



HOW TO LOSE FAT FAST

**LOSE
WEIGHT,
NOT YOUR
TIME!**

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Introduction

Congratulations! You're about to pull ahead of the pack of dieters who try, time and again, to lose weight and keep it off. No matter your age or fitness level, the fat loss tips in this book will propel you toward your goal.

You will soon learn how to:

- Blast stubborn belly fat
- Get rid of bloating once and for all
- Boost your energy
- Make the most of your metabolism – even if it's been damaged by yo-yo dieting
- Eliminate food cravings
- Separate fitness fact from fiction
- Avoid “diet” foods that make you hungrier
- ...and much more!

You took a huge step toward your goal when you downloaded this book. Now sit back, digest the useful information it contains, and prepare to stop dieting and start losing fat permanently.

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5 Secrets to Getting a Flat Belly

As dieters, we've all dreamed of having tight, toned stomachs with sexy six-packs. Unfortunately, abdominal fat is not only dangerous, it's just plain hard to get rid of. For many of us, the midsection seems to be the first place we pack on extra pounds, and the last place we lose them.

But don't give up hope just yet! Here are five proven secrets you can use TODAY to get a flatter stomach while you work to reduce that stubborn belly fat.

Secret #1: Reduce overall body fat.

There is no such thing as spot reduction. That is, you can't lose fat in your stomach area without losing fat everywhere else. To get the lean stomach you want, you'll need to reduce your overall body fat percentage. This can only be done through a healthy diet and exercise regimen that combines aerobic exercise with strength-training.

Start today by researching a food plan and exercise routine you'll enjoy. The most successful plans feature diets high in lean protein and complex carbohydrates, plus cardio exercise and strength-training three to five times a week.

Secret #2: Fill up on fiber and protein.

Snacking on the wrong foods can sabotage your tummy-busting efforts. Keep your hunger – and your waistline – in check by filling up on whole grain oatmeal, fruits and vegetables, beans, lean meats, nuts, and olives. Foods that are high in Omega-3 fatty acids, such as fish, help counteract the fattening stress hormone cortisol.

Cortisol sends signals to the body that cause it to go into survival mode, storing fat all over, but particularly around the midsection. Reduce your cortisol levels, and your body will start to burn through those fat stores again. You can reduce cortisol today by practicing relaxation and eating foods high in Omega-3s.

Secret #3: Stay away from salt and sugar.

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Carbohydrates cause us to retain water (hence the –hydrates suffix). This can result in bloating, especially in the tummy area. Salt is another notorious bloat-inducer. Instead of loading up on table salt, try smaller amounts of sea salt, or a salt substitute.

For quick stomach shrinkage, reduce the number of carbs you consume each day. The ones you do eat should come from whole grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables. These complex carbohydrates help regulate hunger and minimize cravings.

Secret #4: Strengthen your core with regular sculpting exercises.

Exercise will help remove the layer of fat that hides your abs from view. It will also help shape those hidden muscles so that they'll look great when they finally make their appearance. A strong core will also help you stand and sit upright, which has a two-fold benefit: Good posture makes you look thinner, and also gives you ample opportunities to work those abs by holding them taut as you walk or sit.

For the strongest, most sculpted abs, do core-strengthening exercises like sit-ups, V-ups, leg lifts, or Pilates three or more times a week. Vinyasa yoga has several poses which strengthen the core and help you clear your mind of stressful thoughts that stimulate cortisol production – a fat-busting bonus!

Secret #5: Drink water to flush fat away.

It might seem counter-intuitive to load up on water when you already feel bloated, but the fluid you consume actually helps your body get rid of the fluid it's holding on to.

Bloating occurs when the body is dehydrated. In an effort to preserve its vital fluids, the body holds onto every bit of water it has, resulting in puffiness in the hands and abdomen. The only way to counteract this is to drink enough water to make your body feel safe again, allowing it to flush the retained fluid from its system.

A flat stomach is something you must earn over time, but that doesn't mean you can't make some quick fixes today! Starting now, you can:

- **Shop for bloat-busting foods.**
- **Find a core-strengthening exercise plan that you enjoy.**

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- **Drink plenty of water.**
- **Stand up tall! You're already making progress toward your goal.**

The Top 5 Ways to Boost Your Energy

Of course, it's hard to get that flat stomach of your dreams if you're tired all the time. Many of us lead busy lives that leave us feeling stressed out, drained, and just plain exhausted. While it's unrealistic to do away with all of the demands on your time, it is very possible to increase your energy level so that you can cope with those demands and still have enough oomph left to exercise.

Here are five great habits that will have you feeling energized in no time:

Tip #1: Eat small, frequent meals.

Your body is in a constant state of action. It has to move, think, and carry on vital functions throughout the day. Therefore, it needs constant refueling in the form of small, frequent, healthy meals.

Start your day off right with a combination of protein and healthy carbs for breakfast, such as a scrambled egg, two slices of turkey bacon, and a cup of strawberries. Eat another snack two hours later, like a handful of almonds and a stick of low-fat string cheese. Distribute your calories throughout the day, eating every two to three hours, to keep your hunger low and your energy high.

Tip #2: Add exercise to your daily routine.

One effective way to energize your body is through exercise. The more you move, the more your body will want to keep moving. Exercise will also speed up your weight loss, keep you flexible, improve your heart health, and decrease your stress level. There's no reason not to do it!

If you're not accustomed to exercise, experts recommend starting small. Find a fun cardio exercise, like walking or dancing, and work it into your daily schedule five times per week. Each exercise session should last 20 to 30 minutes to begin. After just a few

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days, you will notice that you feel better, sleep better, and have energy to spare throughout your day.

Tip #3: Get enough sleep.

Studies show that most people, especially women, aren't getting enough sleep these days. Like food, sleep is crucial for recharging your energy. Get too little, and you'll have trouble focusing on tasks, struggling through your exercise routine, or even staying awake.

How much sleep is enough? The typical adult requires anywhere from 7 to 10 hours per night. Sadly, less than 40% of all Americans get a sufficient amount of sleep. To get the best rest possible, avoid drinking caffeine in the afternoon and avoid alcohol consumption at night. Caffeine can act as a stimulant for up to 7 hours after you drink it, and wine and other alcoholic beverages are notorious for causing nighttime wakefulness. Also, avoid over-the-counter sleep-aids if possible. These have been known to stimulate the appetite, and you could become dependent on them.

Tip #4: Practice conscious breathing for stress-relief.

Stress can zap your energy, leaving you physically and emotionally exhausted. Stress has also been linked to a large number of health complaints, from migraines and insomnia to weight gain.

To de-stress the natural way, choose a quiet place to sit and relax. Take a deep breath, inhaling as deeply as possible until your lungs are full and your stomach is distended. Hold the breath for a count of four, then release it slowly and completely. Wait four seconds and repeat the process. Conscious breathing calms the mind and revitalizes the body.

Tip #5: Feel your best with vitamins and nutritious foods.

A vitamin deficiency could be contributing to your lack of energy. It's important to get the recommended amount of vitamins and minerals each day. Try eating a variety of foods each day. Eggs, lean meat, low-fat dairy products, whole grains, and a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables will provide most or all of your nutritional needs.

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Some vitamins, particularly the B vitamins, are crucial for optimal energy and metabolism. To fill in any gaps in your nutrition, take a multi-vitamin each morning. Some vitamins are fat-soluble, so 1% milk is a good beverage to wash them down with.

A healthy body needs plenty of energy to work efficiently. You can boost your energy by controlling stress, eating properly, exercising daily, and getting a good night's sleep.

How to Eliminate Bloating

You've been eating right and exercising, doing all the things experts say you should do in order to lose fat and get healthy. But when you step on the scale, you get a nasty shock: you've gained 5 pounds! What did you do wrong?

Absolutely nothing. Everyone experiences unexpected weight gains from time to time. These are caused by water retention, also known as bloating. Bloating can be very discouraging to dieters, but it's important to remember that the weight gain is temporary. You can lose the water weight as fast as you gained it by following these simple rules:

Reduce your carb intake.

Carbohydrates give us quick energy, but they also make us retain water. When stored in the body, carbohydrates attract water. The end result is a puffier appearance, tighter clothes, and a few extra pounds on the scale.

To reduce bloating, eat fewer carbs. Note that this does not mean you need to eliminate all carbohydrates. Simply avoid sugar, starch, and any product made from refined white flour. Instead, eat protein, healthy fats, vegetables, and products made from ground flax seed. You will see a visible reduction in your bloating after one to two days.

Use up your glycogen reserves.

Carbohydrates are stored in our muscles as glycogen. Glycogen combines with water to puff muscles up and make them look larger. While this is desirable for competitive bodybuilders, the typical dieter doesn't want to look any bigger than they already are. To do that, you'll need to make sure you're burning through those glycogen reserves.

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The strategy is simple: eat fewer carbs and exercise more. Do a mixture of cardio exercise and strength training, and eat only protein and healthy carbohydrates, like fruits and vegetables, to fuel your workouts.

Drink more water.

Quick: make a fist. Do your hands feel tight and puffy? If you wear rings, do they leave deep impressions in your skin after you remove them? These are sure signs of bloating, probably stemming from dehydration. Water is a sure cure for this type of bloating.

When your body doesn't have enough water, it starts to hold on to every bit of fluid it has access to. This causes the fluid to build up inside you, leaving you bloated and sluggish. To overcome this survival mechanism, you'll need to drink a lot of water. How much is a lot? At least 64 oz over the course of a few hours. You can tell your dehydration is being corrected when you start to pass clear urine.

Cut out the extra salt.

Sodium is a necessary mineral, but a diet heavy in processed and fast foods (ie, the typical Western diet) provides far more sodium than is necessary or healthy. The human body requires only 500mg of sodium daily, but many of us routinely take in 6,000mg or more each day!

All of this extra salt can have a detrimental effect on your health and your waistline. Sodium acts as an irritant to your muscles and organs. In order to dilute this effect, your body will retain water. This is why excess salt consumption leads to bloating in so many people. To avoid this, eat as many whole, unprocessed foods as possible. Use potassium chloride as a salt substitute, and drink plenty of water to flush your system.

Caffeine: A quick and dirty trick.

Caffeine has both a laxative and a diuretic effect. Simply put, it makes you pass waste materials and fluids at a faster rate. If you need to look your best for a special event, but haven't been able to lose the bloat, drink some coffee along with 64 oz of water. This should get things moving!

Remember that caffeine is simply a quick fix, and should not be used as a long-term weight loss strategy. This method will result in a loss of temporary water weight only. Go

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back to your healthy diet plan as soon as possible, and follow the preceding tips to keep bloating at bay.

Bloating can make you look and feel bad, but these tricks will help you fit into your skinny jeans in no time!

3 Little-Known Ways Your Body Can Put on Fat... Even While Dieting

We diet to look better, feel better, and enjoy better health. Most commonly, we diet to lose weight. But did you know that millions of people actually *gain weight* on their diets? Of course, some people fall off the wagon and binge their way back up the scale, but for many, it's simply a case of being too virtuous.

To end your diet lighter than you began, avoid these common diet mistakes that can make you fatter:

The Fattening Feast & Famine Cycle

Did you know that diets have been proven to make the human body more efficient at storing fat? That's disappointing news for the millions of people who start a new diet each year, but it's simple science. The human body was designed to preserve itself during times of famine. The problem is that, in modern days, most of us have replaced famine with diets.

Consider a typical yo-yo dieter. They go on a diet, lose some weight, go off the diet, and regain what they lost – plus a little extra. This cycle leaves many people heavier than they were before they started dieting. Their bodies, confused by periods of low caloric intake, do exactly what they were designed to do: store more fat to survive these periods of self-induced famine.

To avoid this, it's important to view healthy eating not as a temporary fix, but as a lifestyle. Choose a food plan you can comfortably follow 85% of the time, for the rest of your life.

The “Skinny Fat Person” Syndrome

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Your weight is not the only indicator of dietary success or failure. Since muscle is heavier and denser than fat, it's possible for a perfectly healthy slender person to outweigh their same-sized peers. Healthy thinness is achieved by regular exercise, strength-training, and a balanced diet.

Unhealthy thinness is achieved by starving the body. This often happens when a dieter uses their weight as the only benchmark of success. As they decrease their calories, their bodies begin to store fat due to the famine effect described above. Their weight may decrease, but only because their bodies are beginning to feed off of their healthy, lean muscle mass.

To ensure optimal health, measure your body fat percentage. This can be done with calipers, or by visiting a gym where your measurement can be taken electronically.

Women should have a body fat percentage between 21% and 36%. Men should have a body fat percentage of 8% to 25%. If your weight is low but your body fat percentage is high, you should improve your nutrition and start a strength-training regimen. Your weight might increase as you become leaner but, in this situation, that's actually a good thing.

Artificial Sweeteners are Not Your Friend

Researchers at Purdue University and the University of Texas have concluded studies involving the effect of artificial sweeteners on weight gain. Their findings are disturbing: test animals at Purdue gained more weight from saccharine than from natural sugar. The University of Texas researchers were shocked to find that the risk of obesity was higher in people who drank only diet sodas.

How on earth do test subjects gain weight on 0-calories sweeteners? There are many theories. Some researchers believe that artificial sweeteners actually stimulate the appetite, increasing hunger and making dieters eat more. Others think that dieters might believe they deserve more treats because they've been consuming 0-calorie foods and drinks.

Either way, the facts are certain: some, if not most, dieters gain more weight when they exclusively use artificial sweeteners. To keep this from happening to you, give yourself the go-ahead to eat sugar – in small amounts, and on special occasions.

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As you can see, the dieter isn't always to blame when they gain weight while on a diet. It's often not a matter of willpower at all. Keep yourself out of starvation mode and avoid chemical sweeteners whenever possible, and you will eliminate two of the most common diet saboteurs.

Why Most Diets Don't Work and Why They Actually Make You Gain Weight

You've probably known someone – or been someone – who started out a diet with the best of intentions. You would lose weight, feel better, and enjoy greater health and confidence. Disappointment set in when, months or years later, you or your friend weighed in at a much heavier weight than ever before. Why did the diet only work in the short-term, and why was there a net gain when it was over?

The problem with diets is that they're diets. Many of us try the newest diet fads out of desperation, at times when we're feeling especially frustrated with our current weight. Something in the back of our minds tells us that we can't subsist on cabbage soup for the rest of our lives, but we ignore it in the rush to lose weight as fast as we can.

Diets do not result in lasting weight loss. Why? Because all diets come to an end, and when we go back to our former way of eating, we risk going back to our normal weight as well.

There is science to support the conclusion that diets can make you gain weight. Our bodies' efficient fat-storage served our ancestors well. When food was scarce, their bodies lived off of stored fat to stay alive. In times when food was plentiful, their bodies continued to store fat because another famine was likely on the way.

Today, most of us are fortunate enough not to face true famine. But we do put our bodies through self-imposed famines, or diets. When food is taken away, the body responds with its natural self-defense mechanism: feeding on stored fat. The problem occurs when the diet ends; that's when the body kicks its fat storage into high gear in preparation for the next diet.

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There might be emotional issues at play, too. Some diets are so strict that they leave people feeling hungry. Feelings of deprivation cause some dieters to comfort themselves with food. This leads to a downward spiral of overeating, guilt and shame, and more overeating.

In 2009, Susie Orbach told the New York Times that she was interested in filing a class action lawsuit against Weight Watchers International. Her contention is that the diet industry thrives on repeat business, therefore it has no interest in helping its customers attain long-term weight loss.

That view might seem radical to some, but rigid food rules can lead to obsession and compulsive eating or starvation. Orbach advocates a more natural approach whereby people learn to identify true hunger and eat intuitively rather than eating predetermined amounts at preset times.

So if you can't trust diets to help you lose weight, what can you do? Make a sustainable lifestyle change. Eat nutritious foods. Get out and move regularly. Find ways to relieve stress. Learn to identify things that masquerade as hunger, such as loneliness, boredom, and depression. These changes might not make you lose weight as fast as an all-juice diet, but the weight you do lose will stay gone.

Remember: "Diet" is a four-letter word. To reach your health goals, you don't need a temporary fix. What you need is a permanent lifestyle makeover. When assessing a new eating plan, ask yourself, "Could I eat this way for the rest of my life and be healthy and happy?" If the answer is yes, you've found a sustainable eating plan to last a lifetime.

Why Fitness Experts (Who Have Never Had a Weight Issue Themselves) are Totally WRONG about Exercise

When it comes to weight loss and fitness advice, it's hard to separate fact from fallacy. Friends tell us one thing, doctors another, and lifestyle gurus tell us something else entirely. In an effort to sift through the conflicting information, many of us turn to fitness experts and treat their words as gospel. It's a safe bet; these people have spent years in the fitness industry, so they must know what they're talking about, right?

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Guess again. It turns out that some of the leading fitness experts do little more than repeat the false information they've read in the headlines. Worse, most of these experts have never had a weight problem, and cannot relate to people who have struggled with obesity.

Thankfully, we live in the Information Age. Good advice is widely available, but it doesn't always come from the "experts". In fact, studies have proven time and again that fitness gurus have it all wrong.

Here are some important facts that so-called experts have gotten wrong in recent years:

Wrong: You must always stretch before exercising.

Really, it depends on the type of exercise you're doing. Runners might need to stretch a bit before they take off, but anyone doing resistance training will be better off leaving the stretching until after the workout.

That's because when you stretch, the fibers of your muscles grow longer. This makes them less stable and more prone to stress injuries. You could actually harm yourself by stretching before a strength-training session. It is important to stretch after you're done, though, to promote circulation and ward off stiffness.

Wrong: Light wrist and ankle weights will give you a more effective workout.

Actually, the added weight is more likely to tire you out. If you throw in the towel due to fatigue, you're going to miss out on the benefits of a long cardio session. In fact, runners and walkers are better off leaving the weights behind so that they can go longer distances at higher speeds.

But what about weight training? Some experts suggest that wrist and ankle weights will add muscle mass, but the truth is that these weights are usually too light to be of much benefit. You are far better off devoting some time to weight lifting, using sufficient weight to tire your muscles out after 8 to 12 reps.

Wrong: Women must exercise an hour a day to maintain their weight.

This discouraging statistic recently showed up in the headlines, and it has been passed around by fitness experts in an attempt to get women to work out longer and harder.

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What the experts don't tell you is that the accuracy of this study is very questionable. The sample group was very small, and consisted only of women over the age of 50. This group is not representative of women as a whole. The study also failed to take diet into consideration.

The real danger here is the spreading of false information, and its effect on female dieters. Many do not have an hour each day to commit to exercise, so they wonder why they should bother working out at all.

Some exercise is better than no exercise. You don't have to spend your life at the gym in order to lose weight (though there are some personal trainers who'd like you to think that). Half an hour of cardio five times a week, coupled with a healthy diet and a few sessions of strength training, is all it takes to maintain a healthy weight.

Wrong: BMI is a good way to measure total fitness.

BMI, or Body Mass Index, is a measurement that factors your height and weight to determine if you're at a healthy weight. It has been in use for many years, and continues to be used by many professionals today - which is unfortunate.

BMI does not take muscle mass into consideration. Muscle is much denser than fat, meaning it takes up less space but weighs more. Therefore, a heavily muscled man might be considered overweight or obese by the BMI scale. A slender woman might have a healthy BMI, when she actually has a high percentage of body fat and little muscle.

If the BMI charts have kept you running in circles for years, trying to fit the mold of health, just ignore them! Your waist-to-hips ratio and body fat percentage are much better indicators of a healthy weight.

Wrong: Exercise is more important than diet.

There are fitness experts who would have you believe that you can eat whatever you want, as long as you work out long enough to burn off the calories. In theory, it sounds plausible; weight loss is a matter of burning more calories than you consume. But when you dig deeper, you find that this is really bad advice.

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Diet is at least as important as exercise in maintaining a healthy weight. By learning to control portion sizes and distribute calories throughout the day, you are learning to give your body the fuel it needs to perform its best.

Eat small meals throughout the day, never going for longer than 3 hours without snacking. You will find that this strategy decreases hunger and cravings, and leaves you energized and ready to work out.

Wrong: You should exercise on an empty stomach.

The premise behind this bad advice is that exercising on an empty stomach will force your body to tap into its fat stores immediately. If you eat before you exercise, your body will only burn off the calories you just consumed.

This is wrong for many reasons. First, when you exercise, your body always burns a combination of carbs and stored fat. Second, your body needs fuel so that it can metabolize its fat stores. It won't do this efficiently if you're hungry or dehydrated.

Finally, working out on an empty stomach can quickly lead to low blood sugar, which causes dizziness, fatigue, irritability, and nausea. Low blood sugar also makes you more likely to binge later in the day.

The best approach is to eat a small meal one to two hours before your workout. Make sure that the meal includes lean protein and carbohydrates. Some tuna with low-fat mayonnaise on a whole grain roll is a good example of a balanced pre-workout meal.

Wrong: You'll get a better workout at the gym than at home.

Again, there are a lot of gym owners and trainers who would love for you to buy into this myth. And it seems plausible, since gyms have a lot more equipment and group exercise routines than we have access to at home.

But gym memberships aren't a necessary part of weight loss. In fact, results continue to prove that old classic exercises like push-ups, pull-ups, and running provide the most benefit. While these exercises might not be glamorous, they get the job done without the need for pricey equipment.

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Many people have trouble sticking to a gym-based workout plan. Some find it difficult to afford the monthly membership dues. Others find it inconvenient to drive to the gym. Still others simply never grow comfortable exercising in a group setting.

Here's a fitness fact that gym owners won't tell you: The most effective fitness program is one you'll do consistently. Often, that means exercising outdoors or in the comfort of your own home. You don't need fancy machines to get a good workout; you just need your own body weight and a healthy dose of determination.

Nobody has all the answers 100% of the time – not even the experts. You know your body better than anyone. Experiment with diet and exercise habits to find the best fit for yourself, regardless of what the fitness gurus tell you to do.

A Simple but Effective Trick to Speed Up Your Metabolism

Did you know that diets are a leading cause of slow metabolism? It's sad but true: the more diets you go on, the more damaged and inefficient your metabolism becomes.

If you've been a chronic yo-yo dieter for years, you might feel like your metabolism is broken beyond repair. Some life-long dieters find that they gain weight when they eat anything approaching a healthy number of calories each day. That's a demoralizing problem, but don't give up just yet! There is a fast and easy way to get your metabolism back up to speed.

The key to a faster metabolism is *more food*.

How is that possible? To better understand the reasoning behind this trick, let's take a crash course in dieting and metabolism.

Everyone has a certain amount of calories that they must consume in order for their bodies to function properly. This is called the Basal Metabolic Rate, or BMR. You can find BMR calculators online, or you can quickly estimate your BMR by using this simple system:

- 12 to 13 calories per pound of body weight will result in weight loss.

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- 15 to 16 calories per pound of body weight will result in weight maintenance.
- 17 to 18 calories per pound of body weight will result in weight gain.

(It's important to note that these estimates assume that you get a regular amount of physical activity each day. If you are completely sedentary or very active, your calorie requirements will vary. Consult a BMR calculator that takes various activity levels into consideration.)

Dieting can lower your BMR by 20 – 30%. Very low-calorie diets, also known as starvation diets, result in the most damage. A healthy, active 150 pound person needs approximately 2,200 calories per day to maintain their body weight. If that same person goes on a low-calorie diet, they will maintain their body weight on a mere 1,870 calories.

Now let's say that person decides to lose a few pounds. If the dieter has a healthy metabolism, they can lose weight by consuming 1,800 calories a day. But with a diet-damaged metabolism, that dieter will need to drop their daily calorie consumption to 1,260. That's bordering on dangerously low.

So how does one speed up their metabolism after years of ravaging diets? As stated above, more food is the key. You need to nourish your body to encourage it to heal.

This might sound too good to be true. After all, if all it takes to lose weight is to eat more food, why doesn't everyone do it?

It's not as easy as it sounds. When you start to eat normally again, you will almost certainly gain weight. This quick gain scares many dieters, sending them back to the near-starvation diets they've grown accustomed to.

But if you can just wait it out, the scale will start to move in the right direction once more. Remember, it took your body a while to reset its metabolic rate to a slower speed. It will take just as long, if not longer, for it to speed back up.

There are some things you can do to minimize the waiting period. First, calculate how many calories you would need with a healthy BMR. Start eating that number of calories each day. It might feel like a lot of food at first, but just remember that your body is repairing itself, so it needs plenty of fuel.

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Instead of digesting three large meals several hours apart, allow your body to burn food throughout the day by eating 5 or 6 small meals. Eat foods from a variety of groups. Take at least half of your calories from whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Try to eat some lean protein at each meal.

Be sure to get a little physical activity each day, even if it's just a half-hour walk after dinner. Add in some meditation and deep, mindful breathing to alleviate stress. Now you've got all the bases covered: food, energy, and oxygen. All three are vital for maintaining a healthy metabolism.

It might take longer than you like to see a weight loss with this method, but the loss you do attain will be a healthy and permanent one. Some habitual dieters are able to speed up their metabolisms in weeks. Others take months. Your individual success will depend on age, genetics, and adherence to the plan.

Remember: Diets slow down metabolism, but it can be repaired! Give your body small doses of fuel throughout the day, plus the movement and oxygen it needs. This is a simple, proven trick for getting your metabolism back on track.

6 “Weight Loss” Foods That You Should Avoid

#1 – Fat Free Foods

It's an unfortunate fact that fat gets a bad rap among dieters. True, fat contains more than twice the number of calories per gram as does protein or carbohydrates, but some fat is necessary for the absorption of vitamins and a feeling of satiety.

Fat free foods usually contain more sugar than their full-fat or reduced-fat counterparts. They also tend to be less satisfying, leading many dieters to overeat in an attempt to satisfy their natural craving for fat.

Instead of eating only fat-free foods, compromise by eating moderate portions of reduced-fat dairy along with avocados, nuts, olive oil, and salmon. These foods contain unsaturated fats that meet your dietary needs and improve your heart's health.

#2 – Diet Soda

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Diet soda is a dieter's best friend, right? After all, it contains no calories, so it can't have detrimental effects.

Wrong! Artificial sweeteners like those found in diet sodas have been the focus of many scientific studies. Those studies found that people who drank only diet sodas were more likely to be fat than those who drank an occasional sugary soda. There is some debate over why this is the case, but some experts suspect that the diet sweeteners stimulate the production of insulin, which in turn increases the appetite.

Water is the healthiest drink for dieters. Green and black teas are also good. But if you can't give up the fizzy drinks altogether, at least limit your intake to just a few sodas each week.

#3 - Pre-packaged Frozen Diet Meals

Frozen diet foods are very convenient, and some even taste great. Simply buy one, pop it in the microwave, and you've got a quick, portable, low-calorie meal.

The problem with these prepackaged meals is their sodium content. Your body only needs 500mg of sodium in order to function properly. More than that can have an irritating effect on your organs, and can lead to bloating and even high blood pressure. If you eat one or more frozen meals per day, you can easily take in three times the sodium you need – or more!

Some frozen meal makers offer low-sodium options. Try those, or take a can of low-sodium soup with you. You could also pack yourself a turkey sandwich on whole grain bread, with broccoli and baby carrots to snack on.

#4 - Coffee

Caffeine tends to decrease the appetite and stimulate energy, which has given it a reputation as a good diet supplement. But coffee (and any highly caffeinated beverage) can actually work against your weight loss efforts in three ways.

First, coffee is often taken with sugar and cream. Many dieters forget to factor in those additions when calculating their caloric intake. If you have a habit of buying morning lattes, you'll want to kick that habit soon. One large latte can set you back hundreds of calories. If you do drink coffee, drink it black or with low-fat milk.

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Too much coffee can leave you jittery, putting additional stress on your body. When your body feels stressed, it produces the hormone cortisol, which causes abdominal fat storage. Reducing your caffeine intake can help you feel more relaxed and get better sleep, both of which will counteract cortisol production.

Finally, caffeine is a diuretic. It pushes fluid from your body, and can leave you dehydrated as a result. Even mild dehydration can cause your kidneys to stop functioning efficiently. Your liver acts as a back-up filtration system, which takes it away from its usual task of metabolizing fat. Thus, dehydration slows your fat metabolism, in addition to its other nasty side effects.

Make it a habit of drinking one to two glasses of water for each cup of coffee you consume. This will head off dehydration and give you the benefits of increased water consumption as well.

#5 - Diet Shakes

Weight loss shakes might seem like a good idea. They are convenient, carefully portioned for calorie control, and many of them are quite tasty and nutritious.

But diet shakes aren't usually as satisfying as a regular meal. Some are also high in sugar, which is bad news for dieters who want to limit their intake of simple carbohydrates. Sugar can cause blood glucose spikes that lead to crab cravings, making it difficult to keep your appetite under control.

Price is also a consideration. Money spent on diet shakes is money you could be spending on more nutritious, satisfying solid foods. The cost of diet shakes can really add up, especially if you're drinking several a day.

Some diet shakes are actually very high in calories. These shakes were designed to be meal replacements. If they are consumed in addition to regular meals, the calories will add up fast!

#6 – Diet Junk Food

There is a huge selection of reduced-calorie, reduced-fat, and reduced-sugar snacks at the grocery store. But diet junk food is still junk food, so don't waste too much of your calorie allotment on "virtuous" snacks.

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When you're trying to lose weight, every calorie counts. It's much better for your body if you load up on high-quality foods that pack a lot of nutrition into a small calorie count. Diet cookies, snack cakes, and chips are good on occasion, but they add empty calories to your daily intake.

Watch out for artificial sweeteners and fat substitutes. Many people are sensitive to saccharine and aspartame; too much of these substances gives them bloating, joint pain, increased hunger, and fatigue. Olestra, a fat substitute used in some potato chips, can cause intestinal pain and diarrhea. Some sugar alcohols used to sweeten sugar-free candies cause the same effects if eaten in large quantities.

Diet snacks labeled "cholesterol free" can be misleading. If these products contain tropical oils like palm kernel oil or coconut oil, you can bet they're loaded with saturated fat – the kind that clogs your arteries. While tropical oils are technically cholesterol free, consuming them can lead to high cholesterol levels.

Diet foods aren't always the best choice for dieters. They can add heavy doses of sodium, flavor-enhancing chemicals, and saturated fats to your meal plan. If you're going to splurge, you might find it healthier and more satisfying to eat a small amount of "real" junk food on occasion.

How to Stop Your Cravings Dead in Their Tracks

You've been doing well on your diet, sticking to your plan and making healthy changes. Then, BAM! You can't stop thinking about chocolate. Or salty potato chips. Is it hunger, or is it a craving? Sadly, many of us have lost the ability to tell the difference.

Hunger is the body's way of telling you it needs more sustenance. However, it is rare for people in industrialized nations to crave foods due to a real nutritional deficiency. If you crave fat, salt, or sugar, you can bet you're not feeling true hunger. The modern Western diet is high in all of those things.

Most cravings stem from feelings of deprivation, poor blood sugar control, or an unmet emotional need. Sometimes cravings are stimulated by the flavor-enhancing chemicals in processed foods. Some individuals, especially those with insulin resistance or type 2

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diabetes, have cravings for carbohydrates that seem to get stronger as more carbs are consumed. This is due to rapidly rising and falling glucose levels.

Here are some helpful tips for discovering the root cause of *your* cravings, and stopping them dead in their tracks.

Eat Enough, Often Enough

Can't stop thinking about food? Chances are good that you might actually be hungry. If you find yourself craving foods that are typically considered healthy, such as meats, fruits, or vegetables, give into your cravings. Your body is telling you it needs more nutrients. To keep cravings away, eat a small, healthy meal (approximately 200 calories) 6 times a day.

Avoid artificial sweeteners. Aspartame, sucralose, and MSGs enhance the flavor of our foods. Unfortunately, these chemicals have also been shown to create a hunger response in some individuals, even after they've eaten. Stop your cravings by reducing the amount of chemically-enhanced, processed food you eat. Prepare whole foods instead, and eat a small amount of real sugar on occasion instead of large amounts of artificial sweeteners every day.

Carbs Create Cravings

If you're diabetic, pre-diabetic, or insulin-resistant, you probably know what it's like to daydream about carbohydrates. That's because your body doesn't use glucose correctly, so it constantly craves sugar (and other carb-rich foods that cause a jump in blood glucose levels). Choose foods that are low in carbohydrates, or whole grain foods with plenty of fiber. These foods don't stimulate cravings the way processed flour products do.

Discover What You're Really Hungry For

If you find that you're hungry most of the time, you should take a moment to sit down and reflect on what you're hungry for. Food has a strong emotional connection for many of us, and it can be difficult to discern real hunger from boredom or loneliness. Sometimes a hug or a new activity can satisfy our needs much more than extra food can.

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Evaluate Your Diet

If your cravings persist after taking the above steps, your diet might not be providing all the nutrition you need. Write down all the foods you eat for a week or two, and then have a doctor or nutritionist evaluate your diet. They can recommend dietary changes or supplements that will reduce your cravings.

Eat What You Want (In Moderation)

Of course, everyone gets stuck in a food rut every now and then. Your cravings could be a signal that you've grown bored with your eating plan and need a little something to increase morale. If that's the case, go ahead and eat what you're craving, but keep it in moderation. Instead of having a huge slice of pie, have a smaller portion and split it with a friend. Have those cheesy nachos, but increase your exercise to compensate for the extra calories. Almost any food can be an occasional part of a healthy diet.

Cravings are your body's way of telling you what it wants or needs. Once you get to the root cause of your cravings, you can take steps to send them packing – permanently.

Now It's Up to You

By now, you've seen how the fitness and diet industries use sneaky tactics to keep you coming back again and again. You've learned that cravings can have surprising causes. You've discovered ways to flatten your belly and eliminate bloating. You've even learned how to repair a damaged metabolism.

Armed with this new information, you're more likely than ever to succeed at losing fat and keeping it off. You will never have to diet again, because you have learned that a life-long healthy eating and fitness plan is the key to lasting weight loss.

Start with small changes, and add more over time. Find exercises that are fun to do, because the best exercise program is one you'll stick to. Feel free to use this e-book often as you make your way toward a lifetime of health.

Remember: the most important factor in the weight loss equation is you.

We wish you the very best on your journey!

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Recommended Reading

The Trimmer Method *By Tracey Trimmer*

<http://www.build-muscle-and-burn-fat.com/trimmer>

The Trimmer Method is a 170+ page course that teaches readers how to make weight-loss fast, easy, and permanent by making it fun and enjoyable. Tracey's system teaches people how to lose weight by eating more of the foods your body naturally craves, in an all-natural, safe and effective way.

Common weight loss myths and dieting tips that stop people keeping the weight off permanently are addressed in this eBook, and Tracey's approach is straight-talking, practical and effective.

The Trimmer Method will not only teach you how to lose weight easily, you will see a number of other life-changing benefits including more energy, happiness, and more self esteem.

If you use The Trimmer Method as a guide, you will be able to say goodbye to your oversized clothes very, very soon.

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