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Vegan Fitness

By Sophie Braccini



Jennifer Faldt prepares a "super drink." Photo Sophie Braccini

Lamorinda certified personal trainer Dan Attanasio chose to become a vegan three years ago to maximize his total body output and he hopes it will increase his life expectancy. While he does not think that it is mandatory to go vegan to be healthy and high performing, he does believe the change in diet was effective. Attanasio is also a performance enhancement specialist.

"A diet that incorporates very few animal products is excellent from a health perspective," said Attanasio, "it reduces inflammation in the joints and the whole body, helps with heart conditions, obesity and diabetes."

He says that at 40, he feels better than he ever has.

Attanasio began the diet as an experiment and has stuck with it, although he does admit to eating a little cheese from time to time.

He eats a lot of vegetables, whole grains and beans, and fruit.

He does not recommend supplements, saying they are not absorbed readily like real food. Instead, he makes his own super-drinks adding five natural foods: spirulina powder, a protein and mineral rich algae; maca root powder and hemp seeds; goji berries and cocoa powder, both powerful antioxidants.

Moraga resident and school teacher Jennifer Faldt trains five to six times a week and went vegan last spring under the guidance of Attanasio. As part of Faldt's conversion, Attanasio recommended she read Dr. Joel Fuhrman's Eat to Live.

that in addition to developing strength, she lost 20 pounds. The vegan diet allowed her to balance carbs, protein and fats to become leaner and stronger.

Both Attanasio and Faldt are also motivated by the challenge, more than just getting the good looks a fit and lean body provides.

Faldt hopes to one day become fit enough to complete the Barbarian Challenge for Women: 25 dips, 35 push-ups, 15 pull-ups and 2 muscle ups in six minutes.

With this diet and proper training, she thinks she will succeed.

For more information, go to Attanasio's web site at www.thebarunion.com.

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