

Health Tips & News

Fad vs. Fat: Popular diets

Fat vs. fiction: What diets work?

Lose 15 pounds by the weekend? Get your dream body while eating whatever you want and without having to go to the gym? Shelves full of books and hours of infomercials will try to have you believe otherwise, but there is no magic formula that can get you the body you want.

Yes, losing weight can be a daunting task - which explains the appeal of programs that promise to make weight loss easy. But all too often, fad diets result not only in regaining lost pounds, but in putting on extra weight as well. That's because safe, effective and, most importantly, long-term weight loss requires two important things:

- permanent changes in the way you eat
- making exercise a habit, not just something you do on the rare occasion that the mood strikes

And these are two things that many quick fixes fail to incorporate.

Here are some tips for recognizing fad diets or weight loss gimmicks:

- **It promises unrealistic results.** Safe weight loss means no more than 2 lbs. (1 kg) per week. If you lose weight any faster than that, your body could compensate by slowing down the rate at which it burns calories, thereby slowing weight loss and even making it easier to gain weight after you return to your normal eating habits.
- **It requires you to purchase special products, supplements, or foods.** The foods you need to lose weight sensibly - a balance of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and lower-fat dairy products - are all available at the grocery store.
- **It eliminates certain foods or even whole food groups entirely.** By cutting out certain foods from your diet, you risk coming up short on all the vitamins and nutrients you need.
- **It requires you to strictly follow a set plan.** The less a diet plan takes into account your own personal likes and dislikes as well as your lifestyle, the less likely you are to stick to it. Any diet plan you follow should also account for your individual nutritional requirements, which can vary depending on age, activity level, and any medical conditions.

Here are some qualities of reliable diet plans:

- **They incorporate exercise.** Burning energy through exercise means you can achieve weight loss without having to cut the number of calories you consume as drastically. As well, studies have shown regular exercise is one of the biggest predictors of keeping the weight off.
- **They make recommendations based on sound science.** A safe weight-loss program makes its claims based on large-scale studies that have been reviewed by reputable health care professionals.
- **They meet Health Canada's daily recommended intakes.** It's important to make sure you are getting all the protein, vitamins, and minerals you need. Because it can be difficult to meet your targets while restricting calories, your doctor or dietitian may recommend supplements.
- **They include plans for maintenance.** Your program should help you form the habits you need to make your weight-loss long term. Remember, healthy eating is a way of life - not just a two-week plan.

Quote of the Month

People are so worried about what they eat between Christmas and the New Year, but they really should be worried about what they eat between the New Year and Christmas.

~Author Unknown

Drover Financial
The Ultimate Financial Solution

James E. Drover, CLU, CFSB
65 Empire Avenue
St. John's, NL A1C 3E7
Tel: (709) 579-6926 Fax: (709) 579-2320
e-mail: info@droverfinancial.com
www.droverfinancial.com