

Does Cutting Carbs Really Work – Part 2 of 6

As our investigations into carbohydrates continues, I'd like to recap from last month's article. We were discussing monosaccharides, or simple sugars and noted that there are several different types of simple sugars (fruit sugar, blood sugar, etc.). We also talked about how it's a good rule of thumb that any refined sugars should be limited. Lots of sources say this same thing – watch out for the sugars. Here's why it's important: rapid rises in blood glucose (blood sugar) levels cause the body to react to keep everything working smoothly. Ask any diabetic about blood sugar and they'll let you know that if it gets too high or too low, the body starts to shut down. First, if the blood sugar gets too high, insulin is released. Insulin gets the blood sugar levels back down by primarily storing the glucose as fat. If blood sugar levels are too low, the body will often send signals of cravings for sweets, something it knows will get that blood sugar back up quickly.

On to oligosaccharides, the second class of carbs we're going to look at. This class of carbs contains di-, tri- and tetrasaccharides. The di-, tri- and tetra- prefixes mean that these oligosaccharides are made of two, three or four monosaccharides jammed together into one molecule. Common disaccharides are lactose (milk sugar), maltose (malt sugar), and sucrose (table sugar). There's an interesting twist with oligosaccharides – some of them resist hydrolysis in our digestive system. This means that they don't react with water like other sugars do. A specific class of these resistant oligosaccharides is called fructooligosaccharides (FOS for short). They're important enough to get highlighted in next month's issue.

Remember, if your body's blood sugar starts to move outside the normal ranges, the body goes into 'crisis' mode and sends out fat storage triggers. If enough of these are sent out during the day, your body will fight to hold onto fat even if you are exercising! If we can instead keep our blood sugar moderated, our body will become more comfortable and start to mobilize the fat stores for use as energy. It's kind of like this – if you had to heat your house by using logs in a wood-burning fireplace, you'd want to make sure you had enough logs for the winter. It wouldn't make sense to burn all the logs on one rather cold day or to continue burning the logs if the temperature rose up and risk not making it through the cold season. Your body works in a very similar manner, kind of panicking and holding on to the fuel it knows will keep it alive if everything goes haywire. Here are some tips to keeping your blood sugar moderated...

- Watch out for consuming sugary foods alone like drinking a can of regular pop or eating sweets during the afternoon.
- Low-fat foods are kind of a trick – in order to make the food not taste terrible, sugar is added as the fat is removed to balance out flavor and consistency. Watch out for sugars in low-fat foods, which could cause blood sugar spikes when eaten.
- Watch out for skim milk – drink too much and you're sugars will be out of balance if there's not other foods to keep them in check.
- If you're going to have a candy bar, consider something with nuts, like a Snickers® bar. The fats and proteins from the nuts balance out the sugars and slow down their absorption a little bit – this means your blood sugar doesn't spike up as much.
- Eat regular balanced meals – a good balance of proteins and carbohydrates in your meals will help keep your body full and your blood sugar in a healthy range, thereby mobilizing fat stores for energy.

Do You Have A Health Or Fitness Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from all of my good friends and clients who enjoy reading my monthly newsletter. And I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have about anything related to health and fitness. If you have a question, tip or idea, please feel free to call me at (847) 276-7132. Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!

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Inside This Issue

Three Secrets to Losing Weight! – Page 1

Low Fat is Better, or is It? – Page 2

The Cheesecake Test – Page 2

Reaching Peak Performance – Page 2

Does Pain = Gain? – Page 3

Does Cutting Carbs Really Work? – Page 4

Come Across An Interesting Diet, Weight Loss Or Fitness Product?

No need to guess if it's worth trying or wonder about its effectiveness. Just call me at (847) 276-7132 and I'll tell you...with no hassles and no obligation.

Three Secrets to Losing Weight!

I would bet that most houses have a scale, commonly found in the bathroom. Did you know that most people look at their body weight as a guide to determine if they are healthy? Ever catch yourself saying, “If I was just ten pounds lighter,” or something to that effect? Here's three secrets to losing the weight that you want...

- 1. Just losing weight isn't good enough!** What's the point of losing ten, twenty or thirty pounds if the only device we track this with is the bathroom scale? Did you know that your body is comprised of about 70% water? You know, not drinking might be a great way to lose some weight! Seriously, don't risk dehydration for something as simple as a number on your scale. Keeping track of your body weight as the main measurement of health is like trying to diagnose an illness just by taking a temperature. If I have a temperature of 100, does it mean I'm sick? What if I just spent thirty minutes in a sauna or working out? Body composition tests are the only real way to determine what is happening with your body. A less specific way is to look in the mirror – is your body taking shape or just becoming a smaller version of the old you. If it's not taking shape (like dropping more than 1-2 pounds a week), your body is losing something else besides fat, and that isn't going to help in the long run.
- 2. Changing your eating habits is only one third of the equation!** There are four main parts of being healthy, although three of them directly affect body weight and composition – strength training, cardiovascular training and nutritional choices (flexibility is the other). Work on just one of the legs and you build an unstable triangle. The most synergistic results come from working on all three sides at the same time.
- 3. Gain weight to lose fat!** That's right – I said gain weight. If you want to get serious about turning your body into a fat-burning machine, something that resists the storage of fat in the future and burns its energy as efficiently as possible, then strength training is unavoidable. Your muscle tissue determines your basal metabolic rate (BMR). Using the BMR, we can calculate how many calories you burn during different activities (including sleeping). Raise the BMR and you raise the total calories burned in a day. Raise your lean tissue (muscle and bone) and you raise your BMR. The good news is you don't have to be a powerlifter to strength train, but I'll be blunt here – three pound dumbbells aren't going to cut it for the average person.

Low Fat is Better, or is It?

Have you noticed the swing of the pendulum lately? We go from an eat-what-you-want lifestyle in the 70s to a low-fat, low-cholesterol diet of the 80s to a high-fat, high-protein diet in the late 90s and early 2000s. When I look at that trend, I can see that the vogue eating habits of Americans shifts with the 'latest research.' In this article, we're specifically going to look at choosing low-fat options in food choices and how it can affect your health.

True or False – low-fat is healthier. True... and false. Just like with last month's article on caffeine, it's just not as simple as a single true or false statement. Let's take a look at milk, for an example. Assuming that we ignore all other factors of milk as a food source and simply compare skim to 2% to whole (or Vitamin D, as it's marketed). If you look at the nutritional facts on a gallon of 2%, you'll see something along these lines – about 5 grams of fat and about 11 grams of carbohydrates (all sugars) with around 8 grams of protein. A serving size is one cup (yes, one *measuring* cup). The 2% milk advertises that it has 37% less fat than whole milk, so we'll figure that whole milk has around 9 grams of fat and skim milk is fat-free.

Here's where it gets a little more complicated. The milk sugar (lactose) is absorbed more rapidly into the blood stream than the fats, which take more time to digest. If the fat in the milk is lowered enough and nothing else is eaten to slow down the absorption of the milk sugar, it's possible to have a fat storage trigger from insulin release (see *Does Cutting Carbs Really Work* in this issue). Fats in the milk will help to slow this absorption down. Now while milk doesn't cause quite the same blood sugar effect that something like alcohol or fruit juice does, it still can make a difference. The trade off is that each gram of fat delivers more than twice the number of calories than a single gram of carbohydrates, which means that in the process of trying to keep our blood sugar regulated, we may just be piling on more calories than we need in a meal at the same time – hence the balancing act.

So here are the points to consider when looking at fat levels in foods...

- If there is a lot of sugar or simple carbohydrates in the food and not a lot of fat, try and eat something complementary with the meal to balance out the potential rapid absorption of the sugars into the blood stream.
- When finding your own body's balance, make sure that the choice isn't all-fat by default – examine how you feel and try to figure out what mix of fats, proteins and carbohydrates gives you the most lasting energy and mental focus. This may take some time, but it is the only way to figure out which kind of nutritional plan is best for you.

For more information on how to find your ideal and unique nutritional plan, please feel free to call me at (847) 276-7132 and ask me – I'd be glad to provide more information.

The Cheesecake Comparison Test™

Want to figure out if a particular meal is better or worse for your body? There's a simple little test that can help make the decision for you. Simply take the total number of calories in a meal and divide it by 330 (the number of calories in a piece of Eli's® Original Plain Cheesecake). Here's an example...

Three White Castle® 'sliders' (plain – no condiments) with fries and a Diet Coke® comes out to 535 calories. Still hungry? Add three more sliders for a total of 955 calories. (Consider that most people need 2000-2400 calories in a day.)

The Cheesecake Test rates the first meal as a **1.62** and the second as a **2.89**. That means that eating the White Castle® meal is the same as consuming 1.6 or 2.9 pieces of cheesecake, depending on how hungry you are. Not a bad score, but it still can get up there pretty easily.

Peak Performance!

In this month's newsletter, the topic is planting seeds. If we take a pot of soil and water it and give it sunlight, not much will happen without some kind of seed being present. Sometimes, it's easy to get so caught up in the 'busy' demands that are placed on us that we forget to plant the seed. Instead, we waste our efforts on trying to cultivate something from nothing. Remembering to plant that seed can make sure that your efforts get rewarded in the end, as we shall indeed reap what we have sown.

Test yourself by making sure your efforts are spent on worthwhile causes. Make sure that there's a good reason why are doing the tasks you are doing and then take the test to other people – try planting seeds with those around you and get to know the people behind the activities. Have lunch with someone you wouldn't normally go with. Keep it up, and you'll be heading toward Peak Performance!

"We need to learn to set our course by the stars, not by the lights of every passing ship."

- General Omar Bradley

Funky Facts...

↳ Did you know that research studies show that people with more hobbies are more creative on average than people with fewer hobbies?

↳ The next time someone says a movie is expensive, think of it like this: It costs \$60 million to make and you get to see it for \$6. Now that's a deal!

I'd Love to Hear From YOU!

Whether your goal is to lose weight, get in the best shape of your life, or anything in between, I can help you.

I'd love to hear from you – even if you just want to say "Hi!"

I'm full of energy, and people tell me – a pretty fun person to talk to. So please don't hesitate to call me up with any questions you have about health and fitness related issues. There's never any pressure and no obligation. I'm a resource...and a friend!

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Does Pain = Gain?

It's kind of funny how the fitness industry takes terms and quotes and distorts them a little bit. The 'no pain, no gain' statement has been popularized over the years yet it is eschewed by educated fitness professionals that know what is really happening in the body. It's natural for us to want to feel like we 'did' something after we exercise. Amazingly, it's not necessarily what's best for our body. In fact, the body can make great gains without even being tender following exercising. In fact, powerlifter Stephen Korte uses reduced intensity sets to help his body grow to new levels by completely avoiding pain and tenderness for periods of time.

Interestingly enough, it was Ben Franklin that originally coined the phrase from which "No Pain, No Gain" was spawned. Ben said something to the effect of "No gains come without pains." His meaning behind this was not that of physical pain, but of challenges. In our daily life, we are often confronted by challenges, and our ability to deal with them in a beneficial manner determines the kind of gains that we can make.

In terms of exercise, it's a good idea not to push to pain. Pain = damage in the body, which isn't a good thing. While it's normal to experience some soreness when starting to exercise again, it's not healthy for normal exercise routines.

Simple Beginnings...

Did you know that Ivana Trump worked as a ski instructor on weekends to earn extra money when she was starting out?

Growing up just outside of Prague, Czechoslovakia, Ivana skied from an early age was quite good. She earned a Masters Degree in Physical Education and Languages from Charles University in Prague before moving to Canada to meet up with another Czech professional skier named George. Ivana worked at George's ski boutique during the week and instructed skiers on the weekends.

After a few years, Ivana decided she wanted a career and began modeling for the top modeling agency in Montreal at the time. It was through this connection that she met Donald Trump. Although she and Donald divorced in 1992, Ivana has developed into a symbol of strength, professionalism and ambition. She currently owns two companies, one of which sells a large line of cosmetics and fragrances. She speaks about being a mother, the role that holds absolute importance in her life, and also gives presentations promoting female athletics, and being an entrepreneur. She is currently worked on a condo development on the coast of Australia. Learn more at www.ivanatrump.com.

Thanks for the Kind Words

"Jim pushes me, which forces me to work harder and get better performance from my efforts. I am in better condition now and have more knowledge in training properly so I can train by myself properly and get better results."

- Wes Wodka