

# *Weight Loss Plans That Best Suit Your Diet Personality*



***Whether You're a Binger Eater, a Late Night Snacker, or Someone  
Who Just Over-Indulges on a Regular Basis, We Have  
A Diet Plan That Will Suit Your Unique Needs!***

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## **There's No One Size Fits All Diet Plan!**

Have you tried every diet known to mankind? Been on the one where you eat nothing but cabbage soup or hot dogs? How about the one where you drink all of your meals or the one that makes you eat so little you feel like you've turned into a bird?

For some people, these diets may work. But for the majority of us, we have special individual needs and preferences that serve as a precursor to how we're able to lose weight and keep it off for the long haul.

We're going to talk about six very different, yet healthy ways to lose weight. In each section, you'll learn how to eat, what exercise tips you may want to try, and motivational mindset techniques that could work well for your particular diet plan. Of course, you'll need to get your doctor's approval before starting any weight loss regimen.

Notice I didn't say exercise that you *have to* do. It's hard adopting healthy habits. When your whole life gets turned upside down and you're suddenly eating differently, it's hard to commit to also exercising, so the programs laid out here are all about baby steps.

It makes it less likely that you're going to give up on your New Year's Resolution to lose weight this year. It makes it *more* likely that you'll be able to stick to your diet throughout all of 2010.

You don't have to stay on any one weight loss regimen, either. You can try one diet program the first month, and then switch things up. Let's say you're on the one that helps those who like to eat at fast food restaurants – but suddenly you grow tired of that.

It's okay to switch things up and try the at-home meal plan option or something else you feel might work best for your current mood. That's key right there – the word *current*. Your attitude may evolve into something different as time goes on.

You may grow tired of one option and have different food cravings or even nutritional needs from week to week or month to month. The important thing to remember is that you're not chained to anything here.

So don't beat yourself up if you're using one set of rules and you discover it's time to switch things up for a bit. Are you ready to adopt a new, healthier way of eating for 2010?

This is your year to finally shed the unwanted pounds from your frame and strengthen your body so that it keeps you alive and active over the coming years!

## **The Plan for Those Who Don't Want to Give Up Their Favorite Foods**

If you're like most dieters, you don't want to say goodbye to white bread, chocolate or even your favorite sodas. You might think you can do it when you're celebrating on December 31<sup>st</sup> and shouting out your New Year's Resolutions, but when January 14<sup>th</sup> rolls around, and you've gone two full weeks without, it starts to get a bit depressing.

There is a way to diet without having to part with your favorite foods. But if you're looking for a quick weight loss plan, where you shed 20 pounds in two weeks, this isn't it. Look at some of the other plans for something more fitting to your needs.

Many experts who deal with behavioral eating issues recommend that you learn what's called "normal eating habits." This is very hard initially, but eventually it becomes second nature for you and it's a form of dieting that you can adopt for a lifetime.

Normal eating means you're going back to the roots of how you used to eat when you first born. You knew when you were hungry (and cried for food, although you won't be doing that now), and you stopped when you were finished, refusing the bottle anymore by pushing it out of your mouth with your tongue to signal your fullness to your caretaker.

You didn't stuff yourself until you were miserable or binge one evening and starve yourself the next. Yet somehow, that's exactly what we learn to do over the years as we suffer from a poor body image and get influenced by our peers and by the media and marketing moguls who want to sell us products.

We may sit down to a healthy meal one night and say, "Oh I can only have two bites because I pigged out last night." It's like you're punishing yourself every time to feed your body for mistakes you've made in the past.

When you're an adult and no longer having to ask Mommy and Daddy if you can have a piece of pie or stop for fast food, it gets harder and harder to control how often you cave into those cravings.

So instead of saying, "No" to certain foods that you adore, I want you to look at eating in a different way. And let me warn you – it's going to feel very uncomfortable for awhile until you suddenly feel a wave of relief wash over you.

Normal eating starts with eating *what* you want, *when* you want. That means listening to your body – including your mental *and* physical state. Your mind might be saying it wants to eat, but your body's not in agreement.

There's no stomach growling or feeling in the pit of your stomach that you need to fill 'er up! Your mind, though, is pointing out how happy those doughnuts would make you or how great it would be to stop working for five minutes and head to the vending machine.

Your first goal with this weight loss plan is to play referee for your mind and body. Whenever you think about eating, turn your full attention to your mind and find out *why* it wants you to eat.

Is it because your stomach is signaling it's starving and the mind is doing the rational thing by alerting you to the dilemma? Or is it because the mind wants some sort of satisfaction and it's saying food has always done it for you before, so why not go for it now?

Then turn your attention to your stomach. Give your hunger a number on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being absolutely starved. If you're tipping the scales into the true hunger side of things, and your mind is in compliance, then do the *normal* thing a human would do – EAT!

Don't wait until red lights are flashing and alarms are blaring that you've gone too long without food. Then you'll be in danger of gorging.

## ***How to Eat***

Once you've made the decision that you're going to eat, you'll need to relearn the right way to do it. You're not going to eat mindlessly anymore. Until this become something you do without thinking, I want you to carefully choose your foods and portions – but I'm about to shock you with some very pleasant news:

When I said before that I want you to eat *what* you want – I meant it. We have to get rid of your food guilt so that you instinctively give your body what it wants on a regular basis.

If you're dieting, and you give in and have a piece of cake but there's always the nagging thought of, "I'd better enjoy it now because I'm supposed to be dieting, so I can't do this again," what's going to happen?

You're going to overindulge!

You're going to eat every bit of that slice of cake, pick up crumbs with your index finger and possibly lick the plate clean – or maybe not, but some people do. Now let's look at another scenario:

There's ZERO guilt associated with eating a slice of cake. You aren't thinking it's a "bad food," and you aren't worried about eating it all now – because you can have it today, tomorrow, and the next day if you want.

What occurs when you have this mindset is that the anxiety goes away. Not at first, mind you – food guilt is a hard thing to get rid of. You may have to coddle yourself and remind yourself that it's okay. Some people have even forced themselves to enjoy the slice of cake daily for a week until they stop feeling panicked that it's going away sometime soon.

When you're not in danger of losing your favorite food, you feel relaxed. You eat more slowly and savor the food. And you're perfectly fine with

leaving some on your plate because there's always tomorrow if you want to eat more.

Let's talk more about stopping.

This is something you have to practice, too. You've probably heard how it takes your brain 20 minutes to get the signal from your stomach that you're full. This isn't a myth. So you want to slow down while you're eating.

You're not going to stop when you're feeling *full*. You're going to stop when you're no longer hungry – there's a big difference between the two! Refer to your scale from 1-10 on hunger and fullness and stop once your hunger has been satisfied.

It's a feeling where yes, you could eat a lot more if you wanted to. But you're also not sitting there feeling like something's physically gnawing at you to eat more. The mind is a different story.

You *are* going to feel like your mind is gnawing at you to eat more because it's used to getting stuffed with food. So there's a bit of uncomfortableness until this becomes old hat for you.

Back to eating what you want, when you want.

If you want cake for breakfast, eat it! If you want leftover fried chicken for lunch, go for it. You *can* eat what you want and lose weight when you apply the principles of eating only when physically hungry and stopping before you get full.

During the first week or two of this program, if you feel extremely panicked about ridding your life of good food/bad food labels and keep using words like "indulging," then you may put on a couple of pounds because you'll still be eating more than your body really needs.

But that feeling *will* subside and you'll relax and the weight will come off effortlessly. How about timeframes? Your body *does* need fuel in the



morning. Try to spend the first two weeks training it to get hungry upon waking.

You might start out very small – eating just a tiny bit since you're not used to eating breakfast and won't feel hunger. Then after a few weeks, your hunger in the morning will be real.

I'm not going to give you timelines for your meals – but check in with yourself throughout the day. Don't get so engrossed in work that you forget to eat and by 5 PM, you're famished!

Your meals will gradually get smaller – if you're stopping when no longer hungry – and you may find yourself eating more frequently, but in tinier amounts. This is good and it's why so many dieters have succeeded with the 5-meals a day plans.

### **Exercise Tips**

The mental happiness you're about to feel on this plan will likely result in a more invigorated state of mind for you. You're used to feeling physically drained on a diet. Sometimes, we start out energized and motivated, but put so much pressure on ourselves to lose weight that we wear ourselves out until we quit.

For this particular weight loss plan, and with your doctor's approval, of course, I want you to get up and move *when* you want and *how* you want. Oh no – more freedom – can you handle it? 😊

I think you can!

Throughout your day, I want you to check in with your body and ask it – physically and mentally – if it needs some exercise. And by exercise, I don't necessarily mean going to the gym at 4:30 AM before work and spending 1 hour and \$100 with a professional trainer.

I mean *move*. Get your heart rate going. Let your legs stretch. Your heart is a muscle and it can only grow strong if it gets to work out. And that can be done in many ways. Your daily exercise can include things such as:

- Walking to deliver a message to a co-worker instead of emailing them
- Getting up from your couch and dancing or walking in place for a few minutes during all of the commercials of your favorite show
- Cleaning house
- Working outside in the garden or yard
- Taking a stroll around the neighborhood
- Parking farther away from the door to places you frequent
- Jumping up and down and having fun like a five year old on a mini trampoline while you watch *Desperate Housewives*

It doesn't have to be boring or traditional. It can be fun! I am not asking you to count steps or time your workouts. Just tune in to your body. If your legs feel cramped, get up and give them some movement for a little while. If you're feeling kind of anxious or depressed, exercise will release endorphins, so sometimes it will be a mental reason that you provide your body with some exercise.

### ***Mindset Motivation***

Consider this particular plan your key to freedom from the diet war you've been waging all these years. Finally, there's no measuring, no limitations, and no demands made on you.

You get to be *you*.

You get to choose more than you ever have before when you've been on a diet. I want you to focus on being good to your body and mind. Listen to them. Help them guide you in your decisions.

They helped you survive and grow and flourish as a child and somewhere along the way, you tuned them out in preference of a world of media that told you a size zero was normal and that you shouldn't eat things that taste good to you.

The first two weeks will be the hardest – but not for reasons you typically associate with dieting, like denial. They're going to be hard because you're putting trust back in *yourself* – and not in the hands of diet manufacturers who earn \$30 billion or more off of your weight gain headache.

## **The Plan for Those Who Like to Eat at Fast Food Restaurants**

Dieters are usually warned to stay far, far away from any kind of fast food. And that's for good reason. Much of what you find on a fast food restaurant's menu is fried and jam-packed with fat and calories.

That's really not what you need when you're trying to adopt a healthy eating pattern.

We've become a society of fast food eaters. There are plenty of reasons for this. Fast food is relatively cheap, meaning you can get a filling meal for not a lot of cash. If you're on a budget, and forgot to pack a lunch, hitting the nearest fast food eatery seems like a reasonable option.

Plus, it's better than getting a couple of candy bars out of the vending machine in the break room, right? We also flock to fast food restaurants because they're – fast! Sometimes there isn't time for waiting to be served at a “real” restaurant or café that might offer healthier fare.

Sometimes you aren't in the mood to even walk in and order, so you go to the drive-through and get your breakfast, lunch or dinner almost as quickly as you can order it. When the end of the work day comes and you haven't even begun to consider what's for dinner, it's very quick, easy and convenient to hit your favorite fast food joint.

So fast food does have a couple of things going for it.

And if you're the type of person who enjoys fast food, you're going to be pretty bummed out if you have to completely give it up on your diet. Diets that make you feel like you're being totally deprived and banned from enjoying anything that you truly like don't have much of a chance of success.

You need to be able to lose weight, while still allowing yourself some fast food now and then. That's the key. With many dieters who want to

maintain volume of food without the consequences, calories and fat have to be cut back on. Those eating habits are what helped you gain weight in the first place.

Eating one fast food meal, with its super-size upgrade and extra tasty sauces can add up to **an entire day's worth** of fat, calories and sodium. Wow! That's what needs to stop. That's where habits need to be adjusted.

You can have fast food now and then – and there are many dieters who do nothing but eat fast food and *still* lose weight. But you have to learn how to make healthier fast food choices.

That way you can still have some of the foods you love and continue enjoying the convenience that comes with drive-through meals. Is it really possible to eat fast food and lose weight? Yes! But you need to learn how, and commit yourself to making some healthy adjustments.

### ***How to Eat***

Here are the three things you need to consider when it comes to losing weight and still having fast food in your diet: healthier options, planning, and paying attention.

Even fast food restaurants are offering healthy options for people who have special dietary needs or who are trying to manage their weight. And you can plan for your own healthy options, too.

If you're serious about losing weight, but you know you're still going to eat fast food, one of the very best things you can do is check out the nutritional value and ingredient lists for your favorite foods at your favorite restaurants.

A quick search online will provide you with tons of information. Simply search for “fast food restaurant nutrition guides,” or use a similar search term, or search for nutritional facts from your favorite restaurant.

Almost every fast food chain gives you online access to its nutrition guides. Be prepared to be shocked and amazed. The amount of calories, fat and sodium in some of your favorite fast food meals could be incredibly high.

Checking out the nutritional guidelines will help you plan for ordering healthier options and for limiting or avoiding the foods that will really mess up your diet quickly.

Fast food places are becoming more and more receptive to making your food custom made to order - without that "special sauce" that adds a ton of fat and calories. They do want your business, after all.

Order your food naked of the extra sauces and dressings—ask for those to be put "on the side." Instead of mayonnaise on your chicken sandwich, order it bare and get a packet of mustard or ketchup to put on it yourself—this gives you the control. Many fast foods would be reasonably healthy without the extras added on.

If you can, choose foods that are steamed or broiled, rather than fried. And skip the basted, batter-dipped, breaded, crispy, scalloped, au gratin, and creamy menu items.

Drink water or a diet drink, not a super-sized, sugar-laden soda. Drinking water will save a lot of calories and it's a lot healthier for you. Plus, at some fast food restaurants, they don't charge for water, or if they do, it's often less than the charge for a soda. So you might save some cash, too!

Plan ahead by looking at menu options online and choose healthier options. Don't be afraid to order a menu item, asking for the cooks to tweak it a bit to make it more diet friendly for you.

Then, pay attention to portion size and to what you're doing. Portion sizes at fast food restaurants can be grossly misleading. Some fast food meals provide you with over a thousand calories *per meal or per menu item!*

That's way more than anyone needs in one meal! Don't super-size, and don't eat the whole thing. Depending on what you order, you can take half home – save it for later. Or go to the restaurant with a diet buddy and split the meal - two meals for the price of one, and everyone is happy.

Be mindful of your hunger while you're eating. Eating can be a very pleasurable activity. But if you're inhaling your food like there's no tomorrow, you're going to sabotage your diet.

Slow down and enjoy! Fast food tastes good. Eat it slowly and savor every bite. Stop when you're no longer hungry (which is different from being full). See if you can reduce your visits to fast food places if you find yourself cheating.

Don't cut them out if you love them. Just give yourself a chance to moderate things a little. Have you been eating fast food several times a week? Then cut a couple of trips off your weekly visit allocation and the rest of the time, make better choices, pack lunches, and plan dinners ahead.

And if you normally only go out for fast food once a week, just make your food choices better. Finally, learn to make some good, healthy meals at home that are quick and easy to prepare, and learn about packing tasty and healthy lunches for work.

You don't have to cook your own meals or take a lunch every day, but these are good habits to work on for weight loss, better health, and saving some money.

### **Exercise Tips**

There's a good chance that if you're eating a lot of fast food, you're also a very busy person who really doesn't have a lot of extra time for anything. You're on the go. This happens more and more in this busy world.

College students rarely have free time, neither do busy parents, business people, people who work more than one job, or even those with a very active social life. But no matter how busy you are, if you're working on losing weight, you want to exercise. You have to get some exercise every day, if possible.

For basic health and weight maintenance, everyone needs at least 30 minutes of exercise each day. To lose weight, you may actually need more. If you're always busy, you might be wondering how you're going to find 30 or more extra minutes every day for working up a sweat.

Here's the good news: You don't have to do it all at once. You can do 10 minutes here, another 10 there, and still another 10 somewhere else. Just as long as you get 30 minutes in.

And here's more good news: There are a ton of ways to get exercise—you don't have to go jogging to do it.

So let's go over some good tips for getting revved up with exercise.

First, we'll look at conventional exercise like walking, jogging, biking, working out at the gym, and swimming—that sort of thing. Take a look at your daily schedule. Of course you're busy.

But realistically, can you find an extra half hour total five to seven days a week that you actually could devote to exercise? If so, what type of exercise appeals to you?

Getting started could be as easy as scheduling exercise in a spot where you were “busy” watching TV. Depending on what you do for exercise, you might still be able to get your TV program in, and in fact, this can work well for busy people. If you have a stationary bike or treadmill available to you, set it up in front of your TV and get to work.

If you really don't have the extra half hour in one sitting, see about breaking your exercise into 10-minute bites, like I mentioned earlier. On



your lunch hour, put on your walking shoes and go for a brisk 10-minute walk.

Take the dog out for a quick walk. Turn up your favorite music and dance in your living room for 10 minutes while dinner is on the stove or you're waiting for your pizza to be delivered.

Devise a plan that will help you work a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise into each day. Use your imagination. And try to mix things up a little. The body will lose weight better if you keep it guessing.

So walk, dance, do calisthenics, work with weights, go for a swim, mow the lawn (with a push mower) or play catch with your child in the front yard. Don't always do the same thing if you can avoid it.

Here's an example of a 30-minute plan that could work for you:

- First 10 minutes - get up 10 minutes early and take the dog for a brisk morning walk.
- Second 10 minutes - at lunchtime, get on the stationary bike and listen to your favorite music while pedaling your pounds away.
- Third 10 minutes - shoot hoops in your driveway with your son or daughter, or by yourself.

Depending on your habits, your job and interests, you can pretty much choose any physical activity that gets you moving. It could be vacuuming or mopping your floors.

I have a few more ideas for you on how to get more movement into your busy lifestyle. When you have a choice, use stairs instead of elevators or escalators. Go dancing instead of going to a movie.

Pick up the pace when you're doing housework. Mow your own lawn instead of paying to have someone else do it. During your work day, get

up from your desk to stretch and move a bit - take a walk to the restroom or around the building and back. I bet you can come up with some great ideas on your own!

### ***Mindset Motivation***

One of the most important factors in losing weight, no matter how you choose to do it, and regardless what you're eating and not eating, is your mindset.

It's entirely possible that you lead a very quick-paced life and that you're one of those people who are always on the go. That's part of the reason you eat fast food, I'll bet. It comes in very handy when you're leading a life that really doesn't allow for cooking gourmet meals every day.

To go along with your fast-paced life, you probably have a mindset that is always encouraging you to keep going. In some ways, that's great. You're a highly motivated person and you're interested in making the most of every waking moment.

But in some ways, that mindset isn't so great. There's a lot of value in taking some time to slow things down a little, allowing your mind to rest and you to take care of yourself. Part of following any weight loss plan is learning how to care better for yourself.

Take some time each and every day, even if it's five tiny minutes to allow yourself to slow down. Don't worry about not getting something done. Five minutes is a small amount of time, and if you spend it caring for yourself, it will be well worth it.

What can you do in five minutes to slow down and care for yourself?

- You can set a timer, close your eyes and breath deeply, allowing much needed oxygen to reach your brain and all of your organs.

- Listen to a wonderful piece of music or watch a hilarious clip of a favorite TV show or movie (try I Love Lucy clips – laughter is a proven stress reliever).
- You can sit quietly with your cat or dog – another proven stress reliever.
- Take a short walk through the garden or sit under a shady tree.
- Take five minutes to write your thoughts in a journal—just write whatever comes to mind.

The point is to learn to slow your pace down a little. This gives your life more balance, and we all need that. If you can, try to give yourself some “calming” time every day, and work up to 15 or 20 minutes if possible.

As you work your diet plan, your mindset will make all the difference. A calmer, more relaxed mind will help you to slow down, pay attention, and make better choices. And you won't seek solace from your busy day through the practice of stuffing yourself with comfort food.

## **The Plan for Those Who Have Ample Time to Prepare Healthy Meals at Home**

The cornerstone of weight loss is healthy eating, with fewer calories and lower fat. Obviously, adding a solid exercise routine is going to help with weight loss, but your healthy diet is the most important factor when it comes to dropping extra pounds.

Some people have little time for pouring over recipes, making shopping lists and reading food nutrition labels, let alone cooking balanced and wholesome meals. But some people *do* make time for that.

If you have the time to devote to creating healthful meals at home, you're in a great position for losing the weight you want to lose! You have complete control.

Possibly the best option for dieters is to do their own meal planning and preparation. This is because it puts you squarely in the driver's seat. You can incorporate the foods you enjoy into dishes that are low in fat and calories, but high in nutrition, giving you a creative outlet, and allowing you to decide exactly how your diet is going to go.

Preparing healthy meals at home means that you'll have to learn about reading food labels, and you'll have to devote some time to planning. But in the long run, this is to your advantage, and you'll probably save money along the way, too.

It's no secret that it's almost always cheaper to cook a meal at home than to go out to eat. When you factor in nutrition, it's definitely a better value, considering that foods prepared at restaurants are often full of fat, sodium and preservatives to extend their shelf life. Fresh meals made at home are simply better for you.

If you already love to cook, this way of losing weight will be great for you. You might need to make some ingredient and portion adjustments, but you're ahead of the game because you already know how much fun it

can be to create a wonderful home cooked meal, or to pack a lunch from fresh ingredients.

If you don't consider yourself a cook, but you have the time to make your own meals, consider this an opportunity to get in touch with your creative side and to learn a very useful and new skill. You're going to learn how to make healthy meals that are going to help you shed pounds!

### ***How to Eat***

Eating a healthy diet really has no hard and fast rules, even when it comes to losing weight. In spite of this, there are plenty of guidelines to follow that will help you prepare meals that are both tasty and healthy, and that will help you on your path to weight loss.

Before you start planning and creating meals that are right for your diet, you should familiarize yourself with the basics of healthy eating.

First off, think about calories. Even if you're trying to lose weight, you still need enough calories for your body to keep itself healthy. That amount will depend on your body type and build, age, gender, and how much you exercise every day. But to lose weight, you do need to take in fewer calories than your body needs to maintain its current weight.

Your doctor or nutritionist can help you determine the correct number of calories you need every day. Or you can search online for a caloric needs calculator. These are good, but not exact tools.

Make sure that you incorporate a wide variety of foods into your meals. You should strive to eat lots of fruits, whole grains and vegetables, and complement them with lean meats and low-fat dairy products.

Watch your sodium intake. Sodium can contribute to water retention in your body. When your body retains water, you feel puffy and bloated and you weigh more.

Remember to practice portion control. Many of us have distorted ideas of what a single serving of a given food looks like. It's often much smaller than we think! To get a good understanding of what a portion of a given food actually is, read nutrition labels.

There are many portion guides online that give you excellent illustrations of correct portion sizes for many foods, such as a single meat serving being the size of a deck of cards.

You can have treats and desserts, especially if you've prepared them yourself and you know the ingredients involved. Use moderation with sugary sweets and fried foods. When you can, cook with low-fat ingredients and avoid fried foods and bake instead.

Don't forget about water. You should include lots of fresh water in your healthy home cooked diet. Your body needs it to regulate all sorts of bodily functions and to flush out toxins, but water fills you up so you're not as hungry.

When planning your home cooked healthy meals, start by taking your favorite recipes and analyzing them a bit. Are they high in fat and calories? Can you substitute ingredients to make them better for your diet? Sometimes, you can even use less of an ingredient and still have great taste.

Think about homemade pizza for example. Why not use less cheese? You save in fat and calories, and it still tastes great! And what about eggs? Whole eggs have about 75 calories and five grams of fat, whereas egg whites have about 16 calories and no fat.

If you don't like the taste of egg whites, but you're planning to make 3 scrambled eggs, then use the yolk of only one egg and just the whites of the others to help maintain taste and coloring without the extra calories.

As you plan your meals, you might want to start out by planning for a week. Remember that you have to eat breakfast, you need a lunch, and

you'll be hungry at the end of the day for dinner. Planning will take some time, but it will be a huge help in your diet.

Make a detailed list of everything you'll need from the grocery store, and remember to plan for healthy snacks, too. When you're shopping, stick to your list. And it's preferable that you shop on a full stomach so you're not tempted to throw extra unhealthy foods into your basket.

Read labels to choose the meal ingredients that are nutritionally best. The nutrition label will tell you the serving size and how many servings come in the package. It will also tell you how many calories per serving you'll get, and the amount of fat calories per serving.

Other important details on nutrition labels include total fat (noting how much is saturated, and trans fat), cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, protein and vitamin and mineral content.

Generally speaking, lower fat, cholesterol, and sodium is good. And carbohydrates should be higher in fiber and lower in sugars.

Earlier, I mentioned that making your own meals is a great way to save money, and it is. You can maximize your savings by planning your meals so that you can buy some items in bulk. Usually when you purchase larger packages, you get a better price. And using coupons for savings on the foods and ingredients you use most will help enhance savings, too.

And remember that you don't necessarily have to buy the most expensive name brand grocery items. Often, you can buy the house brand at a better price and get the same nutritional value. Compare prices and labels.

Other good ways to save at the store are to stock up on healthy ingredients you know you will use, and then store them or cook meals ahead and freeze them. If you quit buying soda and those fancy flavored water drinks, and drink water instead, you'll save calories and money. And

if you opt for more vegetarian dishes and fewer with meat as a main ingredient, you'll be able to cut your grocery bill, too.

### **Exercise Tips**

Now that you're well on your way to a healthy diet for weight loss, thanks to devoting yourself to planning and preparation of delicious and healthful meals, it's time to rev up your metabolism and get your body burning off those extra calories.

If you have the convenient sort of schedule that allows you to devote time to prepare meals, you probably have some time for getting enough exercise, too, and that makes you very lucky!

You'll most likely be able to do your exercise program in one block of time each day, so you have some choices that people who have to cut their exercise time into small bites don't have.

If you like, you can get your daily exercise done and out of the way first thing in the morning. Morning is a great time to exercise, providing you with energy for the day and acting as a natural way to relieve stress and help keep your mood balanced all day long. Plus, you only have to shower once then, after you work out and before your work day begins.

Why not jump on a treadmill in the morning while you're watching the news, or plug in a DVD - anything from kickboxing, to dance, to those video workouts that you like best. Zumba is one type of dancing video workout that's gaining in popularity because it's fun.

Or, if the weather is nice and you love the outdoors, go for a blood-pumping bike ride, or a fast-paced walk. Don't forget that there might be a pool that's open to the public nearby (or maybe you're fortunate enough to have one in your backyard), and gyms are great places to get in shape and meet new friends, too.



Don't neglect working with weights or doing resistance exercises for building muscle and increasing strength. Many exercise DVDs include both cardio and strength training in their programs. If you use a local gym, you'll find weight machines and free weights that you can use to help you increase muscle strength, which also boosts your metabolism.

No matter how healthy the meals you plan are, exercise is going to boost your weight loss, and it will be well worth the time you carve out of each and every day to get yourself moving, jogging, dancing, lifting weights, swimming, biking or hiking. Strive to get a *minimum* of 30 minutes of exercise in at least five days a week. You'll see results.

### ***Mindset Motivation***

With a goal in mind of improving your diet by creating healthy homemade meals that are lower in fat and calories and higher in nutrition, you're making a positive change for both your body and mind.

A mindset like this promises to not only improve your health and weight, but to improve the health and lives of your whole family. You're providing everyone in your family with the basis for optimal health and longevity via a great diet and healthy new eating habits.

Plus, you're setting an example for them by exercising regularly, and eating right. You're even showing them how bad habits, such as eating a poor diet, can be exchanged for great habits that affect every aspect of life in a positive way. Good for you!

How can you take this healthy new mindset and let it improve your life and the lives of your loved ones even more?

Why not invite your kids or your spouse to join in the fun of preparing delicious, healthy meals? Why not teach them how to plan a meal that's great tasting, and healthy, too? Can you experiment together with creating tasty desserts that are lower in calories and fat, but still satisfying?

How about spending time together getting exercise? There are plenty of things you can do on your own to get fit, and there are things you can involve your partner or kids in, too. Try a brisk walk on the local nature trail, or go roller-skating together.

If you're single, this new, healthy mindset is an excellent way to meet new friends at a cooking or nutrition class, or at a fitness center. And you can invite guests over and share some wonderfully prepared, and oh-so-delicious healthy meals with them.

Don't forget that even as a single person, you're setting an example for your work colleagues, family and circle of friends.

All the way around, use this mindset to continue to motivate you to your goals and to enjoy the new, healthy life you're creating for yourself with every meal and every step you take on your treadmill.

## **The Plan for Those Who Know They'll Have a Hard Time Limiting Their Food Intake**

There's just no way to get around this fact - people who have a hard time limiting their food intake are going to have a tougher time losing weight. This is a horribly frustrating truth for those who love to eat! But there it is.

If eating a lot in one sitting, or eating constantly is something that you like to do, and it's important to be able to continue to do this, then you're going to have to create some strategies that allow you to do that, within reason, and still decrease the amount of calories and fat that you consume. You've got your work cut out for you, but if you're determined, you can do it.

Before we get started with developing strategies, let's explore how you got to where you are. If you're reading this, you probably looked at the title of this section and said, "That's me!"

You already know that quantity is something you appreciate when it comes to food. You've become accustomed to eating large meals, or nibbling on food all day long. If you were only eating carrots and broccoli in large doses, you might still be slim, but that's unrealistic for anyone.

It's probably safe to say that you either think about food a lot, or you're just so used to eating often (and a lot) that you have a big habit that's become a part of your lifestyle.

It's probably also safe to assume that you're eating large portions of everything - salad with dressings, breads, meat, desserts, fruits and veggies. Your diet might be reasonably balanced. Or maybe you're eating a lot of snack foods, too - chips, soda, candy, cookies, and plenty of high-calorie Ranch dip on your celery sticks.

Regardless, the calories and fat have added up and attached themselves firmly to your middle, thighs, rear, or maybe just everywhere.

So now what? If you aren't ready or able to significantly reduce the volume of food you eat, then it's time to significantly change the types of foods you eat. There's no way around this.

### ***How to Eat***

For me to suggest that you immediately stop eating snacks and cut your meal portions in half is silly, although if you do that, you'll probably start dropping weight pretty quickly. A more realistic strategy might be to combine reducing your portions and the number of eating events you have each day a little, and to work on making your diet much lower in calories and fat.

Let's explore how that might work.

First, let's look at *why* you're eating so much, and *what* you're eating so much of. I'm not a psychologist, so I'm not going to get into all the possible causes for overeating as a sort of psychological defense, or because of fluctuations in brain chemistry.

All I'm going to say is that a lot of us overeat because it gives us comfort and temporarily makes us feel better. You've heard of comfort foods, haven't you? For some, it's chocolate, for others, mashed potatoes.

I've never, ever heard of someone sitting down with a great big plate of Brussels sprouts when they were stressed, or feeling bad, or bored. Some of us eat a lot because, in many ways, it makes us feel better somehow - at least for awhile. And then we need to eat more to keep the good feeling going.

Some of us just like the physical action of eating. The hand to mouth, and mouth to gut action - similar to how a smoker likes to have a cigarette in hand. Just take some time to explore what it is about eating a lot or eating big portions frequently does for you. Then take a look at what you're eating.

It's a great idea to take a week with your current eating habits and write down everything you ate, along with portion size, every day. If you want, you can make notes about when you ate, and how you felt at the time.

This might give you some insight into why you're eating so much. And from your weeklong food tracking exercise, you'll be able to see all of the foods that you're eating, along with how many calories you're consuming.

It could be a real eye-opener. Now let's get down to business. If you're planning to lose weight and still eat lots of food, there are modifications to be made to your overall diet. Make a commitment to limit (or cut out entirely) the food items that are flat-out not going to help your diet in any way.

These include soda, sugary desserts, candy, snacks from the vending machine, high-fat and high-calorie fast foods, whole milk and high-fat dairy, fatty meats, and simple carbohydrates like white bread.

Then commit to replacing those foods with low-fat dairy, lean meats, lots and lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, low-fat, low-calorie salad dressing, complex carbohydrates like whole grain breads and whole wheat pasta, lots of fresh water, and desserts such as fresh fruit slices topped with fat-free whipped topping.

For lunch or dinner, you can fill up with a big salad filled with plenty of vegetables, a sprinkle of low-fat grated cheese (just a sprinkle, not a handful), a few croutons, and a tasty and healthy dressing.

Add a small portion of lean, grilled chicken (or if bakes, make sure you take the skin off), or a sliced hard-boiled egg for protein, and you have a big meal that's high in nutrition and lower in fat and calories.

For any meal, your plate should be half filled with steamed or grilled vegetables (or fruit if it's breakfast), without thick, creamy sauces, one quarter filled with lean meat that has been broiled or baked, and one quarter filled with something starchy, like pasta.

When your meal is gone, sit for at least 15 minutes before even considering going for second helpings. This will give your body time to realize that you probably don't need more food. Your mind might want more, but if your gut is full, go with the gut.

A note about plates here: Standard dinner plate size is significantly larger in the 21<sup>st</sup> century than it was in the 1960s! Use a smaller plate. You'll save yourself a bunch of calories and fat when you do.

At breakfast, eat eggs or meat, whole grain toast or oatmeal, and fruit. And for your morning coffee, use one small teaspoon of sugar instead of two, and low fat creamer instead of regular.

Don't forget that clear soups can be a wonderful help when you're working on losing those saddlebags. They can be part of a meal, or you can use clear broths at snack time to just act as a filler.

If you're a snacker, you're probably used to eating chips, candy, crackers and other snack foods. You know, it's fine to do that now and then, but the bulk of your snacks, especially if you're the type that likes to have something to nibble on at all times, should be healthy snacks that don't pack on the pounds.

So you want to be looking at eating carrots, celery, apples, berries, low-fat yogurt, and nuts (be careful with nuts - they're healthy, but high in fat and calories, so you only need a small handful).

Don't forget to drink plenty of fresh water every single day. Keep a bottle or glass of water with you at all times and sip from it often. This helps keep you hydrated and healthy, and helps to calm both your tummy and mind when they think they're hungry.

You can still nibble at something all day, but you have to be very careful about what you're nibbling on. It's important that even though you're changing your habits, you don't deprive yourself to the point of misery.

Agree with yourself to adopt these habit changes and allow yourself one small treat a week or every three or four days. This could be a couple of fun sized candy bars (those little ones), or one single scoop of rich, creamy frozen yogurt. Just don't overdo it.

Is reducing portions and changing what you're eating going to be tough? Yes, it might be at first. But remember that you don't have to cut your food intake drastically, or anything like that.

Make subtle changes in what you eat, how often and the way you eat, and you'll find your habits changing, too. You'll find that it will get easier and you'll start to love your new way of eating and looking at food. It's a great start!

### **Exercise Tips**

In spite of the fact that you're eating different, better foods and you're changing your habits when it comes to portions and the size of your meals and snacks, if you don't want to strictly limit your daily food intake, then you need to plan on getting plenty of exercise every day to help you lose weight.

First, you'll need to get a bare minimum of 30 minutes of exercise, five days a week. Seven days is even better. Thirty minutes really isn't that much time, so do your best to get it in, even if you have to break it into three 10-minute sessions each day.

You'll need to do cardio exercises to get your metabolism revved up. And you'll need to do some strength training, too. This will help build muscle, which firms you up and boosts your metabolism, too.

Mix your workouts so that you're doing cardio three days, and strength training two days a week one week, and the opposite the next week.

Cardio exercise consists of activities like aerobics, walking, dancing, biking, hiking, jogging and swimming - anything that gets your heart rate up works. Even mowing the lawn at a fast pace (with a push mower) will work.

Cardio exercise is great for your health and for burning calories. It helps boost your metabolism so that your body uses energy more efficiently.

Strength training can involve working with free weights or weight machines, like those you find at the gym. But you can also use resistance bands (those big "rubber bands" you find at the sports store), or even cans of fruit or water bottles. The whole idea behind strength training is to make your muscles work against something that's giving them resistance.

If you're a woman and you've heard that strength training is bad for a female unless she's planning on becoming a body builder or looking like a guy, that's just a myth. Strength training can help shape a woman's body and give it a very sleek, smooth and toned look.

And if you're a man, well, strength training is going to help you gain muscle definition and look great – not to mention it burns calories faster with every pound of muscle that you build.

So, it's time to map out your exercise plan. That could mean joining a gym, or walking every day with your neighbor and working with resistance bands. You have to determine what's right for you.

If you're really out of shape, go see your doctor and discuss your weight loss and fitness goals with him or her. They'll give you advice on the best way to get started from where you're at health-wise.

Also, if you've been a couch potato for awhile now, you might have to start out slowly. Don't let that get you down! If you don't get started, you'll never get to your goal. Before we wrap up our discussion on exercise, there is one more thing we need to talk about - the subject of hunger with exercise.



Exercise might make you more hungry, so to avoid after-exercise crazy eating, have some lean protein and a small portion of complex carbohydrates (like a half a turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread) or half a protein bar about an hour before you exercise.

This doesn't apply if you're exercising in 10 minute increments throughout the day. This small meal of complex carbs and protein fuel your workout and keep you from feeling starved when you're done.

After your workout, drink plenty of water to replenish what you lost through sweat. You can also have a small snack. A good rule of thumb is that your snack can equal half of the calories that you would have burned during your workout.

Don't worry about putting those calories back in you - weight loss doesn't work exactly that way. So if you burned 300 calories during your exercise time, you can have a snack that's roughly 150 calories. It can have both protein and carbohydrates in it.

Snacks for after your workout could be:

- A small fruit smoothie
- Cottage cheese and fruit
- The other half of your protein bar
- Cereal and low-fat milk
- Crackers and low-fat cheese

When and if hunger randomly strikes during your day, before you reach for a snack, do some light exercise. Go for a 10-minute walk, or do some stretches and a set of push-ups. Just remove yourself from the hunger for a few minutes.

This will help you determine if it's real, true hunger or if you just want to eat something out of boredom or old habits. Plus, you get a little extra exercise out of the deal.

### ***Mindset Motivation***

Your mindset is going to be instrumental in your weight loss program. And if you're the type of person who has a hard time limiting food intake, it probably has a lot to do with how your mind works, what you think about, what you tell yourself, and what you dwell on.

This is true for anyone who is working on making positive changes in his or her life.

There may be times that you feel that all you can think about is food - wonderful, tasty, food. It's very normal to obsess about something we don't think we can have. But the good news is that you can have food - you're only working on creating healthier habits surrounding your meals.

It can help immensely if you're prepared for these times, which may be most of the time, especially when you're just starting out. The key is to change your mindset away from a "need" for food and toward other things.

You get personal satisfaction from eating. Can you find other things to do that will bring you satisfaction and help you curb your desire to eat, eat, and eat some more? Everyone's different, but here are some things you can do:

- **Be busy.**

You don't have to be running around like crazy, but it will help if you increase your level of activity, whether it's social activity (that isn't centered on eating), volunteering, taking a class, working, cleaning the house, gardening, helping your neighbor, catching up on phone

calls or correspondence, crafting, exercising, going to the movies, or learning to play guitar.

- **Change your lifestyle habits.**

If you're used to chowing down while watching hours of TV, stop watching so much! If going out for pizza and beer every Friday with the gang is your habit, go only every other Friday, and invite your friends to try something different on the two "off" Fridays, like having game night (serve low-fat cheese and crackers, veggies and low-fat dip and smoothies).

- **When hunger strikes, talk to yourself.**

Argue with the voice that says, "Feed Me Now!" Ask yourself if you're really physically hungry, or if you're bored, lonely or frustrated. Find something else to do if you're not truly hungry. Play a video game, watch a DVD, turn the stereo on loudly and dance, call a friend for a chat, or see who's on Facebook.

- **If you're going out with friends, get a mindset of planning ahead and self-control.**

You don't have to stuff your face just because it's what you used to do, or because everyone else is. Eat a small meal of protein and complex carbohydrates, so you're not very hungry when you head out. Then practice some good, old-fashioned restraint. If you're going to a restaurant, plan what you'll order, and then do it.

- **Steer clear of the people who make you want to eat.**

You know who those people are. They either encourage you to eat because it's fun and they're doing it, or they encourage you to eat because they frustrate you and you eat to feel better.

- **If you're used to telling yourself things like, "What's the use? I might as well eat because I'm never going to lose weight," catch yourself before you reach for the fork.**

Your mind is used to talking to you that way, but you don't have to let it. Tell yourself that you're going to keep moving ahead with working on changing your habits for the better. Yes, it's difficult sometimes, but you're going to do it to prove those negative thought patterns wrong.

In the end, your mindset is going to be your main motivator for failing or succeeding at losing weight. Your mind is very powerful, and if you keep it on its toes, and call it to task when it's leading you astray, you'll win the weight loss game.

## **The Plan for Those Who Raid the Fridge at Night**

It's like a scene from a horror movie. You're reading a book late in the evening, or maybe you're watching TV, or even worse, maybe you're already snuggled in bed and are traveling through dreamland, when something awful and sinister invades your body, taking it over and turning you into a lunatic.

You jump up and head for the kitchen. Nothing can stop you. You're going for the fridge and you're going to eat its contents like a zombie eats brains!

It's Night of the Fridge Raiders. Coming to a theater near you.

It can be like this! It's as if you're possessed. You stand in front of the fridge eating whatever you can find. If the refrigerator doesn't have anything that looks good, you check through all the cupboards and the pantry. FOOD!

One sure way to mess up an otherwise healthy, balanced and reasonable diet is to be a fridge raider. And the worst thing is, you *know* you shouldn't do it, but you seriously have trouble *not* doing it.

Studies have shown that people who snack late at night (or participate in late night eating binges) eat more calories overall than people who quit eating after dinner. This is because the snacking and binging is in addition to dinner, it's not as if you're just eating your normal dinner later in the evening.

Stop beating yourself up over it. Yes, you really do need to change this harmful habit, but if you're driving yourself crazy with guilt, it won't help anything. You need to find a sane approach to an unhealthy behavior.

What you need to do is find realistic ways to undo eating late at night.

## ***How to Eat***

If you're maintaining a reasonable diet during the day, meaning that you aren't consuming too much fat or too many calories, and you're eating sensible meals and snacks, good for you! You only need to address this one situation of nighttime fridge raiding.

If you're not eating healthy during the day, then you have multiple situations to address.

The first thing you should consider is breakfast. Are you eating it? If so, that's great. If not, it's time to start. Believe it or not, the most common reason people get the munchies at night is that they didn't eat enough early in the day.

Your body and brain work on a clock that sort of monitors your eating. If you miss out on breakfast, even if you ate lunch and dinner, your brain is going to send out the "I'm hungry" signal about 12 hours after your missed meal.

If you're not having a good breakfast, somewhere late in the evening, your brain's going to decide it's time to eat. What should a healthy breakfast consist of?

- A serving of grains (cereal, toast, half a bagel)
- Some protein (peanut butter, nuts, meat or eggs)
- Fruit or vegetables (orange juice, a small apple, a few tomato slices)

This is the proper way to start your day nutritionally. Skip the sugary cereals and glazed doughnuts. Keep it healthy and watch your portion sizes.

Many people do what's commonly called "emotional eating" later in the evening. As the day winds down and you begin to relax, all of a sudden you're thinking about things that bother you - your crappy job, your kid's

bad grade in science class, your huge hips, your rude neighbors, or an overdraft at the bank.

Worry, fear, anger and hurt feelings can lead to eating for the sake of making yourself feel better - if only for the time that you're eating. Before you start eating at night, ask yourself what's really going on, and deal with that problem constructively, rather than drowning it in food.

Speaking of drowning, limit your evening cocktails to one or none. Drinking alcohol will lower your inhibitions about eating. Also, alcohol can disturb sleep patterns and cause you to wake up in the middle of the night. If this happens, will you head for the fridge?

If midnight fridge raids are going to happen, and they still may on occasion, make sure you've stocked your kitchen with healthy snack foods. Don't have your kitchen filled with ice cream, potato chips, cookies and doughnuts. Yes, they're fun to eat, but they also attach themselves firmly to your body in the form of fat very quickly.

Do the right thing and shop wisely. Low-fat cheese and crackers, yogurt, fruit, healthy cereal and skim or 1% milk, or whole wheat toast and natural peanut butter make better choices if you must eat late at night.

And don't eat in front of the refrigerator or at the kitchen counter. Put your food on a plate, sit down at the table and think about what you're doing.

Another strategy that might also help is for you to eat your dinners a bit later in the evening. Contrary to popular notion, it won't make you gain weight to eat a late dinner. It's the after dinner snacking that will get you because it adds on new calories. If you usually eat at 6 PM, push dinner to 7:30 PM and see if that helps.

Sip water through the evening and keep a glass of water on your nightstand, so if you wake up, you can have a drink. And if you do wake in the middle of the night, instead of heading for the kitchen to eat, read

a book or magazine. Or write your feelings in a journal. Or do something creative, like needlework or work on a puzzle.

Fighting the urge to binge at night might be difficult at times, but if you put these ideas to work for you, you'll notice that the desire for late-night snacking eventually subsides. As the urge starts to go away, so will those extra pounds.

### **Exercise Tips**

Everyone, whether they're trying to lose weight or not, needs to get exercise every day. Most experts recommend a minimum of 30 minutes five times a week. This is for basic health, but it will also help you lose weight, especially if you haven't been exercising regularly for awhile.

So you know you need exercise, preferably by combining strength training and cardio. You can accomplish this in a number of ways. Any activity that gets you moving is going to give your heart a work out, so taking your puppy out for a good walk every day is good cardio exercise, unless you're just strolling along – you want to make your heart beat faster.

Taking a dance class and riding a stationary bike while you're watching the news in the morning are also good. And strength training can take place at the gym, with weight machines or in the comfort of your family room, with a set of dumbbells, resistance bands, or a couple of cans of tomato sauce.

If you need ideas on how to get started with exercise, check some workout DVDs out from your local library, or see if your local gym offers a free pass for a week (many offer specials like this to get you interested). Ask a friend or your spouse to walk with you every day.

Exercise can help you with your nighttime fridge raiding. Regular exercise helps you sleep better, so if you're the type of person who wakes up in the middle of the night and wanders into the kitchen for a midnight meal, exercise can help you sleep through that temptation.



For some, exercising in the evening helps to induce sleep. For others, it's better to exercise earlier in the day. This is because exercise will initially elevate stress hormones in your bloodstream, with those hormones eventually tapering off, leading to a relaxed feeling later.

If you're extra sensitive to stress hormones, late exercise might interfere with sleep. But if you aren't, late exercise will help tire you out and help you stay asleep. If you're not sure, try exercising later in the day for a couple of weeks and see how you sleep.

Then, exercise early in the day and see if your sleep patterns change. You'll be able to decide which time is best for you. Regardless, exercise will help you get a better, more restful night's sleep and will help fend off nightly binges.

### ***Mindset Motivation***

Where is your mindset at when you're trying to quit bingeing at night? You have to answer that question by first understanding why you're eating past dinner and into the night. Is it because you're stressed out?

If stress is causing you to eat late at night before bed or to get up after going to bed and eat, it will help you to use some stress relief methods and to work on developing a nighttime routine that helps you get to sleep and stay asleep.

Stress is a fact of life.

We live in a very fast-paced world and there are a thousand and one things that can stress any of us out at any given time. Since stress happens, and is sometimes completely unavoidable, we need ways to handle it so that it doesn't overwhelm us and cause us to indulge in unhealthy habits for a quick fix.

You may want to work on building your own repertoire of stress relieving methods that you use each day on a regular basis. This can include:

- Writing your thoughts and feelings in a journal
- Practicing yoga, tai chi, or general stretching exercises
- Getting daily exercise
- Practicing deep breathing techniques. These are easy to learn and help you slow down and relax by providing much needed oxygen to your brain.
- Meditation
- Guided imagery
- Massage therapy
- Laughing - laughter releases endorphins in your body, making you feel happier and more relaxed. Watch a funny movie, read the comics, or watch your favorite sitcom reruns to get more laughter in your life.

Another very effective way to relieve stress in the evening and help you ward off feelings of false hunger is to establish an calm evening routine that gets you ready for sleep and helps you relax enough to sleep peacefully through the night.

Your nighttime routine might go something like this:

1. Clear the dinner dishes - clean and close the kitchen
2. Take a pleasant thirty minute walk
3. Prepare for next day – pack lunch, choose clothes, etc
4. Brush teeth (when your teeth are freshly brushed, you're less likely to eat again)
5. Help kids with homework

6. Tuck kids in to bed
7. Curl up with a good book and cup of herbal (without caffeine) tea
8. Head to bed when sleepy

If you've had breakfast, lunch, possibly an afternoon snack and a healthy dinner, you don't need a nightly snack, and you certainly don't need to raid the fridge late in the evening or in the middle of the night.

Take some time to explore what's compelling you to do this, and find better, more productive ways of dealing with the problem of late-night eating.

A mindset of committing to reduce stress in your life and establish healthier daytime eating habits will help you kick the midnight fridge-raiding habit and enhance your weight loss efforts.

## **The Plan for Those Who Need to Lose a Small Amount of Weight in a Short Time Period**

Uh oh. Something's coming up - a class reunion, a wedding, or maybe a beach vacation. And you need to drop some weight fast so that you can look great in your swimsuit, your jeans, or that new suit or dress you want to wear.

You need to lose a small amount of weight really quick! Don't panic.

There are ways to slim down fast, but you have to be prepared to do some things that might be tough. After all, you didn't gain the extra 15 or 20 pounds in a couple of weeks. It's not going to be a cinch to lose it in a couple of weeks. But, you can do it.

When people try to lose weight really fast, there are some things you need to be aware of. First and foremost, quick weight loss diets usually fine for short-term use (as long as you're healthy), but you shouldn't stay on them for more than a week or two.

After that, if you want to keep losing weight, switch to a plan that allows you to lose at a slower pace that's healthier for your body. Not eating anything at all is not a diet, and it certainly isn't healthy.

Even if you want to lose weight very quickly, you still have to put some food in your body. Don't try to starve yourself. Also, quick weight loss plans are usually low on variety when it comes to food, so they can get boring quickly.

Since they're made for short-term use (only a few weeks at a time) you can survive the boredom, lose the weight and enjoy getting into those skinny jeans.

Remember that once you come off your quick weight loss diet plan, you aren't going to be able to go back to your old way of eating, unless you don't care if you put all of the weight right back on. Start back into a

normal, healthy diet, by eating three reasonable meals a day and one small snack.

Finally, exercise is going to play a huge role in your quick weight loss plan, so be prepared to really work out!

### ***How to Eat***

For dropping weight quickly, detox and fasting programs can work wonders. These can take on a variety of flavors, shapes and sizes. You've probably heard of some: the Seven Day Juice Diet, Three Day Diet and Cabbage Soup Diet are a few.

The premise behind these types of eating plans is that you consume foods that are naturally very low in calories and fat, along with some foods that may have properties that help to boost your metabolism, or cleanse your system of toxins.

Of course, there are severe restrictions in many of these diets, too. The restrictions could include refined sugar, carbohydrates, alcohol, caffeine, certain fruits, fast foods, and meats.

The good news is that you won't have to eat like this for the rest of your life, and if you lose the weight you need to in time for the big party, you'll be happy you did the diet. Basically, quick weight loss programs do two things: They clean out your system and they help you shed some extra pounds fast.

You'll often hear of detox diets. While detox diets aren't necessarily made for weight loss, they do result in some quick weight loss. These diets often involve consuming very little or no solid food and lots of juices, teas, special liquid mixtures and purified water.

The idea is to get the toxins that have taken up residence in your body to move elsewhere - somewhere outside of your body. Detox diets usually focus on cleansing organs and bodily systems like the lymphatic system.

Some detox diets are extremely rigorous and strict, and can last several days. Some are gentler. In the process of clearing your body of toxins, weight is usually also lost in the form of water and then fat.

Fasting diets for weight loss are used to jump-start a diet, and to help break food addictions. It's like going cold turkey. Juice fasts are very popular for shedding weight quickly, but they shouldn't be used as a permanent weight loss solution.

Juice fasting diets involve drinking different types of fruit and vegetable juice combinations and fruit smoothies to help clean your body out (so it's like a detox diet in that way), and to help your body lose weight fast.

In many ways, detox and fasting diets are similar, and both may use simple, raw foods to produce results. If you want to use a detox or fasting diet to drop weight fast, you can do it very simply - here's an example of a good detox/fasting plan:

**Breakfast:**

Make a fruit smoothie from one banana, the juice of one freshly squeezed grapefruit and two freshly squeezed oranges, and a handful of strawberries. Combine together in a blender.

**Lunch:**

Make a hearty vegetable soup filled with your choice of favorite veggies, and made with vegetable stock (don't use chicken or beef broth). Have a serving of applesauce along with your soup.

**Dinner:**

Combine three or four handfuls of washed spinach, several lettuce leaves, a handful of alfalfa sprouts, one cucumber, four or five stalks of celery in a

blender, then add enough purified water to create a juice. If you like, add a squeeze of lemon juice for flavor. Drink up!

### **Snacks:**

Carrot or celery sticks with hummus, small apple or orange, fresh berries

As you can see, this diet leaves out all meat and dairy. You don't get that morning cup of coffee, or your diet soda. There are no sugary treats as rewards for doing well. But you would only stay on a diet like this for one to two weeks max. Beyond that would be unhealthy.

You will, however, clean your system out well with this diet plan, and you'll drop weight too. And you can do a detox and fasting program every once in awhile to clear out your system and drop more pounds fast.

Now if you don't think a plan quite like this is going to work for you, you can do something like this, and still lose weight:

### **Breakfast:**

Black coffee or tea, one piece of toasted protein or whole wheat bread (dry), one half grapefruit or a whole orange

### **Lunch:**

One serving of tuna, or lean meat or poultry - broiled or baked, fat and skin removed, or two eggs - cooked without oil; a small vegetable salad with low-fat, low-calorie dressing, or a serving of steamed vegetables; water, diet soda, black coffee or tea

### **Dinner:**

Same as lunch (you can eat the same types of foods, but it will probably be nicer if you don't have *exactly* the same thing you had for lunch)

**Snacks:**

Carrots, celery, fruit juice (no sugar added)

This diet gives you more variety, but is still very strict. It probably can't technically be called either a detox or fasting diet, but you'll still lose weight quickly with it. Again, this isn't balanced enough to stay on for more than a couple of weeks.

The key to losing a small amount of weight in a short time period, say 15 to 20 pounds, in two weeks is to cut way back, and eliminate anything that even resembles processed sugar or fat.

Diets like those outlined above are going to keep you in the very low range when it comes to calorie consumption, and your body will accordingly lose weight. There are diets that you can find online and in books that you can use, if you like, that will accomplish the same result.

You'll find that they're similar to what I've described in terms of being quite strict. For example, the Seven Day Diet gives you some variety, but it still strictly limits what you eat as well as your caloric intake. It works like this:

- Monday: All the fruit you want to eat, except you cannot have bananas
- Tuesday: All the veggies you want; and you can use mustard, soy sauce or vinegar with them
- Wednesday: All the fruits and vegetables you like
- Thursday: Five bananas and five glasses of milk
- On Friday: Four 3-ounce servings of lean beef, chicken or fish, with lots of fresh vegetables
- Saturday and Sunday: Four 3-ounce servings of beef steak, with fresh vegetables



The Cabbage Soup Diet is another popular diet that's aimed at helping you lose between 10 and 15 pounds in one week. There are a few versions of the Cabbage Soup Diet, but they all focus on eating plenty of low-calorie, low-fat cabbage soup, lots of vegetables and fruit, a bit of meat, and not much of anything else.

As you can see, the key to eating when you're on a mission to lose weight quickly is to severely limit yourself. And that takes will power. But, if you're determined, you can definitely do it, then returning to a normal and healthy way of eating.

You're going to have to get a lot of exercise in to help you drop the extra pounds, so make sure you have your doctor's approval. Strict diets can make you feel a little less energetic.

If your diet is making you feel lethargic, or like you just can't get your exercise in, try adding a bit more protein and some complex carbohydrates to it. Yes, this will add calories, but not much, if you choose wisely. Go for very lean meats and fish, and some additional fresh fruit and vegetables.

### **Exercise Tips**

Part of losing weight quickly is increasing your body's ability to burn fat. How can you do that? It's simple. You have to do fat-burning cardio exercise for between 30 and 60 minutes at least five times a week.

How do you know the cardio you're doing is burning fat? That's really simple, too. If your exercise is getting your heart into its target range, and keeping it there for the majority of your workout, then you're burning fat stores.

How do you know your heart's target?

1. Find your resting heart rate. You do this by counting your pulse for 60 seconds. This is best done first thing in the morning before you get out of bed.
2. Subtract your age from 220. This is your maximum heart rate. You don't want your heart rate to exceed this.
3. Subtract your resting heart rate number from the number of your maximum heart rate. The resulting number is your heart rate reserve.
4. Divide this number by two.
5. Add this number to your resting heart rate to find the low number for your target heart rate range.
6. Take the heart rate reserve number you came up with (see step 3), and multiply it by .85, and add it to your resting heart rate. This is the upper number of your target range for heart rate.
7. If your heart rate is between the low and high numbers when you're exercising, you're within your target heart rate range, and you're burning fat.

What kinds of cardio exercise are going to get your heart into that range for the 30 to 60 minutes you're exercising?

Well, if it gets you moving and breathing, it will probably qualify. So that means you can walk very briskly, jog, swim, dance, play tag with your kids, vacuum the floor, dig up a new garden bed, put your little one in the stroller and go walking, do a cardio DVD, walk up and down stairs, get on the treadmill, ride a bike, jump on a mini-trampoline, or anything else that gets you going.

Quick weight loss isn't about building up muscle, so skip the weight lifting and strength training for right now. Concentrate on working out with cardio, and you'll lift the fires of your metabolism.

### ***Mindset Motivation***

You've chosen a diet plan that isn't easy for many. But if you really want to do it, you can! Your mindset during this time is going to have to be one of hopeful determination. Spend plenty of time giving yourself positive reinforcement.

You're doing well, and you will soon have made it through the diet, and you'll be slimmer, too! That's something great to look forward to. It's all about keeping your will power running high and your confidence in your abilities strong.

You can do this!

Before we go any further, let's do a reality check. It is possible to drop a fairly good amount of weight in a small timeframe if you're determined enough. However, it is unrealistic to expect drastic weight loss like 50 pounds in 14 days, and you shouldn't put too much pressure on yourself.

Approach this type of weight loss with determination and a good attitude. You'll lose weight if you follow a restricted diet and get in your exercise. Will you lose exactly 20 pounds? Maybe. But it might be 14 pounds. Just do your best.

Keep your attitude throughout the time that you're working on dropping this smallish amount of weight positive and upbeat. Remember that the rigorous eating plan won't last forever, and enjoy the cleansing and lightening effects of your diet.

If you don't lose the amount of weight you'd hoped to lose, don't label yourself a failure.

If you don't lose enough to fit in your bikini or your jeans from high school, then you need a plan B to show off the body that you *do* have. Whether you're a man or woman, you can still find ways to dress and look awesome. And the bonus is that you've no doubt lost some weight, so that's a perk!

If you can't get into your jeans, then go get a pair that looks great on you. Don't try to pour yourself into your skinny jeans. Pair them with a great shirt, and get your hair styled.

If the bikini still doesn't fit, find a killer one piece or tankini and a fantastic sarong to wrap around your waist for a sexy effect.

Pat yourself on the back and give yourself two thumbs up for your strong effort! If you stuck to a strict diet and exercise plan, you deserve kudos for demonstrating your inner strength!

You can hold your head up and continue to lose weight with a more reasonable diet plan. Keep working out, adding in some strength training, and the pounds will continue to melt away!



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