



support@getstudiofit.com | 805 776 3676 | getstudiofit.com

## **The Foundations of Nutrition for Surfing Athletes**

### **#1 Most Important Thing to Understand**

You are unique. Your genetics, your development, your environment, your gut health, your activities, your heritage, the foods you've been exposed to, food allergies,... the list could continue. What works for you is different than what works for me. You have different needs that can change over time, so the most beneficial thing you can do to find your optimal nutrition is to learn how to listen to your body. Begin to listen to the signals from your systems as to how foods make you feel, your energy levels, bloating, cognitive clarity, and digestive health.

### **EAT REAL WHOLE FOODS**

The foundation of your nutrition should simply focus on real whole foods. The more processed foods you consume the more variables and unknowns you introduce to the equation. Don't get caught up and distracted by the small details until you focus on the big picture and eating real whole foods is where that starts.

Elimination or inclusion of specific foods is very relevant when dealing with specific health issues, but overall, if you just start eating REAL FOOD, you will benefit.

## **Simple REAL FOOD guidelines:**

- real food grows and dies, it isn't created in a factory
- real food rots, and wilts... real food cannot sit on a shelf for two years
- real food doesn't have an ingredient label
- real food doesn't have health endorsements, or AHA ratings, or the heart healthy logo

***Real food can be deduced down to food in its most natural state. Vegetables, Fruits, and Animal Proteins.***

## **Consume Healthy Fats**

We need to get over the fat phobia and understand that saturated fats are NOT the sole cause of weight gain, heart disease, or the "evil" elevated cholesterol.

Saturated fats have been completely demonized due to bad science, and this has unfortunately stuck around in the thought process of the media and old school nutrition/dietician thought. You NEED high quality saturated fat in your diet, as well as high quality unsaturated fat. Saturated fat is critical to many systems of the body as the human organism has evolved to utilise saturated fats. Coconut Oil, ghee, organic lard, grass-fed butter, olive oil, and avocados are all great sources of healthy fat. Vegetable oils such as canola, corn, soy, and cottonseed, and the media-driven food product margarine are very much an inferior fat and basically are

a toxin to the body in my opinion. While these are often touted as “healthy oils”, there are very large schools of nutritional thought and exceptionally intelligent people that view these fats/oils as being extremely detrimental to our overall health.

A major caveat with saturated fat is that you must make effort to find the highest quality you can find. Any animal sourced foods are only as healthy as the animal. Find good quality organic butter, quality coconut oils, and best yet, find a local farmers market and source fresh butter!

## **Avoid Hydrogenated Oils, Partially Hydrogenated, and Trans-saturated Fats/Oils**

These are NASTY. Start reading food labels and watching out for these. I will again reiterate to also abstain from the use of processed vegetable oils like canola, safflower, soy, and cottonseed oils.

## **Stay Away From Processed Starches/White Flour Products**

Pasta, white bread, boxed crackers, and snacks made of processed flour are what the modern diet is primarily composed of and are far from optimal. Refined and processed flour based goods are almost completely devoid of nutrients, generally are 100% artificial, and throw all sorts of confusion at your blood sugar levels, which can negatively affect your hormonal systems. Don't eat the stuff.

Yes, I understand the fact that it's 2014, and we will all eat some junk now and then, but you would benefit from a serious attempt at minimising it. Limit the consumption of flour based foods: white bread, snack chips, low quality pastas, and pastries.

## **Drink More Water**

Just drink more water, not juice, not sports drinks, just water. If you need to add some flavor to your water, squeeze in some lime/lemon, maybe some mint leaves, and a pinch of sea salt for some electrolyte replacement.

## **Eat Full Balanced Meals**

Don't eat a plate of just carbs, or just protein, or just fat. Have balanced meals consisting of the 3 macronutrients. This helps to maintain blood sugar balance and sustain energy levels. Ratios of these particular macronutrients is what gets confusing and convoluted by the diet world. Some people perform better with higher intake of carbs, while others do better with higher intake of protein and fats. The specifics of ratios isn't important here, and like I said, everyone is very different in regards to what they specifically need in terms of food ratios, but overall, just eat balanced meals. Once you get this dialed in, then you can begin to play with ratios.

## **Eat Quality Carbohydrates**

First of all, carbohydrates are not the sole contributor to obesity and weight gain. Eating bad, not sleeping well, neglecting the food basics, stress, and not being in touch with your body are the foundations of obesity.

Carbohydrates fuel your body, and long term limitation of them can wreak havoc on the hormonal systems. Carbohydrates can be the surfers friend in terms of energy production, we just need to shift the focus away from grain based carbohydrate and more towards nutrient dense carbohydrate. The average joe is consuming far too many grains and grain based foods. Most people consume the majority of their calories from processed grain carbohydrates.

The modern food pyramid recommendations on grains are far from ideal in my opinion. The majority of individuals would benefit from focusing far less on grain consumption (even whole grains), and focus on quality fruits and starches for carbohydrate consumption. I'm not anti-grain in any sense, but I do think people need to shift their perspective towards more nutrient dense food sources.

When I speak of carbs, I'm referring to starches (sweet potatoes, yams, white potatoes plantains, yuca...), and fruit.

## **Eat More Vegetables**

I think that one is pretty self-explanatory. Be big boys and girls and eat your veggies!

## **Start With Small Changes and Create New Habits**

When it comes to what to eat, don't get too bogged down by any one particular diet, or diet guru. While there are specific health conditions that can benefit from wildly exclusive dietary protocols, you can reap huge health benefits from just beginning to implement the basic foundations we talked about above.

Once this is accomplished, then you can begin to play with the specifics of food elimination, or food ratios, intermittent fasting, inclusion of superfoods..... the list of what makes the field of nutrition so difficult. Start with the basics and please realise that what you put into your body can have a very serious impact, both beneficial, or negative.

**So make wise informed choices.**