

Ingrid Loos Miller

# WEIGHT MANAGEMENT FOR TRIATHLETES

WHEN TRAINING IS NOT ENOUGH



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Ingrid Loos Miller** is a USAT Certified Coach, Sport Nutrition Consultant, and triathlete. A Team Trainer for the Weight Watchers® Momentum Challenge, she has helped athletes and non-athletes alike to achieve their weight loss goals by showing them how to reduce the calorie impact of the foods they enjoy. She teaches the motivational and focusing strategies needed to achieve goals and provides tools and daily practices that make permanent weight management a reality.

Other than becoming an Ironman® and regular podium finishes in triathlons, her greatest personal accomplishment has been overcoming a lifelong struggle with weight. She has written for *Trail Runner Magazine* and her writing has appeared in *Triathlete Magazine*, *Marathon and Beyond* and on [BeginnerTriathlete.com](http://BeginnerTriathlete.com).

Her other books include *Functional Strength for Triathletes* and *Fearless Swimming for Triathletes*. Ingrid lives and coaches in Southern California.



# Weight Management for Triathletes

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# PREFACE

If you think that the price for being lean and eating well is misery and deprivation, then it is no wonder you have still not succeeded. No one wants to live that way, and you don't have to.

The volume of research supporting the health benefits of a plant-based, whole food diet is so vast that it cannot be ignored. From a weight management perspective, eating this way is a game-changer. You don't have to count calories anymore. This means, to a great extent, you don't have to manage your hunger anymore. You can eat as much as you want. But is it that easy?

No matter what food plan you choose, there will always be foods that you should limit and avoid. There will be times when you are out with your friends and they pressure you to have "just one bite" of junk food. You will be alone at night and something from the pantry will be calling your name. You will drag yourself home after a big race or a nightmarish workout and be too darn tired to care about sticking to your plan. It is hard to make a big change in your life and even harder to stick with it forever.

The number of times you have to just say no each day, multiplied by the number of days in the rest of your life, makes such a task seem impossible. But if you change the way you feel about food, change your food preferences, and create habits that put you in control of what you eat, making a permanent change is manageable and, at some point, it actually gets easy. This book will help you learn to happily eat fewer calories for the rest of your life. Yes, happily.

Don't get me wrong—it is hard work to change your beliefs about yourself and about what is possible, especially in the beginning. Reaching your goal weight is an important milestone, but it takes years to truly feel comfortable—really comfortable—in your own skin. Along the way you will reap the rewards of looking and feeling better about yourself than you have in a long time. You will race faster, look younger, and feel masterful! All of those positives will build, layer upon layer, certainty and confidence in your ability to keep the weight off. You will learn to defend your lean weight like a tiger protects her

cubs. There is no way you will let things get out of hand ever again. When you reach that level of certainty, the transformation will be complete.

This second edition incorporates several of the exercises I have used with my food coaching clients. It fleshes out and modifies the basic structure of a calorie-counting program, leading you through the process of cognitive reshaping and emotional rewiring. It takes lots of practice, but as a triathlete, you are used to that. It is time to train your brain as rigorously as you train your body. Let's get to work.

## INTRODUCTION: YOU CAN'T OUTRUN A BAD DIET

Did you become a triathlete in order to lose weight? Maybe you entered a big race hoping that a massive training program would do the trick. Maybe you have tried dozens of 30 day "challenges", commercial weight loss programs and read every diet book on the bestseller list. No doubt you have had some success –yet here you are, with this book in your hand.

Endless training takes a bite out of excess calories but it is not enough to overcome the habitual overeating that got you here in the first place. The now famous editorial appearing in the British Journal of Sports Medicine says it all, "You cannot outrun a bad diet". It is worth reading in it's entirety at: <http://bjism.bmj.com/content/early/2015/05/07/bjsports-2015-094911.full>

It is easy to stay overweight for years, even if you train daily. Here is a list of possible reasons why you are not losing weight, even though you are training for triathlons:

- You are underestimating your intake. You are not weighing and measuring and recording everything.
- You are overestimating your calorie needs. You overload rather than reload after training sessions.

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT FOR TRIATHLETES

- You are carrying around old weight, even if you are currently not overeating on a regular basis.
- You are eating in restaurants too often. You don't realize how calorie-packed restaurant food usually is.
- You are eating to celebrate your last triathlon finish, or to mourn a poor race performance or for other emotional reasons.
- Your "diets" are a temporary thing that you go off of when the weight comes off.
- You allow stress/vacation/injury/holidays or some other situations to derail you.
- You have a notion that it is unfair/oppressive/not normal to eat carefully all the time.
- You tend to abandon your diet and the scale if you get discouraged.
- You have a low tolerance for hunger. This is one of the easiest things to manage.
- You figure you will fail eventually anyway, so why bother working really hard now?
- You feel pressured by others to eat the wrong foods and you give in to that feeling on a regular basis.
- You don't really want or know how to make the required changes in your thinking.
- Deep down, you are okay with your current weight. If this is the case, you don't need this book.
- You lack sufficient motivation (enthusiasm, pain or anger) to make lasting change.

All that calorie-burning exercise and strutting your stuff as a triathlete makes it in some ways, even more difficult to lose weight.

- Your physical ideal is probably leaner than the norm (especially since most people are overweight).

- You probably take pride in your ability to hang tough and not quit during your workouts. You know how to suffer but you seem to lose all that determination and drive when it comes to food.
- You love the athlete in you but you are embarrassed about the overeater.

It is inconceivable that you don't know what foods to avoid and how to lose weight. There are many different ways of eating that will help you lose weight. But the food you choose is not going to change your way of thinking about yourself and your weight. It won't teach you how to stay lean when you are injured, on vacation or during holidays, or when for one reason or another, your athletic life is put on hold.

You need to think long-term right from the start and to spend more time challenging your thoughts and beliefs about food (as this program does) than you spend looking for a miracle.

Don't worry. You can change. This book will show you how.

