

March 2020

What is the “Perfect” Diet?



Perhaps you have tried to lose weight with one of the many popular diets (low-carb, high protein, clean eating, sugar-free fad diet) only to gain the weight back once you resumed your old eating habits. The truth is diets do not work in the long-run.

5 Tips to Prevent Mindless Eating



Too Good To Be True? Dieters Beware

Definition of “Fad”: a temporary fashion, notion, manner of conduct, especially one followed enthusiastically by a group.

Lose 10 Pounds in 10 Days!
Eat as Much as You Want and Still
Lose Weight!
Drop a Dress Size a Day!

Our society is focused on weight and as a society, we fall prey to diets that promise to make losing weight easy. Every few months another trendy new diet comes along yet obesity rates continue to rise along with a growing number of chronic diseases. With 1 in 3 adults being considered overweight or obese, and the phrase “I’m on a diet” being as common as “How are you” why is this fact still true? Primarily because the claims made by so-called “experts” are confusing the general population struggling with the dreaded scale.

Making the right choices can be challenging when we are overloaded with responsibilities, lack of time, and fast food conveniences. If the diet sounds too good to be true, it probably is. There are no foods or pills that can miraculously burn off fat. Some fad diets do work...initially. But just like the definition states, it’s temporary. As soon as one “goes off” the diet, the weight comes back (and sometimes even more than what was lost). Diets are not designed to help you change your habits or challenges with food. They are not meant to be sustainable. Only life-style changes will accomplish that.

Be cautious of diet plans, pills, and products that make the following claims:

Rapid Weight Loss

With rapid weight loss, you may also experience loss of muscle, bone, and water. And as stated, you will most likely put the weight right back on after you go back to your previous eating pattern.

Quantities and Limitations

Stay away from diets that promote unlimited amounts of specific foods (grapefruit and cabbage soup diets). It’s boring, lacks a balance of nutrients, and will be nearly impossible to sustain. Avoid diets that restrict entire food groups or macronutrients (like no carbohydrates).

Strict Menus

Labeling food “good” or “bad” makes for an unhappy and frustrating relationship with food. Before you start any diet ask yourself “can I eat this way for the rest of my life?” If the answer is no, the plan is not for you!

Combine Specific Foods

There isn’t any evidence that proves combining certain foods at certain times of the day will aid in weight loss. Nor is there truth that eating the “wrong” combination will turn food immediately to fat or produce toxins in your intestines as some diets claim.

No Need To Exercise

Exercise is a key component to good overall health and well-being. Getting the recommended amount of daily aerobic activity and incorporating strength-building, flexibility, and balance training in combination with nutritional eating creates a lifestyle that is timeless.

Fad Diets Can Be Very Unpleasant and Harmful

1. Dehydration—when you drop weight rapidly, the majority of the weight lost is water. When you are trying to lose weight, water consumption will actually improve your success. It can help keep you from overeating and will be essential if you have incorporated exercise.
2. Fatigue—Calories give us energy. Our body needs a certain amount to function properly. When you dramatically cut the calorie intake your body needs to sustain energy, you can quickly find you are feeling tired most of the day.
3. Serious digestive problems—truth be told, losing weight too quickly can lead to severe diarrhea to be followed later by constipation. This can also lead to dehydration and the loss of essential vitamins and minerals.
4. Other symptoms one may experience: headaches, more frequent colds, nutrient imbalance, nausea

The Diet Mindset

According to an article in Psychology Today, dieting and the diet mentality is the primary contributor to today's obesity epidemic in America (Pritchard, 2013). Dr. Pritchard has these simple suggestions you may want to consider:

Understand your cravings—until you know why you eat what you eat, you will struggle to change your mindset.

Are you eating that cookie at 3pm because you really want the cookie or are you really hungry and need *real* food? Plan ahead to avoid falling prey to whatever is around the office.

Stop blaming yourself—it's not about willpower!! We are not perfect. If you "fall off track", instead of beating yourself up or saying "forget it I will never lose weight", focus on all the positive things you have done so far, refocus and start again. Work on positive self-talk and ways to build your self-esteem. Setting smart and realistic goals is a good way to start. Small successes breed continued successes.

Learn to listen to your body—pay attention to the signs of hunger. Don't be restricted to what time it is. If you are truly (belly growling) hungry, eat something healthy like a piece of fruit. Sometimes thirst can be mistaken for hunger. Drink a glass of water. Wait 15 minutes. If you are still hungry, eat and enjoy it.

Learn to manage your stress—Stress can make you gain weight especially around your mid-section due to cortisol, the hormone released from our adrenal glands when we are stressed. When you know you are stressed, and find yourself reaching for something unhealthy, get up and take a short walk. When you come back, if you still want that it, eat it.

Ask yourself what you really need—many times food is our substitute for other things lacking in our lives. Reaching for food becomes a habit when we need emotional support from others.

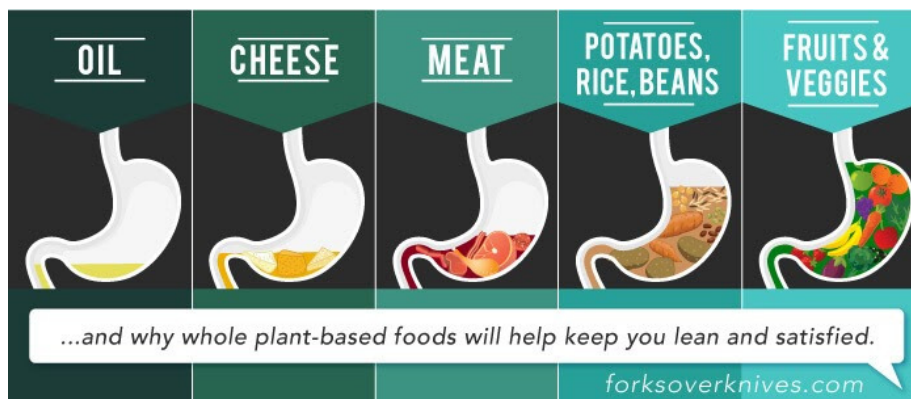


Why Calorie Density is Important

Is it true that a calorie is a calorie no matter where it came from? If that were the case, a calorie from a carrot would be the same as a calorie from soda, right? Well we all know that the quality of that calorie matters too.

Calorie density refers to the number of calories contained in a given volume/weight of food. It's really the most common sense approach to managing your weight without starving yourself or deprivation. The goal is simply to eat more low-calorie dense foods and minimize the high-calorie dense choices. You'll see what I mean in the graph below. Oil, the highest of calorie dense foods would barely fill a fracture of your stomach yet consuming the same amount of calories in fruits and vegetables, would fill your stomach to the top! Therefore, following a "diet" that contains more low-calorie dense foods will enable you to eat A LOT more food! In addition, the food would generally be much healthier, have more vitamins, minerals and fiber, giving you a feeling of satiety.

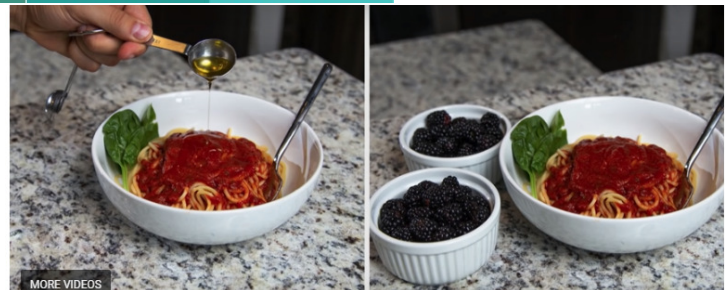
Low-calorie dense *What 500 calories look like* High-calorie dense



One S.A.D. fact is that sixty-three percent of America's calories come from refined and processed foods including soft drinks and packaged snacks. Only twelve percent of the calories come from plant-based foods with six percent coming from health-promoting vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds and the other six percent, unfortunately, coming from French fries!

Here is another visual representing calorie density

If you were to drizzle a tablespoon of oil (high calorie dense food) on top of a dish of pasta, you would add 100 calories that your stomach would not even notice. However, if you have those same calories in blackberries (low calorie dense food) yielding you two cups, you would probably be unable to finish!



Here are some things to keep in mind regarding calorie density:

Eat when you are hungry and eat until you are comfortably full (about 80%). Do not starve and don't stuff yourself.

Try starting your meal with a salad, soup and/or fruit. Reminder: dressing on the side or homemade...no cream soups...whatever fruit you like (fresh preferred).

Try to avoid drinking your calories. Eat/chew your calories for more satiety. I realize many people do enjoy smoothies for breakfast which is fine. Just load it with vegetables and some protein so you aren't reaching for something else in an hour.

Push out some of the low-calorie dense food by loading up your plate first with whole grains, vegetables, legumes and starchy vegetables. Be careful when adding fats and oils since they will spike the overall calorie density of a meal.

Resource: forksoverknives.com





TIPS TO PREVENT MINDLESS EATING

1

HUNGER CHECK

Ask yourself if you are really hungry or just bored, tired, stressed or thirsty.

2

REFOCUS

Take a walk, lift hand weights, or lie down for a power nap to refocus your attention.

3

DRINK WATER

It's easy to confuse thirst with hunger. Drink sparkling water or add lemon to spruce it up.

4

FIND A HOBBY

Search for something else to do to keep your hands busy during your "weak moments."

5

PREPARE SNACKS

Keep a supply of nutritious snacks such as baby carrots, celery sticks and raw broccoli on hand.

March is
National
Nutrition
Month

Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle!





CHICKPEA CURRY—20 MINUTE MEAL

Made with convenient canned beans, this quick and healthy Indian recipe is an authentic chickpea curry that you can make in minutes. If you want an additional vegetable, stir in some roasted cauliflower florets. Serve with brown basmati rice or warm naan.

Ingredients:

Serving Size: About 1 Cup

Per Serving:

278 calories; 15.5 g total fat; 1.2 g saturated fat; 354 mg sodium. 356 mg potassium; 30.3 g carbohydrates; 6.3 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 5.8 g protein; 260 IU vitamin A; 18 mg vitamin C; 75 mcg folate; 65 mg calcium; 2 mg iron; 34 mg magnesium;

Exchanges:

1 Starch, 1 Vegetable, 1/2 Lean Meat, 3 Fat

- 1 medium Serrano pepper, cut into thirds
- 4 large garlic cloves
- 1 2-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled & coarsely chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped
- 6 tablespoons canola oil or grape-seed oil
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 1/4 cups no-salt added canned diced tomatoes with their juice (from a 28-ounce can)
- 3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 15-ounce cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 teaspoons garam masala*
- Fresh cilantro for garnish



Recipe from Eating Well

Directions:

1. Pulse serrano, garlic and ginger in a food processor until minced. Scrape down the sides and pulse again. Add onion; pulse until finely chopped, but not watery.
2. Heat oil** in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onion mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add coriander, cumin and turmeric and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.
3. Pulse tomatoes in the food processor until finely chopped. Add to the pan along with salt. Reduce heat to maintain a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 4 minutes. Add chickpeas and garam masala, reduce heat to a gentle simmer, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes more. Serve topped with cilantro, if desired.

Note *: Garam masala is a blend of ground Indian spices.

Note **: If you want to lower the calorie density, use broth or water instead of oil when sautéing the onion. Just add about 1-2 tablespoons as needed to avoid sticking.

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The doctor of the future will no longer treat the human frame with drugs, but rather will cure and prevent disease with nutrition.—Thomas A. Edison

