

# Wellness Wednesday



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## Kevin Curry: Here's What Men Need To Understand About Nutrition

"If The Rock made an announcement that he ate a salad once a day, do you know how many men would start eating salads?"

*When Kevin Curry started his blog Fit Men Cook, he had no idea his personal quest toward improved health through nutrition would not only help him radically transform his life, but would also become a platform where he could help other people. Since then, the author and entrepreneur has written cookbooks, created a top-ranking food and drink app, produced an original spice line and built a base of over 1.5 million followers on social media. In this Voices in Food story, as told to K. Astre, he talks about his approach to nutrition, why it's a bad idea to jump on fad diets and how The Rock could change the way men look at salads.*

### On why he felt his voice was needed

When I started my blog back in 2012, I was at a place in my life where I was looking for solutions to my own diet and a lot of the information out there just didn't resonate with me. At the time, I didn't see a lot of men sharing food content that was nutritious. So when I started out with Fit Men Cook, it was a way for me to crowdsource my own diet. There was a lot of granola, parfait and salad recipes. And I don't want to gender stereotype certain foods, but as a man, that didn't really make me enthusiastic or want to get into the kitchen.



But what I was interested in was to make something like steak and potatoes healthier. I didn't start out trying to do what I am doing today. When I was overweight and I was working out three hours a day for a year, I didn't see any changes and then one day in the gym, a trainer asked me what I was eating and a lightbulb finally went off. Once I changed my diet, the weight began to fall off me.

### On what's missing in the conversation about men's nutrition

Right now, I think a really big thing that we're missing across the board is the over-reliance on animal products and supplements. We live in a society where we want everything right now, so you can't even look at information about working out without running into a gimmick like "six pack in five days!" We want everything instantly.

A lot of fitness nutrition focuses on protein, so many people fall back on filling their plates with meat. Protein doesn't just have to come from animals, it can come from vegetables. Unfortunately, there's not a lot of mainstream marketing aimed toward men and plant-based diets. If The Rock made an announcement that he ate a salad once a day, do you know how many men would start eating salads?

## On finding balance in your approach to nutrition

There's the extreme side that preaches that you have to go vegan and that doesn't resonate with people, either. I think what we have to do is educate people on that but also how much better you can feel with balance. We need to find some place in the middle where we can get people to adopt a more sensible lifestyle. People need to know that they have more options than all meat or all vegetables. That's where I found the most happiness and the most success. What if we start to think about food differently? What if we made vegetables and legumes and grains the star of the meal and if we wanted to, we treat the meat like a side? I encourage my followers not to make meat the star of their dish, but to make a vegetable the star of their dish and complement it with meat.

## On why restrictive diets don't work

Everyone has to get to a point where we have to find balance in eating. If you are following a plan that is so restrictive that it interrupts your social life or the normal way that you function, where you have to make special plans to eat, I have noticed that over time people have less long-term success with that approach. It becomes so hard to keep up that they'll fall off their routine completely and have to start back at square one. Now, there's nothing wrong with experimenting with different diets to educate yourself on different ways of eating that may benefit you personally, so that you can incorporate them into your normal day-to-day diet. But moderation is really the key when it comes to being consistent.

## On when you should be counting calories

I don't count my calories because I don't have to anymore. But I think it makes sense to count calories when you want to be more efficient with your weight loss goals. For people just getting into changing their diets, I recommend everyone counts their calories, but only because it's helpful to have an idea of the amount of food you're regularly eating. It's not to shame yourself. It's just useful information you can use to start implementing changes because many of us are just simply not aware of the caloric content of what we are eating. When we eat without truly thinking about what we are putting into our bodies, it's difficult to make informed decisions. But I don't recommend counting your calories all the time.



## On why cheat days should be canceled

I used to be a part of the "cheat day" culture, but now I talk about it in a different way. We need to graduate out of the mindset of moralizing food by labeling them "good" or "bad." That just isn't a real thing and it does no good for how people learn how to approach food as nutrition. It makes people afraid of food. I have shifted from looking at them as cheat meals to seeing them as treat meals.

You can have a brownie fudge sundae without going off of your diet if you learn to embrace food in moderation. Cheating means you're doing something wrong and that type of language makes it hard to embrace all foods. If you feel like you're doing something wrong, you're not going to just fall off the wagon, you're going to be under the wheel. When you reframe it, you remove the stigma from food. We have to be careful about things like cheat days because that was created by the bodybuilding community because their diets are so strict that they can't accommodate for anything outside of their regimen. Unless you are competing then that type of mindset is not practical for the average man. It's just food.

## On why men need to have realistic goals

For many men, the bodybuilding approach is offered as a normal way to live and that just doesn't make sense to me. I have tremendous respect for that industry and the community of athletes because of what they put their bodies through. But as I frequently tell my followers, if you are frustrated because it's extremely difficult for you to adhere to a diet similar to a professional model who is paid to look that way — that's completely normal!

## On how cooking can help you through the pandemic

There's no better time than right now to reimagine our relationship with food. We're all dealing with so much right now from the pandemic to the racial injustice in America. The weight of all this can affect our food choices. Cooking for yourself can be very therapeutic. Aside from getting that serotonin boost from finishing a task from start to finish and the feeling of accomplishment from preparing yourself this beautiful meal, eating foods that are efficient for our bodies can help us to feel and function our best.

## On where to start if you want to change your diet

Always start small. Don't try to overhaul your entire diet in one day. Yes, many people have and will continue to do that but I caution against it because over time you get burned out much faster. Give yourself some grace, understand that you got to where you are today after years of eating habits you would like to change and that 30 days of strict meal prepping will not reverse that.

I would advise people to change one thing about their diet at a time. If you drink soda every single day, start cutting down to one every other day. Then once a week. Maybe start with cutting down on how much takeout you have and cooking more meals at home. Whatever it is, it's important to build a habit that becomes automatic before you start to add more changes. If you want to run a marathon, you take it mile by mile until you can run the whole thing. That's how you build up confidence in yourself. It's the same with changing your relationship with food.





# WHIPPED RICOTTA TOAST WITH ROASTED TOMATOES

256 Calories | PREP TIME: 10 mins | COOK TIME: 35 mins | TOTAL TIME: 45 mins  
YIELD: 5 Servings | COURSE: Appetizer, Side Dish | CUISINE: Italian

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium head garlic
- 3 teaspoons olive oil
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 dry pint grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 medium shallot, cut into ¼-inch slices
- 8- ounces French baguette
- Olive oil spray
- 1 cup part skim milk ricotta
- ¼ cup chopped basil, for garnish
- Crushed red pepper flakes, for garnish (optional)

Whipped Ricotta Toast with Roasted Tomatoes on crusty bread and topped with garlicky tomatoes, shallots and basil is the perfect way to enjoy fresh summer tomatoes.

## TIPS:

Toast isn't just for breakfast! This tomato ricotta toast would be excellent for a light lunch or as a side dish with a salad. It could also be served as a hearty appetizer.

## Nutrition Information

Serving: 4 slices, Calories: 256 kcal, Carbohydrates: 35 g, Protein: 12 g, Fat: 7.5 g, Saturated Fat: 3 g, Cholesterol: 15 mg, Sodium: 586 mg, Fiber: 2.5 g, Sugar: 4 g  
Source: [Skinnytaste.com](http://Skinnytaste.com)



## INSTRUCTIONS



### How to make:

- 1.) Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
- 2.) Cut just the top of the head of garlic off, leaving cloves intact and exposed.
- 3.) Drizzle with 1 teaspoon oil, wrap tightly in aluminum foil, place on medium sheet pan and roast for 25 minutes.
- 4.) In a medium bowl, combine the tomatoes, shallots, remaining 2 teaspoons oil,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt and pepper, to taste. Toss to coat.
- 5.) Transfer to a sheet pan lined with parchment.
- 6.) After garlic has roasted for 25 minutes, leave it in the oven then add the sheet pan with the tomatoes and shallots and roast for 20 minutes.
- 7.) Meanwhile, cut bread into 20 ( $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch) slices.
- 8.) Remove both sheet pans from the oven. Turn the oven off, take wrapped garlic off sheet pan and allow to cool for 5 minutes.
- 9.) Lay bread slices in an even layer on the sheet pan, spray lightly with olive oil and place the sheet pan in the oven to allow bread to toast while you whip the ricotta.
- 10.) Unwrap the garlic and carefully squeeze or scoop cloves into a food processor fitted with metal blade. Add the ricotta,  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt and pepper, to taste then process for 30 seconds. Scrap sides with a spatula and pulse 2-3 times to thoroughly combine.

## FEATURED EXERCISE

# 11 Strength Training Moves for Women Over 50

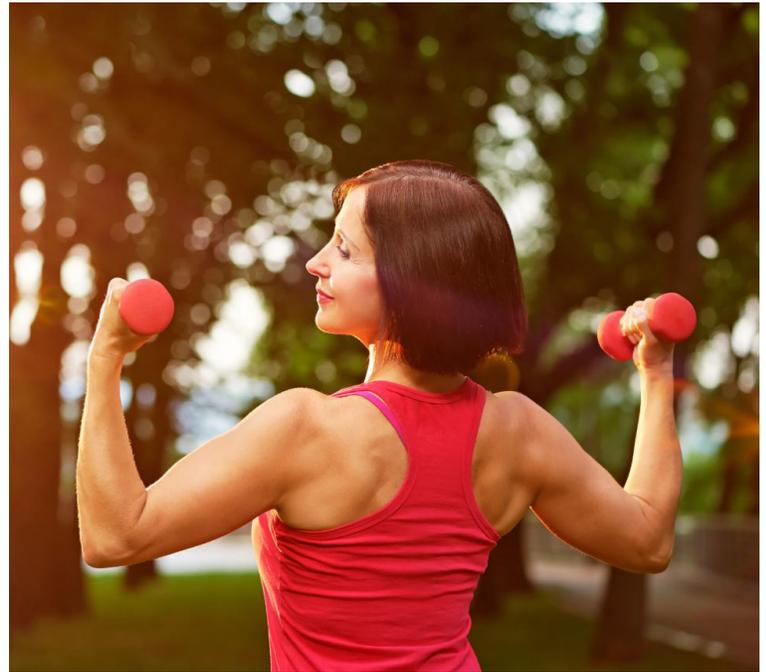
While aging is inevitable, aging well is not. There are many factors involved in maintaining good physical and mental health as you age, but one of the most important things to consider as you grow older is weight training.

Exercise not only keeps you feeling and looking younger, but actually physically slows down the aging process. And while exercise comes in many forms, strength training is where the true anti-aging magic happens. If you're over 50 and haven't been strength training, it's not too late to start!

Let's explore in detail the benefits of strength training and some of the specific weight training moves women over 50 should do.

## The important benefits of strength training after 50 include:

Builds muscle mass, builds bone density, decreases body fat and speeds up metabolism.



## Use these links to learn more:

[Benefits Of Strength Training After 50](#)  
[11 Strength Training Moves Women Over 50 Should Do](#)  
[Additional Strength Training Tips Before You Get Started](#)

Source: <https://gethealthyu.com/strength-training-moves-for-women-over-50/>

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



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