

The Skinny on Cycling
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Introduction:

I was always the fat kid. When I was growing up, I was the last to be picked for any team sport but the first to be chosen when someone needed a problem solved, a quick joke or advice on how to deal with a friend or foe. When it came time to play “shirts and skins” basketball, I could usually be found hiding somewhere far away from the basketball court, refining my excuse making skills and thinking of new ways to be “cool” without working up a sweat.

By the time I reached 30 years old I had become a successful professional, a great husband and father, a congenial host and great cook. But, I weighed over 300 pounds, my cholesterol was too high, my blood pressure was through the roof and my diabetes was out of control. To make matters worse, most of the men in my family had heart disease, some died from it and many had undergone open heart surgery to try to avoid an early grave. I was certain of two things: I had been dealt a bad set of “fat guy” genes and I was going to die of a heart attack. I figured I would be lucky to live to the age of 50.

That all sounds pretty grim, doesn't it? Well, I'm here to tell you that things have gotten quite a bit better over the past few years. In fact, I've lost over 100 pounds, my blood pressure and diabetes are in good shape and the last time I had my cholesterol checked, it was 91. I have also gone from not being able to walk more than a hundred yards or so without gasping for air to bragging about completing my first century ride last summer.

If this is starting to sound like the beginning of an infomercial, never fear. I'm not going to try to sell you anything, nor am I going to try to convince you that there is a magical system or product that will help you lose weight so that you can lead the peloton to the head of the tour next year. Nor am I about to tell you that there is an easy way to transform yourself from a die-hard couch potato into an instant world-class athlete. However, I do have a few thoughts to share on living a more healthy lifestyle, shedding a few pounds, enjoying cycling and the out of doors and maybe some ideas that will help you with some significant lifestyle improvements that won't make you suffer, cry or complain too much to those around you.

If you're looking for a program, ploy or pill to assist you with weight loss and healthy living, you might as well stop reading this column. However, if you'd like to hear a story that might sound familiar as well as some advice that includes a heaping helping of common sense then you might enjoy my upcoming columns.

The Skinny on Cycling will be a regular addition to your CIBA newsletter and will include some useful, realistic suggestions for losing weight, eating both well and reasonably and increasing your overall health. And if that makes you a little faster in the saddle this year, then who's going to complain about that?

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Wade Wingle, the author of "The Skinny on Cycling" is the father of one adorable little girl, the husband of a beautiful & talented librarian, a Yogi and an avid cyclist. His web site, www.HowILost100Pounds.com features common sense advice on losing weight without suffering and improving your cycling through healthy living.