

Your New Years Weight Loss Resolution



How To Get The Body Of Your Dreams in 2009

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Introduction

It's 2009 and here you are again.

Sure you haven't tried this program before but you no doubt aren't a stranger to the dieting merry-go-round that has been plaguing your life up to this point.

If you are here then there is a 98% likelihood that you are looking for yet another way to lose weight, sorry girls this figure is especially true for women. For the fellas on the other hand it's around the 60% mark, staggering but true.

So what does this mean? It means that between 60% and 98% of American adults will be on yet another diet at some stage during the New Year.

It's all part and parcel of the New Year's resolution checklist and weight loss is a high priority on it. That means that we will set our goals with full intention of dropping every last pound so that we can swan around at the beach in that two piece bikini then after the first week there we are, staring down at the bowl of cabbage soup wondering what on earth what it was all for in the first place. Darn those New Year's resolutions!

So there we are again, we yet again failed the weight loss resolution part of our goal but that's ok because we'll just write it down again for next year.

Rinse and repeat and the cycle continues.

These sobering high figures of dieter's shows us that we are all well aware that we need to lose some weight yet each year we continue to get fatter than the year before.

Diets actually make you gain weight in the long term and that is becoming ever more evident in the obesity epidemic that is plaguing this fast food, minimal exercise generation.

Did you know that stadium seats have to be widened to accommodate the increase in peoples expanding, ahem...girth? It shows that we are becoming a larger nation (and not in a good way) of people than we ever have before and this is in the past 20 years alone.

Our children are suffering from obesity related conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

A group of 70 obese American children from the ages of 6 to 19 were subjected to a battery of tests to examine the effect that a diet high in fat had on their young body's.

The results were eye opening. All suffered from high cholesterol and all were within the high risk category of having cardiovascular disease and heart failure of which some subjects were already exhibiting symptoms of.

Among some of the tests was the measurement of plaque buildup of the carotid arteries. These are the arteries that are located on either side of the neck which supply precious blood and oxygen to the face and brain. The shocking discovery is that these youngsters had the artery age of a person in their 40's.

That means that their arteries and internal age was more than twice that of their chronological age, as doctors say "you're only as young as your arteries".

Frightening isn't it? Children are literally being robbed of a long, healthy life simply by what they are eating. Because children learn what they eat from their parents it's vitally important that we teach them good eating habits based upon our example.

So, I'm glad you are here, but let's make this the last program you do.

Get off the dieting treadmill that has kept you overweight and under fit for too long. Stay away from the pills, powders and potions that go against your body's natural balance and get back to basics.

Look at it this way, if we get back to basics and eat and move like our slimmer ancestors did, the better off we all will be.

My purpose is that by the end of this book you will have gained a greater understanding of how your body works. How and why you gained the weight and what you can do to drop pounds for good this time because believe it or not, why we gained the weight in the first place goes far beyond just overeating.

Most programs throw a program at you addressing only the issue of the weight itself while we are going to delve a little deeper to get to the core of your weight gain. If you don't properly address and correct this issue from the start you will always be wondering why you can't lose weight and keep it off for good.

Not anymore.

My aim is to arm you with all the knowledge and tools you will need to drop the weight once and for all.

I thank you for taking this journey. If you apply what you learn here you have no choice but to lose weight. But like with anything in life, you only get out what you put in.

I know you can do it.

So let's get started.

Why Do You Want To Lose Weight?

Seems like an obvious question doesn't it? Scratch beneath the surface and you will find your true motivation that will keep you dedicated until you achieve your goal.

What do you hope to get out of this program?

Why do you want to lose weight?

Is it simply because it was on your New Year's resolution list of goals to achieve?

Is it for a reunion you'll be attending?

Is it for a holiday?

Is it to fit into your old clothes or perhaps a slinky little outfit you want to get into?

I know it's difficult but these days it seems that you can't turn a magazine page or change a channel without seeing an emaciated, skinny teenager touted as being the image we should all aspire to.

The media images we are fed are false ideals, this is certainly not how regular people look neither should we be forced into a mould to achieve it.

We are all different and the world is a richer place for it. Just because we may not be 100 pounds, leggy and 5 feet 11 doesn't mean that we are not beautiful.

Just because we don't fit into that template of what is deemed beautiful by an industry obsessed with perfection does not mean that we are incapable of ourselves being beautiful and looking our best.

If you are carrying excess weight, losing some of that weight will peel back the layers and reveal your true physical beauty lying hidden beneath. You will unearth your beauty like chiseling away at a magnificent Michelangelo sculpture, pound by pound.

You are your own masterpiece.

Just remember, you can and will look great.

So let's get back to the reason why you want to lose the weight. Sure you want to look great, that's a given but why else?

Whatever the reason, it has to be one based on something more impacting than just wanting to lose a few pounds because of an event or for the sake of fitting into something.

Sometimes we lose weight for the wrong reasons. Sometimes we have the misfortune of being on the wrong diets and are given incorrect information vital to our weight loss success.

You need a more compelling reason to stick with your program because let's face it, times get difficult when you're tired, hungry, depressed or bored and you see the chocolate cake staring back at you screaming your name.

Every cell in your body is telling you to eat the cake, every fiber of your being is trying to sway you from your purpose. Tell me, at this point, do you have a strong enough reason to prevent you from eating that cake?

Probably not, the draw of the cake is far stronger than the appeal of the reunion or the size 0 outfit and let me tell you why.

It's because the cake is right there. The reality is right there in front of you in plain sight and everything else, all of your weight loss goals, the reunion, the outfit, the - fill in the blank goal becomes just a faint whisper in the background by comparison.

Why? Because you thought you could suppress all of those years of conditioning in one week. Your body is stronger than you think. That's not to say that you can't lose weight, you absolutely can you just have to work with your body and not against it.

Having said that, think of a worthwhile purpose to lose the weight if you haven't done so before.

Something like:

- * I want to lose weight because I want to gain a healthy respect for my body

- * I want to lose weight because I want to live longer for my family

- * I want to lose weight because I want to enjoy life more by doing the things that my weight restricts me from doing

- * I want to lose weight because I want to feel great about my myself and my appearance

* I want to lose weight because I want to travel and enjoy all that life has to offer me

* I want to lose weight to have the strength and energy I need to enjoy life like having the energy to chase my children

* I want to lose weight so that I can be an active participant in my own life and not just a spectator

Now it's your turn. Something compelling. Something deeper than your usual New Year weight loss resolution. Something that will keep you grounded and anchored to your purpose. That way the lure of the cake is no match for wanting to watch your loved ones grow up around you, it won't even come close.

Take your time and think of something that is truly worthy of you and you will stick with it like glue.

So why do I think you should lose weight?, because you are worth it and you deserve to have a full and truly wonderful life, having the energy to fulfill that is a requirement.

So get to it, think of your compelling purpose. Think of a dozen, the more the better.

Other Reasons Why You May Want To Lose Weight

No doubt a big reason why you want to lose weight is linked to your physical appearance. This scratches far below the surface than just wanting to lose weight to fit into something or simply hating the way your thighs look.

Excess weight can impact on self esteem. No one wants to be obese because it has so many negative connotations in our society.

Because we believe we are not attractive and appealing to others can make us rethink our own self worth and value. This can lead to social and emotional problems and distort the way we perceive ourselves as well as how we interact with others.

This can become a vicious cycle within itself where we eat because of how we feel to medicate the pain yet often end up feeling worse along with gaining even more weight. The cycle continues.

Does Your Weight Have Emotional Control Over You?

Psychologists are aware of the emotional effect weight can have on self esteem but the remaining medical world is just starting to wake up to this fact.

Find out if weight gain has an emotional effect on you. Some brief questions.

Are you conscious of your physical appearance when you are out in public?

Are you comfortable with looking at yourself in the mirror or do you avoid it?

Are you concerned with what others think of your body?

Do you feel that the only way you can truly be happy is to change the physical things you don't like about yourself?

If you answered yes to any of the above questions then it's possible that your weight has an emotional influence over you. Your appearance shouldn't keep you unhappy. Your appearance really should be the icing on the cake to the person you are within.

You have the power to do something about it. You can either continue to live with it or do something about it.

The fact that you are here says a lot about you and proves that you are willing to take action. I congratulate you for that and know you will find answers here.

Just remember this book aims to re-educate you and unlearn all of the bad habits you may have picked up over the years. It won't happen overnight, but it will happen. You are about to experience some life changing truths so just stay with it and absorb as much as you can.

Health Issues

A big motivation for wanting to lose the weight could also be for health reasons. You don't have to be a genius to figure out that we are living in an obese nation. We are suffering in epic proportions from diseases our ancestors 100 years ago had never even heard of.

You know the effects that carrying excess weight can have on the body even in your joints and your lower back but we often forget what impact this is having to our internal organs.

Did you know that excess abdominal fat is the most dangerous type of fat to have? This is because this is most active of them all.

The fat is packed around your intestines, your liver and heart and interferes with the way those organs work. This fat secretes chemicals and hormones that inhibit proper function of those vital organs. It is also an indicator of Type II diabetes and heart disease.

For women if your waist is more than 35 inches at the belly button and for men if is more than 40 inches than you lie within the high risk category of heart disease, diabetes, blood pressure and stroke and must lose weight.

Excess fat in the body causes the arteries in your heart to become clogged which raises your blood pressure to force the blood to your organs. Having just an extra 30 excess pounds forces your heart to work twice as hard to do the same job it did when you were just 30 pounds lighter.

Excess blood pressure damages the blood vessels in your kidneys and can cause them to fail. High blood pressure is also linked with blindness caused from burst and bleeding blood vessels in the backs of the eyes.

High blood pressure can also cause weakened blood vessels to burst and bleed on the brain causing a stroke. Blood clots can also become lodged within narrowed arteries also causing a stroke.

Diabetes causes the blood to thicken which raises the risk of blood clots forming resulting in strokes and heart attacks from your already thickened arterial walls.

So, as you can see being overweight can cause a cascade effect on our health, it affects everything. Each organ relies upon the other to work effectively to keep us well. Throw any one of those off balance and it affects everything.

The simplest solution is to just lose the weight. We seem to think that having a little less cake or cutting back on saturated fats is a death sentence but not nearly as deadly as the one that plays havoc with our bodies when we choose to eat that foods that put us there.

In a medical trial to test the long term effects of excess weight on individuals, a study of around 600 people was conducted over a 14 year period. The results revealed that participants who were 'overweight' had a 34% greater chance of heart failure than someone at their ideal weight. Participants who were obese had a massive 104% increase in risk of heart failure over someone at their ideal weight.

Incredible what a little extra weight can do over a period of time.

The Difference Between Being Overweight And Obese

So what is the difference between being overweight and being obese?

It is the BMI (Body Mass Index) that differentiates between the two whereby it is the weight above what is generally considered to be a healthy ideal weight for a specific height.

For example:-

For adults whose BMI is between the range of 25 and 30 are considered to be overweight

For adults whose BMI is greater than 30 are considered to obese.

You can determine your BMI be going here:

<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

Sobering isn't it? The fact that carrying even a little excess weight can have detrimental effects on our health is mind blowing and you don't even have to be morbidly obese for that to happen.

Most medical professionals consider someone who is 5% to 15% above their ideal weight to be considered as overweight whereas people who are 20% to 30% above their ideal weight are considered to be obese,

anything above 30% and you fall into the range of being morbidly obese.

So what weight should you be? Find out your ideal weight for your height by going here:

<http://www.halls.md/ideal-weight/body.htm>

There is no motivation quite like knowing the health risks associated with excess weight. By now you will know which category you lie within and now you can lose the weight for more than just looking nice in a pair of jeans but to extend your life expectancy and increase your quality and enjoyment of life.

How Did You Get Here?

How did you get to this moment of realization that something had to happen?

You had that moment right?, the a-ha moment that wakes you out of your slumber of denial. For whatever reason that brought you to this point, I congratulate you. Because you have recognized it you can take action and do something about it.

How did you get to this point in your life? How did you gain the weight in the first place? It is important to address the issue so that you can be made conscious of it and avoid being undone by it in future.

Did you start eating more?

Did you eat more of the wrong foods? – sometimes just eating more empty calories can increase weight. In fact, most obese people don't eat more than their slimmer counterparts. It's what they eat that's causing them to gain weight.

Did your exercise patterns change?

Did you eat out of boredom?

Are you an emotional eater?

You need to think about it. Really study and examine how you eat, what is the thought that leads to the action?

Why We Eat

Emotional Hunger

We are creatures of habit. We have amassed lots of habits that have been developed over the years that sometimes become subconscious.

We are not aware of the things we do until we purposely take notice of them. For instance, observing the thought that leads to the action of us reaching for the cookie. What was the thought? Were we feeling upset?, distressed?, depressed?, angry?

If you find you want to reach for the jar of cookies, catch yourself in that moment. Examine your thinking. How are you feeling? What state of mind are you in? What is your mood? Disrupt your pattern by forming a new one.

Rather than indulging your craving, count back slowly from 100. With each number you find yourself wanting the cookies less and less. This is because you are disrupting your usual pattern of behavior and consciously replacing it with a new one. You'll find that after 100 that cookie won't be as tempting as it was.

Emotional eating can also extend to happiness too. Childhood habits can see us overindulge for doing something good which can spill into adulthood where we treat ourselves with food for rewards. This is fine as long as it's periodically.

There are ways to treat yourself other than eating. Why not get your nails or your hair done? Why not treat yourself to a nice hot bath and a facial? Why not have a healthy lunch with the boys or the girls? There are other rewarding ways to treat yourself that are not based around tempting treats. It's just a matter of thinking a little outside the square and replacing old habits with new and healthier ones.

Boredom Eating

If you find yourself reaching for that tempting delicious high fat food because you have nothing else to do, why not call a friend for a chat? Why not take up a sport and meet up with your friends instead? Guaranteed you'll have so much fun you won't even be thinking about junk food.

Mistaken Hunger

It should be a healthy appetite that drives us to eat. When our energy needs replenishing because we've depleted our energy stores our appetite signals for us to eat. It is a simple biological reflex. We get hungry, we eat. Sometimes our hunger is more psychological than physical and thinking our body is hungry, we feed it.

If you have eaten your last meal within the past 2 hours more often than not it will be thirst which your body can sometimes interpret as hunger. If you know you have just had your last meal within a short timeframe ago, why not try drinking a glass of water then waiting 30 minutes for the brain to register it. If you are still hungry after this time period then have a light snack.

Sometimes we eat out of boredom. If you find yourself sitting around and instinctively reaching for the fridge or the pantry, catch yourself.

It's all about replacing bad habits with good ones because that is what will make your weight loss a permanent success. It goes far deeper

than losing weight for the sake of it but rather arming you with the tools to make sure you really succeed this time.

Why we need a permanent solution is because we are reprogramming ourselves and our attitude towards our food. Look at this way, it took years to form these habits and it will take a little time to break them and create newer healthier habits in its place.

Nothing is more apparent then when we eliminate all of our favorite foods at once. Our body goes into shock, tries to override our good intentions and sabotages our efforts. Another diet bites the dust simply because we weren't aware of how we conditioned our bodies over the years.

Our bodies are marvelous pieces of machinery and will stop at nothing to preserve us at all costs. That means that if we drastically reduce our food intake our body will shut down our metabolism to force us to eat. When we do, we binge and gain back all the lost pounds we fought so hard to lose. Don't hate your body for that, it is just doing what comes naturally.

So how do we get around this? Work in alignment with your body. Introduce changes gradually. Don't shock your body or it will thwart your best intentions to lose weight.

Medications

There are some medications of which the side effects can be weight gain.

Medications such as some antidepressant drugs can cause you to sleep more and expend less calories making you more susceptible to weight gain. There is also a tendency to snack on more carbohydrate rich foods which also contributes to weight gain.

There are things that you can do to lessen the degree of weight gain experienced by taking these types of medications.

Try to reduce the amount of calories you consume by identifying them in your current diet.

Don't do anything drastic just eat smaller portions and reduce the amount of carbohydrates you may be consuming, the body needs a balanced diet so don't be tempted to eliminate carbohydrates completely from your daily eating plan. Make sure that you get plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts, lean protein and whole grains.

Incorporate more exercise into your life to counteract the effect your medication might be having on your weight.

If all else fails, consult your doctor for any alternative medication equivalents without the side effects.

The Diets That Lead Us Here

Apart from the fact it has the word "die" in it, I don't much like the word. Diet gives the impression of a temporary solution and with anything temporary it must come to an end. When we reach that end, the old habits and weight come flying back.

If you are on a diet you are losing weight for the here and now. If on the other hand you want to lose weight on a more permanent basis this is what I would refer to as a "lifestyle change".

Think long term and permanent change which is what you want to get out of this program as opposed to just wanting to lose weight for the moment.

Because dieting is for the short term once we depart from it we gain back the weight as we fall back into our old eating habits. This leads

to “Yo-Yo Dieting” as we go from one diet to the next in the hope that this is the solution to our weight problems we have been searching for.

Just like a Yo-Yo goes up and down so does our weight with each diet we embark on.

Each diet has the same symptoms. We start out and experience quick results, hit a plateau, binge then gain back all the weight plus more.

Why do we gain all of the weight back plus extra? Our bodies have what we call a set point. Think of it as your body’s natural thermostat. It regulates your weight.

When you drop weight after starting your new diet especially on diets that restrict caloric intake, your body goes into shock. Say your starting weight prior to commencing the diet was around 170 pounds.

You lose 5 pounds. Then you lose another 3 pounds. Suddenly your weight loss comes to grinding halt. You cut even more calories in the hopes of keeping the weight loss going but again, you lose zero pounds. By now because you have restricted your calories that your body goes into self preservation, survival mode. This is where evolution as its finest kicks in. Your body overrides you by making you sluggish and lethargic. You have the metabolism of a tortoise. You barely have enough energy to lift your own arm let alone your entire body to continue exercising.

Your body has taken over and thwarted your attempts to lose weight. You can’t work out to lose the pounds you simply don’t have the energy for and to top it off you have an increased appetite.

Your body is stimulating your appetite to make you gain back all of the weight you spent a lot of effort to lose. So not only do you eat, but you eat lots. Your body’s thermostat makes sure that your weight goes back to your original 170 pounds, in fact it doesn’t just stop there.

It makes you add a few extra pounds on top of that to store away for a rainy day. Because you put your body through trauma it thought it was starving so it literally made you store extra fat for times of famine to safeguard you against losing any more weight again.

So there you have it, you just hurt your chances of losing weight by provoking your body into defense mode and making you gain extra weight.

It's well documented that this happens which is how the phrase got to be coined as "Yo-Yo" dieting. Your weight goes down then it comes back up again and then some.

There is a way around Yo-Yo dieting and the secret lies in not shocking your body into retaliation but rather working in alignment with it. I'll explain more on that a little later in this book.

Fad Diets

If any of the diets you have ever tried in the past fell into any of these categories, there's a good chance it was a fad diet.

1. Promises you will lose lots of weight in one week with little effort
2. Fails to mention disclaimers or recommend doctors consultation prior to dieting
3. Suggests you eliminate entire food groups from your eating plan such as carbohydrates or dairy or vegetables
4. Restricts you to a set eating plan without considering what your preferences are, in other words lack of flexibility setting you up to fail
5. Fails to reinforce good and health habits and lifestyle changes
- 6.Reduces your eating to less calories than you can healthily function on

7. Goes against sound medical information
8. Is dependent upon certain supplements, diets or products to be effective
9. Makes over the top, unrealistic claims
10. Lack of scientific proof that it works and why it does

Sound familiar? Most diets you see fall into these categories. They rely on doing something drastic just to differentiate themselves from other diets whether that be eliminating entire food groups, eating certain foods on certain days, eating only one color of food or eating only one kind of food for days at a time.

Fad diets all have the same thing in common. The solution to weight loss they offer is only ever temporary a band aid quick fix to a problem that has been years in the making. Once the diet ceases the lost weight quickly returns. When this happens it is more often than not, fluid not fat that was lost in the first place which is why it is gained back so quickly.

None of these diets are sustainable. You simply cannot survive on them. The thing that makes you weight is the difficulty of adhering to such a strict diet in the first place. You go off your food because of the lack of variety and that is what makes you lose weight, or do you?

Fad diets are extreme ways to drop pounds quickly but the results are not permanent, you more often lose fluid and muscle than fat so not only are you not losing the fat you wanted to but you are damaging your health in the process. Any diet that eliminates entire food groups is not good for you.

We have a variety of foods to eat for a reason, because we need them for our nutrients and it is only those foods that can provide them, to eliminate them means that we can become vitamin deficient. To cut out one or more food groups is setting yourself up for disaster and harmful to your overall health.

To have a balanced diet we need to eat from all of the food groups because we gain all of our nutrients and vitamins from each of these four groups.

The Four Basic Food Groups:

Grains, whole grains, cereals, breads, pasta

Vegetables and Fruits

Dairy , milk, cheese, yoghurt

Meat, protein, poultry, fish, eggs

Breads, cereals and grains gives you sustained energy throughout the day as well as giving you bulk to help properly clean out your bowels protecting you against bowel cancer. In fact by just adding 35 grams of fiber per day can reduce rectal cancer by 67%. Eating grains also protects against the risk of diabetes and insulin resistance and cardiovascular disease and lowers cholesterol levels.

In a study of 70,000 women over a 12 year period it was found that women who consumed grains as part of their daily diet weighed less than the women who consumed less grains.

Dairy, cheese and yoghurt helps strengthen bones and protect against future osteoporosis.

Studies have confirmed that a diet rich in calcium, magnesium and potassium which are nutrients found in dairy foods actually lowers blood pressure while reducing the risk of hypertension. It is also an important component for proper muscle and nerve function.

Fruits and Vegetables contain antioxidants which fight against free radicals that age the body. Like grains they also provide bulk for the

bowel and therefore reduce the risk of contracting bowel and rectal cancer. Eating oranges and tomatoes also increases the ability to absorb iron from meat. Fruits and vegetables also contain carotenoids which reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke. Fruits and vegetables have been linked with memory improvement and slow mental decline with age.

Meats gives a natural source of Vitamin B12 that cannot be sourced from non meat products. The body can metabolise and absorb Vitamin B12 fives more from meat compared to its pill form. It is a rich source of iron which is needed to carry precious oxygen the organs and muscles and for proper neural function.

You can consume enough from your diet naturally that you shouldn't have the need for vitamin supplements.

Dark green leafy vegetables are a great source for iron but compared with meat, weight for weight 100 grams of liver contains around 6,000 micrograms of iron compared to 325 micrograms in 100 grams of spinach. So as you can see protein is a great pure source of iron and many other vitamins and you can stay healthy by consuming around 75 grams 3 times per week.

The Recommended Daily Servings For A Balanced Diet

Grains: the recommended daily dietary amount is around 6 ounces per day

The reason why we don't combine your fruit and vegetable intake is because you need to eat a specific amount from each.

Vegetables: 2 ½ cups per day

Fruits: 2 cups per day

Dairy: 3 cups per day

Meat and Beans: 5 ½ ounces per day

A Closer Look At Fad Diets

The Atkins Diet, The Cabbage Diet, The Beverly Hills Diet, The Zone Diet, The South Beach Diet and sadly lots, lots more.

The Atkins Diet

This diet has been known to be effective for weight loss. Subjects who have participated in this program usually see quick results within a week. Participants have been known to lose between 3 and 5 pounds straight out of the gate by increasing the amount of meat in their daily diet.

Why meat?

Well meat believe it or not is quite filling and acts as an appetite suppressant causing you to eat less for starters. It also encourages your body to burn fat in the absence of sugar. Because you are not consuming vast amounts of sugars by restricting your carbohydrate intake consumption, you burn fat.

Fat is not the only thing you burn, the Atkins diet does not actively promote exercise, you are given the premise that you can lose the weight without having to do any exercise. While you may still lose weight you are also losing precious muscle tissue. It's the building of this muscle tissue that actually burns the fat you are so desperately trying to rid yourself of.

You are restricting entire food groups, foods that you need for a healthy body. Carbohydrates such as breads, grains, rice, and pasta actually help to add volume and mass to your colon and aids in cleaning out the bowels. This is why a diet high in protein, cheese and eggs can cause constipation and bad breath.

Diets high in proteins have been linked to certain cancers. Nobody knows for sure what the long term health effects the Atkins diet will have will have on the body, but time will tell. Don't sacrifice your overall health for the purpose of losing weight. There are better ways of losing weight while keeping your sanity.

In a recent study, over 40% of participants dropped out within their first year of being on the Atkins program. The reasons were that the program was too restrictive.

On a more positive note, those who did participate lost an overall average of 16 pounds during their first six months, however near the end of the year that amount dropped down to a 10 pound average weight loss.

The results for nearly half of participants was not permanent because people don't like being deprived of the foods they enjoy eating which is why they cannot sustain long term success on diets such as these.

More often than not the weight will be gained back within a few months because participants will slip back into old habits and go back to enjoying the foods they loved prior to starting the diet.

It's not their fault it's just the way the body is designed. It was not designed for elimination of entire food groups or eating too much of one particular group. As I mentioned before your body is hardwired for survival and will stop at nothing to preserve you at all costs even if that includes derailing your current diet.

Low Carbohydrate Diets – Why They Are Bad For You

Your body being the master design of efficiency that it is will always turn food whether it be a teaspoon of honey or a wedge of orange into sugar. The body needs to convert it to this form so that can be burned as fuel so that we can get on with the business of living.

What diets that are low in carbohydrates do is they severely limit your carbohydrate intake so that your body has an absence of sugar to burn so instead of burning sugar, it burns fat.

Embarking on extreme diets like these will see a drop in weight but you may not want to live without your favorite foods for the long haul. That is what makes it difficult to stick to these types of diets.

Eliminating carbohydrates restricts the vitamins and minerals you get from that food group such as from brown rice, whole wheat's, whole grains, beans, pastas, vegetables, etc. These are carbohydrates that are good for you and give a slow release of sugar into the bloodstream which keeps your energy levels stable. Whole grains that you find in oatmeal also are beneficial for your health. It is known that the whole grain found in oatmeal lowers dangerous LDL (low density protein) cholesterol in your blood.

Unless you love meat and dairy diets like these can lead to a lack of variety causing dieters to stray.

Diets Low In Fat

Despite what you might think low fat diets aren't all they're cracked up to be. Every human being even if you're Kate Moss needs a certain amount of fat in their diet. You need this for your body to function efficiently. Fat insulates your organs and gives them separation from other neighboring organs. Fat also coats your nerves cells and protects them deterioration. Fat is also involved in your body's important biochemical reactions so having some fat in your diet is important though within the limits of reason and what is healthy.

Fat also promotes normal brain cell function, it regulates hormones, immune system operation. Assists with haemoglobin oxygen transport, proper cell wall function, transporting and absorbing cell nutrients, etc. Fat is essential in our daily diets.

These particular diets are very popular because the train of thought is that if you consume less fat the less fat you will gain. Makes sense doesn't it? After all, fat is very calorie dense.

Before venturing into a diet like this there are couple of things that you need to remember, that not all fats are created equal. Not all fats are bad, there are good fats and bad fats.

Here's what I mean

Bad fats

These fats tend to be the saturated fat and of the Trans fat variety. There is a link between saturated fats and cardiovascular heart disease, it is this type of fat that raises your cholesterol levels. It usually exists in diets that are high in animal fats which is why the Atkins and low carb diet models aren't usually the best kind.

Although Atkins himself has found no increase in cholesterol levels with his way of eating, we still do not know what the long term effects this kind of eating will produce. Diets high in saturated (animal) fats have been linked to certain cancers.

If your diet is high in cholesterol, fats deposit themselves on your arterial walls restricting blood flow to your heart and to your body. Your heart then has a tougher job of pumping blood to the rest of your body which increases your blood pressure.

Your heart may also increase in size to force the blood through your arteries causing angina a condition known as enlargement of the heart. Through blood pressure increase comes kidney damage and damage to the smaller capillaries in your eyes causing eventual reduction in eyesight and possible blindness if blood pressure is not controlled.

Trans fatty acids are amongst the worst kind of fat to have in high quantities in your diet. Fats or oils that have partial hydrogenation are more than likely to be Trans fatty. This type of fat lowers the amount of healthy cholesterol (HDL – high density lipoproteins) which throws the system out of balance by increasing the amount of bad cholesterol present.

Good Fats

In their basic building block form they are simply known as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. They play several important roles in hormone production and help to aid in proper cell function.

These types of fats contain Omega-3 fatty acids, fish is a source rich in this fat. Omega-3 has been known to reduce the risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and stroke. If you want to preserve your health for the long term then you should make fish and fish oils a regular part of your diet.

If embarking on a diet low in fat the positives are that less fat consumed, less fat stored on your body. You are still able to eat many of the foods you enjoy without the restrictions of the Atkins or low carb diets. You get to have a balance in your diet. Simply restricting foods high in bad fats from your eating plan means you get to eat a wide variety of foods just avoiding the high fat versions.

Just remember, do not eliminate all fats from your diet, not all fats are bad for you. We need a certain amount of good fats in our daily diet for our bodies to function at their peak.

Be mindful this is still a diet nonetheless and you still have to exercise restraint over yourself when selecting foods. This diet is not as restrictive as those calorie counting ones yet you still may be tempted to cheat. If you are to go on this type of diet the control has to come from you rather than from a strict eating plan that does the meal plan for you.

What it comes down to as with anything in life, we have to be self governing and exercise commitment to our goals. Nobody can make you lose the weight or lose the weight for you. You have to want to lose the weight and stick to it until you do.

Popular Programs Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig

The reason why these diets are so popular and have stood the test of time is because they offer support to their clients. Losing weight is not always easy and to have the support of others increases the likelihood of staying on the program in the long run. That emotional support keeps you going longer.

The success of these programs not only comes from their support but in the case of Jenny Craig they promote portion controlled meals with reduced fat and sugar content. You can basically eat your favorites but just to watch how much you eat. A more realistic way to eat that is in alignment with how you would probably eat in the real world.

Weight Watchers rely upon a points system. Each day you get a certain number of points to consume and each food is worth a certain number of points. You can trade points for example if you want to have dessert you can trade that for your one of your meals instead so that you can have your cake and eat it too without blowing your calories for the day.

Bottom line. Avoid fad diets. You won't be able to realistically stay on them for the long term and you won't experience long term weight loss

results. If it falls into any of the categories above, chances are it's a fad diet.

So what draws us to them? It's the allure of quick results with very little effort. We live in an instant gratification society, we want everything now with little work. If you want anything worthwhile in life, it will always require effort. In fact the reward is only proportional to the amount of effort invested.

Weight loss is no different. If you want to lose weight you have to earn it, it's going to take some work, but think of all the benefits you get back in return. They far outweigh any sacrifice. Your life is worth it don't you think?

Factors Affecting How We Lose Weight

There are several reasons why we gain weight of which we will delve into in more detail.

What We Eat – Our Calorie Consumption

When we consume more calories than we burn our bodies store the excess away as fat. As I mentioned before our bodies are extraordinary creations and tend to store away any excess fat we don't need in case of leaner times that might lie ahead.

However today those times are few and far between and because we live in the developed world rarely are there ever any times when food is truly scarce so we continue to keep storing it away.

Compared with 100 short years ago, you would be hard pressed to find any of our ancestors stricken with obesity because they worked hard in order to eat. They would either have to grow and harvest their own food or go to great lengths to get it. Because there was a certain amount of effort that went into daily survival they burned more

calories compared to our readily accessible society where everything we want is at our fingertips.

Even what was considered luxury items such as flour, sugar and chocolate to our ancestors have become everyday fixtures of the modern pantry. Things are too readily available to us that nothing is a treat anymore and we tend to over indulge ourselves on a regular basis.

As a result of this way of living we are left to find ways to get rid of the fat we spent years gaining. If only we could look at our lifestyle and realize the answer is staring back at us from our pantries and not in the bottom of a jar of diet pills or the next fad diet that blows our way.

Understanding how our bodies operate, how they burn fat, what makes them gain weight is all instrumental in your own personal weight loss journey. Educating yourself on how your body works only empowers you to make better decisions for yourself.

Why We Gain Weight

We are all different. It's frustrating to see people who eat like a horse never gain a single pound. They probably have very active metabolisms which acts like the body's natural furnace burning calories effortlessly the moment they are absorbed into the body. These people are like the hummingbirds of society, no matter how much they consume their weight remains perfectly controlled.

But like the rest of us mere mortals, we may be disheartened when we experience the exact opposite by having what is known as a low metabolic rate. As you can guess when you have a low metabolic rate anything you eat seems to be directly deposited on your love handles without much effort.

Low Metabolism

Our metabolisms are sensitive to our activity levels and the proportion to lean muscle tissue we have in comparison to fat.

Our muscle tissue burns calories for energy. The more muscle tissue the more fat we burn. The less muscle tissue we have the more fat escapes into our bodies and gets deposited into fat cells for storage. Think of your fat cells as storage space where the excess fat is deposited if not burned. Everything has a destination it is either stored or burned.

If we live sedentary lives and we are not physically active our metabolism reacts by slowing down. When our metabolic rate is slow we lose the ability to properly burn calories and we store the unburned energy as fat. This is why we gain weight if we are not regularly exercising.

People that are more physically active have a greater muscle mass which burns more calories and hence more fat. Some people however are genetically predisposed to having a higher metabolism and will always be able to burn calories effortlessly. I know, it doesn't seem fair but just because you may not have been genetically blessed with a fast metabolism doesn't mean you can't have one.

Little fact:

Did you know that 2 people one with greater muscle mass than the other can be sitting side by side enjoying a movie together. Although they are undertaking absolutely no physical activity for that time period, the person with the greater muscle mass will actually burn off more calories than the one with the lesser muscle mass. Incredible what having a little more lean muscle mass can do.

Here's How You Increase Your Metabolism

Start exercising more, no matter what type. Any form of exercise will impact on your metabolism. You will burn lots more calories than doing no exercise at all.

Instead of having larger meals, why not try portioning? Smaller meals at regular intervals will keep your metabolism burning steadily rather than weigh it down with heavy meals. Ever feel lethargic after a large meal? Energy is diverted away from the extremities and put into digestion which makes you tired. Don't weigh down your metabolism with large meals, small is the way to go.

Avoid crash dieting and restrictive calorie control. Starvation will only throw your body into survival mode and will derail you from your weight loss program completely. Remember fad diets only work temporarily, any weight loss is almost guaranteed to return once coming off these programs. So if you want to lose weight, you have to feed your body. Don't drive your body to the point where it's so fed up it will force you to binge to get some food.

Try the miracle exercise almost anyone can do and best of all it's free. Walking is fantastic for exercising all of your large muscle groups while getting your heart rate up. Just walking for at least 30 minutes per day for 3 times per week can greatly increase your metabolism and your weight loss efforts than from just dieting alone.

This is often a hot topic of debate however most doctors believe you should always start the day with breakfast. The results have shown that those who skip breakfast are more inclined to overeat later on during the day which of course diverts precious energy into the act of digestion. It also gives you the energy you need to get through your day. Did you know that you still burn calories as you sleep so that you need to replenish them when you wake? This is why the meal is called "Break" "Fast".

Other Factors Affecting How You Lose Weight – How You Eat

Not only how much you eat can impact your weight loss efforts but also how you are eating plays a huge role in your ability to lose weight. Are you aware of how you are eating?

Even the speed at which you eat can have an effect. Being aware of how much you eat at a meal and being aware of every bite will decrease the need to top up your plate.

How many times have you sat down to a meal and ate so fast you wondered where the food went? Being aware how you are eating will make the food last longer and seem like more. You will be less likely to get extra portions and will be more satisfied on less.

Remember it takes at least 30 minutes for your brain to register that it is full so give it time. I also mentioned earlier that sometimes we mistake hunger for first, instead of eating more food try having a glass of water instead.

Your Genetics And Your Metabolism

Your genetic makeup may have an effect on your metabolism but only a minor one. Don't think that because your predisposition to being obese is a death sentence and that you can't lose weight. You absolutely can, there are several things that are within your power that you can do so don't think for a second that you are doomed by your genetics because you are not. Because genetics only counts for a small amount when it comes to your weight loss the tools you have at your disposal lies within what you eat and how much you move.

How Much You Move

Let's face it. If you want to lose weight exercise is an integral part of the process. You simply cannot get around this fact because it is by this process of exercise that you burn fat. It is the only way for your body to shift the rolls of fat or the love handles that were deposited over time.

Exercise can be something as simple as walking. Don't feel you have to hit the gym to burn the pounds or step onto a mechanical treadmill while being subjected to blaring music. With walking you can enjoy the outdoors, breathe the fresh air, enjoy the view and get real benefits from genuine hill climbing. And best of all it's free.

Exercising just 30 minutes per day 3 times per week or more has so many benefits that have far reaching consequences long after you've done the exercise.

Exercise reinvigorates and energizes you.

Exercise releases your natural feel good chemicals known as endorphins. In fact even the 30 minute walks 3 times per week can greatly lower your stress levels and make you feel euphoric, calmer and relaxed.

With exercise also comes the repairing and building of muscles mass which in turn increases your metabolism. Don't think that you have to look like The Incredible Hulk muscular to burn fat, even the slightest extra muscle tissue can greatly increase your fat burning efforts. The kind of muscle mass will be the shapely and attractive as the fat burns away. So don't think for a second when you are building muscle mass that you are building bulk. You are simply creating more lean muscle tissue to burn more fat.

As mentioned earlier you don't have to attend the gym for it to be classed as exercise. Walking, swimming, biking, hiking, jogging even gardening are all great for raising your heart rate and for burning calories.

How To Dump The Weight For Good This Time

You can dump the weight off permanently by simply starting with your mind.

Through education and sound knowledge on knowing how your body burns and stores fat means that you are in a strong position to finally shed the weight once and for all.

Knowing how to recognize fad diets and how to avoid them means that you are so much more ahead of the game than you were before. You won't be tempted to fall for these fly by night diets that promise the earth and deliver nothing but disappointment.

You have also learned that it is a lifestyle that you are pursuing and not a quick fix. It was years of habit forming eating that got you here in the first place and it would take more than a week's worth of dieting to undo it. It can be done, you can do it. The thing that you should be excited about is that now you finally have the answers to really do it this time and not some band aid temporary solution to a lifelong struggle.

As you can see, weight loss is so much more than just the weight itself. It's more than just looking good or being able to fit into something, although those things have their importance. Weight loss is a holistic thing because it goes deeper than just the issue of the weight itself. It encompasses the drives and motivations as to how we got there in the first place.

So to get rid of the weight once and for all it requires some serious thinking on your part to identify the root cause of the matter and as you have read in previous chapters, it's more often than not more than just the physical weight itself that is the problem. Once you understand this, the weight will not only come off but it will stay off for good.

Inches or Pounds?

Which is more important? When we start a weight loss program we become obsessed with the scales where we weigh ourselves several times a day to see if that pesky little needle has shifted. Suddenly our entire diet's success teeters on that one measurement. We weigh ourselves before we eat and after we pee. We weigh ourselves 2 or 3

times a day to see if we have dropped any additional weight throughout the day. Don't let that scale turn you into a basket case.

Weighing yourself is important as a starting point but what I would do is weigh yourself initially then weigh yourself after every 1 to 2 weeks.

I know, sounds like torture but it will prevent you from becoming a slave to the scale because before you know it, the success of your diet will rely on the number that scale spits out. That's too much power for a little inanimate device to have over your life. You need to realize that your weight will fluctuate all day every day, that's a natural thing. Sometimes you hold more fluid on certain days than others and this will reflect itself through the scales. Seeing this fluctuation even after half starving yourself will only make you feel defeated.

The best indication for your weight loss is the way your clothes fit.

You can have 5 different weight fluctuations throughout your day which makes you feel as though you are not succeeding in your diet when in actual fact it couldn't be further from the truth.

Fat is lighter than muscle. Ever notice when you're cleaning out a pan filled with fats that it floats to top of the dishwater? That's because fat is lighter, so then doesn't it reason to stand that fat will also be the lighter of the two?

So imagine to your horror when you've gained 2 pounds on the scale yet you are swimming in your clothes. That's because you have gained more lean muscle mass, the attractive, toned type not the Arnold Schwarzenegger kind. This is great because the more lean muscle you have the more surface area it covers and the more fat it can grab and burn as energy because that's really all fat is, unused energy just waiting to be burned.

So just remember when weighing yourself, muscle weighs more. Don't get worried if you have gained a little especially when you know

you are eating right. It just means that your body is changing and reshuffling itself as your body eliminates fat from your body.

My advice, weight yourself once every week or every two weeks, then hide your scale out of sight until the 2 weeks are over. Let your clothing be your indicator as to how much fat you are losing because fat weighs less than muscle yet takes up more space which is why you will notice your clothes getting bigger, or rather you getting smaller.

Starting Point – The Importance Of A Goal

A Ship's captain and an airline pilot have the same thing in common, before they even leave port they have a destination already set.

Before you embark on your program, you too need to have an end in mind. You need to have a destination, an arrival point. In other words, what weight will you finally arrive at?

Don't take it as the weight you think you will look good at and just because you may have looked great at that weight as a teenager or when you were younger does not necessarily mean you will now.

The best thing to do when determining your goal weight is find a program that can calculate that for you. It takes several factors into consideration and will arrive at an average weight it feels you should be based upon your age and your height.

So, what weight should you be?

You should have already calculated that earlier in this book. If you haven't already the chance to you can do so here:

<http://www.halls.md/ideal-weight/body.htm>

Take your body measurements so that you can keep track of your progress. You never realize how far you really come until you know where you initially started. Keeping track of your measurements is a rock solid testament to your progress and gives you burning incentive to stick with it.

Your measurements should include:

The Date: _____

Height: _____

Current Weight: _____

Bust (women): _____

Waist around the belly button: _____

Hips: _____

Thighs: _____

Right upper arm: _____

Left upper arm: _____

Make sure that you purchase a notebook to keep tabs of your measurements. Don't forget to re-measure yourself every month which will encourage you to stay focused on your goal.

As mentioned before, weigh yourself every two weeks, once a week at the very most to avoid becoming discouraged with the natural weight fluctuations as your body begins to change and transform.

The other great thing about goal setting is that not only do you have a real purpose and you are solidifying and materializing those dreams into reality but it also gives you achievable steps to attain it. Think of it as a blueprint to your weight loss.

Which would keep you motivated longer?

I will lose 100 pounds in 12 months of which I will be at my goal weight of 120 pounds.

Or...

By December 31st 2009 I will weigh 120 pounds. My current weight is 220 pounds therefore I need to lose 100 pounds.

To achieve my goal of a 100 pound weight loss I will need to lose at least 2 pounds per week for the next 12 months.

Then create mini weight loss goals which will eventually contribute to the overall weight loss goal of 100 pounds because how do you eat an elephant?, one bite at a time.

How do you achieve such an overwhelming amount of weight loss?, one pound at a time. It is these small, simple, unglamorous steps that add up to the life changing 100 pound goal.

Get very detailed and specific.

So if you started your program on January 1st, by January the 8th you would have lost 2 pounds with your new weight being 218 pounds.

By January the 15th you should weigh 216 pounds

January the 22nd your weight will now be 214 pounds

January the 29th you will now weigh 212 pounds

See what I mean? It's more realistic to break your overall goal into achievable little bite sizes so that you can see your progress and where you are headed. You appreciate that these little mini achievements add up to a your overall goal.

Doing it this way makes it doable and removes the pressure from having to lose 100 pounds now like most of those fad diets would have you believe.

You set yourself up for failure when you see you've only lost 2 pounds in your first week because you have that huge monumental goal in mind, never mind the fact that weight loss is just a collective of little weight loss successes that form the overall bigger picture.

Knowing that massive success with weight loss comes in little steps as you will know that with each pound you lose.

If you half kill yourself with punishing calorie restriction and excess exercise and find yourself losing over 5 pounds per week, just remember that most of that weight will be water and some desperately needed lean muscle tissue. That means that all of it will return almost overnight. So stick with a realistic, healthy, permanent 1 to 2 pound per week weight loss.

Watching What You Eat – Keeping Tabs On Those Calories

What Exactly Is a Calorie?

Before we start what exactly are calories? You hear that word touted around loosely on so many diets but what exactly are calories and why is important that you keep track of them?

All a calorie is is a measure of heat energy. One calorie is the amount of energy being required to raise the temperature of a gram of water by one degree Celsius. Calories are found in fats, proteins, carbohydrates or alcohol so pretty much everything except water.

A gram of carbohydrates contains 3.75 calories

A gram of fat contains 9 calories

A gram of protein contains 4 calories

A gram of alcohol contains 7 calories

You can see from the above figures that it's easy to gain weight from consuming foods high in fat and drinking too much alcohol as they are laden with more calories than protein or carbohydrates.

Monitoring Your Calories

Up to this point you know how important diet and exercise are with respect to your weight loss. You know that to lose weight you have to eat. Severely restricting your calories to crash diet levels won't only hinder your weight loss effort but it will damage your body in the process.

You have also learned that when you deprive the body of food it will feed off itself for survival including burning precious muscle tissue which alarmingly also includes the heart. This is why some dieters on extreme calorie restriction diets often die of heart failure because the heart has been broken down and weakened. So please don't shock your body by starving it.

The approach you should be taking is from a scientific standpoint, don't worry anyone can do this and you certainly don't have to be a doctor to understand it.

Make sure you eat from all food groups but eat smaller meals, say 5 to 6 meals per day to keep your energy levels balanced. When we severely restrict calories we jump start our set point to kick in and

make us eat. So to avoid that evolutionary mechanism response we need to work in alignment with our body and feed it good food, and frequently. Your body won't think that it's being starved or deprived and it will allow you to lose the weight.

So how can we lose weight by eating? By monitoring our caloric intake. Did you know that if you can create a 500 calorie deficit every day from just your diet and exercise that you will be able to lose around a pound of fat per week?

A pound is great, it doesn't sound like much however remember how I mentioned before that volume for volume fat by far takes up more room than muscle tissue. That means that every pound you lose you are losing bulk and rolls from your body. This is why that even if you lose 3 pounds of fat that you notice your clothes getting looser because even though muscle is heavier than fat, fat actually occupies more space than muscle does. Keep that in mind when you weigh yourself. The scale isn't always an accurate reflection of your true fat loss.

The Number Of Calories You Consume

Every food you consume has a caloric value associated with it.

To really lose weight you need to create a deficit of calories every day. For example, if you eliminate 250 calories less each day from your diet either by eating a little less or by removing high sugar, high fat foods from your diet and you exercise and burn off 250 extra calories per day you can lose up to 3,500 calories per week which totals one pound of fat lost.

To do that you have to be burning 500 extra calories per day. This is 500 calories over and above what you are eating. If you simply burn off what you eat you are maintaining your weight level. If you are burning over and above what you are consuming then you begin to burn your excess fat stores.

To lose 2 pounds per week you simply double the amount of daily exercise you do and eat more lean, healthy foods.

How Many Calories Should You Consume Daily?

Women should consume no less than 1,200 calories per day to ensure weight loss and that they are receiving the balanced diet they need.

Men on the other hand should consume no less than 1,800 calories per day to lose weight.

To determine accurately the number of calories you should be getting in your daily diet use this handy tool to calculate yours:

http://www.dietblog.com/archives/2005/12/26/how_to_calculate_your_daily_calorie_needs.php

Remember the more lean muscle mass you have the better. If you decide to go below the recommended calorie amount for a balanced diet then you will be losing precious muscle tissue which is instrumental in the burning of fat. Don't forget that the more lean muscle tissue you have the better your body at losing weight.

You will not experience permanent, sustained weight loss by eating too little but you will also run the risk of slowing your metabolism to the pace of a snail. Anyone who's been on restrictive calorie diets in the past will know that it is difficult to exercise when you simply don't have the energy to do so. So the key here is to make sure that you

consume enough calories to have lots of energy and to enjoy life while losing weight at the same time. It's all about balance.

Keeping Tabs Of Your Calories

Know what you are putting into your body. I love knowing that there are 3,500 calories in a pound of fat. Some people can consume that amount each day which is not surprising why some people gain 30 pounds in a year without knowing how.

It's very easy to do. Think about it, a hamburger, fries and soda (1,200 calories) and there's most of your daily calorie allocation blown right there, to top it off it won't keep you full for long either. Eat that every day for a year without much exercise and that adds up to some serious weight gain.

The reason why I love knowing that there are 3,500 calories in a pound is because it puts it all into perspective. I know that to burn that off, I will need to do more than 60 minutes on the cross trainer each day plus a 30 minute walk. So it makes me wiser in my food choices. The place where you wish you never had that extra donut or chocolate shake is right in the middle of your intense work out where you pay in sweat to work it off. Don't worry if you're coming to terms with this, the important thing is now you are aware of it you will start to see food in a different light and gain a healthier respect for it and the effect it has on your body.

These days all foods display the amount of calories on their packaging. This way you can know roughly how many calories you will consume and if it meets your daily requirements. This is also a great indicator of foods to avoid especially if they are loaded with empty calories.

Use your knowledge when determining the number of calories a meal has, be a calorie detective by making it a priority to know what's going into your body.

Once you get good at it, figuring out how many calories a particular food has will become a breeze.

The Food We Eat

Calories aside the actual food we eat plays an important role in how we lose weight.

For example 100 grams of hard boiled candy will have a lot more fat than say 100 grams of lettuce. Even though foods may be of equal weight doesn't mean that they will be equal in calories. So be aware of any extra fats or calories hidden in foods. Always check your labels.

You don't have to be a food Nazi and restrict yourself to the point where you're not enjoying what you eat. It's important that you have the occasional treat so that you are not feeling deprived. Remember we're aiming for permanent lifelong change by altering our lifestyle eating choices. You have to treat yourself now and then to avoid any derailing binges that come from feelings of deprivation.

Good Fat vs. Bad Fat

We touched upon this earlier in terms of the types of fats to avoid and the kinds that we should be incorporating more into our daily diet.
Foods High In Fat – What To Watch For

Ok, you know about saturated and Tran's fats. The fats that tend to be solid at room temperature are of the saturated kind.

Here are some common fats that are high in saturated fat content:

Animal fats such as dripping
Bacon grease
Crisco
Margarine

Coconut oil
Palm oil
Hydrogenated Oils
Partially hydrogenated oils

Both Hydrogenated oils and partially hydrogenated oils are liquid oils that have been solidified by having hydrogen forced into them at high pressures. The process of hydrogenation is to preserve the oil for longer in its solid form but because this process change its form it also alters its chemical properties turning it from healthy unsaturated fat to Trans fat, the dangerous kind.

This is the type of fat that causes arteriosclerosis and blocks the arteries in your heart. Keep these fats to a minimum in your diet. In fact, if you want to lose weight on an ongoing basis you need to limit the amount of fat you consume to a total of 20 grams or less per day.

In a 3 scoop serving of Haagen Dazs Mint Chip Dazzler with hot fudge sauce and whipped cream you would consume around 38 grams of saturated fat (1,300 calories!).

So watch for calories and fat. You can be fooled by small snacks that seem harmless enough like with the ice cream treat, but it's not until you find out the fat content that you realize how easy it can be to put on weight.

Foods With High Fat Content

- French Fries
- Animal fats
- Fried bacon
- Potato chips
- Cake
- Cookies
- Candy
- Sausages
- Tartar sauce
- Pizza (you can make your own low fat alternative)

- Donuts
- Whole cream butter
- Cream Cheese
- Sour Cream
- Danishes
- Whole Mayonnaise
- Whole Cheddar cheese
- Nuts and olives
- Avocadoes

There are a couple on that list that probably stand out such as the nut, olive and avocadoes. Some healthy foods contain fat but also hold high nutritional value and are beneficial to you. Avocado contains fat but is the kind that is actually good for your heart.

Carbohydrates Or “Carbs”

Foods High In Carbohydrates

We need carbohydrates in our diet. They are source of fuel the body uses for energy once broken down during the process of digestion.

During digestion, carbohydrates are broken down into sugars, providing the body with a steady source of energy. Carbohydrates come in two forms simple (monosaccharides meaning “one”) and complex (polysaccharides meaning “many”)

Once you understand the difference between both simple and complex carbohydrate you will know which offers the best quality fuel for your body.

Simple Carbohydrates

Come in the form of high energy, sugary snack foods which you would typically find in granola bars, candy, chocolate, cakes, cookies, donuts, soda also in fruits and dairy products etc. These types of

carbohydrates are broken down instantly and used for energy by the body. This is why some people experience intense sugar highs after consuming foods high in sugar.

The burst of energy is like a flash in the pan, it only lasts for a short time. Within an hour your energy levels have gone to an extreme high then plummets to a low. Your body then stimulates your appetite to consume more because it needs more energy.

Consuming diets high in refined sugar foods plays havoc with your insulin levels. Because there is such a rush of sugar in one huge amount, the body must accommodate this by releasing enough insulin to counteract it which is why you experience intense highs and lows.

Your body must get rid of that sugar from the blood immediately and any excess sugar that is not burned off as energy must be stored as fat. You have to understand that your body cannot allow any remaining sugar to be floating around in the blood as it effects your body's normal functions. Once your body becomes unable to effectively remove all sugar from the blood, you become diabetic.

The scary fact is that most children under the age of 10 years are consuming around 70 teaspoons of sugar in a typical day. This is staggering; in fact it is believed that our children today will be among some of the first in their generation to die before their parents.

Examples of simple carbohydrates:

- Cookies
- Honey
- Soda drinks
- Chocolate
- Jam jellies
- Cake
- Oranges
- Plums
- Pears
- Blueberries
- Grapefruit
- Cherries

Complex Carbohydrates

Unlike simple carbohydrates these aren't easily broken down and absorbed into the bloodstream as quickly.

Because they are complex in structure take longer to break down and are released gradually, not instantly into the bloodstream. This means that they provide a steady, stable source of energy and because they are slow releasing have a chance to be burned off rather than stored as fat.

Examples of complex carbohydrates:

- Vegetables (cellulose)
- Whole grain breads
- Wholegrain cereals
- Whole grain pasta
- Legumes
- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes
- Brown rice
- Bagels
- Corn
- Beans
- Yams
- Peas
- Jasmine rice
- Lentils

You should incorporate more complex carbs into your diet but that's not to say that you can't have the occasional treat.

Just be aware of what you are eating and putting into your body and that any type of carb consumed, simple or complex, in the absence of any kind of exercise will lead to weight gain. Your body is efficient, if the energy you consume is not used it will be stored as fat.

It probably pays to eat to the conditions. What is that I hear you ask? Just like driving to the conditions if you know that it's going to rain, you of course drive a little more cautiously, you drive to the conditions.

In the case of eating, you eat to the conditions. If you know that you are out to play an intense game of tennis for the evening then you consume extra carbs for energy. If on the other hand you're going to be sitting in a movie theatre for 2 hours then you consume a little less as you won't be undertaking any physical activity to burn it off.

Your diet should be higher in complex carbohydrates as it takes your body longer to break them down meaning a slow, steady release of energy. This is the best route to take for weight loss as simple carbs tend to release energy too quickly into your bloodstream giving you massive highs and lows. Also the slow release means the less likely you are to contract Type II diabetes at some point in your life. However don't forget that with any carbohydrate consumption must always be accompanied with exercise.

We Have All Of This Knowledge – Now What?

With everything we've spoken about up until this point, it boils down to 2 things that you need to lose weight for good. What you eat and how much you move.

You should eat sensibly, that's not to say that you can't have the occasional treat from time to time. Just not every day. A lot of these foods were absent from market shelves and from society just 50 short years ago and the weight of the average person reflected this. So it stands to reason that it is how we are eating that is keeping the weight on our bodies. If we just shift our eating by reducing the high fat, simple carbohydrate foods and move a little more like our ancestors did, we will lose the weight.

Eat a balanced diet and you're well on your way.

Some things to remember when creating your eating plan:

- Do not eliminate any of the food groups. Eat from them all. Cutting out entire food groups will not only deprive you of vitamins and minerals which could leave you vitamin deficient but will leave you with a very unbalanced and boring diet making it difficult to stick to.
- Reading food labels and finding where the hidden calories are lurking in food. Having a raised awareness of this will not only keep the weight off but will also empower you to make informed decisions about what you are putting into your body.
- Avoiding high fat foods. A treat once in a while is fine and we all should get a certain amount of fats from our foods but be careful you don't get too much of the wrong kind. Remember anything you eat that isn't burned off is stored.
- Be aware of your carbohydrate intake. Make sure you get more of the complex than the simple variety. We all need carbs for energy we just need to monitor how much. Always opt for the slow release complex kind which will sustain you for longer and won't spike your sugar level leaving you feeling tired and lethargic.
- Drink water. You can also get fluid from coffee, tea, milk, fruits and juices but don't forget the best fluid your body prefers over everything is water because it can be readily absorbed and used; nothing has to be broken down or done to it. Water is nature's perfect elixir.
- In the next chapter we're going to address the other important component for weight loss that you can't be without, exercise.

Getting Physical

Quick fact: Remember what we mentioned before? There are approximately 3,500 calories per pound of fat?

That means that you need to burn 3,500 calories to lose one pound of fat.

Makes you think twice before eating a hamburger with the fries doesn't it?, especially when you put it into perspective with the amount of exercise you have to do to burn it off. That always makes me think twice before reaching for the tub of ice cream because I think how much I'll have to sweat and burn to get rid of it.

But don't think for a second that you need to be like those Biggest Loser Guys on television where they lose an unrealistic 10 to 15 pounds per week.

Who has the time to exercise for 6 to 7 hours per day? Not me and I'm pretty sure neither do you. I wouldn't recommend this method of weight loss; it's simply not realistic for the general population to follow when you have a fulltime job and family to worry about. Great if you can hole yourself up for 12 weeks with a personal trainer, all of the latest cutting edge technology equipment and with the entire world watching you're every move, who wouldn't succeed?

Please don't think that because you are not losing 5 pounds per week that you're failing your program or that it's not working. Don't compare your results to these types of shows as the conditions they lose the weight under are extreme.

A recent study revealed that if you give someone a good enough reason to lose weight, they will. 25 overweight participants had pictures taken of them wearing nothing more than their underwear revealing of all their lumps, bumps and jiggly bits.

The challenge for the group was for everyone to lose at least 10 pounds in the next month or run the risk of having their picture published on the front page of the highest publication newspaper. 30 days later, how successful do you think the experiment was?

100% success rate and why wouldn't it be? If you were faced with humiliation you would do anything to avoid the pain of it. Same thing with the Biggest Loser contestants, not only is money a motivating factor but who wants to look like a failure in front of the world?

Wouldn't it make you want to work just that little bit harder?, you bet it would.

So please don't put yourself under unrealistic pressure to match pound for pound what these contestants are losing. I recall once reading a weight loss forum post where a woman was so depressed having only had lost 3 pounds in one week compared to her favorite female contestant who had lost 8 pounds. It derailed her diet because she couldn't keep up, she thought she wasn't working hard enough which left her disheartened and feeling like she failed.

A pound of fat is a pound of fat no matter how you look at it; it's a tiny miraculous achievement that adds up to your bigger goal. Whether you lose 1 pound, 3 pounds or zero pounds in a given week shouldn't throw you from your overall goal because you need to remember everyone is different and will lose weight at different rates. Even if you don't lose any weight in one week doesn't mean you are not making progress. Remember that weight fluctuations will happen and if your weight seems like it's not budging fast enough, I'm sure your clothes will prove differently.

Any weight loss is great. Just keep with it.

So exercise huh?

The thought makes most people cringe but don't worry, we aren't going to ask you to go out and spend hours in the gym working off your weight one mile at a time on the treadmill.

Instead you're going to get a no nonsense approach to exercise anyone can do despite your current level of fitness.

Exercise in your life

Ok, let's start the show by busting a myth or two along the way. Contrary to popular belief sneaking in a little housework during commercial breaks doesn't cut the mustard. It won't be enough to lose the excess pounds you gained over the years.

For exercise to be of any long term benefit you have to raise your heart rate for at least 30 minutes at a time for at least 3 or more times per week.

Would you believe that some people don't consider walking around the neighborhood or up stairs as significant exercise? It may be low impact but it is better than doing no exercise at all and whether you realize it or not still burns calories.

When you think of exercise what images do you conjure in your mind?

Is it of sweaty bodies squeezed into a tiny spaces jumping to pounding music? Exercise doesn't have to be a torture; it can be enjoyable especially if shared with your family or friends. Exercise can be going for a walk, chasing after your children, mowing and raking the lawn.

Anything that gets your heart rate up for an extended period of time is considered exercise.

Exercise And Its Far Reaching Benefits

Exercise, why even do it? Whether you like it or not it's the only way we can burn the excess stores of energy we have accumulated over the years, otherwise known as fat. Our body has stored it but thankfully it can get rid of it too and in order to do that, you've got to move. It's the only way your lean muscle tissue can grab the surrounding fat to burn as energy.

Long after your exercise session whether it be walking, running, swimming, biking, etc, your metabolism continues to burn calories even when you are at rest. The effects of exercise can be experienced long after the actual exercise itself. This is evident in that you sweat a little easier which means your body is behaving like a fat burning furnace, any exercise you do after that point just turbo charges the exercise you've already done and burns extra calories.

Exercise has so many benefits:-

Exercise prolongs your life and keeps your heart healthy. Don't forget that the heart itself is a muscle and needs exercise too. That's why you should resist taking the easy way by going to those spas that claim you can lose weight by doing nothing or than sweating. Sure you lose inches but they find their way like a magnet back onto your body with the next glass of water you drink. Resist gimmicks, if it sounds too good to be true it probably is. Exercise, get your heart rate going, it's the best thing you can do for yourself and your heart will thank you for it.

Exercise also releases your body's natural feel good chemicals known as endorphins (a combination of the words *endogenous* and *morphine*) which naturally relieve stress. Endorphins are thought to be as powerful as morphine yet they are not addictive and are produced naturally within the body. They are also the body's natural pain relief.

Exercise has so many additional benefits including increased agility and stamina, improved memory and reaction time, increase bone density, keeps your arteries supple and flexible for blood to flow through. Reduces the risk of heart attack and stroke. Stronger immune system and deeper, restful sleep.

Exercise helps you to live longer, people who do 30 to 60 minutes of exercise 3 or more times per week will generally live longer than those who don't.

I don't know about you but that builds a pretty strong case in favor of exercise.

Types Of Exercise

Exercise in your home.

Exercise doesn't have to mean buying expensive gym memberships or exercise equipment.

All you have to think of is what you can do to start burning more calories than you are today.

Here are some daily calorie burning activities you can do along with the value of calories burned associated with it.

Note – before embarking on any exercise program it is highly recommended that you first consult your physician to assess your current physical state.

Note – these are the average figures for a 185 pound individual, results will vary according to weight. If you are a little heavier you will burn more calories than the figures presented below. These figures are based upon 60 minutes of activity.

- Ironing – 189 calories
- Washing dishes – 189 calories
- Cooking – 222 calories
- Carpentry – 300 calories
- Lawn raking – 333 calories
- Mopping – 377 calories
- Housework– 390 calories
- Gardening – 455 calories
- Wood Chopping – 511 calories
- Furniture rearranging – 555

Exercise as you can see comes in many forms not only are there practical and useful applications but you also get the added benefit of it improving your health.

However if you are serious about losing weight you have to step up your efforts a little more, these everyday household activities are great for getting exercise but as you know in order to lose even a pound of fat you need to lose 3,500 calories. It would take a lot of furniture moving and gardening for you to get to that point.

To get to the stage where you will lose weight on a consistent basis you need to add extra exercise to your routine.

Let's start small because these are activities that can boost your level of fat burning that little bit extra.

These activities aren't too strenuous but can help the weight come off faster.

Light Exercise

This is achievable for most people no matter what your fitness level and will kick your weight loss up a notch.

Note – these are the average figures for a 185 pound individual, results will vary according to weight. If you are a little heavier you will burn more calories than the figures presented below. These figures are based upon 60 minutes of activity.

- An hour's worth of Yoga stretching – 350 calories
- A relaxing bike ride for one hour – 350 calories
- Running around with your children – 350 calories
- Lawn mowing – 366 calories
- Basketball (shooting hoops) – 377 calories
- Pilates – 433 calories
- Walking (4 miles per hour) – 433 calories
- Game of golf – 480 calories
- Snow shovelling – 511 calories
- Walking up stairs – 577 calories
- Stationary bike – 588 calories
- Walking on a treadmill or jogging – 588 calories

- Low intensity jump rope – 700 calories

Light exercise is fantastic because it can be easily incorporated into our daily lives and will be the exercise most people, especially when starting off on a weight loss program will be able to do.

Once the weight starts to come off and you gain a little more confidence you no doubt will be able to introduce more rigorous exercise into your regime. When you feel within yourself your fitness level increasing you might want to try some moderate exercise.

Moderate Exercise

Here are some examples of moderate exercise. Again these figures are representative of a 185 pound person. If you weigh more than this your calorie expenditure will be much higher. These figures are based upon 60 minutes of activity.

- Low impact Aerobics – 431 calories
- Hiking – 499 calories
- Swimming (moderate) – 511 calories
- Hiking (medium terrain) – 520 calories
- Jogging – 588 calories
- Step Aerobics – 588 calories
- Basketball officiating – 588 calories
- Jogging – 600 calories
- Rollerblading – 600 calories
- Repelling – 677 calories
- Game of Ice hockey – 700 calories

- Press-ups/sit-ups – 700 calories
- Mountain Biking – 710 calories
- Running (5 miles per hour) – 710 calories
- Ski Machine – 810 calories
- Rowing machine (minimal effort) – 820 calories
- Jump rope (moderate effort) – 860 calories

If you want to take your weight loss to newfound levels you can introduce more intense exercise to your routine known as heavy exercise. Not only will it build more fat stripping lean muscle tissue but it will make your body both inside and out stronger than ever.

Proceed with caution – these are advanced exercises and you should consult your doctor before even attempting them. Do not jump into these activities without first having built up your strength with the low and medium impact exercises above first. Not only can this damage your health but it will hurt your chances of weight loss as a result of any sustained injury.

Heavy Exercise

These exercises are the same as above but with the difference of increased intensity level.

Remember that if you have been sedentary for quite some time, you may want to build up to these activities by trying the lower intensity alternatives first.

Again these figures are representative of a 185 pound person. If you weigh more than this your calorie expenditure will be much higher. These figures are based upon 60 minutes of activity.

- Step Aerobics (high impact) – 888 calories
- Rock Climbing – 921 calories
- Basketball Full Court – 921 calories
- Bikram Yoga – 950 calories
- Elliptical Trainer – 955 calories
- Swimming (butterfly stroke) – 1,000 calories
- Handball – 1,010 calories
- A game of Squash – 1,040 calories
- Canoeing (above 6 mph) – 1,040 calories
- Jumping rope (high impact) – 1,040 calories
- Cross-country skiing (high impact) around 1,400 calories.
- Running (12 miles per hour) – 1,876 calories

Finding an exercise program that is right for you

There will only ever be 24 hours in a day and how we use those will have a huge impact on our weight loss success.

I know it's not easy. With the crazy pace of our lives in the 21st century we are finding ourselves busier than we ever have before at any other time in history and as a result, we may find it difficult to incorporate exercise into our hectic schedules.

The reality will always be that if you want to have any success with your weight loss efforts you have to be able to exercise and make it as part of your new lifestyle.

But just because you will be adding exercise to your daily routine doesn't mean that you have to join a gym unless you really want to.

Even just watching a little less television and opting instead to go for a brisk walk can contribute to your weight loss. Playing with the kids and exerting yourself a little more will burn extra calories. Finding the balance that's right for you and the exercises that you can work into your lifestyle without turning your whole life upside down is the key to your success.

If you find it difficult to materialize the time during your day to exercise then simply take the times that you undertake any kind of physical activity and amp it up just a fraction more to burn the extra calories.

Use the time you play with the kids to increase activity levels. Instead of just playing with them why not bike ride with them or throw a ball around at the same time? You still get to spend quality time with the added benefit of ditching extra calories.

Get active, sign up for a sport whether it's tennis, football, baseball, swimming or aerobics this is a great way to lose weight and have fun

at the same time while making new friends (what a great way to get support). Even making the time to do this once per week can contribute to your overall weight loss.

If you work in an office building why not opt to take the stairs? To build up your fitness you may even wish to go past your own level. Not only is this a great way of increasing your fitness level but it's also fantastic for incorporating into your daily schedule so you in essence made it part of your new lifestyle change without having to make too great a sacrifice. Before know it, it will have become such an integral part of your life that you won't be able to do without it

Try hiring exercise equipment for home. Why hire? So that you don't get bored from using the same piece of equipment day in and day out.

When hiring you can advance to more challenging and sophisticated equipment the more your fitness increases and you're not stuck with the same thing each day.

By hiring you can continually upgrade and take advantage of the latest cutting edge equipment. The beauty of exercise equipment is that you get to exercise anywhere you want and why not take the opportunity to do an hour long workout during your favorite show, that way you get to enjoy the show while doing something beneficial for yourself. Don't forget though as with anything in life you only get out what you put in. So if you're going to go to the trouble of hiring a piece of equipment, you have to use it.

Not enough hours in the day? We can't create extra time however we can use wisely the time that we do have. Why not try jumpstarting your day an hour earlier by doing some exercise? Why not walk the dog? Why not do an hour on the treadmill or an hour of yoga or Pilates? Not only do you kick start your metabolism into action but you will continue to burn calories long throughout your day as a result of your early morning exercise efforts.

Any activities that you do such as housecleaning or vacuuming, sweeping and mowing the lawn, why not put more effort and intensity

into it? This can make an impact on your weight loss efforts just by doing a little more.

Any form of exercise is good and the more you do it and increase the intensity level the more fat you will burn. Aim to start with three times per week then increase from there and you will notice the results. Not only will your energy levels increase but you will notice your body changing and your clothes fitting looser on your body.

Remember that exercise is not just for the here and now; it's a lifestyle change for life. Beyond just wanting to look good you are prolonging your life in the process and the benefits far outweigh sacrificing a little down time. Your health and life are worth it.

Your Personal Weight Loss Plan

You really don't need a set meal plan that is going to make you feel as though you are on a diet because let's face it; it's the dieting that got you here in the first place.

I want this to be the last program you will ever need and to do that you need to remember that diets don't work. They imply a temporary quick fix. What you need is a lifelong lifestyle change to get rid of the weight and to keep it off for good this time. You won't be told the portion sizes other than to eat 5 or 6 smaller meals throughout the day that leave you feeling satisfied, not full.

So in order to do that, I won't be giving you all of the 5 meals you must eat each and every day. This is where you start honing your own survival skills and exercise your own judgment because only you know yourself better than anyone else, better than I ever could. I don't know about you, when I see set meal plans it screams diet, deprivation and restriction. My mind already is already working against it and it won't take long until my body finally does.

What I will tell you and as you and I have both discovered along this journey is that you must eat well and exercise for it to have any significant change on your body.

We have spoken about having to lose 3,500 calories overall per week to lose one pound of fat. To do this you need to lose at least 500 extra calories per day and from the exercises above you can see how easy it can be. It doesn't have to be torturous exercise but something as simple as walking the dog, playing with the kids or going for a bike ride. You also know that if you want to step up your efforts that little bit extra simply increase your level of intensity to burn even more calories.

If you want to lose 2 pounds per week, double your workout time or your intensity level. There are plenty of activities above you can do to lose that amount of calories such as jump rope, high intensity

treadmill, jogging or even swimming (swimming, which is low impact on your joints).

How you go about this is in your hands. You have to find the starting level comfortable for you then to work your way from there. Always remember to build muscle you have to feed muscle. Extra muscle tissue strips that fat right out of your system and burns it off for energy so it's important that you get a good balanced diet.

When it comes to eating never consume more than 20 grams of fat in a day. This way you are not burdening your body with unnecessary extra calories to burn off.

Consume smaller meals and take notice of the way you eat. Eat slower than you normally would. Focus on how you chew your food, take notice of how much food is on your plate so that it doesn't seem to vaporize before your eyes leaving you wanting second helpings. Eating slower gives your brain an accurate measure of fullness as it takes 30 minutes for your brain to register that you are full.

Make an effort to exercise at least 3 times per week any additional exercise will only increase calories burned contributing to your overall weight loss.

Don't eliminate entire food groups, ensure you eat a balanced diet with a mixture of good fat and complex carbohydrates. You need carbs for energy in order to lose the weight and you need a certain amount of good fats for normal body functioning. It's ok to have the occasional bad fat treat just remember the amount of exercise you'll have to do to burn it off.

Exercise As Part Of Your Weight Loss Plan

You know that exercise is extremely important and you know that the only way to shift the fat that has accumulated on your body is to burn it through exercise. If you want long lasting success with your weight loss plan and really want to lose fat then you need to do at least 30 minutes of exercise 3 times per week to see results.

More than 3 times per week if you want to see even more significant results and double your weight loss.

Expend more calories than you eat. Double your length of exercise and intensity to lose two pounds per week instead of one.

To really get the full benefit of exercise workout for longer than 15 minutes. This is so that you can give your heart muscle exercise but also because within the first 10 to 15 minutes you are only burning sugar from the muscles. The fat is a little more stubborn and comes after the 30 minute mark, go figure.

Don't forget that exercise can be anything, it has to be realistically incorporated into your lifestyle because at the end of the day, that is what's going to ultimately work for you. This can be anything ranging from housework to joining the local tennis club. You have to find what work's for you.

Here are some tips to get the most out of your exercise:

Don't forget to consult your physician before embarking on any weight loss program. Work your way up gradually to the more physically demanding exercises rather than jumping straight into them.

Do something you enjoy, chances are you'll stick with it longer and it won't feel like exercise. This could be brisk walking in the park with your dog or a friend while using it as catch up time while getting your daily exercise dose.

Use your time wisely, find other activities you could be doing rather than sitting and watching television and if you have to catch your favorite program why not grab an hour of exercise on the treadmill at the same time? You could even record it or TiVo it.

Make exercise a priority, remember this is lifestyle choice and to undo all the negative habits that were formed throughout your life you have to counteract it with positive ones. Exercise is definitely a high priority on that list. Set your exercise goals, re-evaluate them every month then aim to increase your duration and intensity once your fitness level improves.

Eating Plan

We have discussed which foods you should limit in your diet and which foods you should get more of. We talked about poly unsaturated and mono saturated fats and simple and complex carbohydrates and how you need a balance of everything. Monitoring your fat and calorie intake coupled with exercise will be instrumental in your weight loss.

As you would have already calculated your target body mass index and your target weight you can now determine how much weight you will need to lose in order to achieve that goal. As was mentioned earlier, always start with an end in mind that way you can work gradually toward your weight loss goal.

You become empowered when you know how much weight you need to lose, how many calories you need to consume and how many you need to burn. Your body really is a machine that consumes and expends energy, once you figure that out your weight loss will be completely within your grasp.

For example you wouldn't consume 4,000 calories if you were only going to do 500 calories worth of exercising would you? Once you burn close to what you eat you will start to see the weight shift. To see the weight melt off you need to burn more than you consume.

Don't be tempted to miss meals, this will only hinder your metabolism and derail your weight loss efforts. Skipping meals makes you tired and lethargic and your body will rebel by making you eat high calorie foods to gain back those missing pounds so don't trigger your body's defenses, lose weight in alignment with your body.

There you have it, all of the tools and resources you need to lose the weight that has been clinging to your body. This is not a diet but a lifestyle which is the only way to lose the weight once and for all permanently.

Let the last diet you will ever be on be the one before you found this. You are not force fed meal plans or times to eat. You can govern yourself, you have enough information to make informed decisions and you are exercising that over what you eat because you are now accountable to yourself. You owe it to yourself.

We've have just armed you with the parameters to be within in terms of eating the right kinds of fats and carbs and how much exercise you have to do if you really want to change your life this time. You decide based upon this information what combinations of foods you would like to eat because no two default one size fits all set meal plans will suit everyone, it wouldn't be realistic and would be classed as just another diet if we were to do that to you.

You are going to take stock of what you eat in the real world, you're just doing it sooner rather than later. Most people coming off set meal plan diets don't know how to eat in the real world and end up falling back into old habits, this is because they never addressed their eating habits and why they gained the weight in the first place. They were trying to fix the symptoms of the weight rather than to get to the root cause of the problem which is more than just the issue of the weight itself.

To achieve your weight loss goal:-

Know your target weight and determine how much you need to lose. Break your goals down to weekly weight loss amounts and work one pound at a time towards it, it may seem pale in comparison to those Biggest Loser contestants but yours is realistic and achievable in the time that you can devote. Don't think you're going to lose 100 pounds in one month because it will mostly be water and precious muscle and to shift that kind of mass in such a short time frame will no doubt damage your body in the process.

Slow wins the race, that's how the weight came on, don't think you can lose 10 years worth of weight in one month. I promise it will come off quicker than it went on. Stick with it.

Prioritize your weight loss. Sacrifice something you can do without such as watching television or playing video games. It's important that you make that time for yourself if you want to see results.

Keep track of your calories and how much you're eating. Buy yourself a little notebook and jot down all of the things you eat in a day. Look at the food packaging and determine how many calories you consumed. Also watch out for how much sugar and sodium you are taking into your body. Unless they are unprocessed and raw, most cereals will have high hidden sugar content in the form of fructose which is fruit sugar to give cereal its sweet taste.

You must be aware of this because this is where hidden calories are coming from. Fructose although a fruit sugar can still be stored as fat if not burned off as energy. Be mindful and aware of what you are eating. And find the things you can do without in your current diet such as food high in fat and sugars. Look for added sugars and added juices on your food packaging.

As soon as you have figured out how many calories you are currently consuming compared to how many calories you are burning you can get started. See where you can start reducing calories from your diet.

This can easily be achieved by cutting out extra fatty junk foods and reducing your food portions.

Look at your current schedule and where you can start slotting in some exercise. Are you able to squeeze in an easy walk for at least 30 minutes? Can you go for a bike ride with the kids? It doesn't matter where your fitness level is currently at, you will only get stronger from this point on.

Be consistent, this is now your lifestyle. It takes a while to replace old habits with new ones and your health will improve and you'll feel better than you have in a long time. Don't cheat because the only person you're cheating is yourself. Stay focused on your goal, remember your reasons for wanting to lose the weight in the first place and you the weight will drop off. (This is why your purpose is so important).

Re-evaluate where you're at every 30 days. You will gain more energy, more strength as the weight falls off and as you do you will be able to increase your intensity and duration.

Conclusion:

Never give up until you reach your goal.

How long should you give it? a week?, a month? How long should you give yourself before you are well and your blood pressure and body is out of danger?

As long as it takes because this isn't a temporary fix, this is for keeps.

Remember the appealing factor about crash diets is that they have a time limit, lose 20 pounds in one week. This makes you feel that you can tolerate the craziness for a short period of time yet we are under the illusion that we can still keep the weight off when we return to our old eating habits.

Slow wins the race you are in this for as long as it takes. This is not a crash diet with an unrealistic timeframe. This is you; your weight loss, your life and your journey will be different from the next person.

This change is for good and the beauty about that is the results won't go away. You will permanently keep the weight off because this is how you will live for the rest of your life. Not only that you will have reduced your risk of heart disease, blood pressure and stroke and are on your way to living the full life that you deserve.

No matter what weight you have to get down to, you're going to keep going until you arrive at your goal however long that may be. If you are 300 pounds it will take a little longer to get to your goal weight then if you were 200 pounds. But it's only a small price to pay compared to the quality of life you will gain in return.

The fact that you will be able to live life again where your weight may have previously restricted you is priceless. You will be around longer for your family and to watch them grow up. So in answer to your question, for as long as it takes.

You didn't get this way overnight and so it will take a little bit of time to undo it, not nearly as long as it took to get that way in the first place. Remember what you gain in return far outweighs the little sacrifices, any day.

To a long and happy life!

Recap:

1. Weigh yourself to determine your current weight
2. Determine your ideal weight from the calculation, find out how much you should weigh, (available from the resources below)
3. Determine how much weight you need to lose by subtracting your ideal weight from your current weight
4. Take your measurements
5. You need to lose 3,500 calories per week to lose one pound
6. Choose foods from Food Pyramid and from food table that will give you a 250 calorie deficit per day (consume 250 calories less per day) (available from the resources below)
7. Choose low impact exercises you can do now that will burn 250 calories per day (available from the resources below)

And there you have it, you'll be well on your way to losing one pound per week and consequently 50 pounds per year, which is incredible.

You can do it!

Valuable Resources Of Interest:

You have at your fingertips valuable information designed to aide you with your weight loss. The internet is a rich source of information that you can access anywhere in the world. This is also part and parcel of being empowered with information so that you can make better informed decisions for yourself.

Because information changes at the speed of light you will have access to the latest cutting edge information when it comes to hand.

Here are some helpful resources you may find useful.

BMI

<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

Great for estimating your Body Mass Index to determine where your weight lies for your height and for determining which category you fall into, whether your are overweight or obese.

Ideal Weight

<http://www.halls.md/ideal-weight/body.htm>

This enables you to determine the ideal weight you should be for maximum health and how much weight you need to lose.

Updated Food Pyramid

<http://www.hard24get.com/food/food.htm>

To get the ultimate balance in your diet find out the portions and amounts you should be eating from each food group for optimum health.

Allows you to determine the number of calories you need daily.

http://www.dietblog.com/archives/2005/12/26/how_to_calculate_your_daily_calorie_needs.php

Healthy weight calculation:

<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/healthieryou/html/chapter4.html#definition>

Calorie burning exercises:

<http://www.healthstatus.com/cgi-bin/calc/calculator.cgi>

The number of calories in everyday foods:

<http://www.weightlossforall.com/number-of-calories-in-food.htm>

<http://www.fitwatch.com/caloriecounter.html>

<http://www.fitday.com/WebFit/calories/calories.html>

Insulin Resistance, how to undo the effects:

<http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/insulinresistance/>