**Fitness Myths That Need to Die**

“All carbs are bad for you and is likely what is making you fat.”

Short Answer: Energy balance dictates fat loss. Meaning, the only way to gain weight is to consume more calories than you burn. Different types of carbohydrates can serve different purposes, depending on the time of the day. Complex carbs are great to keep hunger low and blood sugar levels stable, while simple carbs are great for post workout use to give the body a high insulin spike and convert the body from catabolism to anabolism, allowing the muscles to begin to repair.

“Girls will become “bulky” if they lift weights, especially low reps.”

Short Answer: Unless as a female you are training rigorously with consistent nutrition for years, you will not be adding large amounts of muscle that will make you look “bulky”. Women’s estrogen:testosterone ratio is much higher than it is to men, and inhibits them to gain the amount of muscle men can, unless assisting with sports enhancing drugs. Additionally, lower reps can be an excellent way to burn a large amount of calories and strengthen the central nervous system.

“Aggressive dieting is the best way to lose weight.”

Short Answer: Crash dieting, or dieting on very low calories, will work very briefly for someone, but then their metabolism will begin to stall and begin to stubbornly hold onto the fat stores it carries. Additionally, as soon as a normal food intake is consumed again, weight will spike back up, possibly even more than it was originally at!

“Sugar, dairy, gluten, non-organic, gmo, processed foods, are terrible for you and should never be consumed (excluding allergy purposes)”

Short Answer: Dieting methods should reflect your lifestyle and not become overly restrictive to a point where you are unhappy. The fear of eating “unhealthy” labeled food because you are afraid it will make you fat should be recognized as irrational and false. Again, energy balance dictates fat loss, so any food can be included into your diet as long as you stay within your calorie allowance to achieve your goal. Unless you have an allergy to a specific food or food group, bread or a glass of milk is not your cause of being overweight, the amount of overall food you consume is.

The ability to lose fat and gain muscle at the same time.

Short Answer: This is a phenomenon that actually is possible, given the right conditions. Meaning, yes you can gain muscle and lose fat at the same time, but you would have to be an untrained/new athlete or just be coming back from a prolonged time of minimal activity. Otherwise, for a person who consistently trains for 6 or more months, you will not be doing both at the same time. It is often the case that someone begins to lean out and reveal more definition that causes them to believe they are getting bigger, which they equate to added muscle, but it’s simply the illusion of just getting leaner.

“Eating fat will make you fat.”

Short Answer: Yet another common myth that people associate with fat gain, is the fear of eating fat itself. Again, total caloric intake will dictate fat loss, not demonizing a specific macronutrient (i.e. carbs or fats). In fact, a ketogenic diet is comprised predominately of fats with moderate protein and minimal carbohydrates and has shown to work exceptionally well for different types of metabolisms.

“I don’t have the genetic ability to lose weight.”

Short Answer: Every single person has the genetic ability to lose fat. Genetic differences in metabolism do exist and can range based on numerous factors including; gender, age, activity level, etc…, but everyone has the ability to lose weight when put on a structured caloric deficit.

“Waist trainers work.”

Short Answer: Waist trainers do not reduce fat or help target fat loss. Waist trainers at best will help you lose water weight around a specific area of the body, thus dehydrating the body.

“Detoxes/cleanses work.”

Short Answer: Detoxes and cleanses work by acting as a natural laxative and/or diuretic which will temporarily make you lose weight or have your stomach look flatter. Additionally, many of these detox protocols have you limit your food intake and drink whatever it is they are selling, which ultimately puts you in a large caloric deficit, yielding temporary weight loss. Do not buy in Detoxes or cleanses as your body comes with a complete detox system already installed; liver, pancreas, and your small intestine to name a few.

“Fasted cardio is superior to fed cardio”

Short Answer: The idea that fasted cardio, or performing cardio on an empty stomach, is superior to fed cardio at first glance makes sense. The logic being, if you don’t provide the body additional energy to use, it will be forced to use fat stores it currently has instead. Burning available fatty acids over carbohydrate intake in the long run does not yield any additional benefits. More so, intermediate/high intensity cardio yields the benefit of EPOC, or the afterburn effects of high intensity interval training. Being in a fed state will allow for more endurance and energy to push through cardio and increase overall EPOC, while reducing catabolism on the body.

“I don’t want to have a lot of muscle, I just want to “tone”.”

Short Answer: The word “tone” is a great buzz word in the fitness industry to sell programs or supplements, but the simple truth is you will not look tone without having muscle. Being tone is simply having a good amount of muscle in comparison to body fat to allow for a nice shapely body composition that is lean. By avoiding the weights and simply performing cardio, you will lack a muscular foundation and just become a smaller version of yourself and never truly obtain the “toned” look you desire.

“Creatine bloats you and makes you look less lean.”

Short Answer: Creatine is one the safest and most studied supplements on the market, so it makes it very easy and desirable to take as it is proven countless times to increase strength and endurance in the gym. This is because creatine serves to assist in the ATP-CP energy system which is most commonly activated in quick short bursts of energy that are often seen in the gym. The misconception is that creatine will bloat you and make you look “softer”, when in reality creatine will only increase water intracellularly, allowing for a more filled out look.

“High reps will lean you out better than lower reps”

Short Answer: There is absolutely zero toning effect to high reps in comparison to lower reps. You can induce different stimulus to the muscle, (muscle damage, cell swelling, metabolic damage), but in order to lean out, you must be in a caloric deficit. Resistance training will only assist in muscle preservation and total daily caloric burn.

“Muscle weighs more than fat.”

Short Answer: Muscle does NOT weigh more than fat. Muscle can yield less overall volume than an equal weight of fat, but the weights are equal. 1b=1lb. This seems to be common sense, yet is an extremely popular saying. Similar to saying 10lb of feathers weighs as much as a 10lb bowling ball. The amount of feathers it would take to add up to 10lbs will look much bigger than a 10lb bowling ball, but the weight is the same!

“Muscle turns into fat.”

Short Answer: Muscle and fat are two different types of tissue. When you stop working out, unused muscle becomes softer and if you continue to eat the same amount of calories as you did when you worked out, you will gain additional fat mass.

“Carbs after a certain time in the day will make you fat.”

Short Answer: There is no time in the day that carbohydrates suddenly become worse for your body, or become better at being stored as fat. As mentioned numerous times in this article, total caloric intake will dictate the direction your weight travels. Consistently hitting a set amount of calories each day is much more important than avoiding carbs and calories because the sun has set.