

Benefits of Saturated Fat for the Cyclist.

Robert Mack (Bach. Exercise Science)

Over the last two or three weeks a number of club members have approached me during the training rides and asked for advice regarding nutrition. Many of the questions your peers have been asking pertain particularly to saturated fat. Is it good or bad??? Some of you are trying to eliminate saturated fat without really understanding why you are doing it. Thinking that you will lose weight. It's a controversial topic and there is a lot of misinformation floating around. A lot of our misinformation is brought about by the manipulations of the food industry, however it will always remain a hot topic of debate. Hence, to help answer some of the questions you may have, I have decided to write this small position stand, regarding saturated fat and its benefits for cyclists, (I will try and keep it as brief as possible).



Q: Will eating saturated fat make me fat????

A: No!!!!!! The real enemy is Sugar.

- People gain weight due to poor diet (too many kilojoules and type) and insufficient exercise expenditure. If losing weight is your goal, start counting kilojoules and compare intake with expenditure. Its simple but it works – lance does it!!!!
- Sugar (any form) raises insulin levels within the body, which accelerates the blood streams ability to absorb kilojoules. This in turn pumps more energy into the body more quickly leaving the cyclist needing more food sooner. Thus you will be eating more.
 - Try and limit your sugar intake to the 20min window after training.
 - A diet high in sugar will lead to extreme highs and lows in energy and concentration levels.
- Saturated fat is naturally high in kilojoules, when compared with carbohydrates(16kJ) or protein(17kj), containing nearly 37 kilojoules per gram.
 - Do not be scared though, the energy contained in saturated fat is slow releasing and will not raise your insulin levels as high or quickly when compared with sugar.
 - However, when sugar and saturated fat are combined together they form the perfect concoction for weight gain (e.g. ice cream, chocolate or pastries). Too many calories from the fat, combined with the rapid absorption of sugar leave the fat cells in our body with no where else to go but absorb all the kilojoules that we have put in.
 - Educate yourself as to which products on the supermarket shelves contain this issue!!

Q: I'm eating heaps of carbohydrates but I'm still really tired after the weekend's rides.

A: EAT MORE SATURATED FAT!!!!!!

- You will find, as you start to 'come down' from your morning training session high, that you start to feel a little tired and foggy. During your training ride you would have burned mainly fat as energy leaving your stores depleted and in need of an instant 'pick me up'.
 - Most people eat enough protein during recovery and not enough saturated fat.
 - It takes a while for complex carbohydrates to be stored in the body as fat (usually 4-7 hours).
 - Some fatty acids contained within saturated fat can be absorbed relatively quickly and will assist your post training session recovery meal with regaining your energy levels.

- Saturated fat will keep your metabolism raised and help you burn more calories throughout the day. Once again the energy contained is actually slow burning and will help keep you fuller for longer.
- Fat is necessary for hormone production. Saturated fat actually increases testosterone production. Testosterone is the most essential hormone for the cyclist. It drives our sexual function as well as our muscle development, which will help the cyclist recover faster and develop more muscle tissue. Thus get stronger and feel less tired.

Nutrition Strategy:

Energy Ratio:

- Carbohydrates – 65-70%
- Protein – 10-15%
- Fat – 20-25%

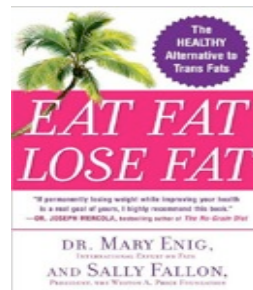
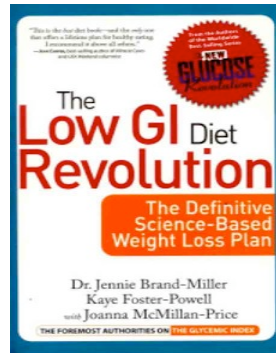
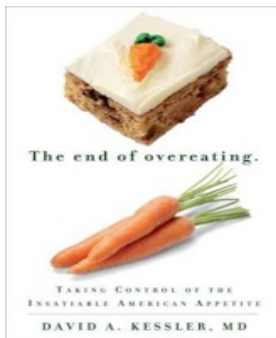
Post Ride Meal:

- 1 cup of uncooked basmati rice.
- 4 whole eggs.
- 1 cup of spinach leaves.
- 1 tsp of Himalayan salt.
- 1 tsp olive oil.
 - Method: Steam Rice. Scramble Eggs together and cook. Add salt, olive oil and spinach leaves once eggs are nearly cooked. Put rice onto serving plate and then add scrambled egg mixture on top. Recovery done!!!!

Conclusion:

Guys I'm not suggesting that you should rush out and eat as much saturated fat as you can get your hands on. To the contrary, my beliefs are probably what you have heard time and time again, everything in moderation. Plenty of healthy unsalted or processed nuts, meats and coconut based products. Coconuts are the healthiest food on the planet!!! If you do your best to control your sugar intake

you will go along way to controlling your waistline and your energy levels.



robertcmack@hotmail.com

Some recommended reading: