

Training IQ - Returning to Training and Supplement Use

I have been sent a question from a friend in his mid-twenties interested in getting back into the gym after a 2 month holiday in Europe. This was his question:

“I'm heading to Europe for 2 months drinking. After I get back I plan to get seriously stuck into gym and was wondering if you could recommend any programs/ supplements to help me?”

OK so getting back into training after a long period off. Well, I would start with training weights maybe 3 times a week doing full body sessions and work up the cardio fitness which will help you with your weight training. Depending on how many days a week you want to dedicate to training I would suggest training weights on say Monday, Wednesday and Friday with a 20 minute walk on the Treadmill or outside post weights (and post shake). Dedicate the other days, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday to straight cardio, maybe a RPM class or 45 minutes on the X-Trainer. Something that is cardio intensive. Try intervals every now and then.

I would stick to this for about 4 weeks until your muscles adapt and then change your weight training to a split program. What your split is will depend again, on how many days you want to dedicate yourself to training and the areas you want to make the biggest gains are. I work on 5 day split, so something between 3 and 5 days would be best. When you get to this stage you may choose to drop some of the cardio sessions or integrate them.

As for diet, it is best to establish where you are at and what your goals are.

Here is a good site to start with to find an approximate daily calorie intake

http://www.freedieting.com/tools/calorie_calculator.htm

You can insert your current weight and approximate body fat to gauge the number of calories you need in your diet. Depending on the frequency and intensity of your training, along with your diet goals (lose weight or eat to have enough energy to train, or balance both).

How you chose to break these calories up depends on you. I would recommend starting with 2-2.2g of protein per kg of body weight per day (for me this is $60 \times 2 = 120$ g of protein per day). Every gram of protein is equal to 4 calories. So for me 480 of my daily calories would come from protein. From here you decide how many calories you take from carbs and how many from fats.

Remember that good fats are important for healthy body function, as well as helping with weight loss. Don't be afraid to integrate good sources of fat from nuts, fish and oils (Flaxseed and quality olive). Personally, I have around 30g of fat per day from almonds and flaxseed oil. Just remember that fat is very energy dense so you need less of it ($30\text{g fat} \times 9 = 270$ calories). Consume fats at meals that are not around your training. Eg morning tea, lunch and before bed, if you train in the morning or afternoon. DO NOT heat this oil as it denatures the structure, mutating it from a 'good' oil to a saturated one.

Carbs are also very important as they fuel muscles and help with recovery. Be sure to consume your carbs around training times, both before and after. Remember each gram of carbohydrate is worth 4 calories.

This is a great site to find the nutritional information for so many foods to help you create your own diet

<http://nutritiondata.self.com/>

Eating quality food and taking quality supplements will help you to keep all of your macronutrients in-line. Some poor quality meats will have a lot of fat for example or some protein powders contain a high level of sugar. These will impact on your daily calorie intake. Try sourcing your protein from

lean meats such as chicken, kangaroo and fish with most calories coming from protein. For protein powder I currently use Dymatize ISO•100 Protein. Almost 100% of the calories in this are from protein. There are no carbs and no fats. Until you lean down, I would recommend this protein before maybe switching to a 'muscle gaining' protein if you have leaned down enough to increase your calories and carbs.

The most important times to consume protein are when you get up, before training, after training (whey for quick absorption) and before bed (casein for slow release).

The best carbs are low GI, meaning they will make you feel fuller for longer. These carbs include rolled oats, Basmati/Brown rice, Sweet Potato, Quinoa and pumpkin (the amount of carbs and calories for these can be found with the link above from Nutrition Data). You may wish to consume high GI carbs however before training to help with energy. There are some supplements on the market that help with spiking Insulin, but my favorite is Vitargo from GenR8 because of the proven studies behind it with its great results and taste. You can use this as a source of fuel during training as well as post training for recovery, just make sure that you account for the additional carbs in your diet. Sugar is best eliminated as the calories associated with these carbs are useless. I use the sweetener, Stevia, so that all my carbs are functional.

As for recovery, I would recommend integrating some BCAA's and L-Glutamine into your diet. These will help your muscles recover from all the training, especially after such a time off. I currently sip on Dymatize Recoup, a combination of the two. You can take this during and post training or even drink it all day like I do.

Foods to avoid are anything processed including bread and all the treats we like to eat.

In relation to dairy, be mindful that dairy contains high levels of lactose (sugar = carb) and also some fats. Try having low fat milk and no fat yogurt (like Jelna).

Have plenty of green veggies such as broccoli, zucchini, green beans and celery (I don't count these as calories = fibre carbs). Eat plenty of green veggies. They will fill you up, add flavour, plenty of vitamins and minerals.

Include fruit, but be careful as fruits can be high in sugar with a high GI. Green apples, bananas and strawberries are good. Try banana's before training.

A diet that you enjoy is a diet that you will stick to. Try playing around with good foods to create meals that you will enjoy and stick with. Good luck!