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Fad Diets & Weight Loss

What you need to know and what really works

Another new year is just around the corner. As with every other year, this is the time when people start to pull out their diaries to plan their New Year resolutions. The sad fact is that many resolutions will involve the dreaded word "DIET". The fact that last year's resolution also involved the same word doesn't seem to indicate that maybe it's not another diet program that is needed but rather a lifestyle change altogether. In this article we explore the fad diet concept and consider other factors that may affect weight loss apart from the "D" word.



Yo-yo Dieting

The concept of "yo-yo dieting" refers to the cycle of going on a diet – losing weight – coming off a diet – gaining weight etcetera and etcetera. Sound familiar?

Fad diets and yo-yo dieting is a practice that is commonplace today. With the problems associated with obesity and being overweight, many are falling prey to this unhealthy cycle. You see, anyone can lose weight over the short-term. You just need to eat less and exercise more (see weight loss laws). The million-dollar question is how to lose weight and keep it off long-term!

The biggest problems with fad diets are simply that they are not practically sustainable over the long-term. That's why they are called "fads". It's a question of motivation above anything else.

To illustrate, let's say a person is frustrated with being overweight and is very motivated to lose weight. He/she commits to a goal of losing 5kgs in two weeks. Let's assume also that our subject succeeds by going on a fad diet that

involves near starvation levels of caloric consumption and vast amounts of cardiovascular exercises for two weeks. While this process is painful and challenging, a person can endure two weeks of this for the sake of weight loss utopia, right? The question is, what's next after the goal is achieved?

Well, the subject is happy because the target has been achieved and he/she no longer feels the frustration of being overweight. In other words, the motivation for weight loss is now gone. Instead, the subject now feels that a reward is in order for enduring the ordeal of

the last two weeks! So the diet is off and the "normal" diet resumes. More often than not, the weight is restored and sometimes can even be more than the actual weight lost.

Why Fad Diets Don't Work

Actually, most fad diets do work! Just as in the example above, if you follow the diet programs exactly, chances are you will lose weight. However, the notion of the "quick fix" that is central to all fad diets is fundamentally flawed. So, too, is the mistaken belief that a change in our bodies can only result from a radical change in how we eat. We need to consider other non-diet factors and to view these diet plans as a means to make gradual, long-term adjustments to our overall lifestyle rather than a way to "melt fat in just two weeks!"

That's an important distinction. The word diet originally comes from the Greek *diaioita*, which means "manner of living." Scientists and nutritionists agree that any long-term program of weight loss and maintenance must be more than a matter of rationing carbohydrates and calculating calories. It must extend to the entire "manner of living."

Although the fad diets can help you lose weight in the short-term, there are many long-term health effects that should be taken into consideration. Certain prescriptions may even lead to a predisposition to certain health risks over the long term. Before you engage in any weight loss diet, you should consult a nutritional consultant to ensure

adequate nutrition is supplied for sustainable long-term well being rather than a quick fix.

Dangers with Some Fad Diets

Low Calories

If the diet is too low in calories as prescribed by some fad diets, the body may be induced into a fasting state known as ketosis. Ketosis refers to the metabolism of muscle tissue instead of fat due to inadequate levels of essential nutrients from food. This state is the body's final emergency response to a lack of nutrition and ketosis can lead to muscle breakdown, nausea, dehydration, headaches, irritability, bad breath and kidney problems. In pregnancy, ketosis may cause fetal abnormality or death. It can also be fatal in individuals with diabetes.

Short-term Effects Are Misleading

Certain diets, which advocate high-protein, high-fat, low-carbohydrate foods, tend to promote the loss of water weight. However much of the diuretic effect may engender a false sense of accomplishment as this weight can and will return quickly when the diet is removed. Even a loss of 10% of your water stores can lead to the breakdown or inefficient functioning of vital body systems such as digestion, metabolism and the immune system.

Nutrient Deficiencies

The body requires at least 50 essential nutrients that are known to science. Essential nutrients are elements the body needs but cannot manufacture and thus must receive from food sources. Certain fad diets not only recommend a reduction in calories but also the complete elimination of certain food groups from the diet. Elimination of certain food groups without adequate supplementation may lead to nutrient deficiency problems.

Acidity And Long-term Health Risks

Some fad diets prescribe high-protein and high-fat consumption at the expense of carbohydrate consumption. Numerous studies have linked high-protein and high-fat diets to predisposing the subject to increased risk of cancer and heart disease. Further, the nitrogen content in high-protein diets can lead to increased acidity of the blood. This is known as acidosis, which results in the breakdown of vital proteins in the body, leading to degenerative conditions.

Other Non-Diet Considerations

If you are keen on managing your weight, the key is to adopt health, rather than just weight loss, as your goal. You may want to consider a more holistic view and not focus solely on food. Here are some non-dietary considerations that are

often overlooked in weight management initiatives.

Candida, Parasites & Carbohydrate Addiction

Know anyone who just can't seem to give up white rice, pasta, soft drinks or sweets? You need to know that the body can only store 2,000 calories of sugar in the body. Beyond that, sugar and/or carbohydrate is converted to body fat!

Candida albicans (yeast) is a normal inhabitant of our bodies, generally comprising 10% of the microorganisms in the intestinal tract. *Candida* only becomes a problem if certain factors encourage the over-growth of *Candida*, factors which include sugar, refined carbohydrates, antibiotics, dental fillings and birth control pills.

Apart from wreaking havoc on your vital systems, an overgrowth of *Candida* and other parasites can cause a tremendous craving for sugar and refined carbohydrates – the very things they feed on. This makes weight loss all the more challenging.

There is a theory based on thousands of scientific experiments being proposed by Dr Richard Heller and Dr. Rachael Heller that as much as 75% of the overweight population and as much as 40% of the normal weight population may be addicted to carbohydrates. Take this short quiz to see if you are too:

Carbohydrate Addiction Quiz:

After breakfast, do you get hungry before it is time for lunch?

Do you have a difficult time stopping, once you start to eat starches, snack foods, junk foods or sweets?

Do you sometimes feel unsatisfied even though you have just finished a meal?

Does the sight, smell, or even the thought of food, sometimes stimulate you to eat?

Do you sometimes eat even though you are not hungry?

Are you sometimes unable to keep from snacking at night?

After a large meal, do you feel sluggish, almost drugged?

Do you get inexplicably tired and/or hungry in the afternoon?

Have you sometimes continued to eat even though you felt uncomfortably full?

Have you been on a diet, only to lose weight and then regain it?

Results, count your "yes" answers:

0-2 You do not appear to be addicted to carbohydrates

3-4 You appear to have a mild carbohydrate addiction

5-7 You appear to be moderately addicted to carbohydrates

8-10 You have a severe carbohydrate addiction.

A person wishing to lose weight over the long term should consider a *Candida* and parasite cleanse as a prerequisite to any diet program.

Toxic Colon & Impacted Colon

The colon is approximately 5 to 5 1/2 feet in length and on average 2 to 3 inches in diameter. Our colon is anatomically designed to consume vegetables. That is why it is longer and more complex as compared to that of a carnivore like say a tiger's colon. A lifetime of indiscriminate eating can lead to an accumulation of encrusted fecal material against the colon wall. A person can carry as much as 2kg to 5kg of impacted material.



Carnivore Colon



Human Colon

This encrusted material itself presents a weight issue but is also related to the earlier problem of parasites and *Candida* as they form a comfortable environment for parasites to flourish.

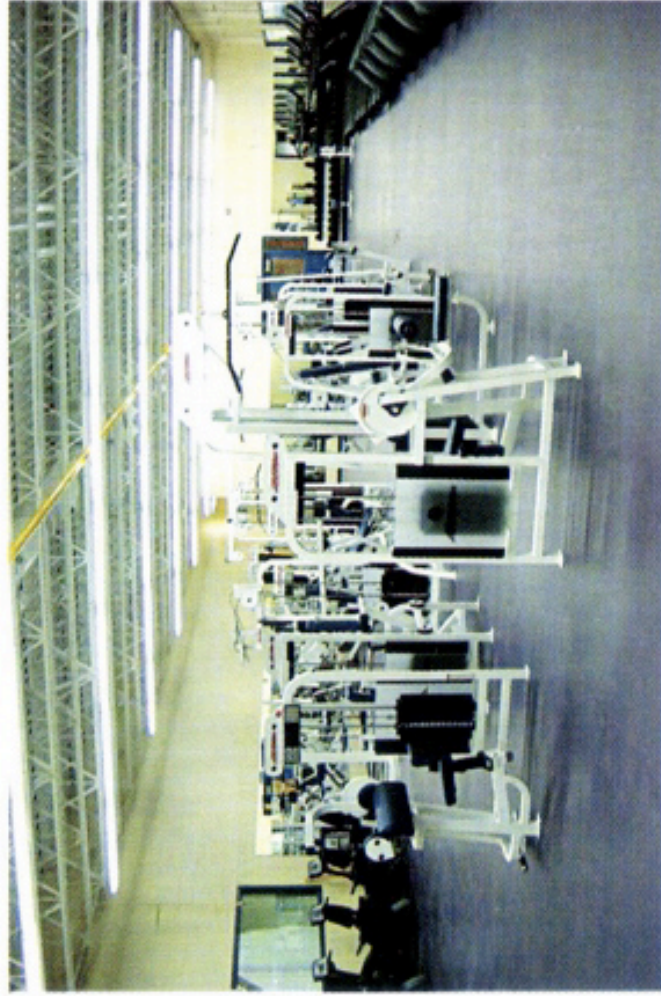
Detoxification therapies that utilize colonic irrigation can remove vast amounts of accumulated fecal debris and is really the first step in treating not only obesity but also numerous other health conditions.

Water

Water may seem the single most important catalyst to weight loss. Water suppresses appetite and helps the body metabolize stored fat. Studies have shown that a decrease in water intake will cause fat deposits to increase, while an increase in water intake will reduce fat deposits.

When the body does not get enough water, it perceives this as a threat to survival and begins to hold on to every drop. Water is stored in the extra-cellular spaces and shows up as swollen feet, legs and hands (edema). When sufficient water is supplied, the condition reverses as the body now gets what it needs and no longer needs to retain emergency supplies.

Water helps to rid the body of waste. During weight loss, the body has a lot more waste to remove than usual. Metabolized fat must somehow be flushed



Studies show that on average, a person will lose approximately 25% of his body's muscle mass between the ages of 20 and 80. The significance of this problem is that the metabolic rate of a person will be reduced together with the loss of muscle mass over time.

This is the reason why adults will find that eating the same amount of food after a certain age results in weight gain when there was none before. Weight training is the key to maintaining a muscle to fat ratio that facilitates the maintenance of a high metabolic rate.

out of the body. Water helps to flush out waste more quickly and efficiently. So, a good tip is to throw out water alternatives like coffee and soft drinks and to consume 8 glasses of pure water a day.

Weight Training

Aerobic exercise and cardiovascular exercise are popular recommendations for weight loss. However, quite often ignored in weight loss programs is weight training. Weight training simply means exercising with weights. Firstly, most people misunderstand the concept and secondly, it is a very challenging experience for the uninitiated.

you burn calories even while you are resting.

Positive Motivation

Lastly, I want to leave you with a concept that I think is the ultimate weapon for achieving the health you deserve. That is – to find a positive motivation. Whether you know it or not, you make decisions based on positive motivation (something that feels good) or negative motivation (something that feels bad). In other words, the only reason we make decisions is either to gain pleasure or avoid pain.

If you are motivated by negative reasons e.g. "I'm sick of being overweight, I want to change!" you may fall prey to some form of yo-yo dieting, as described earlier.

What I'm talking about is finding true pleasure in being healthy, finding a reason that is so strong, it compels you to wake up early in the morning and stay up late at night to achieve it. You just need to be honest and answer this question: *Why is it an absolute must for me to be healthy?* Not a "should", not a "wish" but an absolute "must". If you can dig deep and honestly find a true answer to this question, you already have half the battle won.