



Newsletter

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Welcome to bfit4life monthly newsletter

Hi All,

Delighted you are taking the time out to read my monthly newsletter. I have recently returned from completing internships with former Mr Universe winner Milos Sarcev and strength coach Charles Poliquin in California and Ben Prentiss strength coach to American footballers and NHL hockey players in Connecticut. I look forward to sharing information with you in future issues. Read Steve's story to learn how implementing changes into your life can really benefit your health.

Success Story Stevie Livingston

So there I was leading what I thought was a healthy lifestyle. I was a keen runner, out pounding the roads at least 4 times a week covering distances of between 4 and 10 miles. I supplemented this in the gym with spinning classes and a "Mens Health" style weights program, this was usually 3 sessions per week. My diet consisted of what I thought to be healthy eating choices, wholegrain bread, cereals and pasta, and lots of fruit. With a very busy lifestyle I considered I was prioritising my health & fitness, however despite all the effort I wasn't particularly happy with the way I looked or felt. Recognising that continuing to do the same thing and expecting different results is the first sign of madness I decided it was time for a change.

I had gotten to know Damien in his younger years when he was an instructor at Westwood; his legendary classes had often left me in a heap. I began to see less and less of him instructing as he graduated to personal training and see more of him walking round the gym drill sergeant fashion while he trained his personal clients. It was clear to see the improvements in body shape that Damien's clients were enjoying. I also wondered what he was doing with that laptop and what the hell was a bio-signature that I heard his clients discuss. My curiosity had gotten the better of me and after several enlightening discussions I signed myself up for an assessment and personal training programs.



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Assessment time revealed that I weighed in at 74kg, and had 22% body-fat. Damien normally sets targets in terms of body-fat as weight or BMI alone do not take into account muscle mass, and can be very misleading. Knowing your body-fat is important. Damien often talks about what he calls Skinny Fat people, they have normal BMI's but are still at risk from what is normally considered weight related diseases. A strength test was also part of my assessment, it highlighted that I had a number of imbalances between the left and right side in almost all of my muscle groups. I agreed a target of 10% body-fat with Damien which is what he terms the Gold standard for men. With thoughts of that six pack in my head I set about my training.

Damien set about tailoring weights programs to address the deficiencies and start me on my path to the body I wanted. His first set of programs gave me 3 separate workouts, one for my chest and back, one for legs and one for arms. I followed a cycle of chest and back one day, followed by legs the next, a day-off before arms followed by another rest day and then repeat. In duration terms I was actually working a lot less than before with an average of 4 to 5 hours per week, but my workload was far more intensive and effective than before. Regular "frank" assessments, coupled with new individually tailored programs followed at regular intervals. Damien switched between strength and muscle building programs to challenge the body and keep things interesting. It was hard work, but when you can see and feel the difference you really do believe it's worth it. Damien is inspiring and motivating but a hard taskmaster. He will let you know in plain terms if your performance is not what he expects, his standards are high and he does not accept excuses. He is 150% committed to help you achieving your goals and in return you must show the same determination.

As time progressed my body fat dropped considerably and my energy levels increased. At the start of this year I achieved the primary goal I had set myself at the end of 2005, my body-fat had fallen to 9.7%, to put this in real terms I had shed 22 lbs of fat and replaced it with 26lbs of solid muscle.

The path to this wasn't easy and required a lot of effort both physically and mentally, and sure there were times when I wavered and fell off the good nutrition path, doughnuts are tasty you know! So you ask yourself "Is it all worth it?" Of course it is! I feel better now than I ever have, I'm much happier with my body, I'm more informed on food and its effect on the body and I can certainly see through advertisements promising miracles with no effort required. Still now my programs challenge me in every way and I leave the gym feeling energised rather than fatigued. The dumbbells that I used to look at in wonderment I now use as part of my workouts, 44KG in each had for a chest press – no problem

One of the best things I found working with Damien is his application to personal training, he's always seeking to better himself with practical seminars and courses, and this really rubs off. Your tailored program isn't straight out of a book, it's immaculately researched and put through its paces and tweaked by Damien himself. I always dread seeing him at the gym in the middle of some new exercise, his face contorted with physical effort, because I know some time in the future that exercise could be in one of my new programs!

The dumbbells that I used to look at in wonderment I now use as part of my workouts, 44KG in each had for a chest press – no problem



Tip of the Month



To minimise the impact of the Christmas Feast, take the following advice to ensure you enjoy your meal without detrimental consequences to your waistline.

For your starter, pick a low carbohydrate starter, try something like Parma ham with spinach leaves and pine nuts and a drizzle of olive oil & balsamic vinegar. As well as being healthy it will leave room for the food ahead.

Eat your meat first. Protein has a satiety index and eating your protein first will make it less likely for you to over eat. In addition Turkey a meat ate by bodybuilders to stay lean is a great source of protein.

Stuffing, make your own, use high quality pork mince instead of sausages, use fresh herbs and add chopped nuts for texture. Avoid breadcrumbs.

Swap your normal potatoes for sweet potatoes. Try these roasted with olive oil & basil and some winter vegetables for a mouth watering alternative. Sweet potatoes have a much lower glycemic load than ordinary potatoes that turn into sugar very quickly when processed by your body. One medium size potato has the same impact on your body as eating an average bar of chocolate.

For dessert, try a selection of fresh berries with crumbled pecan nuts & fresh cream or a selection of cheeses with apple, celery and walnuts. But most of all enjoy!

Christmas Countdown- Women Weights & Underwear

As the festive season approaches, fancy frocks are being dusted down out of the wardrobe that might not have seen the light of day since the last big get together. The problem is that it doesn't quite fit the same as it did last year. The lack of investment in exercise on your part and your over indulgence in the sweet and alcohol cupboard has put paid to that. And now the red carpet beckons at the annual Xmas parties with friends and relatives. Its time to get nervous as your anxiety levels start to rise...

In recognition of this, slick marketers have developed "Spanx underwear". These luxurious body-shapers are on a mission to rescue women from love handles, spillage and cellulite and are billed as the best body enhancing inventions ever. They are a serious of scaffolding designed to uplift, and squeeze all your fat in your under garments so your indiscretions in the food cupboard over the past year won't be exposed.

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The search for quick fix solutions is reaching an all-time high and with it passion will soon be lost. A night out in a new romance that finishes in the bedroom will be put on hold as the female retreats to the bathroom. In the bathroom, she removes her spanx underwear, corsets, her chicken fillets or wonder bra, high-heels, false fingernails, eyelashes & ponytail. By the time all of these items are removed the man in question may well be comatose from the beverages previously consumed to improve his confidence and hide his shyness. If he manages to stay awake he may want to have a second look and submit a complaint to the advertising authorities. The removal of the wonder bra has left him wondering where her breasts went. The departure of the body-shaper has revealed more lumps and bumps than Irish roads in the bum department and his date was really Frankenstein's daughter, a combination of different body-parts. He could well be looking for Steve Mc Queen and a great escape down the drainpipe when the truth is revealed.

We need to look at treating the causes of the weight gain instead of covering up the symptoms. After all, if the leaves on a tree went brown, spray-painting them green again will not be the same. Any botanist will know that you must look to the roots, is the tree getting sunlight, water and the relevant nutrition. Your body is no different and you cannot sweep all your problems under the carpet.

Our expanding waistlines are a result of our indulgence in processed foods, white flours, cereals and breads. Our search for quick fixes is not confined to our clothes, we have changed from a nation eating and cooking fresh meat and vegetables to a fast-food nation. Microwaved meals stored in plastics destroy the nutrients of the food and the plastic will melt dangerous chemicals into our food. As a nation, we have become lazier, our sedentary lifestyle involves hours of TV watching drinking glasses of Vino eating late night snacks. The men in our lives have become armchair critics of sports rather than playing it themselves. Gyms continue to promote methods that do little in terms of results with members seeking quick fix solutions like vibrating machines or the latest shiniest treadmills. The weight-room is skimmed over when a new member is brought on an induction tour and the gyms then under-pay the staff whose role is to design an effective exercise program that can help change someone's life.

You are left to take matters into our own hands and realise that you are in control of your own destination. You have never eating anything by accident and you have total control over what you put into our mouths. You can choose to exercise at a level of intensity that will get results and you can also choose to embark on a mission to learn how to use free-weights. Since we either use muscle or lose muscle it is important to exercise regularly. There are 168 hours in a week and the minimum you should do is 3 hours. Put this on your New Year's resolution list, It will be your best investment ever because if you don't make time now you won't have time later. Read in my January newsletter what you can do to ensure that you have the body you deserve. Gravity will always be there but if you exercise you will have your own "Butt" covered!



Since we either use muscle or lose muscle it is important to exercise regularly

Food Pyramid – part II

The Food Pyramid, a powerful & enduring icon which had stood intact since 1992, has undergone a major overhaul. In April 2005, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) unveiled a new pyramid. The good news is that this dismantles and buries the flawed Pyramid. The bad news is that the new pyramids symbol doesn't convey enough information to help you make informed choices about your diet and long-term health. It continues to recommend foods that aren't essential to good health, and may even be detrimental in the quantities included in MyPyramid.

MyPyramid

MyPyramid contains no text. According to the USDA, it was "designed to be simple," and details are at MyPyramid.gov. Unless you've taken the time to become familiar with the Pyramid, though, you have no idea what it means. Relying on the Web site to provide key information - like what the colour stripes stand for and how many servings of each food group are recommended each day - guarantees that the millions of people without access to a computer or the Internet will have trouble getting these essential facts.

The USDA also chose not to put recommended numbers of servings on the new Pyramid because these differ from individual to individual according to weight, gender, activity level and age. Instead, it offers personalized Pyramids at its website.



MyPyramid had many builders. Scientists, nutrition experts, staff members and consultants help shape the pyramid. The selection of these experts is subject to influence by intense lobbying from organisations such as a variety of food industries National Dairy Council, United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association, Soft Drink Association, American Meat Institute, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, and Wheat Foods Council. The pyramid was created to reflect dietary guidelines to promote health and reduce the risk for major chronic diseases based on the latest scientific research. More importantly, it sets the standards for all nutrition programs, including the school lunch program and it helps determine what food products people buy. In other words, the guidelines on a food pyramid influence how millions of Euro are spent each year. So even minor changes can hurt or help a food industry.

The new dietary guidelines published in 2005 made a few steps in the right direction stressing the importance of controlling weight, exercise and new recommendations on dietary fats. Trans-fats, hydrogenated or partially fats should be avoided while the latest advice recommends getting between 20% and 35% of daily calories from fats. It recognizes the potential health benefits of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. It also emphasises people to limit sugar intake. On a negative side it continues the recommendation of refined starches- bread's pastas that behave like sugar. They add empty calories, have adverse metabolic effects, and increase the risks of diabetes and heart disease.



This recommendation ignores the lack of evidence for a link between consumption of dairy products and prevention of osteoporosis

In terms of protein, the guidelines continue to lump together red meat, poultry, fish, and beans as if to suggest that they are interchangeable. Plant based proteins are deficient in a number of essential amino acids that are only available in animal based proteins. The recommendation to drink three glasses of low-fat milk or eat three servings of other dairy products per day to prevent osteoporosis is another step in the wrong direction. Of all the recommendations, this one represents the most radical change from current dietary patterns. Three glasses of low-fat milk add more than 300 calories a day. This is a real issue for the millions of people who are trying to control their weight. What's more, millions of people are lactose intolerant and even small amounts of milk or dairy products give them stomach aches, gas, or other problems. This recommendation ignores the lack of evidence for a link between consumption of dairy products and prevention of osteoporosis.

Despite the limitations of the MyPyramid it is an improvement on its predecessor. However worrying enough the Irish Department of Health have no immediate plans to alter from the old seriously flawed 'Food Pyramid' used as a nutritional guide in Irish schools and hospitals. The Food Pyramid used in Ireland is modeled on the 15-yearold US Food Guide Pyramid which has caused, according to some nutritionists, increasing rates of obesity, due to its heavy emphasis on bread, cereal, rice and pasta. The limitations of this model were discussed in greater detail in the November newsletter.

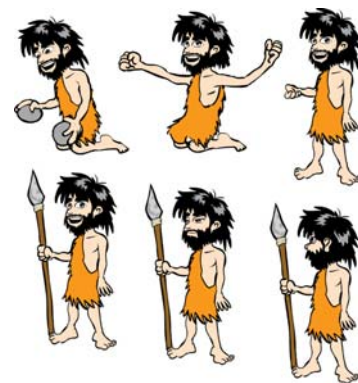
Food Pyramid – part II continued

Building a Better Pyramid

So although MyPyramid is a slight improvement in terms of foods recommended we are still left to search for a better alternative. History is the longest running research study on nutrition. Our history shows a number of very important things. First, it shows a tremendous diversity in cultures and in climates. Reading through Nutrition and Physical Degeneration by Weston Price; The Paleolithic Prescription by Boyd Eaton, et al.; and Western Diseases: Their Emergence and Prevention by Trowell and Burkitt, a few important things become very clear.

First of all, we are a part of a very diverse world. Different populations consume very different foods. Second, the more we process foods, the easier we make them to prepare, and the longer we make them last for storage, the less healthy we all become. Third and last is the apparent total non-existence of any society that has been able to thrive on a strict vegetarian (vegan) diet. It appears that natural selection and history have made it is quite clear that we were indeed hunter-gathers and not fruitarian's or vegetarians. In fact, we were also not grain farmers until quite recently in the overall scheme of things. Scientists tell us that it takes in the neighbourhood of 60-90,000 years in order for an animal species to adapt to a different diet or food source. What some may say about our stomachs, our teeth, or our digestive tracts is actually quite irrelevant. History is history.

Naturopath and Board-Certified Clinical Nutritionist David Getoff designed his own food pyramid guidelines for his patients. He favours a diet with vegetables and protein at the base of the pyramid with processed foods moved to the top of the pyramid. Getoff's pyramid is more complex than the traditional food pyramid consisting of nine levels.



It is quite clear that we were indeed hunter-gathers and not fruitarian's or vegetarians. In fact, we were also not grain farmers until quite recently in the overall scheme of things

Level One: 4 – 8 servings per day

Bottom of Pyramid

Non starchy fresh vegetables & salad, include with 2 to 3 meals, half your plate should be made up of vegetable & salad.

Level Two: 2 – 3 servings per day

Animal protein, organic or free range if possible. Some supermarkets deliver poor quality meat where the animals are fattened for market by being fed grains. If a cow fails to digest grains with four stomachs your stomach will struggle also. So choose grass fed beef. Do not over-cook as you will destroy the amino acids that help build the body. You should eat 1g per 1lb of b/w of protein a day to stay healthy and lean.

Level Three: 2 – 3 servings per day

Healthy Fats, butter, extra virgin olive oil, coconut butter, fats low in saturated fat. Use at least a tablespoon in the preparation of your food. Fats are essential to a healthy body, supplement with natural vitamin E to protect fats in the body.

Level Four: Daily

Raw nuts & seeds, may be consumed daily as a snack or added to other foods such as salads or vegetable dishes or plain whole milk yoghurt

Level Five: 1 – 5 servings per week

One per day or less, Whole grains & Whole beans (except soy). Many grains have to be eliminated with chron's disease, IBS, coeliac disease and other bowel disorders.

Level Six: 0 – 4 servings per day

Fresh Raw Fruit, a serving is the size of a medium apple. Reduce further with cancer, diabetes and hypoglycemia.

Level Seven: As little as Possible

Processed grains, Bread, pasta, cereals, popcorn, crackers and bagels. Eat as infrequently as possible.

Level Eight: 0 – 5 times per month

Recreational drugs - Sweets, coffee, alcohol

Level Nine: Rarely if ever

Soy products



Clinical experience will continue to tell me that if you're goal is health it is important you stick to fresh foods void of processing. Any time you take a food that nature or God has given us and alter it, you make it worse. Chickens have skin, eggs have yolks, milk has butter fat and nature made them that way. If you desire health, stop telling Nature and God that they are stupid.