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FOODFIT

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DIET VS. EXERCISE –

Is there a Magic Solution
for Weight Loss and
Long-Term Success

FOODFIT PROFILE:

Matt Fitzgerald
Endurance Sports Author,
Coach, and Nutritionist

WHAT IF I NEVER LOSE WEIGHT?

By: Nancy Clark, MS, RD, CSSD



SOUTH-OF-THE-BORDER
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FOR 2021





WELCOME TO FOODFIT E-MAGAZINE

Wow! We are nearly 11 months into this pandemic but there's lots of light visible at the end of a very long year. Not sure about all of you, but I can't wait for Spring to hurry up and get here. I think most of us living in the United States could use a lot more warmth, light and hope right about now.

So, in the spirit of hope, we are so pleased to feature not just one, but TWO amazing sports nutrition experts in this month's issue of FoodFit. By now you are all very familiar with Nancy Clark who has done many presentations and webinars on behalf of the Center for Nutrition and Athletics and Wheat Foods Council. I hope you'll take the time to read her thoughts on the importance of putting our desire for weight loss into context.

Our main article this month is on Matt Fitzgerald, a leading endurance author, coach and sports nutritionist. He's written 28 books so far, with at least 3 of them focused on nutrition. You can read about Matt's take on the importance of core habits to achieving nutrition success and also listen to a webinar he'll be doing called, "Eat Like an Elite" which will be available starting February 24.

Meanwhile, stay warm everyone, and if possible, try spreading a little hope where you can.

Stay well,
Michele

DIET VS EXERCISE – IS THERE A MAGIC SOLUTION FOR WEIGHT LOSS AND LONG-TERM SUCCESS?

More of us are dieting to lose weight or improve health than ever before, and yet, nearly two-thirds are overweight or obese, according to a **report** from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Additionally, the CDC found that more than 60% of adults in the U.S. do not exercise enough, and 25% are not active at all.





The barrage of evolving nutrition and fitness data has confused most consumers as they try to determine the most credible sources. Many have chosen to follow popular fad diets that promise rapid weight loss, while eliminating otherwise healthy foods and food groups and minimizing the emphasis on exercise.

These diets are not sustainable for the long haul and tend to do more harm than good. So, what is the answer, diet or exercise?

“Dietary changes are central to achieving weight loss, but adding a regular exercise regimen is vital to maintenance, and it produces other benefits, like a healthy heart,” said Matt Fitzgerald, an endurance sports and nutrition author, coach and a certified sports nutritionist.

Clearly nutrition and exercise are both important for good health, but each may impact the process in different ways. “Science has shown that without both dietary changes and exercise, weight loss and certainly maintaining weight and fitness is difficult,” Mr. Fitzgerald added.



When it comes to losing weight, it’s not a “one size fits all” solution, writes sports nutritionist, Nancy Clark, MS, RD, CSSD, in a [blog](#) posted March 2020. You need to consider one’s individual dietary needs, culture, current habits, and medical history, among others factors, to bring about success.

How a person metabolizes their food is another critical consideration for healthy nutrition. In his book, **Diet Cults**, Mr. Fitzgerald says, “You aren’t what you eat, you are what your body does with it.” He advocates an agnostic, rational approach to eating habits, based on one’s own habits, lifestyle, genetics or body type.

The current CDC data underscores the fact that dieting practices today are failing, and fad diets are not long-term solutions for improved nutrition, health and fitness. It is time to tune out the pop culture diet gurus, and instead consult with a registered dietitian or sports nutritionist.

These professionals can personalize a dietary plan based on real science to help you successfully reach your own weight and nutrition goals, while suggesting workouts that support your individual fitness needs.



FOODFIT PROFILE

MATT FITZGERALD

ENDURANCE SPORTS AUTHOR,
COACH AND NUTRITIONIST
HOW TO EAT LIKE AN ELITE ATHLETE?

As an endurance sports and nutrition writer, coach and a certified sports nutritionist, Matt Fitzgerald has spent nearly twenty years studying the diets of top professional endurance athletes. He found that the training and nutrition regimens of these athletes have evolved, and that most top athletes now train and eat similarly. Matt maintains that the dietary practices that enable top athletes to compete and win may be tailored for all people resulting in better fitness and wellness.

We recently spoke with Matt about the relationship between eating and maximizing athletic performance, and how people at all fitness levels may achieve the best nutrition for optimal health and wellness.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO BECOME A SPORTS NUTRITIONIST AND COACH, AND HOW DID IT EVOLVE TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

I've been a runner since I was 11 years old and a triathlete since my late 20's. In 2001, I began coaching runners and triathletes about the important role nutrition plays in training for optimum performance and success. Over the past twenty years, I've had the benefit of learning in the trenches with some of the best elite athletes across a variety of endurance sports.

To round out my professional experience, I became certified in sports nutrition in 2006, and I've been doing a mix of training, coaching and writing ever since.



I UNDERSTAND THAT BY STUDYING THE DIETS OF PROFESSIONAL ENDURANCE ATHLETES, YOU'VE FOUND MOST TRAIN AND EAT IN SIMILAR WAYS. WITH SO MUCH CONFLICTING SPORTS NUTRITION DATA OUT THERE, HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

It's really an evolutionary process. In the natural world, a certain species doesn't need to know the first thing about genes or natural selection in order to adapt to a changing environment in ways that enable it to survive over time. Elite-level endurance sports are similar. Sports like distance running and cycling have existed in their modern form since the 19th century. Back then, nobody knew the best ways to train and eat, and athletes tried all kinds of things.

When an athlete happened to stumble upon a better way to do things, the result, more often than not was victory. Seeing this success, other athletes would abandon their current methods and copy what the winner was doing.

Over many decades, these small discoveries added up, and eventually elite endurance athletes all over the world converged on a single, optimal set of methods.

FINALLY, PLEASE PROVIDE SOME PRACTICAL TIPS AND IDEAS OF HOW PERSONAL TRAINERS AND DIETITIANS MIGHT HELP SUPPORT THEIR CLIENTS/ATHLETES AND OTHERS TO “EAT LIKE AN ELITE.”

1. DON'T OVERHAUL WHEN YOU CAN TWEAK

I encourage my clients to change their current eating habits as little as necessary to get in alignment with the five core eating habits of the elites. This ensures that their improved way of eating is something they can sustain for the long haul.

2. ACHIEVE ‘THE PERFECT DAY’

A person who goes into a new training regimen or way

of eating will give up if it seems daunting and overwhelming. To prevent this from happening, I like to have my clients start out with a little exercise I call the perfect day. It simply entails sitting down and planning out a single day of eating that obeys the rules of healthy eating and fits your lifestyle preferences. If you can do it once, you can do it every day!

3. USEFUL APPS CAN BE HELPFUL

There are number of useful apps that can help with mindful eating and choosing quality foods. The DQS app that I created measures the quality of the food in your diet plan. You can score each day as you drive toward better nutrition.

Author of more than a dozen books on running, fitness and nutrition, such as **How Bad Do You Want It?**, **80/20 Running**, and **The Endurance Diet**, Matt is also a lifelong endurance athlete himself. His writing has also appeared in numerous magazines, including Bicycling, Men’s Health, Outside, and Runner’s World, to name a few. He is a cofounder and co-head coach of **80/20 Endurance** and the creator of the **Diet Quality Score** smartphone app.

To learn more about Matt’s insights on sports nutrition, click [here](#) to check out his latest webinar
“EAT LIKE AN ELITE”
(Free CEU credit upon completion.)

FIVE CORE HABITS ESSENTIAL TO ACHIEVE OPTIMAL WORKOUT BENEFITS

In 2015, I travelled all over the world to eat with and study the diets of elite endurance athletes. My goal was to collect a ton of data and search for common patterns in the eating habits of this select group. I was able to identify five such patterns, and they are the focus of my book, **The Endurance Diet**.

1. EAT EVERYTHING

Most fad diets are defined by what you can’t eat or what you should avoid. Elite endurance athletes focus on maintaining an inclusive, well-rounded diet that incorporates all of the natural food types and even makes room for the occasional treat.

2. EAT QUALITY FOOD

Nutrition science says that a high-quality food is any type of food that when eaten regularly results in positive health outcomes. Elite endurance athletes base their diet on high-quality, unprocessed foods, such as whole grains, and eat low-quality, processed foods such as sweets sparingly.

3. MAINTAIN A CARB-CENTERED DIET, NOT A HIGH-CARB DIET

Elite athletes typically don’t count calories and macronutrients. But they do include high-quality carbohydrate-rich foods in most meals and snacks. This ensures their bodies are supplied with the right type and amount of fuel to train productively.

4. EAT ENOUGH, NOT TOO LITTLE OR TOO MUCH

The costs of eating too little (fatigue, poor performance, slow post-workout recovery, etc.) can be greater than the costs of eating too much. The way to ensure you get the right amount of food each day is simply by listening to your body. This is what the pros do.

5. CONSIDER YOUR INDIVIDUAL NUTRITION NEEDS

Being in tune with their bodies, elite endurance athletes pay close attention to how different eating patterns affect them and adjust accordingly. The good news here is that factors such as taste preferences and lifestyle can and should be considered as well. Don’t like brussels sprouts? Fine—don’t eat them! Even the fussiest eater can create a healthy diet made up exclusively of foods they enjoy.

INGREDIENTS:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 (10-count) package Small Flour Tortillas | 3 cups shredded rotisserie chicken |
| 1 (10-ounce) can Red Enchilada Sauce | ½ cup whole-kernel corn |
| 1 (4-ounce) can Chopped Green Chilies | 1 cup shredded Mexican-blend cheese |
| | ¼ cup thinly sliced scallions |

DIRECTIONS:

Pre-Heat oven to 350°F.

Tuck each of the tortillas into the cups of a standard-sized muffin pan, gently pleating the edges of the tortillas so that they fit snugly inside each cup, careful not to let the tortillas fold too closely into the middle (since you need an opening for the filling later). Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until the tortilla cups have hardened slightly on all sides. Remove and set aside.

While the tortillas are baking, combine the enchilada sauce, green chilis, chicken, and corn together in a large mixing bowl. Toss until the ingredients are evenly combined.

Once the tortilla cups are ready, carefully spoon the filling into each cup until it is filled nearly to the brim. Place a pinch of cheese on top of each tortilla cup. Then return the pan to the oven and bake for 15 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the filling is warmed through.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle the top of each cup with green onions. Serve warm.

NUTRITION:

One serving provides approximately: 196 calories, 9.3 g protein, 29.7 g carbohydrates, 5.7 g fiber, 5.8 g fat (2.1 g saturated), 21 mg cholesterol, 3 mg iron, 326 mg sodium.

SOUTH-OF-THE-BORDER RECIPES



MINI ENCHILADAS



INDIVIDUAL QUESADILLAS

INGREDIENTS

2-8-inch Whole Wheat Flour Tortillas
¾ Cup Shredded Rotisserie Chicken
2-3 tbsp. Jarred Salsa, Mild or Spicy
3-4 tbsp. Shredded Cheddar or Mexican Blend Cheese (divided)
2-3 tbsp. Frozen Corn Kernels (optional)
2 Scallions, finely sliced, both white and Green parts

DIRECTIONS

At lowest stove-top temperature, heat 10-12-inch non-stick skillet.

When heated, put 1 8-inch Whole Wheat Tortilla in pan.

Spread 2 tbsp. cheese all over the top of the tortilla. Spread shredded chicken on top of the cheese. Spoon salsa and corn (if using) over the shredded chicken. Spread 1 or 2 tbsp. shredded cheese over all ingredients.

Once cheese begins to melt, take 2nd flour tortilla and cover entire mixture.

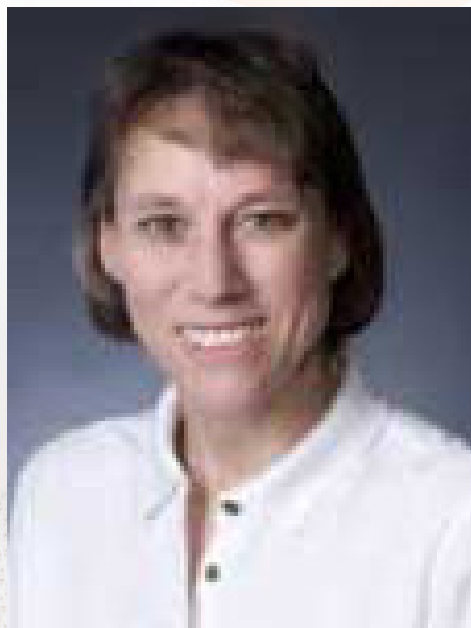
With a spatula, press second tortilla down over the mixture. Use spatula to press down sides of the tortilla. Once tortilla sticks to the cheese mixture and sides, carefully remove from pan. Slice into 6 wedges. Serve.

NUTRITION

One serving provides approximately: 543 Total Fat 15.1g, Saturated Fat 7.1g 36%, Cholesterol 125mg, Sodium 1527mg, Total Carbohydrate 57.7g, Dietary Fiber 7.3g, Total Sugars 6.5g, Protein 45.3g, Calcium 351mg, Iron 4mg, Potassium 152mg.

"WHAT IF I NEVER LOSE WEIGHT...?"

BY: NANCY CLARK, MS, RD, CSSD



Every so often I read something that deserves to be passed along to my audience. If you are fretting about not being able to lose the weight, please enjoy these words of wisdom adapted from Karen R. Koenig, M.Ed., LCSW. Karen is a psychotherapist and author of 7 books on eating and weight, including her latest, *Helping Patients Outsmart Overeating*.

WHAT IF YOU NEVER LOSE THE WEIGHT?

What if you are “doing everything right” and still aren’t losing weight? Weight is a highly complex subject. It’s not as easy as adding two and two and getting four. We don’t all start out on an equal playing field because genetics, trauma, abuse, neglect, stress, chronic dieting, and other factors play a big part in determining body size.

So, what can you choose to do if you are eating “right,” sleeping adequately and exercising regularly—and worry that you’re not losing weight (or losing as much as you would like to)? You can stop focusing on weight loss. Instead, enjoy and focus on what has improved in your life such as your sports performance, energy level, relationship

with food and your body, self-esteem, and health. Strive to accept your body as it is and quit being dissatisfied with your weight-loss efforts and feeling like a failure.

Remember that you’re not a bad person for wanting to lose weight and you’re not wrong to want to feel thinner in our weight-obsessed society. However, also remember that this culture’s range of what’s considered normal weight is very narrow and almost impossible for most people to achieve.

If you’re taking the best care of your mind and body that you possibly can, it makes no sense to spend your whole life pining to be a weight that you need not be in order to have health and happiness.

You may not be able to achieve the weight loss you desire, but you can certainly choose to enjoy your best life whatever your size or weight.

To add to what Karen Koenig has written, here are my words of wisdom: Instead of struggling on your own, you want to sit down and talk with a registered dietitian (RD). (Nutrition services often get covered by health insurance.)

To find your local sports nutrition professional, use the referral network at www.SCANDpg.org. Take note: more often than not, being better fueled can help you reach your athletic goals without having lost weight.

LOOKING FOR MORE ADVICE FROM SPORTS NUTRITIONIST AND AUTHOR, NANCY CLARK? CHECK OUT HER WEBSITE:

[HTTPS://NANCYCLARKRD.COM/](https://nancyclarkrd.com/)

5 HEART-HEALTHY NUTRITION TIPS FOR 2021

1.



DRINK MORE WATER.

Water helps aid digestion, flush bacteria from the bladder, normalizes blood pressure, stabilizes heartbeat, as well as maintaining hydration.

2.



EAT MORE FIBER.

A high-fiber diet helps you feel full, lowers cholesterol, helps control blood sugar levels and maintains bowel health/regularity. Good sources include fruits, veggies, beans/legumes, and whole grains, like whole wheat!

3.



EAT MORE PLANTS.

Purchase whole fruits and veggies in their natural state and prepare as desired. Include bean/legumes and nuts. Try to include at least one fruit or veggie with each meal.

4.



EAT ENOUGH BREAKFAST.

Fuel your day by having a balanced breakfast with fiber and protein which will help control your appetite throughout the rest of the day.

5.



EAT LESS PROCESSED-FOODS.

Processed foods are often high in fat and sodium. Try avoiding processed meats and snack foods, which won't help in satisfying your hunger.

Source:

Hartford Hospital, <https://hartfordhospital.org/about-hh/news-center/news-detail?articleid=30158&publicId=395>