nearly impossible, twice a day a damn fantasy.

The bottom line is, health and fitness require work. The faster you want to see the result, the greater the work. To lose an appreciable amount of body fat and acquire a physique that the body hasn't seen in years, if ever, will take A LOT of work. Twice a day workouts is not unheard of, nor is it insane. For those who continue to say that the immense work involved in losing 40 pounds (or 30, 20 or the last 5 pounds) doesn't work into their lifestyle, I hope that science will soon discover something more "ideal." Perhaps this discovery won't take a decade. Personally, I'm not willing to wait, nor will I bank my health and fitness on a pill.

I am happy to have something that works for me: Fresh fruits and lots of vegetables. Meats of all kinds and healthy nuts and seeds. But I haven't always followed my mother's dietary advice. I grew up a fat kid, and I still have a picture of me at the steps of a swimming pool with a belly that was a result of Wonder Bread smeared thick with Miracle Whip and loaded with candy corn. You'll never see this picture, but you'll also never know how hard it was for me to create a long-term habit. Of course, the struggle initially was not of change but rather of fitting in and blending with peers so that you don't stick out like the softness of an underbelly.

But I've gotten past that stage of my life. Maintaining a healthful dietary habit, however, is still hard work. Mom's advice might sound simple, but consistently eating fresh fruits and lots of vegetables with a variety of meats, seeds and nuts is not easy. It requires diligence. When I'm out with a group of friends and I order a salad instead of Penne Strasciate (ok, except for on New Year's Eve), a comment invariably falls on me that I don't need to eat like this because I'm already lean enough. I have learned the grace of biting my tongue instead of retorting with "How the hell do you think I got this way?"

Whether you go with Atkins, Pritikin, Sears or Mom, the success lies not in their recipes but in your ability to stick it out for life. This is not easy. No one says that losing weight, getting fit, becoming strong, or doing anything else worth doing in life is easy. Or everyone would be doing it and 60% of the population would not be overweight or obese.

In the past couple of months, I have personally heard from many of you the comments, compliments and questions about the physical change that Analisa has achieved. I asked her to tell us about it, and so she sat down and started typing. In this month's newsletter, her article reveals in detail her experience in the journey. As you'll find out, none of it was simple. But, as she proves, it was entirely possible.

I believe that a lot of health and fitness is based on an attitude, a mentality that can dictate success or failure. Scott will shoot straight from the hip in his article this month about this aspect of health, fitness and weight loss.

If you believe that health and fitness is worth the work, I'm with you. I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter, and keep up the hard work. It pays.

## **My Story: Two Experiments, 17 Weeks & 73 Kilograms**

by Analisa Naldi

It wasn't until I pushed myself up, fully extended my elbows at the top of the rings and having completed my first muscle-up ever, that I realized why I do what I do every day of my life. Finally, I'd proven to myself that I could do something I truly thought wasn't going to happen in my world. To be completely honest, I hate that there are things that I can't do. I know it sounds corny, but I want to be able to do everything! I want to know that I can do 30 pull-ups in less than a minute. I want to be able to clean and jerk my body weight. I want to look in the mirror and be happy and proud of what my body looks like. These are some of my motivating factors. And, here is my personal 'before and after' story of how with some rigorous nutritional focus, disciplined workouts, and a great supporting cast, I 'experimented my way' to 73KG.

### October 2006 – Experiment 1: 'Lighten Me Up Scotty'

I had just completed a rigorous 90-minute workout that included some Olympic lifts and kettle bells. I walked into the back office, put two scoops of Recoverite into my water bottle, and plopped down onto the couch to catch my breath. "That better be Muscle Milk in that bottle," said Scott. That was it...we dove into a conversation about various types of supplementation after workouts, what my workout goals were, and why I was working as hard as I was without any real purpose. I needed goals. I needed to change. I needed to be rejuvenated.

I realized that I wasn't working out with an objective. I could afford to lose some body fat, so I decided to see how much body fat I could lose safely and efficiently in 8 weeks. Scott promised to help me with the nutrition side and I was to handle my workouts. Two weeks before Christmas, Thom did my RMR (Resting Metabolic Rate) and body fat analysis. I started this experiment weighing in at 192lbs, 25.2% body fat, and an RMR of ~2900.

The first objective was a weight loss goal of 16 lbs by February 14, 2006. That gave me exactly 8 weeks to lose 2lbs per week, right through the middle of the holidays. Second, I set a target number of calories per week to average in order to keep me on track. Since my RMR (amount of calories my body utilizes per day in order to maintain my current body weight) was 2900, in order to lose 2 lbs per week (3500cal per lb of body fat, divided by 7 days = 500 cal/day) the daily deficit was 1000 cal per day. However, it wasn't that simple. To prevent the body from adapting to a certain number of calories, rather than take in 1900 calories everyday (RMR 2900-1000cal deficit), my caloric intake was "zig-zagged" over 7 days per week so that the daily intake weekly averaged 1900 cal. Third, I had to change some of the types of foods that were going into my body.

The biggest change was a decrease in fruit consumption. Fruit tends to be high in fructose. The more fructose ingested, the greater the chances of it converting into fat. Any excess fructose will be stored as fat, thereby increasing the chances of weight gain. I was taking in somewhere between

five and seven servings of fruit per day and didn't realize that this was hurting my chances of losing weight! It's important to note that fruit isn't the enemy here. I was eating too much of it and not ingesting it at optimal times. Therefore, to help my cause, my fruit intake was decreased to one serving per day.

I weighed myself every morning immediately after I woke up. I wrote down everything that I ate for the entire 8 weeks. I bought a food scale (16 oz, Bed Bath and Beyond, \$5.99) and weighed out everything that I ate. I learned that I was eating very healthy foods, but too much!

My workouts slowly changed from running a few miles per day and lifting to interval training mixed in with Crossfit ([www.crossfit.com](http://www.crossfit.com)) workouts. I loved the challenges. I loved being exhausted after completing 20 minutes of high intensity training! I loved working out with a specific goal and purpose!

Eight weeks later, on Valentines Day, I weighed in at 174 lbs, 23% body fat, and able to complete 3 kipping pull-ups on my own. Eight weeks, 18 lbs gone, a 10% drop in body fat and stronger – Experiment 1 – in the books and a success.

September 2007 – Experiment 2: Stronger, Faster & Lighter Still!

My latest nutrition experiment lasted from Monday, September 17, 2007 through Tuesday, November 20, 2007 (9 weeks officially). I took a short break to celebrate Thanksgiving and then resumed my habits in order to maintain the success I'd had and work to continue to improve on all fronts.

The objectives this time seemed simple enough – workout and fuel to lose as much body fat as possible while gaining strength. This time, it was performance and strength based as I had specific performance based objectives that I was shooting for ([http://www.focusedtrainers.com/news/newsletter\\_pdf/August\\_news\\_07.pdf](http://www.focusedtrainers.com/news/newsletter_pdf/August_news_07.pdf)). Put simply, unless I was a bit lighter, some of those were going to be unattainable for quite some time, if ever. And so, I went back to Scott Kolasinski, our nutrition guru for his dietary wisdom.

He broke down my optimal caloric intake in order for me to lose 1.5-2.0 lbs per week. I was aiming to take in 1363 calories on the days that I worked out once and 1658 on the days I worked out twice. I committed to at least three (no more than four) double days per week. My caloric intake would be broken down into 40% Carbohydrates, 40% Protein, 20% Fats. My starting weight was 177.8 lbs (80.82kg) and my goal weight was 160lbs (72.72kg). My body fat was approximately 23%, with a target of less than 20%.

Over the course of the next couple of weeks, I found myself battling through my workouts with vigor and aggression. I was attacking intervals on the treadmill, 20-30 minute CrossFIT style workouts, or 3-5 mile runs in the early mornings, followed by 60-90 minute strength and power sessions in the afternoons. I was starting to feel lighter, faster, and stronger.

Did I feel totally motivated and strong every day? No. I was sore, my legs were tired from the double days and my brain was getting tired of always

thinking about what I was going to put in my body next, what time I could eat, and what I was going to eat. But, I'd made a commitment to Scott and me to make this work, get stronger, get lighter, and not let my body beat me. The exact reason behind everything still wasn't clear to me. I just had this intense motivation.

#### October – A Speed bump: Carbo-phobic

Midway through the month of October (almost to the halfway point), my energy level really started to suffer, fluctuating between a great day, followed by a low energy, moody day. I went back through my food journal and my ratios were off. My days were consisting of anywhere between 50-60% protein, 20-25% carbohydrates, and the rest in fat. My carbohydrates were so fiber filled; that my body was struggling to I didn't even realize that I'd become so "carb-phobic". I had to learn to implement healthier, "performance" carbs. Suddenly, my energy level and killer instinct was back!

During the two weeks following my "carb therapy", I snatched 52.5kg (new PR), clean and jerked 70kg (new PR) and completed my first muscle up! I felt strong and rejuvenated. The following weeks thereafter were a roller coaster of PR's, attempting movements that I didn't know I could do (stacked box jumps with the weight vest on), and a completely new sense of self. I made it through Thanksgiving with no problem, eating what I wanted, had a few glasses of wine, and taking two days off from working out. As soon as Monday rolled around, we were right back on track.

#### In Summary: The Before and After

BEFORE (11/05)	AFTER (1/11/08)
BODY WEIGHT	195lbs (88.6kg) 163lbs (74.1kg)
BODY COMP	25.20% 18%
SNATCH	35kg 55kg
CLEAN AND JERK	50kg 70kg
DOUBLE UNDERS	3 47
PULL-UPS	1.5 (zero kipping) 30 kipping/7 strict
DIPS	0 – body weight 5 BW Ring Dips (in a row)
MUSCLE UP	zero 1 (at a time) J
LULU's	12 6 tall or 8 tall
JEANS	12/14 or 33/34 8 or 29

Is the journey over? Certainly not as there are always new mountains to climb, but seeing the second phase of it has passed, we felt it might be helpful to outline the some of the tips, tricks, lessons learned and to also provide some dietary details that may be of help. We've put these on separate pages so you might tear them out, print them off as reminders or use them on your next trip to the grocery store to kick off your own 'experiments'!

## 6 KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. PLAN AHEAD – prepping food for the week, entering into my food journal every day, having an idea of what the following day would entail from all sides (food, workouts, expectations). This is part of maintaining self-balance and accountability.

2. Tracking EVERYTHING - Entering my workouts and how I was feeling into my journal ([www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com), journal tab) each day. This enabled me to air what I was thinking, assess and decipher how my fuel, but my sleep patterns, workload, and emotions affected my performance. Know what you're putting in your body! Read labels, investigate foods, and get creative with recipes!

3. It's a LIFE change – Set objective/goal dates for yourself. My point with this one is making sure that you have a light at the end of the tunnel, even if it is a "stopping point", and the experiment will continue thereafter, allow yourself a celebration, reflection, and day to reset yourself.

4. Having ANCHOR foods – There always ends up being a group of foods that I seem to be drawn to that are staples in my diet. (Please refer back to [http://www.focusedtrainers.com/news/newsletter\\_pdf/May\\_news\\_06.pdf](http://www.focusedtrainers.com/news/newsletter_pdf/May_news_06.pdf)). Being performance based during this past experiment, my anchor foods morphed and were FAGE 2% Greek yogurt, Vanilla Muscle Milk Light, broccoli, Nulaid Redi-Egg, ground turkey breast, balsamic vinegar, garlic, and natural super chunk peanut butter. These foods found their way into my days in various forms, and are often my saving grace!

5. SUPPORT – Having a support system, whether it is at work, at home, or within, is essential. While it is awesome to have your co-workers know what you're doing, ask you, provide you with guidance and laughter, it is also important that those at home realize and back what you're doing as well. Most importantly, be honest with yourself as to why this is significant to you, what success really takes, and how it will affect you. You are your own best support system. I can tell you right now that no cheat meal, drink, or any other form of sugar tastes better than the feeling of waking up in the morning knowing that you said no to a massive, untimely craving. Do it for you!

6. MAKING THE TIME – What it really comes down to is you deciding to be your own best support system, sticking to your guns and doing this for yourself. I work 12-16 hour days 6 days per week. My days are filled with training sessions, my personal workouts, hours of coaching high school kids, working as a member of our management team, and overseeing FIT's marketing. How do I find the time to go groceryshopping, workout a 2nd time during the day, prep my food for the next week, or clean the house? It's simple. You MAKE the time. You MAKE the decision to take care of your body. You MAKE the choice to put your health first. There is always a way. Everybody can MAKE it. All you need is the chance, the choice, and the desire. MAKE the life change.

- THE "MY TOP THREE" LIST -

#### TOP THREE MEALS – FAST, EASY, BASIC

1. Breakfast – 1 scoop Vanilla Muscle Milk Light mixed into 1c FAGE 2% Greek Yogurt. (228cal, 7g Fat, 14g Carbohydrates, 30g Protein)
2. Lunch – Mini-Turkey Burgers with Sweet Potato Mash (2 2oz Turkey Burgers and 1c Sweet Potatoes with salt and pepper – 278cal, 1g Fat, 38g Carbohydrates, 25g Protein)
3. Dinner/Back up breakfast – 1.5c Nulaid Redi-Egg and 3c blanched broccoli, cooked in Pam, salt and pepper to taste (258cal, 1gFat, 14gCarbohydrates, 44g Protein)

#### TOP THREE SNACKS/SUPPLEMENTS

1. PEANUT BUTTER CRACKERS – 2 tbsp Skippy Natural Super Chunk PB spread over two Wasa or Ryvita Rye Crackers. (1 cracker with 1tbsp PB – 120cal, 9g Fat, 10g Carbohydrates, 4.5g Protein).
2. Supreme Protein Bar – 1/2 bar, 165cal, 6g Fat, 17g Carbohydrates, 15g Protein
3. Met-Rx Protein Plus Bar – 1 bar, 160cal, 4.5g Fat, 16g Carbohydrates, 16g Protein

#### TOP THREE FAVORITE SOURCES OF FAT/CARBS/PROTEIN

1. FAT – Raw almonds, walnuts, salmon
2. CARBS – Sweet potatoes, butternut squash, brown rice
3. PROTEIN – Ground turkey breast, Nulaid Redi-Egg, Chicken Breast

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I hope that you all have been able to take a bit of something from this article whether it is objective setting, workout oriented, or nutrition based. If you have absolutely any questions regarding these experiments, please ask! I can be reached via email at [analisa@focusedtrainers.com](mailto:analisa@focusedtrainers.com) or in person at FIT Monday through Saturday. I will be happy to share my as much information as you'd like, right down to my food journal and workout log.

May this find you healthy, active, and happy during these starting months of our new year! And...don't forget to ask yourself at the end of the day, "What have I done for my body today?"

Analisa

Relevant Links:

<http://www.focusedtrainers.com/forum/showthread.php?t=195>

<http://www.focusedtrainers.com/forum/showthread.php?t=197>

<http://www.focusedtrainers.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=33>

Relevant Sites:

[www.focusedtrainers.com](http://www.focusedtrainers.com)

[www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com) \*\*email me for my log-in info

[www.crossfit.com](http://www.crossfit.com)

## **Body Management**

by Scott Kolasinski

While I'm waiting in the line of a supermarket, my eyes will casually glance over the tabloid and fitness magazines available. As I realize how difficult it is to ignore the latest brain-dead accusation and update of Brittany Spears, Angelina Jolie, or Jessica and Romo, my attention fell on the pictures of a fitness model and/or celebrity.

A recent issue of US magazine has "How I Got My Body Back!" of former Bachelorette contestant and new-mom Tricia Rhein (for the record, I am ashamed that I actually know her name). Shape, Cosmopolitan, and Muscle and Fitness [Fiction] have their usual male and female hard bodies delicately manifested on each of their magazines. Many of these magazines try to portray how an ideal body should appear with a ripped set of abs, tight waistline and chiseled chest that screams sex appeal.

As much as I hate to admit it, some of these models and celebrities have been blessed with great genes, and they can achieve a great physique naturally with little attention to what they eat. However, this is certainly not the majority of us.

The fact of the matter is, for the majority of us who want the type of physique portrayed on a number of these magazines, we have to put in a large number of hours and pay meticulous attention to our nutrition.

I once wanted to the body of a model on one of those fitness magazines. On January 15, 2002, having been a personal trainer for approximately 3 months at another facility and having finished my masters degree in exercise science, I decided that it was about time to show I can put what I know (and those things I advise to my clients) into practice. Twenty-seven other men and I started a contest while being monitored by the owner of a supplement store to lose 10% of our bodyweight in eight weeks. My starting weight was 212 at 19% body fat. I had to be at least 190.8 pounds in eight weeks. Long story short, at the end of it all, I learned a ton about what it is like dieting to extremely low levels of body fat percentages, and I finished weighing in at 188.5 pounds and 7% body fat. My point for telling you this is that I have been there and done it; I know the sacrifices, the discipline and daily focus that are necessary to obtain a specific weight loss goal. However, many people do not understand the focus that is required, and as such, when their world gets difficult with an assortment of stress, anxiety and temptation, they resort back to their old ways of living and eating, and they have a "Forget It" attitude.

In this article, I will help you understand the types of tools and focus that are necessary while dieting that will ultimately lead you to a healthy lifestyle. Instead of giving you a list of facts about why you should strive for a low bodyfat percentage, I am positive the media has exhausted your brain with those reasons. Here, I will focus more on how to get started and the psychological side that you must have in order to reach your weight loss goals.

#### More Exercise or Diet?

Scientists agree that the best way for us to lose body fat while retaining muscle is through a combination of diet and exercise. However, we do not have a consensus on whether or not there should be more attention on one versus the other: Some people believe the needed attention to diet and exercise can be broken down into percentages, such as it requires 40% attention to an exercise regimen and 60% attention to a nutritional plan. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. I cannot give you a definite percentage of how much detail is needed between the two; however, I will tell you that it requires more attention to nutrition than exercise.

#### Getting Started

Before you venture out on your weight loss goal, you will need at least three things: 1) A food scale to weigh all of your food, 2) a food journal to record what you eat, the grams of carbohydrates (carbs), protein and fat, 3) a food manual to look up food items and their macronutrient content. Nowadays, you can find various free online nutrition programs that make this very easy. An example is [www.fitday.com](http://www.fitday.com). This already has the USDA's nutrient database available and it gives you the option of custom-entering the nutrient facts of foods not listed in the USDA's database.

Ok, those are the tools. So you now need to figure out how many calories to shoot toward daily. Yeah, that's right, record calories! People hate recording calories because of the amount of time and tedious nature it takes to have to weigh all of their food while aiming for a certain caloric goal. However, the research is clear, while trying to make a behavioral change (in this case, it would be eating less), the most effective way for long-term change is to write down everything you are eating. Weight Watchers requires some sort of math with their point system. The Zone uses blocks. If one of those systems of record keeping works for you, fine, but you will need to record something. Those that do not write down what they eat tend to underestimate their calories and later wonder why they are not losing any scale weight – and they usually put the blame on a "slow metabolism." You must know your caloric intake – not have an idea about it, KNOW IT!

Lyle McDonald, a self-made human physiologist and author of several nutrition books, puts it well when describing the hunger and anxiety that so many experience while dieting: "The main [issues] that folks have to deal with are hunger and anxiety. To a degree, both the hunger and anxiety are just psychological manifestations. Simply knowing that you can't eat what you want when you want, even if you're eating plenty, tends to make people both hungry and anxious. As a friend would put it, it's simply human nature: we want what we can't have."

And if someone tells you that you can't eat what you want when you want, you're going to want it. Even if it's yourself telling you you can't do it, by making the conscious decision to diet; it still causes psychological anxiety. Take something away from a 5 year old if you need proof. Dieters aren't far from this: big food-obsessed cry-babies who bitch about not being able to eat whatever they want whenever they want. Well, tough; eating whatever you want whenever you want is what made you..." unhappy about your physique "in the first place. Losing fat means changing something and that usually includes food intake. That causes anxiety to one degree or another. So what's the solution? Well, there isn't one except to change your mental outlook. Basically, you can either deal with it, or stay [the same]; those are the only options."

The above quote has to be your mentality when trying to create a certain physique within yourself. Every day, you may have to remind yourself of why you are doing what you are doing. All of the foods you feel you are depriving yourself have one promise about them: they are not going anywhere. When you finish your transformation, they will still be there. However, if you are making changes that will result into a healthy lifestyle, you will realize that you can still eat these once missed foods. More on this later.

There are a number of psychological triggers that can really make it difficult on an individual trying to achieve their goal. For example, many women in particular must deal with cravings: in general, they crave salty-crunchy snacks (like potato chips and nuts) or chocolate; and then there are those like me that crave both. One of the best ways of dealing with this is refuse to bring them into your house. That works great for single individuals, but not the married-with-children individual. If this is the case you will have to find other options. For the chocolate craver: protein bars and shakes work very well for many. You do not need to live on them, but use them for what they are for: convenience and helping to deal with that craving. For the salty-crunchy craver, many enjoy peanut butter and/or almond butter on low-carb tortilla wraps; or I will still eat some nuts, but I will actually count how many I am eating so that they agree with my needed calories. It might be only nine or ten, but those nuts will still be there tomorrow, and I will enjoy them again.

#### Social Gatherings

When many people try to lose weight, they are not aware of the types of struggles that they may encounter. If there is one situation that can ruin an entire week's worth of exercise and dieting in one meal is when they go out to a party or some other gathering. This is one of the reasons why more attention needs to be placed on nutrition than exercise. Healthy eating does not need to stop at a birthday party, business gathering, or just going out to have fun and relax. If you are focused on your goal, you will not make excuses and you will take responsibility for what you need to do to achieve your goal.

If you notice closely in Analisa's article, she started her first experiment in December. She does not mention that she was in graduate school, head coaching girls high school JV basketball and she was finishing her thesis at the time. To say she was busy, perhaps stressed and vulnerable to distractions may be an understatement. I asked her at least three times

during our first meeting, "Are you sure you want to do this now?"

One of the primary keys to Analisa's success was her organization as she planned her meals days in advanced. Planning your meals with great focus is the best secret to success. Because she recorded everything she ate, she still enjoyed Christmas, New Years, and occasional post-game get-togethers with the team, and through it all, she still achieved her goal.

And then there is the one thing that you cannot control: how others react to your healthy eating. As Johnny briefly mentioned in his article, you will certainly get some crap for eating healthy in the face of others who are not. Why? You are reminding them of what they are doing wrong. They are trying to bring you down to their level. They are eating care free, insisting that this is necessary in order to have fun. But realize it is also very fun achieving a long-held goal of having a low body fat percentage. Sacrifices will need to be made, and it would seem logical that if they were your friends, they would respect your wishes of achieving your goal.

#### I Just Don't Feel Like It Today

Get over it. We have all been there. Ever not want to have to go to work? You did it. Ever not want to take out the trash? You did it. Ever not want to have to drive the kids 2 hours to their soccer tournament? You did it.

With regards to your exercise training and eating regimen, have you ever wanted to succeed? Stick to it. The reward is well worth it.

For those wanting to diet down to extreme body fat percentages, you may be a grumpy person. You must be more disciplined with your eating than ever for a long amount of time. While dieting to extreme low levels of body fat (BF) percentages (for women, that would mean under 17% BF; for men, under 9% BF) our hormone levels start affecting our mood severely. I recall being rather grumpy near the end of my contest. There really is not anything we can do about the moodiness other than learn how to deal with it and warn others around us how you might be feeling. During this time of the training and eating, often you awaken hungry, eat, a half-hour later you are hungry, an hour later, starving, 2 hours later famished, you finally eat something small again and the cycle repeats. Not fun, but that's how it is near the last days of a photo shoot (for those beautiful models you see in magazines) or a bodybuilding contest. It happens and you are mentally and physically pushed to a level unlike any other.

#### I Have Succeeded, Now What?

Once you have achieved your initial weight loss goal, now the TRUE challenge begins: how long can you keep it off. All of those people who might have been a means of support are now challenging you with words of sarcasm, "Did you keep your weight off?" In a sense, they are right. If you could not keep it off, then what have you proven? For the individual (like a bodybuilder) who may actually need to get some larger muscles, yes, that individual needs to start eating more again and changing his exercise program accordingly.

But for the person who has been dreaming of losing their weight for many months, and finally achieves it, you must maintain healthy eating habits

and make exercise a part of your life for the rest of your life.

Certain body fat percentages are almost unrealistic to live by: under 7% for men and under 15% for women. This is very difficult and some physiologists would say it is too low of a percentage. However, the worst possible alternative you could do is go back to your old lifestyle before the weight loss. This will only lead you back to that old body. After losing a significant amount of weight, our bodies are primed to gain fat, not muscle. The fat cells did not leave you, they are still there, and they are only empty. Empty fat cells are a large proportion of the "loose skin" displayed on those who have lost a significant amount of body fat.

This is why diets never work, only lifestyle changes do.

#### Summary

This month's article can be broken down simply:

- 1) Write down what you eat.
- 2) Plan your meals in advanced.
- 3) Hunger and anxiety will happen, deal with it.
- 4) You will get crap from others, even your spouse or closest friends.
- 5) Only lifestyle changes last for the long term.

This is the mentality and discipline you must have for a long amount of time. The food you feel you are missing is not going anywhere; you are not going to go without it for the rest of your life. A short, focused 12-16 weeks can eliminate what years of overeating have created to your body. If you maintain your focus, you will achieve more about yourself than you ever knew was possible.

For any questions or comments about this article, please email me at [scott@focusedtrainers.com](mailto:scott@focusedtrainers.com). Until next time...

#### **Client of the Month Feb 2008: Aurora Dreyer**

Name: Aurora Dreyer

Age: 34

Member Since: April 2007

Goal: Initially, to lose 40 more pounds in addition to the 60 I had already lost.

Result: After starting at FIT and then gradually adding in some Crossfit workouts, I met my goal of losing 100 pounds in October 2007! I am now well on my way to losing 120 pounds total.

Likes: Rowing, wall ball, med ball slams, pull-ups, and learning Olympic lifting

Dislikes: Push-ups, bruises on my collar bones from cleans, burpees

500 Meter Row (best time): 1:46

Chin-up: 5 Kipping

Key to Client's Success: The keys to Aurora's success have been her consistent attendance, intense attitude, and desire to learn and get better. She is always looking to improve her technique regardless of the exercise and push herself outside her comfort zone to improve work capacity. She has maintained a sense of humor and an open mind which help during the wee hours of the morning when the last thing anybody wants to do is 100 pull-ups, push-ups, or squats!

In Aurora's Words: I started coming to FIT and seeing Jimmy with my friend Clydene in the spring of 2007 in order to supplement my ongoing weight loss with strength training. I began by coming just once per week. The results were so remarkable that I added in a second day with Danielle and as of January 08; I am coming in 3-5 days per week for training and Crossfit.

I have now lost a total of 108 pounds (with about 12 more to go...I think...or until my butt looks like Analisa's.:), dropped 6 sizes and can routinely beat my male co-workers in arm wrestling. The physical changes brought about with FIT's help have literally made me unrecognizable, as well as made me feel years younger. I have become stronger and capable of pushing myself to levels that I never imagined were possible. It has also unearthed an apparent borderline obsessive competitive streak, as many of my training partners and Crossfit buddies can attest to. :) I am now setting new goals for myself such as competing in the Crossfit games and running a 1/2 marathon this year. It's been an amazing journey and one I couldn't have completed without all of the wonderful and supportive staff at FIT and all of the awesome and inspiring training friends. Looking forward to 2008!

### **FIT Teen Spotlight Feb 2008: Stephen William Woodworth**

Name - Stephen William Woodworth

Age - 14

School - St. Matthew's Catholic - 8th Grade

Date you started working out at FIT: Summer 2007

Why did you start working out at FIT?

I wanted to drop pounds for school basketball and hopefully high school football.

What is your proudest moment at FIT?

When I back-squatted 60 kilos (132 lbs.).

What is your favorite exercise or movement at FIT?

I like the back squat.

What is one thing you've learned from working out at FIT?

Athletes make lifting weights look really easy, but now I know how hard they really have to work!

What advice would you give a future FIT TEEN?

Make your goals and stick to them. Don't get discouraged if you cannot lift a lot of weight right away. It takes a lot of time, but you'll make it! Eating healthy helps too. I've learned how to read labels and make better food choices. You can too!

## The Rep

[This is an old article that is still relevant today as it was several years ago, and especially pertinent to this month's topics.]

The 7 Nutritional Habits of FIT People  
by Johnny Nguyen

Although being fit and being healthy can mean two different things, in this article the "being fit" means possessing a healthy body weight. While it's true that there are many factors that contribute to overall health, having a healthy body weight is a desirable trait that may hint at a person's overall positive health. In some of us, though, the appearance of a normal body weight is alone a desirable goal – an influence of cultural ideology.

Whatever your reasons for wanting to look fit, below are some of the habits of those who are at a normal, healthy body weight. Of course, the hope is that you want to be healthy from the inside out, of which the desired appearance is simply just the result. The habits listed below may or may not work for everyone, but they make sense to the people I've spoken with.

### 1. FIT People Know Food

People who are fit have a habit of approaching their food with not only their stomach but also their head. Rather than selecting food indiscriminately, choosing food based on nutritional values and portion size is the key. It is a thoughtful process, and fit people put the brain next to the stomach when it comes to eating. A FIT client who lost 20 pounds – and is still losing – revealed her habit of thoughtful food selection: "The one main difference between what I did and what I'm doing now is that now I'm decidedly aware of what I put in my mouth – I know the food and the portion. I put some thinking into my eating just as I put some thinking into my spending."

In order to know food, it's critical to become familiar with the nutritional value of various foods. A food data booklet, one in which you'll find the nutritional breakdown of common and not-so-common foods, is invaluable. (Or you can use the free web-based nutrition data at [www.nutritiondata.com](http://www.nutritiondata.com).) Then portion-size selection at each meal may be less erratic and more intentional. Although it may sound like a lot of work, it's no more difficult than initially becoming familiar with the characters in a novel or a movie – the rest of the time you enjoy the story.

Another client of mine commented that "knowing the nutritional values in food is an essential investment, and it

takes some work only at the beginning. After a while, you reap the benefits of recognizing automatically the basic foods that you'd find in almost any reasonable dish that you'd eat. And if the ingredients contain too many things that you don't know," she continues, "then you might want to think twice about putting it into your body."

## 2. FIT People Eat All the Time

The body can digest and assimilate only so many calories per meal, and calories in excess of this amount get shuttled to you-know-where. So a meal that's eaten but is larger than the body can use at any one time is a stepping stone to weight gain, or at least it is a road block to weight loss. By this account, if a person eats only two or 3 meals a day, it's likely that those meals are in larger portions than if 5 or 6 meals are eaten. Not only do the excess calories go to fat storage, but the resulting blood sugar fluctuates wildly, causing a huge surge of insulin that quickly shuttles the blood sugar (from the meal) into tissues, both muscles and fat. And, on top of all that, you slip into an energy crash mildly similar to the infamous Thanksgiving coma. So abandon the traditional three-meals-a-day practice and develop a habit of eating 5 or 6 smaller meals through the day.

One FIT client shares his secret to eating 5 meals a day: "I try to eat every three to 4 hours, whether I'm hungry or not. I don't wait until my body tells me I'm hungry, because by then it's too late and I'm more likely to eat too much for that meal. I go by my watch. If it's been 3 or 4 hours, it's time to eat something. If it's not time to eat, I keep busy with something else. But because I'm eating every few hours, I find that hunger isn't an issue, and I can control my eating better." He is one of my most fit clients.

## 3. FIT People Eat Water

Well, not really. But they choose foods that have high water content. Foods like vegetable, fruits, berries, soup and cooked whole grains are low in calories but are satiating. Most also contain a lot of fiber to not only keep the pipes happy but to help you feel fuller longer, and many contain a dense amount of nutrients to nourish the body.

A FIT client says that she eats all the vegetables she wants during at least two meals. "I'm full at the end and I know that I ate a lot of dense nutrients without a lot of calories."

Another client says, "I'm conscious of my choice in foods. I make sure I don't eat much that is empty calories. If I'm going to eat something with calories, it had better have an abundance of nutrients as well. My body deserves that."

## 4. FIT People Are Anchored

So even if you use the invaluable nutrition data book, or use the nutrition data website ([www.nutritiondata.com](http://www.nutritiondata.com)), and

know the nutritional values in just about any food, having what Analisa Naldi calls “anchor foods” is very helpful in keeping you eating well. Anchor foods have enabled her to achieve her weight loss while venturing out to other foods less familiar. It’s not realistic to know the nutrition profile to every single food you eat, so it’s important to develop a familiarity with as many foods as you can and call these your anchors, safety foods to “stabilize” and maintain your healthy dietary intake. Lean meats, most vegetables, certain fruits (citrus based), berries, low-fat plain yogurt, a high-fiber whole-grain cereal, a quality protein powder or drink, etc. can all be great anchors that make up the bulk of your food consumption. Know their portion size and corresponding nutritional values, and stick with them as often as you can while experimenting with others. While it’s true that variety in food intake is important to good health (and enjoyment), a variety of foods with little knowledge of what they contain can put unwanted calories or junk into your body.

Like an investor building a healthy portfolio, diversify your own dietary portfolio by gradually adding anchor foods – but be sure to study and know each one before it is added.

#### 5. FIT People Don’t Skip Breakfast

You’ve heard this one before. So, are you skipping breakfast? After a fasting period through the night, if you skip breakfast, your body is starving. As a result, your muscles break down to create new energy to fuel your body as it tries to figure out why you’ve skipped the most important meal of the day. What so bad about muscles breaking down? Well, the same muscles you’ve worked so hard to build up in the gym are the very stuff that supports metabolism. So the less muscles you have the slower your metabolism. Don’t let a habit of skipping breakfast steal away the tissues that are so critical to your metabolic rate.

Also, a recent study shows that skipping breakfast throws your insulin sensitivity off, making it likely that more of the meals you eat later end up in your fat cells. It also makes it likely that you’ll eat more calories in meals for the rest of the day. If you don’t like eating breakfast first thing in the morning, change your habit. Not liking breakfast first thing in the morning is not a good-enough excuse to skip it. If you are eating breakfast, however, have you tried Fiber One cereal with blue berries? Excellent with scrambled egg whites!

#### 6. FIT People Really, Really Enjoy Their Desserts

People who are fit are human, too. They enjoy the same great-tasting desserts that everyone else enjoys. The difference is that they allot caloric room for them, and not simply “add on top.”

“If I know I’m going to enjoy a chocolate soufflé, I will eat less of other things during dinner,” says a FIT client, who has lost weight and kept it off for over 5 years. “It is a

treat, and I consider it as nothing less than a treat and therefore I'm going to savor every last bit of flavor! But the most important thing is that I don't do this regularly, which I believe allows me to really, really enjoy desserts."

It might be that people who are fit actually enjoy their occasional desserts even more than people who eat them regularly. If you go to the theater every once in a while, you tend to pick a very good show to enjoy!

#### 7. FIT People Rock the Alternatives

Creativity is a learned skill. Without creativity, it is difficult to maintain a healthy dietary habit. This is why it's helpful to use cookbooks, find new recipes, share food ideas and tips, and understand which unhealthy ingredients can be replaced with healthier ones – such as substituting egg whites for whole eggs, or even diced dried fruits for sugar in baking.

"Instead of using refined sugar in baking recipes," says a self-proclaimed culinary artist who enjoys feeding her family healthful, enjoyable foods, "I often lower this amount and replace it with dried fruits such as dates, raisins, figs, or dried berries. But since dried fruits are also a sugar once they're in your body, I sometimes just lower the amount of refined sugar, period, without using dried fruits as substitute. It rarely ever throws off the flavor of the final product, and if it does, your taste bud will gradually readjust... along with the size of your waist."

There are many strategies for making delicious healthful meals and snacks out of otherwise unhealthful ones. Doing a little research on the internet for meal recipes, cooking tips, and food advices can turn you into a creative homebody culinary artist. Also, you can join the FIT forum (free) and learn or discuss nutrition and share recipe ideas. Go to <http://www.focusedtrainers.com/forum/> and register to join today!

Good luck, and remember that becoming more fit isn't just doing "good" things for a specified period of time – it's creating lifetime good habits.

### **FIT Announcement**

February is FIT FOOD month and we'd like you and your body to get involved!

Did you know that you can substitute ¼ cup of mayonnaise with 1/4c low fat sour cream, 1/4c low-fat plain yogurt, or 1/4c fat-free cottage cheese pureed and as a result save between 309-350 calories per serving?

Did you know that some recipes (salad dressings, marinades, sauces) use anywhere from ¼ cup to 1c of these types of ingredients? Think of how many calories you could cut if you knew your options! Did you know that a tasty substitute for a cocktail before dinner is a fun mix of sparkling water, Sobe Lean Grapefruit, 1 Splenda packet, and a splash of lime? Your perfect "mocktail" with ten calories, no sugar, and a refreshing taste!

Keep your eyes peeled this month around FIT for recipes, food facts, substitution suggestions, and details about our nutrition services with Scott Kolasinski!

For further information regarding our nutrition services and FIT FOOD February, check out our newsletter (<http://www.focusedtrainers.com/news/newsletter.htm>) or email Analisa at [analisa@focusedtrainers.com](mailto:analisa@focusedtrainers.com).

Remember, exercise and food go hand in hand! Your body doesn't run without the right fuel! Happy eating!

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For more information regarding FIT:  
Visit - [www.focusedtrainers.com](http://www.focusedtrainers.com)  
Call - 650-947-9831