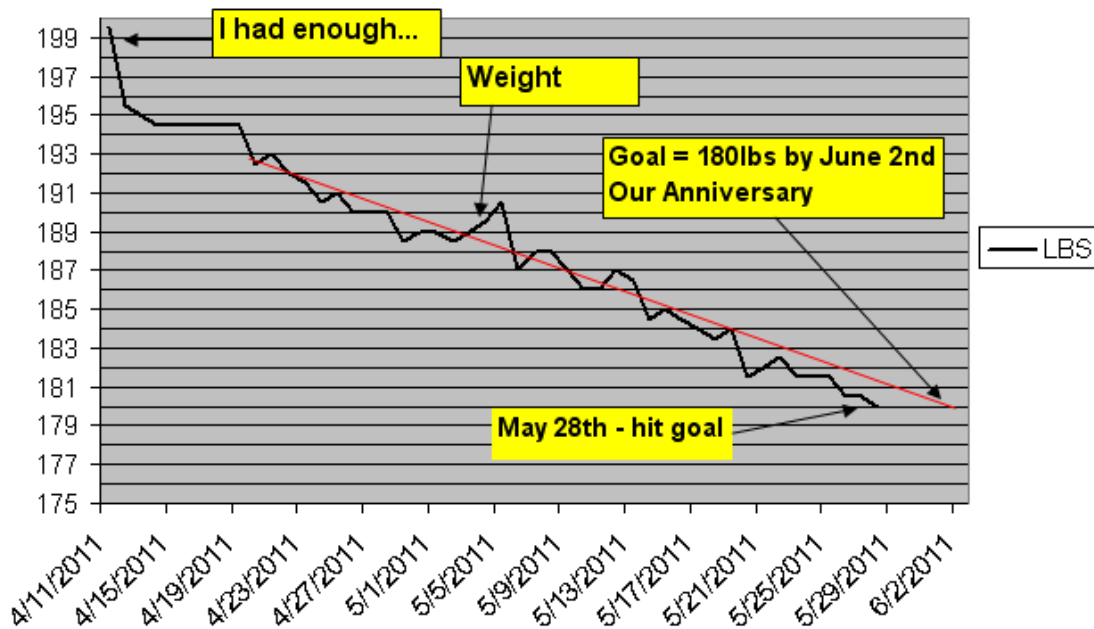


Scott's Progress



Here is a chart of my progress.

First I want to share some information about myself that I thought may help some of you who are busy, have families and struggle with too many priorities and feel you hardly have time for yourself, let alone enough time to work out and stay in shape. What I'm going to share is by no means "the way". There are many good practices that can be adopted that can help keep you on a good healthy path. What I have changed over the past several months is good for me and is easy to maintain. I am sharing this because you may identify with some of these things and I hope you will find some information you may be able to use to make your life easier and it will help you stay healthy. All the information here is offered up as my opinion from my life experiences and daily study.

First some background. I've always worked out and that is important. My main activities are weight lifting and bicycling. I've had chronic non-allergic rhinitis for over 20 years which is a fancy term for inflammation in my nose that causes the membranes to swell and makes me unable to smell / taste much of the time. I do take some Nasonex which helps, but I still haven't been able to taste or smell very often, for many years. I figure with all the bad stuff you can have, this isn't the worst so I just live with it and count my blessings.

I promise I won't list all the ailments I've had since college but there are some facts here that you'll need to know so you understand why I fell into my malaise and almost hit 200lbs after being pretty fit and dedicated to exercise my whole life.

Towards the spring of 2010 as we were opening our Moline store, I was noticing I would suddenly feel like my oxygen wasn't right at times and also could feel my heart beating oddly. To make a long story short, I found out I had a different situation called Atrial Fib. This is a more serious arrhythmia and involves the right upper chamber being out of synch with the normal heart rhythm. Sort of like an electrical problem with the heart. One of the risks is an increased chance of stroke. Not good. The doctor that told me I had atrial fib was going to put me on Coumadin. I didn't want to arbitrarily take such a strong drug, based on one doctor's initial review so I refused. This general practitioner was obviously not happy with my refusal to follow her advice and said I could drop dead from a stroke. I wasn't going to be scared into a quick decision so I waited until I could see a cardiologist and after an extensive checkup and many questions about my life style and family history he determined I didn't need to be on Coumadin. I was happy to hear that.

I understand there are circumstances where it is necessary to take prescription drugs like this if it is absolutely necessary, but the side effects and risks of taking this stuff can be worse than the risks associated with my condition. I wanted to see what I could do to correct this on my own first. After all, nobody could tell me why I had atrial fib and what had caused it. So I decided first to see if I could calm myself down, and also calm down my heart problem with changes to my lifestyle. But I had to back off my workouts for the time being.

I had already been doing some of these things but added a few more things into my daily stack after doing some research.

- 3000 mg vitamin C
- 800 iu vitamin E
- 3000 iu vitamin D
- 1 Max Mens multi-vitamin
- 2.4 g of EPA/DHA (concentrated fish oil) 4 capsules
- 50mg Nattokinase with 250mg gooseberry extract
- Pine bark extract
- Olive leaf extract
- 2TX (natural testosterone booster)
- 200mg COQ10
- 6g Arginine
- 3 ZMA at night before bed
- 2 TBSP liquid Carnitine
- 15g Taurine

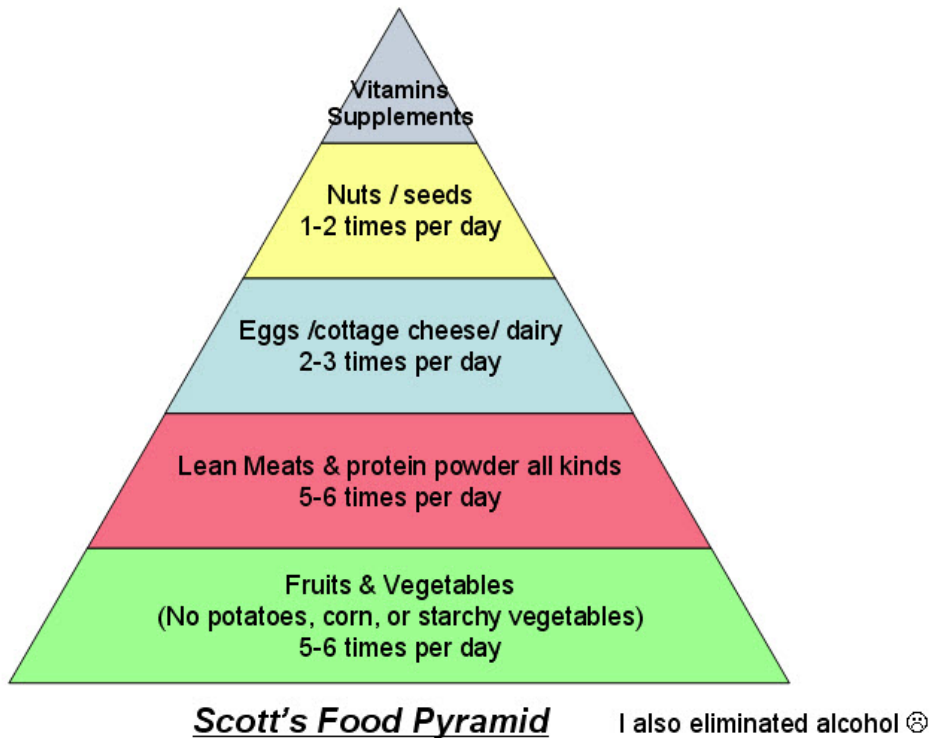
As my heart condition continued, I intuitively knew not to push the cardio and I was even a bit uneasy at times with the weight lifting so I backed off. It made me depressed and with the decrease in activity, I also coupled that with a bit more wine at night and added in some ice cream and some other soothing home remedies. I also knew I needed to throttle my “type A personality” way back. I shifted my mental focus away from things that I knew were stressful. After a few months I could feel a very definite change in my condition. My heart felt like it was almost back to normal. I had been continuing the weight lifting but knew I was way out of whack in other ways.

By April I was approaching 200lbs. To be exact, I weighed 199.5lbs the morning of April 11th, a new lifetime high. We had just completed a rendezvous with some good friends from Chicago and had a blow out eating / drinking weekend. I’m glad I didn’t miss it. But on April 11th I was full on my new lifestyle. Cold Turkey!!! My mind was made up, I was on focus, no wavering and no cheating, I had decided, it was time to clean up my act and get back to being healthy. My heart was feeling better but I was looking like an old man when I saw myself in the mirror. It was time. The mental shift and decision to “lock and load” is critical. **To make sure I wasn’t going to let myself out easy, I posted my stats from the chart above on Facebook and let the world know what I was doing. I also weighed EVERY DAY.**

My nutrition consisted of, and still consists of, lean meats, fresh fruits and vegetables when possible, nuts, skim milk, cottage cheese, and eggs. I do also have salad dressings, bbq sauces, mustards, and spices, etc. I also supplement Max Muscle protein and all the other pre and post workout items I typically take as well as my morning vitamin/mineral stack. What I don’t eat is the simple carbohydrates that break down quicker in your blood stream and spike blood sugar.

I don’t believe in eliminating food groups but these are things within food groups that I did eliminate; breads, cereals, beans, potatoes, pastas, crackers, chips, candy, syrups, **AND I ALSO ELIMINATED ALL ALCOHOL.** Is alcohol a food group? It should be. Wow, I love to cook and every evening I come home and cook dinner. But first I would pour a glass of wine and then get to work. I have had a glass or 5 of wine with dinner for the past 30 years. That is a big adjustment for me. I felt like a fish out of water the first few nights without my ritual. I now have an extra hand that used to grip the wine glass. Now it just hangs there, waving in the breeze with no useful purpose. I know what a smoker must be going through by stopping cold turkey. Anyway, I was determined, and stopping my wine ritual needed to happen so my iron will could stay locked in. **When I am enjoying a few cocktails I tend to relax and not be as diligent about sticking to a nutritional strategy. By eliminating alcohol I was reducing caloric intake of a substance that tends to promote inflammation, hunger and over eating. It had to go for me to reach my goal.**

Here is “MY” pyramid



Another key to my success involved a morning weight in. I did this every day because it made me painfully aware of exactly what my decisions from the day before had on my progress. I needed to do this for myself. It may not be good for everyone. Especially if a blip up in weight is demotivating. For me those upward blips had the opposite effect. It made my determination even stronger. After all, I had gone public and public humiliation was not going to be in my future, at least for this weight loss goal. Every morning I immediately weighed in on a digital scale. I log that weight in my book and was laser focused on the results. Usually I had good results. This became somewhat of an obsession.

I ate/eat 6 times a day. Here are some typical meals/snacks.

Upon rising at 5:30am – fresh brewed coffee and 1 scoop Max Pro vanilla mixed in.

PRE – XTR, EXT, CX3 ← I LOVE THIS (non-stimulating blend due to arrhythmia)

Workout

POST - Iso Xtreme

Breakfast

Fresh melon or other fruit, egg whites or cottage cheese, salsa, spinach or peppers and onions, nuts or avocado slices. (vitamin stack listed below)

Morning snack.

Protein shake or XTR and an apple. I LOVE XTR. It takes the edge off and also has 3grams of arginine as well as branch chains, glutamine and zero calories.

Lunch

Leftover lean meat from dinner such as turkey, chicken, pork loin, or beef and a fruit / veggie salad with balsamic vinaigrette dressing.

Mid afternoon snack

XTR or ostrich stick or boiled egg whites or Max Gourmet Shake and an apple or banana other fresh fruit.

Dinner

Always a prepared dinner of lean meat and fruit/veggie combination. I typically graze on some almonds or walnuts or a mix and some skim milk also.

Before bed snack

A scoop or 2 of MaxPro

This was a lifestyle change. That is another reason I like this eating style. It is easy to maintain, the food is great and I feel good all day long.

My workout consists of lifting weights and doing a different body part each day for 5 days and I take a couple days off each week. I don't plan those days. I usually decide on working out or not when I get up. That way I don't feel forced into doing a workout if I'm a bit tired or don't feel like it. I didn't do any cardio.

Remember the chronic rhinitis I mentioned at the beginning? A HUGE surprise from this change is that I can taste and smell almost all the time now!! Wow, that is amazing to me. I've been to multiple doctors to see if there was anything I could do to alleviate my nasal issue and short of chopping out the swollen membranes and hoping they don't grow back, that is the best answer I've heard and I even pursued it with the Mayo Clinic. Same answer. This is nothing short of a miracle for me. As I think about it, I've had periods in my life where I eliminated alcohol too but I still couldn't smell very well. So is it the grains? Did I have a mild form of gluten intolerance that was causing this? I don't know. I do tend to sneeze more when I drink beer, but do hops or the grain in the beer have similar effects with the breads? I do know that inflammation in our bodies isn't good and chronic rhinitis is an inflammatory disease. Heart disease is also associated with inflammation. Anyway, I am so happy I can actually taste food and smell the smells of summer I am holding off any celebratory drinks I may have envisioned at the beginning of this journey.

Another HUGE positive change are that my energy levels are though the roof. Before, when I ate my meals, that included things like rice or potatoes I would feel a big satisfying surge about 15 minutes into the meal. That was my blood sugar rising and telling me I was filling the tank. Aaahhhh that feeling is good. Or so I thought at the time. **When I first started eating like I am now I noticed I would have, what I would describe, as a hole in the middle of my stomach after I ate. I just wasn't full. That is the toughest part but if you just wait it out it gets soooo much better after the first couple weeks.** I could feel the food in my stomach but it seemed like empty calories. It wasn't doing the trick. That empty unsatisfied feeling would take about an hour to slowly go away and finally I would not feel hungry. I still didn't feel full, just not hungry any more. This was very obvious for the first 2 weeks or so. It slowly started to get better after that and by 3 weeks I actually started feeling like I was getting filled up like I used to, except that I didn't get tired after eating. That was a typical feeling I got at night in the past. I'd eat, and within half an hour I was looking for a place where I could be comfortable after the long day. Sometimes that was right in the chair I was sitting in and I'd fall asleep upright. Not a pretty sight. Now I don't get that feeling. I have energy well into the night and it is another great benefit. My wife Karen and I recently cleaned out every drawer and cupboard in our kitchen and rearranged everything for better efficiency. We finished that and have now gone through the laundry room, our furnace room and the big closet with the over flow below our stairs. Anyway, we are on a roll and we are attacking the whole house. It's a good thing. Lots of energy to do things I wasn't doing before.

Ok, this is getting longer than I intended. I'll follow up this with my "go out to eat" strategy. I did visit restaurants once a week and I'll share which ones I went to and what I ate. You can eat pretty well even if you are on the road.

I hope this helps.

If you have any questions I'll be happy to answer them. I'm usually at the Moline store or you can text or call me on my cell at 309-235-7336. Or you can email me at scott.maxmuscle@mchsi.com.

Sincerely,
Scott Herkes