Aaron Gilbert is a personal trainer and owner of Longevity Athletics in Maricopa.

**Name:** Aaron Gregory Gilbert  
**Hometown:** Phoenix  
**Maricopa since:** 2009  
**Occupation:** Founder/Owner/Operator of Longevity Athletics, LLC  
**Family:** Wife Gigi Gilbert, daughter Annabelle Gilbert  
**Pets:** 2 cats, Skittles and Jack, and 1 dog, Reina  
**Cars:** Chrysler 300, Hyundai Elantra  
**Hobbies:** Table Tennis, Golf, and playing the drums  
**Pet peeve:** Incessant Complainers  
**Dream vacation:** Frigate Island – Seychelles  
**Like most about Maricopa:** The small-town feel  
**Like least about Maricopa:** The 347  

**Favorite ...**  
**Charity:** Keeping Teachers Teaching Foundation  
**Book:** The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey  
**Movie:** Tron  
**Actor:** Jeff Bridges  
**Song:** Under the Bridge – Red Hot Chili Peppers  
**Musician:** Tony Royster Jr.  
**Team:** 1995-96 Chicago Bulls  
**Athlete:** Andre Agassi  
**Food:** Sushi  
**Drink:** Cucumber Collins @ Ra
Gilbert: The Big Problem with Calorie Counting – Part 1: Calories In

By Aaron Gilbert

Yes! I’ve hit my physical activity goal of 1,000 calories expended today. That means, by the end of the week I should be down two pounds and just 10 away from my goal weight. Right, FitnessPal? Well, maybe not so much...

Let’s explore three reasons why the supposed tried and true method of calorie counting for weight management is a flawed approach and not an exact science like many want you to believe.

1  Calorie counts are not precise.

Food companies use any of the five different methods available to estimate the calories you see on nutritional labels. These methods are derived from research done over 100 years ago. Current research has shown that the true calorie content is often significantly higher or lower.  

For example: One medium apple can be anywhere from 83 calories to 116, and one large sweet potato ranges from 231 calories to 705.  

The FDA permits up to 20 percent of inaccuracy due to the variation between the methods used for calculating. This translates to 150 calories looking more like 130-180.

All factors considered. Expect error to be as much as 50 percent.  

2  Our bodies don’t absorb all the calories we consume.

You’ve probably heard before not all the food you eat is absorbed. Some calories pass through us undigested, and this varies as much as there are different things to eat.  

Scientists created the formula we use to evaluate food absorption decades ago. The problem with this formula is that it doesn’t tell the whole story.  

"The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." – Aristotle
Scientists created the formula we use to evaluate food absorption decades ago. The problem with this formula is that it doesn’t tell the whole story. For example, it doesn’t work for nuts and seeds because we absorb fewer calories from them than calculated. With almonds only 68 percent of the calories are absorbed and pecans 79 percent. This formula also is wrong about fiber-rich foods, from which we are consuming an average of 17 percent more calories than reported.

Expect a margin of error around 10 percent due to food absorption variability.

3 Food preparation affects calorie load.

Cooking your food generally makes more calories available for absorption. Additionally, chopping and blending your food increases the calories absorbed as well.

For example, grilling your fist-sized steak takes it from just about 200 calories to almost 250. Parboiling your eggs adds almost 30 calories to each. Calorie counting is not as perfect and linear as individuals/companies would like you to believe. Count on up to 25 percent margin of error when counting your calorie intake. Yes, it is a method that can be helpful in creating structure and organization when incorporating behavior-focused goals. Yes, it can assist with accountability and goal attainment as many of my clients can attest to. What it is not, is an exacting, precise, and singular means of sustainable weight management. Think of it as a tool to use in your arsenal along with your hand for portion control.

Aaron Gilbert, CSCS, is the owner of Longevity Athletics.

Aaron@LongevityAthletics.com
520-261-4661

This column appeared in the May issue of InMaricopa.

Gilbert: To cleanse or not to cleanse in your fitness regimen

By Aaron Gilbert, CSCS

Oops … Your spouse, with the best of intentions, knowing full well you’ve been working so hard lately at adopting some healthier habits, surprises you after a long day at work with your favorite indulgence – pizza. Immediately you do what any normal person would do in this circumstance – indulge, then moments later, lament. This manifests into a solace-seeking Facebook post describing the ordeal in detail. Seemingly in nanoseconds, every guru in your Facebook universe comes to the rescue with the en vogue, quick-fix solution to “Just cleanse.”

What is a cleanse or detox diet?

Detox diets, or cleanses, typically include a highly restrictive list of foods, juices, teas and/or a whole lot of nothing (i.e. fasting). These diets will typically require you to purchase “detox/cleanse kits” or premade juices.

The promise? To rid your body of all the bad stuff, toxins. Sounds like a sweet deal, right? Clear out all the bad stuff causing havoc within your body...
and maybe lose a few pounds and some inches while you’re at it. Maybe not so much. Let’s take a look:

**Buyer Beware**

A cleanse can possibly do more harm to your body than good. Some frequently reported side effects include:

* Intense headaches (most likely from the nitrates dumped into your body from an overwhelming amount of fruit and vegetable juice)
* Sleep problems
* Feeling weak or dizzy

Additionally, high levels of fruit juices, i.e. fructose, aka sugar, can cause a major roller-coaster ride with your blood-sugar levels. Many cleanses are also low in protein. Protein deficiencies can prevent your body’s natural ability to eliminate toxins.

Here’s a big one: Cleansing will not help you lose weight, at least not the fat weight you want to lose. In fact, it might even lead to weight gain. Here’s why:

* Any weight loss is probably from water, stored carbohydrate and stuff in your intestines – all of which will come back in a few hours after the cleanse ends.
* Most weight-loss cleanses are extremely low in calories. In other words, they’re starving you. Many cleanses are so low in calories they’ll negatively affect your hormonal health.

**The Solution: Cleanse Naturally**

1. If you’re eating too much, you’re building up more toxins. For general use, try using your hand for portion and calorie control. Active women – one palm size of lean protein, one fist of dark green vegetable, one cupped hand of a minimally processed, whole carbohydrate and one full thumb of healthy fat. Active men – two palms of lean protein, two fists of dark green vegetable, two cupped hands of minimally processed, whole carbohydrate and two full thumbs of a healthy fat.
2. Drink enough fluids, including water and tea. Give your toxin-filtering kidneys a break and keep them healthy by consuming minimally 3.7 liters a day for men and 2.7 liters for women.
3. Get outside in the sun and enjoy some fresh air each day. The sun makes vitamin D happen from our exposure to it.
4. Exercise and sweat regularly. Skin is a major organ, and this is where a lot of toxins leave the body.

At the end of the day, keeping it simple with well-balanced nutrition made up of mostly whole, real foods, along with plenty of water, exercise and some fresh air will do your mind and body some wonders.

Oh, and you can enjoy a yummy, detoxifying pizza guilt-free by making it with a low net carb, whole grain crust, along with a low sugar sauce, loaded with lean protein, and plenty of veggies.

*Aaron Gilbert is the owner of Longevity Athletics.*

**References**

The holidays often wreak havoc on diets, but Longevity Athletics owner Aaron Gilbert has a few tips to stay healthy during and after the endless feasting of the season.

"During the holidays, it’s a difficult time to stay fit, so it’s important to find ways to put healthy twists on comfort foods," Gilbert says. "That way you can still enjoy the food without going too far into the dark side."

With so much of the holiday season revolving around food, it’s not always possible to adjust what we ingest. However, another useful tip to help keep the weight off is to stay active. According to Gilbert, it doesn’t really matter what activities you do, as long as you keep your heart rate up.

“The temperature restricts people, so take advantage of the evenings with activities you may not usually do,” Gilbert says. “Find something that elevates your heart rate for 20 minutes a day. Walk for 20 minutes or even play with your dogs at the park. It’s important just to get moving.”

**Health Tips**
1. Put healthy twists on comfort foods (less bread and more onions in stuffing, skim milk in mashed potatoes, remove skin and fat from your meat serving).
2. Keep plate balanced with vegetables and fruit.
3. Elevate your heart rate with 20-minute activities daily.
4. Reduce salt or find a salt substitute.
5. If you’ve fallen off your exercise routine during the holidays (or never had one), get moving!

**Tips for losing weight and keeping it off**
1. Set a weight goal and learn your body mass index (BMI)
2. Eat less – you decide how
3. Keep track of what you’re eating
4. Add activity – it burns calories
5. Stay motivated

*Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

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**About Aaron Gilbert**

Owner, Longevity Athletics

**Age:** 38

**Family:** Wife, brother, mother and half-sister

**Hometown:** Phoenix

**Maricopa since:** 2007

**Pets:** Chihuahua and three cats

**Hobbies:** Reading, anything outdoors and table tennis

**Like most about Maricopa:** I like the small town feel in comparison to other places I've lived. You get to know people and there is more of a sense of community.

**Like least about Maricopa:** Out of all the things, I’d like to see the passageway widened to the I-10.

**Favorite Food:** Homemade bunless burger

**Favorite Drink:** Coconut water

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*This story appeared in the Winter edition of InMaricopa the Magazine.*

Longevity Athletics debuts table tennis robot (video)
A lifelong love of table tennis inspired Longevity Athletics owner Aaron Gilbert to provide a table and training robot to his fitness center’s members in order to become Maricopa’s first and only USA Table Tennis affiliate.

USA Table Tennis is the national organizing body of professional table tennis. It organizes tournaments and events around the country, so Gilbert is hoping to host tournaments and “open play” competitions in Maricopa as part of Longevity Athletics’ affiliation.

“There’s a couple (affiliated) clubs in Phoenix, but there is nothing in Maricopa,” Gilbert said. “So I thought, ‘Why not just have a table here’ for members to play or for anyone in the community who’s interested in learning how to play.”

Gilbert has also brought in a table tennis robot to use as a training tool to help beginners and experienced players alike. The robot constantly serves balls to help players develop quick hands and reflexes. The machine can be put on a timer or endless loop, and as long as it has four or more balls available, it will keep serving.

“Table tennis is a sport I happen to be very fond of,” Gilbert said. “The challenge for me in playing it and enjoying it so much is that it’s hard to find people to play with who share the same viewpoint as I do.”

In January, Gilbert plans to host an event for members of the community to get more information on getting involved with USA Table Tennis and Longevity Fitness.

For more information, visit www.longevityathletics.com or visit Longevity’s Facebook page at www.facebook.com/longevityathletics.
Rising construction costs blew Tortosa Trails budget
Feb 12, 2019

City manager proposes a home for MEDA
Feb 8, 2019
Longevity Athletics is a Strength & conditioning company delivering individualized, innovative, high quality services in a safe, effective, fun environment. We pledge to treat all members, staff and community in ways that we would like to be treated; with compassion, respect and integrity. Athletes' longevity. Sports, data & entertainment. Nutrition and sports. Neuroscience and sports. How far have we come, and how far will we be able to go? New technology and training methods are redefining the limits of athletic performance. How much further will runners improve, and how much will the technology improve? The charts show that the goal posts keep moving further. [...] if you’re looking to make a lifestyle change or continue your fitness, I highly recommend longevity athletics!” - lindsay sulik. Our Reviews Say it all Load More...Follow on Instagram. We are Excited to meet you. We want to take time to get to know you and your goals. Use the form to schedule a free strategy session. We will chat about nutrition, athletic ability and setting goal milestones. Please upgrade to a supported browser to get a reCAPTCHA challenge.