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FIT Services

by Johnny Nguyen

FIT is a small company. From the beginning we knew we were the small guys, but we also knew we wanted to do exercise very well. In fact, we have always wanted to be the best. Since the early days, our trainers engaged in numerous discussions about exercise methodologies, some of which often turning into drawn-out debates that sometimes got super heated, but always leaving us with a greater understanding of what we all do with our clients and ourselves. We participate in continuing education of all types, from reading scientific journals to attending national seminars.

I won't try to persuade you that we are the best, because I haven't met the thousands of trainers available out there. But I can tell you that we are trainers and coaches who are very passionate about workouts. You can say that we're exercise connoisseurs.

We have never adopted exercise methods simply because they exist or because someone else was doing them, but rather because we analyzed them inside out and discussed their usefulness. Similarly, over the years we didn't just add services to our business because we can; we added them because we believe in them. I would like to take some time to go over some of these services that FIT offers.

Personal Training

This has been the staple of our business, the original product. It is the goods for which we're recognized by the community and by the fitness industry (we have interviewed countless personal trainers from across the country because, one way or another, they have "heard good things about FIT"). And most of our clients now are from word-of-mouth. We are pleased with – and are grateful for – this.

I shouldn't have to say too much else about our personal training service other than that it is: A one-on-one exercise relationship between client and trainer, with direct attention given to every detail within your exercise session. This is THE service if you want maximum attention given to you and your exercise endeavors.

Small Group Training

Small Group Training accepts up to 4 people. The group program is prescribed and supervised by a trainer whose goal is to ensure that all exercises are modified and scaled to meet the varying physical levels of all participants, and to ensure that everyone performs their exercises properly. If you want to round up some friends for a motivating workout, or if you simply want to join in with an existing group, then Small Group Training might just be for you. Not only is it economical, it is energetic and fun for everyone.

Crossfit Training

Crossfit is a program that we really believe in because it is an exercise program that is broad and general in regimen and is constantly varying. It is group exercise that is high energy, yet it is universally scalable so that everyone can participate, regardless of physical level. This is one of the best ways to quickly achieve outstanding general fitness. If you are committed and want to become really, really fit at everything, this is the program you should get into.

FIT Teen

Young adults should be strong and athletic, whether they play sports or not. But if they do participate in sports, then FIT Teen will help to improve the many physical qualities that their sports demand, thus enhancing their athleticism and lowering the risk of injury. Or even if they do not participate in sports, our FIT Teen program still

benefits them by making them stronger and fitter people, as well as helping them to develop positive exercise habits. Also, now is the time for young girls to build strong bones through physical activity, something they'll literally take with them for the rest of their lives. This program accepts teens aged 13 and up.

FIT Kids

Kids are the future, and we want the future to be fit and healthy. This program gets today's kids moving. It also improves their strength, coordination, agility, endurance and confidence. For ages 7 to 12, FIT Kids encourages the very young to socialize in an active and supervised environment. If I had kids, this program would be a regularly scheduled activity.

FIT Barbell Club

This program focuses on Olympic-style weightlifting, a great modality to increase whole-body strength, speed, flexibility and agility. Olympic-style weightlifting, as a sport, has been around for over 100 years and has gained popularity in hundreds of countries big and small. It has also gained reams of scientific research that shows the endless physical and psychological benefits of participating in Olympic-style weightlifting. Coach Rob runs this club with a keen eye on technique and with a passion for everyone to improve. Many of the club members also compete in weightlifting meets, locally, nationally and internationally. Don't be intimidated by this, though, as everyone starts somewhere, and that's what local meets are for. You don't have to compete in meets, but coach Rob may encourage you to try it. Either way, you should check out a Barbell Club session on any Saturday morning at 11 AM. Lots of great energy.

FIT Buddies

This is a great program for individuals with special needs, including Down Syndrome and Autism. Often people with special needs don't have regular access to a program that focuses on continual physical development in a fun and safe environment. The FIT Buddies group consists of individuals of many ages and is trained according to skill level and abilities. Presently the group meets twice a week, and you'd know it when it is in session – lots of energy, hard work, laughing and cheering. Jennifer Pleimann possesses experience in working with special population and had been passionate about developing the FIT Buddies program in our facility. After a couple of years of getting to know all the members of FIT Buddies, we are very honored to offer this service, and grateful to have a great coach running it.

Other Services

We also have other services such as nutrition counseling, lifestyle coaching, massage therapy and (through our partnership with Agile PT) physical therapy. As time goes by, we'll probably develop more programs, those that we really believe have a place in our business and will serve our community. It's not the end.

Please visit our website for more information on all of these programs, such as schedules and costs. www.focusedtrainers.com

A Summary of the Paleolithic Diet

by Scott Kolasinsky

Over the weekend of September 20, Danielle, Gabe and I drove up to the sights, smells and sounds of Chico, California to attend a nutrition lecture on the benefits of the Paleo Diet. This lecture applied the principles of the Paleo Diet (abbreviated for "Paleolithic," or the "caveman era", if you will) and The Zone (by Barry Sears) to optimize performance, recovery, health and longevity. It was a very informative lecture that would certainly be considered against the norm according to today's USDA Food Pyramid which is 6-11 servings of starch, 3-5 servings of veggies, 2-4 servings of fruit, 2-3 servings of dairy, 2-3 servings of meat, eggs, poultry, nuts and sparingly use fats, oils and sugars.

The Paleo Diet suggests we eat: meat/fish, eggs, veggies, nuts and seeds, some fruit (2 servings per day), no starch and no sugar. On average, the ratios of protein:carbohydrates:fat are 25-30%:30-40%:20-25%. Again, quite contradictory to the starch-emphasized diet the USDA supports for today's Americans.



There are still a number of hunter-gatherer tribes around the world who eat in this manner. Their food is considered to be more nutrient dense because they ate free-roaming grass-fed game and beef, eggs, fruits, veggies, nuts and seeds that were not tampered by pesticides or man. They maintain an active lifestyle with less stress that allows the young and old to maintain a similar activity level.

Research has shown these tribes, such as the Kitava in New Guinea, have a decreased incidence of arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, depression, and cancer, not to mention they have straight teeth and better eyesight. It is suggested that it is because their diet is based on a diet of

evolution, as explained above, that they are able to avoid so many of today's maladies that concern this country's society. Therefore, because the speed of introducing starch and sugar into our diet was faster than what our genes could have evolved to, it would make sense that starch and sugar may have a role in several of today's maladies and age-related diseases (Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's, etc.) plaguing our society.

The lecture also offered a description on The Zone. The Zone is a healthy method of eating which focuses on stabilizing blood sugar in order to minimize inflammation in our body. The Zone uses "blocks" as a tool for measurement for individuals to decide how much they need to eat to achieve their goals. One block of each macronutrient is 7g protein, 9g carbs and 1.5g fat. Blocks are calculated based on your bodyfat percentage. More information can be found at www.zonediet.com.



Typically, people use The Zone as a method of weight loss, but it may also be used to maintain a healthy lifestyle or to gain muscle mass. This lecture explained how to eat the foods that are classified as being "Paleo worthy" while maintaining within your prescribed blocks.

Here are some additional points (potentially controversial) of how and why to eat like a caveman for health, performance and longevity:

- Healthier body composition
- Inflammation is at the root of autoimmune diseases (celiacs disease, arthritis, Type 1 diabetes, multiple sclerosis, others listed above, etc.). Keep the dietary factors that increase inflammation, such as sugar and starch, at a stable level.
- Grains deteriorate and may remove the villi in our small intestine.
- Anybody with a gallbladder removal has "undiagnosed celiacs disease".
- Lectins, found in beans and peanuts, are a gut irritant and cause inflammation. Avoid all beans, peanuts and soy.

- Avoid consumption of metal binding molecules called phytates, found in bread, legumes and nuts.
- Quinoa can create a positive celiac response in the body because it acts like a grain in the body even though it is considered a fruit. Others, such as millet, corn and rye may do similarly in us.
- Faster recovery from exercise.
- Avoid wine because of the sugar.
- Two days of poor sleep in a row will give you a blood profile similar to a Type-2 diabetic.

As I mentioned before, these points are against the norm of dietary foods that the USDA recommends. Who is correct? Unfortunately, in the world of nutrition and with the diversity of genes, we cannot make “black and white” conclusions that will support all.

Clearly, the Paleolithic supporters have their critics. For example, the lecturer said that we should avoid phytates. There are those nutritionists that believe phytates may actually be healthy in that they regulate absorbing too many minerals, such as iron. There is research that supports both sides and for me to analyze and compare both to make a firm conclusion is outside the scope of this article.

I hope that through this article I have not made you more confused than ever. I wish to give you another option for how to potentially deal with any autoimmune maladies that you or someone you know may have. If you are dealing with the side-effects of anti-inflammatory drugs and you would like to reduce their dosage or eliminate them, perhaps this type of eating regimen is easy for you to follow. There is no calorie counting with the Paleo Diet, just the quality of food that is most important. For more reading, go www.paleodiet.com or read about the research done by Loren Cordain, PhD., at www.thepaleodiet.com.

Most people have some difficulty adhering to this lifestyle initially, but because people start to feel so much better and/or their blood profiles improve so much more, they decide to adhere to the paleo eating regimen for life.

If you have any questions or comments, please email me at scott@focusedtrainers.com. Until next time...

The End Result

by Analisa Naldi

In deciding what to write about this month, I felt very strong about focusing on the path that a lot of us take on our journey to optimal wellness, health, and strength. I wanted to discuss how we prioritize these factors in our life and what we put our minds and bodies through in order to achieve optimal personal fitness levels.

This morning, after stepping out of a seminar on the effects of strength and endurance training on power output in athletes, I realized that while it is awesome to focus on the journey, we cannot lose track of the results. Allow me to backtrack for a second. I, along with three of my FIT family members are at a strength conference in Colorado Springs, home to the Olympic Training Center, many hard-working athletes and coaches, and an awful lot of research. There have been a slew of studies addressing the various aspects of training methods and how they affect strength, power, and aerobic endurance levels. The one common factor in discussing the results of these studies is the importance of the end result. While many factors can be attributed to the changes that occur in VO₂, strength levels, power output, or protein synthesis, one factor remained the same; quality of performance.

What does this have to do with FIT? How does this relate to how we prioritize our health and wellness? It helps us remember why we do what we do. It encourages us to keep training because even on days when the process seems never-ending, there

are a multitude of things that contribute to improvement. An example of this can be seen in a series of studies that were presented on the importance of strength training for cyclists. Research is limited examining the benefits of strength training for cyclists' as it is easier to test running economy. The results of these studies discussed the variables affected by implementing strength training and one finding was that there were no obvious improvements in VO2 in either the Strength Training group or the control group. In fact, there were even some that experienced a decrease in VO2. However, there were significant increases in performance. What could have contributed to the improved performance? A variety of other mechanisms in the body "picked up the slack" and contributed. Therefore, even though the journey was not exactly as planned, the end result was positive.

Another example can be extracted from a study that was presented regarding the symptoms and discrepancies of overtraining and overreaching. To clarify briefly, functional overreaching is acute (short term), recovery generally takes days, and there is a temporary decrease in performance. Non-functional overreaching is more extreme, recovery generally takes a number of weeks or months, and performance declines and become stagnant. Overtraining syndrome, which people often mistake themselves victims of, takes months, even years to recover from and performance is usually halted. While the differences between these conditions are still very messy, it is important to note that while you may be experiencing the symptoms of over-reaching (fatigue, negative hormonal responses, delays in recovery), what does your performance look like? Despite the over-reaching or overtraining symptoms, is your performance still improving? This has often been observed.

Whatever your performance is like, the take-home message from both of these studies is that performance IS the end result. While the journey to your objectives and long term goals might seem filled with harsh physical and psychological conditions, if you stick with it, listen to your body, pay attention to your coach, you will achieve the results that you desire.

Be patient. Be open-minded. Be honest with your body. And most important, remind yourself that every minute, every movement, every struggle, and every victory are all what make the results possible.

FIT Client of the Month, Nov. 08

Name: Victoria Johnston
FIT Member Since: March 08'
Goals: Run again, overall better shape, 3 pullups

Results: Victoria can run when-ever if she chooses, can perform any exercise I throw at her and went from level 14 on the pullups to level 4 for 4 reps. She competed in FGB and rocked it and is doing great in the OL.

Likes:

- I like the friendly atmosphere at FIT, where trainers and clients give a friendly smile or wave of acknowledgment of "It's tough, and we're all here to support each other".
- I LOVE my weightlifting shoes. "Dress for success," I always say.
- I love the extra special touch of "face soap" in the ladies locker room.
- I love the feeling of leaving the outside world behind when I walk into FIT, knowing that I have 1 hour for something just for me.
- I like knowing there is always room for improvement.
- I like box jumps.



Dislikes:
Pushups - even though I can do them.

Personal Records: Pullups, Lvl 4 for 4 reps, C&J 32kg for 2, Snatch 24 kg for 2, Box jumps on Big box for multiple reps, FGB for 270 reps.

Keys to Success: (in Victoria's words)
Set goals. Focus. Be present in the moment. Stay committed. Rely on your "team". Be positive. Work hard. Be open to trying to improve. Have grace and confidence. Listen when your coach says: "You're okay."



Keys to Success: (in Kevin's words) Victoria continues to work hard every time she comes in and also has the best attitude to match. Victoria is very attentive to detail and wants to get better at everything she does. She has the right amount of competitiveness without being cocky. And, although there may be the occasional "oh, Kevin you are killing me," I simply tell her "you'll be fine," and she continues on and I think she truly enjoys the workouts.

Off to the Ironman Triathlon: Serena Earwicker

by Analisa Naldi

We'd like to wish our operations manager, the spine of FIT, Serena Earwicker a huge good luck this month in her first IRONMAN triathlon. She has been preparing to compete in this race for the past 12+ months and we are now on the few-day countdown. In light of our talking about how we prioritize our health and wellness in relation to our goals and objectives, she has been gracious enough to share with you a few tidbits of what she's gone through along the way.



Q. Why did you decide to train and compete in an IRONMAN?

A. The Challenge. I love to push myself to see what I am capable of. When you do a workout that you have done a month before and realize you are 10 minutes faster than you were you reach a high that is almost indescribable. It was during my training for a marathon in 2007 that I looked at my training partner, CeCe, and said "Would you ever do an Ironman?" And there it was. We made the decision to train for an Ironman – to experience the exhilarating feeling of pushing ourselves to the next level.

Q. What sacrifices have you made physically, nutritionally, and psychologically for your performance along the way?

A. The sacrifices along the way have added to my strength of mind, body and spirit. I have given up the life as I knew it before. My days consist of work, training, eating, and sleeping. Everything, and I mean everything else has taken a back seat to my dream.

School, free time, seeing friends and family, reading a good book, and drinking my cherished glass of wine are all things I try to squeeze in before. Now they are squeezed in around my training schedule.

Q. What do you feel has been the most rewarding element of your journey?

A. The most rewarding thing for me has been realizing what I am capable of. Having a goal to work towards makes it really easy. I would never be in the fabulous shape I am in if I had not had this crazy idea that I could do an Ironman. But I had a thought and I have worked very hard to get to where I am. I am very proud of myself. Three years ago I did not even know what an Ironman was. Now I am about to push myself to the farthest level of my ability to accomplish the biggest (physical and mental) feat in my lifetime.

Q. Have the sacrifices that you've made in your journey proven to be worthwhile?

A. The greatest thing I have learned thus far is that this never gets easy. You get better, faster, stronger, but it is always a challenge. Each day brings a different obstacle to tackle. How much sleep I got the night before, what I ate, the workout the day before all puts a different twist on my current workout. There are good days and bad days, but I am working towards a goal. I will always own this achievement. It is my dedication to my dream that keeps me going. On November 23, I will cross that finish line and it will all be SO WORTH IT!

Good luck Serena! We can't wait to catch up with you in December and hear all about your race.

Fit Teens and Fit Kids

Volitional Failure, Technical Failure and Momentary Failure: What Are the Differences?

by Johnny Nguyen

Exercise intensity for most people is subjective. What is comfortable for one person can be extremely uncomfortable for another, even if both possess the same physical capacity. Everyone brings to the gym a different perspective on physical effort, and this subjectivity – no doubt rooted in deeper psychological complexity – cannot be argued or judged. Therefore we need more objective indicators to measure true work capacity, whether its limitation is mental or physical.

There are a few traits that one exhibits during an exercise, the first and foremost being technical proficiency. You must, over all else, possess technical proficiency. A lack thereof is a path to certain misery.

In exercise, technical proficiency facilitates positive changes in the systems of the body while minimizes orthopedic assault. It takes a trained eye and great experience to recognize technical proficiency and to also identify its diminishment during exercise.



When Should You Terminate an Exercise?

If true intensity is achieved in exercise, then fatigue is imminent, followed shortly by exercise cessation. But when exactly should an exercise cease?

What is Failure?

Exactly when exercise failure occurs must be clearly defined, if not for maximizing efficacy and safety then for simply knowing how we're performing. Exercise failure comes in varying levels and they are identifiable with careful observation.

Traditionally, exercise is organized by sets and reps, and sometimes the parameters are predetermined so that the exercise terminates before fatigue dictates cessation. Sometimes, though, exercise is taken until failure. But, how do we define failure?

Volitional Failure

Typical among the beginner or casual exerciser in terminating an exercise is his or her conscious decision to stop. The cessation of an exercise is based on the individual perception of when it "feels" too difficult. This cannot be discounted and must be respected because everyone's psychological tolerance for physical work is different. But it is important to be cognizant that one stops an exercise because of one's own volition, not because one has reached physical capacity. Although volitional failure is appropriate for most new exercisers, those who exercise regularly might need to go beyond volitional failure for increased result.

Technical Failure

Those who possess or have developed the mental tolerance to push through intense physical work typically experience fatigue levels that impact technical proficiency. Under this circumstance form breaks down and technique suffers. While the exercise can persist, its characteristics alter. It no longer resembles the exercise it once was. The purist might even accuse it as no longer being an exercise but some sort of a poor physical struggle. Nevertheless, muscles are still contracting and energy expended.

Momentary Failure

When an intense level of fatigue is reached, a cascade of neuromuscular events occurs that ultimately shuts down your ability to perform further work. Your muscles cease to contract. In most cases this is temporary, but it's akin to short-circuiting an overloaded machine; you need to cool off.

Where Do We Go from Here?

How we push ourselves through an exercise depends on many variables. This is as much an art as it is a science. We have to understand the fundamental principles of exercise failure in order to maximize exercise success, and to continue to challenge ourselves while preserving our physical health. The guidelines below are just that – guidelines. Nothing is black and white; technical breakdown does not automatically make an exercise dangerous, although some exercises are more unforgiving than others when technical proficiency diminishes. As with everything in life, you just have to be smart.

Some guidelines for when to reach Volitional Failure:

- You are new to exercise and have yet to build the psychological tolerance for more intense training.
- You are learning a new exercise, especially one demanding high skill.
- You are new to exercise, in which case volitional failure is sufficient to trigger adaptation.
- You are sick and want to have an easy workout.
- Your long-term training program designates a low-intensity training period.
- You require a "recovery workout."

Some guidelines for when to reach Technical failure:

- You've gained the psychological tolerance to push through exercise discomfort.
- You want increased results.
- You have had regular training and the structures of your body (connective tissues and joints) are strong enough to safely handle added stresses.
- You know which exercise retains a definite margin of safety when technical failure is reached and, in some cases, surpassed.

Some Guidelines for when to reach Momentary Failure:

- You've had plenty of experience with exercise and can push to great levels of discomfort.
- You possess good structural integrity (muscles, connective tissues and joints), as well as strong cardiovascular, respiratory and neurological systems.
- You want to overcome a plateau.
- You want to maximize stimulus for further adaptation, or you want to periodically expose your body to a different (though intense) stimulus.
- You know which exercise retains a definite margin of safety when pushed to muscular failure.

FIT Recipe: Pork Tenderloin Stuffed with Porcini Mushrooms

From EATING WELL MAGAZINE – March/April 2007

Makes 8 servings

ACTIVE TIME: 45 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 1 hour 50 minutes

1 pound porcini mushrooms, cut into thick slices (see Substitution Tip)

4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

2 1/4 teaspoons freshly ground pepper, divided

2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage, divided

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme, divided

1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided

2 pork tenderloins (1-1 1/4 pounds each), trimmed

Tomato Salsa Verde (recipe follows)



1. Preheat oven to 400°F.

2. Toss mushrooms, garlic, 1 tablespoon oil, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, 1 teaspoon sage, 1 teaspoon thyme and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Transfer to a roasting pan and roast in the oven for 5 minutes. Stir and continue roasting until the mushrooms are soft and fragrant, 5 to 10 minutes more. Set aside to cool.

3. To butterfly tenderloins, lay one tenderloin on a large cutting board. Holding the knife blade flat,

parallel to the board, make a lengthwise cut through the center of the meat, stopping short of the opposite edge so that the flaps remain attached. Open up the flaps as you would open a book. Cover with plastic wrap. With a meat pounder, rolling pin or heavy pan, pound the meat to an even 1/4-inch thickness. Butterfly and pound the remaining tenderloin.

4. Divide the mushroom mixture between the tenderloins, spreading evenly and leaving a 1-inch border all around. Starting with a long side, roll up each tenderloin to enclose the filling, then tie the roasts at 2-inch intervals with kitchen string. Combine the remaining 2 teaspoons pepper, 1 teaspoon sage, 1 teaspoon thyme and 1 teaspoon salt in a small bowl. Rub the mixture all over the tenderloins.

5. Increase oven temperature to 450°F.

6. Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a large, heavy, ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the roasts, bending to fit if necessary, and cook, turning often, until the outsides are browned, 3 to 5 minutes total.

7. Transfer the pan to the oven and roast, checking often, until the internal temperature reaches 145°F, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer the roasts to a cutting board, tent with foil and let rest for 5 minutes. Remove the string, cut the pork into 1-inch-thick slices and serve with Tomato Salsa Verde on the side.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: Per serving: 252 calories; 15 g fat (3 g sat, 10 g mono); 64 mg cholesterol; 5 g carbohydrate; 25 g protein; 1 g fiber; 352 mg sodium; 678 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Selenium (76% daily value), Potassium (19% dv), Vitamin C (15% dv).
0 Carbohydrate Servings

Exchanges: 1 vegetable, 3 lean meat, 1 fat

TIP: Substitution Tip: Not all of us will have fresh porcini at the ready, so you may substitute an equal amount of cremini, portobello or shiitake mushrooms. If you are using fresh shiitakes, remove and discard the stems first because they are too tough and fibrous to use.

MAKE AHEAD TIP: Equipment: Kitchen string

TOMATO SALSA VERDE

Makes 1 cup, for 8 servings

ACTIVE TIME: 20 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 20 minutes

3 anchovy fillets, rinsed and chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1/3 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1/4 cup chopped celery leaves
2 tablespoons packed chopped fresh basil
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 cup diced seeded tomatoes
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste

Place anchovies, garlic, parsley, celery leaves and basil in a food processor. Add oil and vinegar; pulse until blended. Transfer to a bowl and stir in tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper.

NUTRITION INFORMATION: Per serving: 73 calories; 7 g fat (1 g sat, 5 g mono); 1 mg cholesterol; 1 g carbohydrate; 1 g protein; 0 g fiber; 94 mg sodium; 74 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (15% daily value).

0 Carbohydrate Servings

Exchanges: 1 fat

The Cold, Hard Truth

I'm not saying that strength coach Alwyn Cosgrove speaks gently, and I'm not giving props to his bedside manner, but I must say his message is pretty clear. Actually, Alwyn is a great strength coach and trainer from the Santa Cruz, Ca area, and he's also an author. Below is his brief but straight-to-the-gut write-up about food intake; I had this article filed away for some time now, and I thought I'd share it with you here, since the holiday season is approaching, bringing with it all kinds of celebratory foods. - JN

Basic Truths That No One Really Wants to Hear by Alwyn Cosgrove

Think about the foods that you are about to consume. Are they going to bring you closer to your goal? Or will they make you feel like crap and take you farther away from what you want? Yeah, I know that when you were younger, before you had kids, you could eat



blah, blah, blah and not gain weight. Too bad. Times have changed.

And I know your friend can eat whatever he or she wants and is in great shape. Yay for them. Sucks for you. But no amount of whining will change the fact that you need to work to get your butt in shape.

Stop rushing your meals. Eat slowly. This will give your body a chance to actually realize that you've eaten and register that you're full. It takes 20 minutes for the satiety mechanisms to kick in. Give your body a chance to tell you that it's full before you cram another 500 calories in your pie hole.

Eat smaller portions. Unfortunately you can't eat unlimited amounts of the food you would like and still get lean. Sorry. Second helpings? I seriously doubt it. Appetizers, main course, and dessert? You're kidding me.

Make correct meal choices that contain appropriate servings of protein, carbohydrates, and fats. I love the new "low carb diet" options at most restaurant chains now. A steak with melted cheese on the top. That's not a diet food people. I also saw a low carb buffalo wings option. The difference? No carrots to dip in the blue cheese. Like that's your problem...too many carrots in your diet. A big ass bowl of pasta? That's what marathon runners eat the night before the race. If you have a marathon planned tomorrow, go ahead. If not, you don't need the calories.

"You are what you eat" is a true statement. And it wouldn't surprise me to find out that some of you have eaten a fat bastard or two in your time [I am sure he's referring to a bottle of Fat Bastard wine. - JN]. Are you a lean serving of protein or a saggy nasty sausage?

If certain foods are a "trigger" for you and you can't eat them sensibly, then you have to give them up. I have known very few people who can eat their "trigger" food and not end up blowing their diet. Once you "pop" you can't stop, right? Usually one cookie means the whole bag. You can't be trusted so don't have them in the house.

You do not need something sweet to finish your meal. This is a conditioned response from your childhood days when cleaning your plate meant ice cream. "Need" something sweet? Do you realize how much you just ate? You don't need anything. Dessert is not a physiological need for survival. It is just a bad habit. Habits can be broken. You do not need the cheesecake.

Do not buy junk food. If it is there, you will eat it. If you have a craving for candy and there's none in the house, it's highly unlikely that you'll get up and go to the store. You'll just sit your ass back down and finish watching American Idol. Oh and buying the junk food "for the kids" is an absolute bullshit excuse. The kids do not need the cheezy poofs either. In my opinion, the childhood obesity epidemic has been caused by parents buying shit for their children. It's essentially child abuse, plain and simple. Depriving your kids of crap is a good parenting decision.

If you screw up a meal, do not, I repeat DO NOT try to adjust the next meal to "make up for it." All you'll do is screw up two meals. If you overeat at meal number one, just get back on track. Immediately. Because thinking, "Well, I've blown it now so I might as well REALLY blow it" is akin to getting a flat tire as you drive down the freeway, getting out, and totaling your car.

Cookies, doughnuts, and muffins are crap food choices. You can't ever justify eating them on a regular basis. And low carb, fat-free cookies, doughnuts, and muffins are still crap. Don't kid yourself.

Yes, you can eat fast food. It's called grilled chicken sandwiches or a turkey sub, Jarod. Fries? No. And you do not need to "super size" for an extra 50 cents.

For more info on Alwyn Cosgrove: <http://www.alwyncosgrove.com/>

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