

WEIGHT LOSS – WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT? PART I

If you are like every other dieter out there, chances are you have started and stopped several diet plans with minimal or at least no long-term success. The first week is usually pretty easy. You're full of hope, anxiety and excitement. You repeatedly tell yourself, "This time... it's going to be different!" The second week is ok – a little harder than the first; but, you're still working pretty hard at it. Usually, during the third week, something happens! You bend the rules a bit and you start falling back into your old habits. Why for most does this happen? Why the vicious cycle... the let down...the feeling of failure? I'll tell you why! ***The challenges involved in weight loss for some can be significant and a great deal of frustration for many individuals who try repeatedly to lose the weight.*** The challenges go beyond that of: economics, geography, race, social status or gender.

In order to succeed at long-term weight loss, there are certain strategies you must abide by; but, the most important one is to not focus on the wrong goal. That's right... if we focus on, "pounds lost," we are focusing on the wrong goal. For whatever reason, you must not perceive the weight loss in pounds as being the most important thing to achieve. If it's only pounds, then realistically, you are going to be unhappy until you achieve the weight loss. Does that magical number then generate instant happiness? What happens if you go 1 pound below your ideal number -- immediate sadness and discontent? Please don't misinterpret. Obviously, a reduction in size will equal a reduction in weight loss; but, it should not be your primary goal. ***So, what could be important enough to stick to a new healthy eating habit long-term? How about your present and future health!***

There is nothing in this world more important than the state of your health! Think about it this way... your health affects virtually everything else in your entire life. Once your health is compromised, we automatically change our lifestyle habits. Ideally, we should not wait until our bodies completely break down before we decide to take care of ourselves. If you feel: sleepy, doxy, tired, lousy... everything you do that day is going to be less than ideal. Likewise, if you feel pretty darn good, everything you do that day will probably turn out better! So ideally, let's not focus just on losing a few pounds. Let's focus on improving our health! ***Actually... you have to get healthy in order to lose weight! Losing weight – is not going to make you healthy.***

If you want to lose weight, there is only one formula that you need to know and the math itself is pretty clear. For the most part, calories in minus calories out equals total weight loss or gain. This is the equation that determines whether your body will shape up to look more flat-belly or pot-belly. It's absolutely critical that you have some understanding of what sort of numbers you're plugging into this formula. Yet, keep in mind, we do not ask people to necessarily count calories, points and/or portions. It's markedly more important what you're eating than how much! ***Yet, it's also important to understand about the calories in and calories out concept.***

Most individuals do believe that if you eat less than you burn each day, you will lose weight. This is a fairly established fact and there is quite a bit of research that supports the fact that it doesn't particularly matter how you restrict your food intake – calories themselves is the real issue. Your daily activity, whether it's going to the grocery store, walking from your car to your office, cleaning the house or mowing the yard; all have the potential of "calorie out" effect. Often times, my patients assume there is something wrong with their activities that cause them to be overweight. Activities themselves are an important facet; however, usually it's more the calories in side of thing that's making one overweight. It's the cookies, the fried chicken, the piles of pasta; essentially the white stuff that people eat every day that makes a difference.

As a general overview, in order to maintain a healthy body weight, a moderately active female between the ages of 20 and 50 needs about 2000 to 2200 calories per day. A male in that same profile needs 2400 to 2600 calories per day. Those numbers certainly can fluctuate depending on whether you're taller or shorter than average or whether you spend more or less time exercising; but, they still represent reasonable estimations for most people. Interestingly, it takes 3500 calories to create a pound of body fat. ***So if you can eat an extra 500 calories per day – than you'll earn 1 new pound of body fat each week.*** Make that a habit, like so many in this country do unwittingly – and you'll gain 52 pounds of fat per year! So what is typically only 500 extra calories per day... one multi-grain bagel with reduced fat cream cheese is all it takes.

Ultimately, we have to ask ourselves, "How important is my health to me? How do I prefer to live the rest of my life? Sick and feeling crappy or healthy and feeling vibrant? Do I want to play golf and tennis in my retirement? Spend time with my grandchildren? Playing and laughing? Or... do I want to spend it in bed, wheel-chair bound or in the hospital?" Ultimately, your choice, based on the answers of the above questions will dictate your weight and your health for the future. ***Any lifestyle habit that affects your health in a positive way will automatically cause you to lose weight or at least maintain a better, healthier weight.***

To succeed at permanent weight loss, there are strategies you must employ. The haphazard approach just won't work for long-term, permanent weight loss. If you don't believe me, ask anyone who has lost weight only to regain it in a short while later and often more weight was gained than what they lost! That's why they call this... yo-yo dieting. The majority of our patients, along with wanting to improve their health, prefer to lose some degree of weight. Obviously, this changes from person to person; but, a number of people ask me, "Dr. Grilliot, is there a way I can drop my first few pounds of fat quickly and easily?" Typically I answer, yes there is. It will require a few dietary changes on your part; but, the results can be quite incredible. Here are 3 relatively simple and easy fat loss rules:

1. If it's white, don't eat it. Literally... don't eat anything that is white. Name almost every single food that is white and it's an extremely high probability that you shouldn't be eating it! Bread, pasta, crackers, flour-based products, white potatoes especially with all the sour cream, white rice and most cereals, pasteurized dairy and cheese are all no-no's during this time. Healthy foods like: cauliflower, turkey, chicken, fish and white pork are all the exceptions to this rule.
2. Drink only water and nothing else! That includes coffee. Withdrawal headaches will be an issue for those who have been long-term, die-hard, high-test, coffee drinkers and I suppose 1 small cup of organic black coffee would help with withdrawal symptoms; however, keep the half and half and other creamers away. Remember... it's white!!! Ideally, drink almost half of your body weight in ounces of water each day. If you weigh approximately 200 pounds, you need about 100 ounces. This won't be easy at first. The majority of individuals remain chronically dehydrated because we as Americans just don't drink enough water.
3. Attempt as best possible to not eat anything with the word wheat in the ingredients list. Even if it is whole wheat. Bread, pasta, crackers or cereal. Most packaged snack foods contain some degree of wheat; so make sure to read the ingredient's list carefully.

I realize this may be a challenge for most individuals! But if you want to apply these rules to your own eating plan for approximately 2 weeks, you may surprise yourself; as most people do, at the amazing fat loss results in no time.

Part II of this article will go through a strategic plan, check list for those who like check lists of how to approach weight loss for a more permanent change. Please remember... weight loss can be difficult to achieve. There is definitely no part of the process that's necessarily glamorous. ***But the end result; however, is a healthier YOU and that will always be well worth the effort!***

For more information pertaining to our "Healthy Life by Design" program, please visit us on the web: www.naturalwellnesscentre.net. This article is authored by Dr. James R. Grilliot, a chiropractic physician and director of Natural Wellness Centre; phone number: 740-687-0279.