

## Invited Speaker Abstract

### Author

Last Name: Mitchell  
First Name: Nigel  
Department: Sport and Exercise  
Institution: Sheffield Hallam University  
City (State, if applicable): Sheffield  
Country: England

### Title

From the stroke unit to the Tour de France – a clinical dietitian working in elite sport

### 1. Abstract

Over recent years there has been an increase in the understanding of how diet and nutrition supports the health and wellbeing of individuals. More recently there has been a growing focus on diet and nutrition in sport. I have over 25 years of both clinical and elite sport experience, my interest in sport and nutrition directed me to train as a registered dietitian. On graduation I worked as a clinical dietitian practicing in areas such as diabetes, stroke and palliative care. I believe that this grounding in sound clinical practice equipped me for a career in sports nutrition. Even though for the past 15 years my focus has been sport I have still maintained my passion for clinical nutrition and I have continued to provide a regular dietetic service at a local health centre.

During my sporting career I have worked with a wide variety of elite sports and athletes. These have included Premiership football, professional cycling including supporting the first British Tour de France Champion and multiple Olympic Champions. In more recent years I have also become involved with industry; I am currently a brand ambassador for American Pistachio Growers. I am fascinated by the challenge of providing cutting edge food-focused nutrition to the world's top athletes. Over the past few years the importance of protein has become more established in sport and in health in general. The emerging dietary practices of individuals choosing meat-free protein foods have moved the direction of practical nutrition think about the source foods available.

### 2. key references

- Mettler S, Mitchell N, Tipton K. Increased Protein intake reduces lean body mass loss during weight loss in athletes, *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise* (February 2010)
- Mitchell N. *Fueling the Cycling Revolution* (ISBN 978-1-4729-3693-6) Bloomsbury Pres 2017

### 3. key messages

- Gaining relevant supervised experience in the sporting environment is essential in developing a career in sports nutrition and dietetics
- One of the major challenges dietitians find when working in sport is the lack of peer support and supervision challenges of working as a dietitian in sport
- The basic dietetic skills are directly transferable to working in sport

### 4. three questions

- a. What is the biggest challenge of working in elite sport and how do you overcome this?
- b. How would you support a vegan athlete?
- c. What do you think the future holds for sport nutrition?