

Fad diets – Ask the Dietitian

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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Weighing too much is not good for your health. Being overweight increases your risk of health problems, like heart problems, high blood pressure, diabetes, and some kinds of cancer. A calorie is a unit of energy that your body gets from food. Calories are stored as fat if you eat more calories than you need.
- The best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and become more active. You burn more calories with regular exercise. Fewer calories are then stored as fat. Try to burn about 400 to 500 more calories per day than you take in. This will result in a gradual weight loss of about a pound a week.

WHAT MAKES YOU FAT

Genes and Hormones

Humans come in the world with dozens maybe hundreds of genes and associated hormones that determine calories that we consume and calories we burn through physical activity. Any thing left over is stored as body fat.

Thrifty Gene Hypothesis

People with thrifty genotypes prepare for the hard times by consuming and storing more calories than the expend. The trouble is there are no hard times.



LOW FAT DIETS

MAIN IDEA: calories from fat, especially saturated fat, are the enemy. Eating lots of plant-based foods is generally also emphasized.

PRO AND CONS: Extremely low-fat diets can actually reverse the heart disease. You must be able to distinguish between good fats found in fish and vegetables, and bad fats, found in butter and prepared foods.

EXAMPLES: Ornish, Pritikin



LOW CARB DIETS



MAIN IDEA: the number and type of carbohydrates are limited so that the body's glucose and insulin levels can be manipulated in an effort to make weight loss easier.

PRO AND CONS: The taste buds are satisfied by eating plenty of rich foods. A recent study suggests that low carb diets favor formation of

kidney stones.

EXAMPLES: Atkins, Sugar-busters, Zone

LOW CAL DIETS

MAIN IDEA: By making sure that you eat fewer calories than you burn you are bound to lose weight. The best results require an increase in exercise.

PRO AND CONS: Doesn't require dietary supplements. Whether it's calories, points or portion sizes, you have to count something.

EXAMPLES: Jenny Craig, Weight Watchers

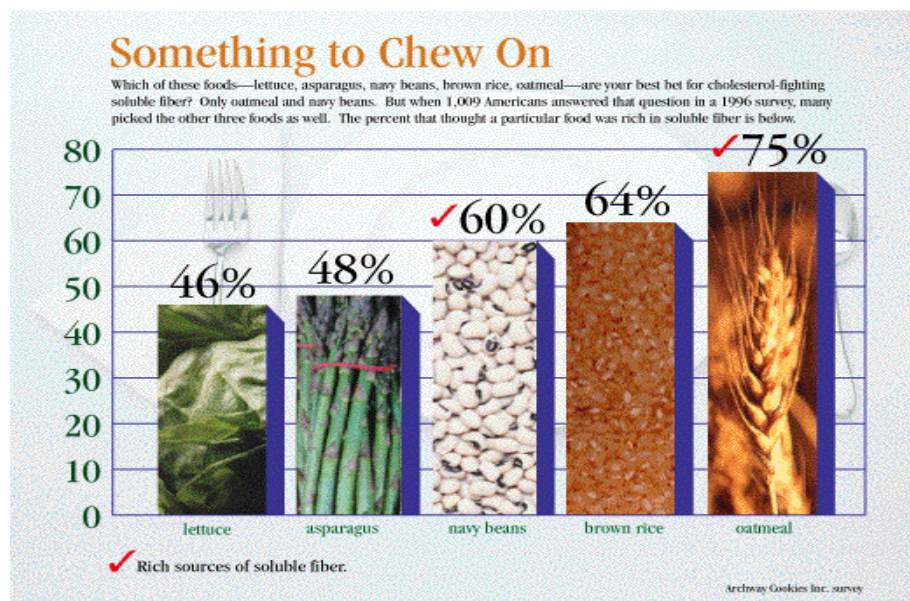


WEIGHT LOSS TIPS



INSTRUCTIONS: Following are tips that may help you lose weight and keep it off. Ask your caregiver for the best diet plan for you.

- **DIET PLANS:** Do not try a crash or fad diet that suggests you eat less than 1000 to 1200 calories each day. Keep your kitchen full of healthy foods on your diet plan. Eat healthy foods from all 5 food groups each day: breads, dairy, fruits, vegetables, meat and fish. Eat only small amount of fats, like 1 to 3 teaspoons each day of oils, nuts, dressings, and margarine. Bake, roast, or broil your food instead of frying.
- **FIBER** High fiber foods help with weight loss because they help fill you up. You may feel full longer because some kinds of fiber help food stay in your stomach longer. They also help prevent certain kinds of cancer if eaten over long periods of time.



- Eat high fiber and starchy foods, such as whole grain breads, pasta, and potatoes. Other high fiber foods are cooked dried beans, raw or steamed vegetables, and fruit. You should eat 5 or more fruits and vegetables each day. The vegetables may be eaten raw or steamed. Eat cooked vegetables without sauces and with little margarine.
- **FLUIDS:** Drink 6 to 8 (soda-pop can size) glasses of liquid each day. Or, follow your caregiver's advice if you must limit the amount of liquid you drink. Some times when you feel a food craving, you are really more thirsty than hungry. So, make sure that you have water and other low calorie liquids available all the time.
 - Limit fruit juices to 1 to 2 small glasses per day because they are high in calories.
 - Limit how much alcohol you drink. Alcoholic drinks have many calories and can weaken your will power with food. Alcohol can also make you hungrier than usual.

- **PROTEIN FOODS:**

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- Make sure your diet plan allows plenty of protein while you are losing weight. This will help you feel stronger while you are eating a lot fewer calories. Choose meat, fish, and poultry that is very lean before cooking. Remove all fat from meats and skin from poultry before cooking. Nuts and seeds are high in fat so limit the amount you eat. Do not eat more than 3 to 4 eggs a week. Use low fat and fat-free dairy products, salad dressings, and cheeses.

- **SNACKS:**



- Fresh vegetables with fat-free dip are a healthy snack food. Fat-free rice cakes and rye crackers contain fiber and starch which helps you feel full. Avoid foods high in sugar, such as candy, cookies, and pastries. Also, avoid high fat snacks, such as nuts, regular chips, and chocolate foods. Instead try baked or fat-free chips, air-popped popcorn, or fresh fruit between meals.

- **MEALS:**

- Enjoy your food by sitting down and eating slowly. Mealtime should be relaxing and enjoyable.



Do not skip meals. Missing a regular meal can make you even hungrier at the next one. You may then overeat without meaning to.

- Many people do not like breakfast. Even so, try to eat something light in the morning. It

will give you energy for the busy time of day and may prevent a binge later.

- **EXERCISE:** Check with your caregivers before starting to exercise if you have not been exercising. Work with your caregiver to plan an exercise program special for you.

- Find several types of exercise that you really like and work them into your schedule. Meet with an exercise "buddy" who will help you stay active. Many health clubs have evening and morning hours which are helpful.
- Even 20 to 30 minutes a day of activity will help you lower your weight. It will lower the fat percent of your body weight and raise the amount of muscle you have. This increases the number of calories you burn each day.
- **SUPPORT:** Meet with a weight loss support group or friends who are also trying to lose weight. Sharing with others will help you stay excited about your weight goals. Other people can give you good feedback on your progress. Talk to your caregiver monthly to be sure your diet is working. Tell him or her if your diet is too hard to follow or makes you too tired.

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- **WEIGHT GOALS**



- Weigh yourself only once a week or less. This keeps you from worrying about small daily changes in your weight. Ask your dietitian or caregiver to help you decide on a sensible weight goal.
- You should not lose more than 1 to 2 pounds a week. There may be weeks when you do not lose any weight. This is normal. But, stay on your diet and you will again start to lose weight.