

7 Waterbury Nutrition

Nobody can prove it, but a lot of people believe it.

“It” is the fitness-industry adage that nutrition accounts for 80 percent of your physique and performance success. You could quibble at the margins—is it really four-fifths? Or just three-fourths?—but I’ll sign on with everyone else who believes it’s in the right ballpark. The right nutrients at the right time will help you perform at the highest possible level, and then recover from that performance by ensuring your muscles repair themselves and come back bigger and stronger.

But that’s where the agreement ends. Even the most highly credentialed experts have very different ideas about which are the “right” nutrients.

Up until the early 1990’s, bodybuilders and athletes often followed a macronutrient ratio of 60/30/10—that is, 60 percent carbohydrates, 30 percent protein, 10 percent fat. The ideas behind it were simple and, unfortunately, simplistic: Carbs provide quick energy, and athletes need quick energy, so therefore three-fifths of the calories should be carbs. Protein? Well, that was crucial for muscle growth and repair, so of course athletes and bodybuilders needed a lot of it. Fat was the oddball. Everyone knew a body needs some for basic cellular repair and hormone metabolism, and everyone knew you couldn’t avoid all of it no matter how hard you tried. But the consensus was that the less you had, the better you’d perform and the leaner you’d be.

Unfortunately, that anti-fat bias left athletes without some of the most nutritious foods on the planet, including salmon, lean beef, nuts and seeds, olive and flaxseed oil, and many others. If you didn’t like the idea of living on chicken