



No Nonsense Nutrition NEWS



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DO FAD DIETS REALLY DO WHAT THEY PROCLAIM?

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Do you know the definition of a fad? Wikipedia (the online dictionary) defines it as: “A fad, also known as a craze, refers to a fashion that becomes popular relative quickly, but loses popularity dramatically.”

Some weight loss diets fall into the “fad” category. We want to lose weight quickly so we can fit into that dress or suit for an upcoming party.

Unfortunately, when weight loss is quick it usually is also quick to rejoin us. At any given time 70% of women and 40% of men are dieting. Of those who do lose weight temporarily, 97% of them gain it back. We spend \$40 billion dollars a year on weight loss products.

Let’s review a few of the popular “fad” diets:

The “New” Atkins Diet

This program restricts carbohydrates and focuses on eating mostly protein with the use of vitamin and mineral supplements. According to this plan, your metabolism should be altered to burn stored fat while building protein. The “new” Atkins diet promotes low-carb bars and food products from Atkins Nutritionals, Inc. The concept is still the same, restricting fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and low-fat dairy products,

and still makes carbs the bad guys. This stands against what we teach with regards to being healthy and helping to prevent disease.

The Zone Diet

This program can be very complicated. It promotes a balanced nutritional approach which you are suppose to achieve by following the proportions of 40 percent carbs, 30 percent protein, 30 percent fat. This diet is closer to what dietitians might recommend, but there are other, less complicated ways to lose weight.

The South Beach Diet

This is a three-phase program. The first phase bans fruit, bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, and baked goods. In this phase you are suppose to lose eight to 13 pounds in the first two weeks. The second phase allows good carbs (based on glycemic index). In this phase you are supposed to lose one to two pounds per week. The third phase is the least restrictive phase. You can eat almost anything in moderation. This program theorizes that sugar and starches are digested faster, therefore, more weight is gained. The weight loss actually comes from the fact that you are consuming a low calorie diet. Phase one can be particularly dangerous and cause accelerated weight loss. The second and third phases do emphasize

healthy behaviors such as eating whole grains, lean meats and dairy, unsaturated fats, fruits and vegetables, and drinking plenty of water.

The Raw Foods Diet

The basic principle behind this diet is that cooked foods lose vitamins and minerals and may lose enzymes necessary to build a healthy immune system. Some raw food diets recommend eating ripe, freshly picked fruits and vegetables, nuts or seeds only. These diets can be high in fiber, but by avoiding other food groups like meat or other proteins, you will be missing other nutrients that your body needs like vitamins B12 and D.

French Women Don't Get Fat

The author of this book is not a nutrition professional and bases the book on some insight, speculations and unproven science. It's purely observational, based on the author and her friends' experiences. Some claims made by the author are that leeks are a mild diuretic and have a "magical" quality and cause weight loss (no science to back this up). She also recommends a semi-fast of eating leek soup only. You might lose weight with this method, however, it's nutritionally inadequate. Some of her recommendations have scientific backing to them; eating soup and more vegetables, walking for exercise and weight training for women over forty.

PS: French women do get fat. The obesity rate in France is growing.

What should you do to lose weight and keep it off?

The first thing you need to remember is that losing weight involves, for the most part, a lifestyle change. This means recognizing why you eat the way you do. The behaviors we engage in have been ingrained in our minds since childhood. We need to recognize the pitfalls and the triggers that may cause us to eat unhealthy or overeat. Use the tips below to get started. You may also want to consult with a Registered Dietitian to help get you started.

- Eat a variety of foods everyday
- Eat from a rainbow when consuming fruits and vegetables. This will help you get a variety of colors which will give you a variety of vitamins and minerals
- Eat regular meals and snacks
- Slow down when you eat and stop eating when you're satisfied.
- Control your portion sizes
- Watch the triggers that can cause you to overeat, like eating when you are bored or upset.
- Eat whole grains instead of processed white breads, pastas and rices.
- Try to eat vegetarian meals at least three times a week.
- Get moving! Walk, run, bike, swim, or play ball. If your body is active, you will burn the calories faster. Plus, and added benefit, you will feel better!

Source: ADA Nutrition Fact Sheet Popular Diets Reviewed, Part 1 & 2

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