

Where Diets Go Wrong

from the Wachters' Weekly Special: 6/30/08 - 7/4/08 Swim Suit
Fit

When we discover that we are heavier than we want to be, we have a natural inclination to eat less food. We may skip lunch or eat only a tiny amount of our dinner in the hope that if we eat less our body will burn off some of its fat. But that is not necessarily true. Eating less actually makes it more difficult to lose weight.

Keep in mind that the human body took shape millions of years ago, and at that time there were diets. The only low-calorie event in people's lives was starvation. Those who could cope with a temporary lack of food were the ones who survived. Our bodies, therefore, have developed this built-in mechanism to help us survive in the face of low food intake.

When researchers compare overweight and thin people, they find that they are roughly the same number of calories. What makes overweight people different is the amount of fat that they eat. Thin people tend to eat less fat and more complex carbohydrates.

Losing weight is not something one can do overnight. A carefully planned weight loss program requires common sense and certain guidelines. Unfortunately, there's a lot of misinformation floating around and lots of desperate people are easily duped and ripped off.

Being seriously overweight and particularly obesity can develop into a number of diseases and serious health problems, and it is now a known fact that when caloric intake is excessive, some of the excess frequently is saturated fat.

The myth is that people get heavy by eating too many calories. Calories are a consideration it's true, but overall they are not the cause of obesity in America today. Americans actually take in fewer calories each day than they did at the beginning of the century. If calories alone were the reason we become overweight, we should all be thin. But we are not. Collectively, we are heavier than ever. Partly, it is because we are more sedentary now. But equally, as important is the fact that the fat content of the American diet has changed dramatically.

People who diet without exercising often get fatter with time. Although your weight may initially drop while dieting, such weight loss consists mostly of water and muscle. When the weight returns, it comes back as fat. To avoid getting fatter over time, increase your metabolism by exercising regularly.

Select an exercise routine that you are comfortable with and remember that walking is one of the best and easiest exercises for strengthening your bones, controlling your weight and toning your muscles.

You hear it all the time - "metabolism", but what is it? It's the process of converting food to energy (movement and heat). Metabolism happens in your muscles and organs and the result of it is what we commonly refer to as "burning calories". Metabolism is essentially the speed at which your body's motor is running.

"Basal metabolism" is the metabolic rate or caloric expenditure needed to maintain basal body functions such as your heart beating, breathing, muscle tone, etc. It's how fast your "motor" is running when you're still in a reclined position or sleeping. Basal metabolism accounts for about 75% of the calories you expend on a daily basis!

The good news is that there are 12 ways you can "boost" your metabolism! The more of these you're able to incorporate into your life, the more you'll boost your metabolism. That means you'll be expending ("burning") more calories 24 hours a day!

1. Always eat breakfast! Skipping breakfast sends the message to your body that you're starving because you haven't had food in 18+ hours. As a protective mechanism, your metabolism slows down. Food, especially complex carbohydrates, fuels your metabolism.
2. Eat earlier in the day! Research has demonstrated that you can lose weight simply by eating a substantial breakfast and lunch, and a light dinner. Dinner should be eaten as early as possible, preferably at least four hours before bedtime.
3. Never eat less than 1200 calories per day! Less than 1200 is usually not enough to support your basal metabolism and thus will slow your metabolism.
4. Snack frequently! Complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, and grains) fuel your metabolism. Also, snacking prevents you from becoming too hungry. The hungrier you are, the less control you have over what and how much you eat.
5. Eat more carbohydrates (food from plants), and less fat (food from many animals and other food with added fat)! Carbohydrates boost your metabolism and have fewer calories per weight than fat.
6. Do some type of aerobic exercise (walking, jogging, swimming, stationary cycling, aerobic dancing, etc.) on a daily basis (preferably in the morning)! Forget this twice-a-week stuff. Our bodies were designed to be active on a daily basis! When we are, our metabolism soars!
7. In addition to your regular aerobic exercise, take a brisk 10 to 15 minute walk at lunch or in the evening. This serves to boost your metabolism even more!
8. Tone your muscles with weight training three days per week. Toned muscles send your metabolism through the roof. Do it!
9. Look for situations to be active. Park as far from the store as you can rather than looking for the closest parking spot. Use the stairs rather than the elevator, a broom rather than a blower, etc. Look for the "hard" way to do things!

10. Avoid alcohol! Alcohol depresses your metabolism and stimulates your appetite.
11. Drink 60+ ounces of water a day. Your metabolism needs plenty water to function properly. Carry a bottle of water with you and drink frequently throughout the day.
12. Don't get discouraged. There are NO quick fixes!

The Positive Weight Loss Approach

Once you have made up your mind to lose weight, you should make that commitment and go into it with a positive attitude. We all know that losing weight can be quite a challenge. In fact, for some, it can be downright tough. It takes time, practice and support to change lifetime habits. But it's a process you must learn in order to succeed. You and you alone are the one who has the power to lose unwanted pounds.

Think like a winner, and not a loser - - remember that emotions are like muscles and the ones you use most grow the strongest. If you always look at the negative side of things, you'll become a downbeat, pessimistic person. Even slightly negative thoughts have a greater impact on you and last longer than powerful positive thoughts.

Negative thinking doesn't do you any good, it just holds you back from accomplishing the things you want to do. When a negative thought creeps into your mind, replace it reminding yourself that you're somebody, you have self-worth and you possess unique strengths and talents. Contemplate what lies ahead of you. Losing weight is not just about diets. It's about a whole new you and the possibility of creating a new life for yourself. Investigate the weight loss programs that appeal to you and that you feel will teach you the behavioral skills you need to stick with throughout the weight-loss process. First you should look for support among family and friends. It can be an enormous help to discuss obstacles and share skills and tactics with others on the same path. You might look for this support from others you know who are in weight loss programs and you can seek guidance from someone you know who has lost weight and kept it off. (see my note on how EFT can really help with this)

There are success stories across the country today. On television and in newspapers, magazines and tabloids about people who have miraculously lost untold pounds and kept it off. In all instances they say their mental attitude as well as their outlook on life has totally changed.

Diets and weight loss programs are more flexible now than they once were and there are many prepared foods already portioned out. They are made attractive and can be prepared in a matter of minutes. Low-fat and low-calorie foods are on shelves everywhere.

You will probably need to learn new, wiser eating skills. You will want a weight loss regimen that gives you some control, rather than imposing one rigid system. Look for one that offers

a variety of different eating plans, so you can choose the one that's best for you.

Keep in mind, too, that your weight loss program will most likely include some physical exercises. Look at the exercising aspect of your program as fun and recreation and not as a form of grueling and sweaty work. The fact is that physical fitness is linked inseparably to all personal effectiveness in every field. Anyone willing to take the few simple steps that lie between them and fitness will shortly begin to feel better, and the improvement will reflect itself in every facet of their existence.

Doctors now say that walking is one of the best exercises. It helps the total circulation of blood throughout the body, and thus has a direct effect on your overall feeling of health. There are things such as aerobics, jogging, swimming and many other exercises which will benefit a weight loss program. Discuss the options with your doctor and take his advice in planning your exercise and weight loss program. [To see the products for this weeks special; http://www.wachters.com/catalogitem_mult.php?itm=5135,5630&PHPSESSID=572cec0143ffd9160a9739281090c02a](http://www.wachters.com/catalogitem_mult.php?itm=5135,5630&PHPSESSID=572cec0143ffd9160a9739281090c02a)

A note from Dana;

Thank you Wachter's, for a well written article. I would like to just add to this the important contribution. EFT (emotional freedom techniques) can play and could be the most important factor differentiating success and failure with dieting and lifestyle changes for health.

First keep in mind we are whole beings. Our mind and body are working as one in the same. As an example, stress (or how we react to stress) plays a major role in our physical well being. What we perceive as something happening in the mind affects our heart, circulation, digestion, elimination, and on and on, often without our awareness. I use the analogy of the computer operating program Windows to describe how we can have multiple programs running in the background of our mind without even realizing it. These hidden programs (in the unconscious mind) play a major role in our wellbeing. Why do we crave junk food? Why do we resist exercise? How do we see ourselves? What have others said to us in the past or what experiences have we had that are effecting us today? EFT can and does take the power and charge out of these hidden programs, usually permanently. EFT can help bring to awareness these hidden and self-destructive behaviors and thought patterns then gently but effectively eliminate their hold on us.

You may learn more about EFT by going to; www.center4wellbeing.com/EFT or by calling us.