

NOTES on EXPECTATIONS and the RISK of Losing too fast

A typical weight loss program aims for fat loss in the region of 1-2 pounds per week (1/2 to 1 kg). The reason for this is to prevent subsequent weight gain due to the body suffering a rapid lowering in metabolism and to prevent loss of muscle.

However, there is a place for **faster weight loss** in certain circumstances. Fast weight loss is only really appropriate for those who are *very overweight*. Any rapid weight loss regime is not appropriate for those only looking to lose 2-25 pounds.

Fast Weight Loss



A typical weight loss program aims for fat loss in the region of 1-2 pounds per week (1/2 to 1 kg). The reason for this is to prevent subsequent weight gain due to the body suffering a rapid lowering in metabolism and to prevent loss of muscle.

However, there is a place for **faster weight loss** in certain circumstances. Fast weight loss is only really appropriate for those who are *very overweight*. Any rapid weight loss regime is not appropriate for those only looking to lose 2-25 pounds.

Do Any Fast Weight Loss Plans Work?

There are a number of quick weight loss programs that attempt to provide a nutritional balance whilst still providing low calories. One such program is Medifast - this is a successful program used by a number of doctors for many years. Weight loss is in the region of 2-5 pounds per week

There are a number of other diets that fall into the category of a VLCD (Very Low Calorie Diet) - this is where daily calorie intake is 800 calories or less. These diets - such as the Cambridge Diet or OptiFast really do need to be medically supervised due to the possible side effects.

These diets typically consist of meal replacement products and can only be sustained in the short term.

What Are The Risks Of Quick Weight Loss?

Most diets that claim fast weight loss are very low in calories. Unless properly balanced and supervised, there can be nutritional deficiencies that can cause potential health problems.

Along with extremely restrictive calories often comes fatigue and irritability, and even other issues such as constipation due to a lack of fiber.

The other issue is a lowered metabolism that can begin a pattern of yoyo dieting. Depending on your goals, fast weight loss can also include loss of muscle mass (catabolism) *as well as* fat - this is not desirable.

Who Can Use a Fast Weight Loss Program?

Weight loss programs that offer rapid weight loss are generally only suitable for people who are obese (a **BMI** of 30 and above). A person who is only mildly overweight will only really cause themselves problems in the long run.

When it comes to losing weight, how many pounds you lose isn't as important as what those pounds are made of. For example, if you lose 10 pounds, but half the weight is muscle, your metabolism is going to suffer. That's because, pound for pound, muscle burns more calories than fat. Surprisingly, the frequency at which you eat when dieting affects the type of weight you lose. In a *British Journal of Nutrition* study, weight-loss participants who ate frequent meals preserved considerably more lean muscle tissue than those who ate fewer daily meals but consumed the same number of calories. A separate Scandinavian study found similar results when testing two different weight-loss diets on a group of athletes. Although all of them lost equal amounts of weight, those who ate fewer meals lost mostly lean muscle tissue. The participants who ate more frequent meals lost almost all fat tissue, preserving their precious calorie-burning muscle. The lesson here is: To keep your metabolism revved and blast pounds, eat regularly.

Your body may not be burning calories quickly because of poor eating habits and a sedentary lifestyle. Fortunately, you can boost your metabolism. Use these tips to rev up your inner engine.?

If your body's engine is already running at full-speed, there's little you can do to boost your fat-burning potential - you're already performing at peak. But if your tank is continually running on half-empty, you have room for improvement. Use these seven tips to rev up your metabolism.

Ladies, start your engines!

Secret #1: Early to bed makes you a slim girl.

Believe it or not, the number of zzz's you catch can have a big effect on your waistline. Research shows that sleep deprivation can send your hunger and appetite hormones out of whack.



Leptin, an appetite-suppressing hormone, decreases in adults who are sleep-deprived while ghrelin, a hunger-increasing hormone, spikes.

This means double trouble for your fat cells: You end up eating more than you need, leaving you with extra pounds to show for it.

How much sleep do you need to avoid this? Some people swear they can get by on just a few hours, but experts recommend that you get seven to eight hours of uninterrupted sleep each night.

In case you're one of those people who think they thrive on less snooze time, take heed: A four-year joint study by the University of Wisconsin and Stanford University found that adults who regularly slept for only five hours a night increased their levels of hunger-inducing ghrelin by 14.9% and lowered their levels of appetite-suppressing leptin by 15.5%.

Getting into a good sleep routine may take a little work, but it's worth the effort.

Secret #2: Early to rise starts your metabolism off right.

Does your morning ritual consist only of showering, brushing your teeth and getting dressed? Then you're skipping two important things that could boost your metabolism.

The first: Eat breakfast - and coffee doesn't count. Skipping that bowl of oatmeal might sound harmless, but you're missing the first opportunity of the day to jumpstart your metabolism.

Think of it in literal terms: Breakfast is "breaking" the overnight "fast" your body was in to conserve calories. Eating - especially a balanced breakfast every day - stimulates your metabolism.

The second key to starting your morning off right? Exercise. Sure, you might struggle to throw off those cozy sheets - who doesn't? - but it's a battle worth winning. Why? It boosts your metabolism.

As a result, you'll burn more calories throughout the day simply doing the same stuff you always do. Who wouldn't want that? Even a 20-minute walk or jog will make a difference. So skip that second cup o' joe and strap on your walking shoes instead.

Secret #3: The more you move, the more you'll lose.

Speaking of exercise, you should do it every day. Cardiovascular exercise (running, swimming, aerobics, walking) stimulates your metabolism, helps you burn tons of calories and can even temporarily suppress your appetite post-workout.

But don't let cardio get all the metabolic-boosting glory. Weight training is important, too, because it tones your muscles and boosts lean tissue mass, which burns more calories per pound than fat. The more lean muscle tissue you have, the more calories you burn each day.

Also, don't be afraid to exercise more than once a day. Breaking up a 60-minute workout into two 30-minute (or three 20-minute) sessions is not only convenient, but also it may help you burn more fat, according to recent research.

Secret #4: Eat all day to keep weight gain at bay.

Don't take this literally. "Eat all day" means you should be eating more snacks or smaller meals instead of gorging on large meals. Eating five or six small meals throughout the day keeps a steady stream of energy available to your body. This boosts your metabolism and your brain power.

Keep healthy snacks (fruits, veggies, nuts, yogurt) with you and graze throughout the day as needed. Just be sure your main meals are smaller to accommodate all this snacking, or you'll load up on extra calories you don't need.

A big weight-loss no-no is skipping meals. Dieters often try to get that extra weight-loss edge by cutting entire meals instead of just cutting calories throughout the day. But this is counterproductive. Skipping meals forces your metabolism to slow down and conserve calories to compensate for the lack of food.

So when you finally do eat, your body remembers that it went for a long time without food and will store more calories to get ready for the next time you're going to starve it. Stay off this roller-coaster by eating at regular intervals throughout the entire day.

Secret #5: Raise a glass to drinking yourself skinny.

Dehydration is a funny thing. The number on the scale may look good when you haven't had enough water, but you're risking major weight gain by not drinking enough. Dehydration can trick your brain into thinking you're hungry, so instead of reaching for a cold one - water, that is - you reach for whatever snack is nearby.

A simple exercise in math may illustrate the importance of hydration:

8 ounces of water = 0 calories

1 candy bar from the office vending machine = 270 calories

Swapping that candy bar for a glass of water, then waiting 20 minutes to see if you were really hungry in the first place = priceless.

Some experts claim that your body burns extra calories as it works to raise the temperature of that icy water to your internal body temperature. It's a controversial claim, but I say why not? It's refreshing, it's hydrating and you'll burn calories on your walk over to the water cooler.

Secret #6: Set your metabolism on fire with spicy foods.

Spicing up your meals may do more than just add great flavor. "Hot" foods, such as jalapeños, chili peppers and spices (like curry and cayenne), may increase body temperature.

Body temperature and metabolism are related: As you burn energy, heat is released. By increasing your internal body temperature, spicy foods may temporarily raise your metabolism and stimulate the use of stored fat as energy. Experts go back and forth on this theory, stating that it's not enough of a boost to make a difference.

But they do agree that eating spicy foods can increase feelings of satiety. And the sooner you're satisfied at a meal, the faster you'll stop eating. You can easily save yourself 100 calories at a meal by taking fewer bites, so pile on the hot sauce.

Secret #7: You can count on calcium for an extra boost.

Lots of research shows that calcium, an essential mineral, can boost your basal metabolic rate, which can help with your weight-loss efforts. In a National Dairy Council-funded study, researchers found that a high-calcium, low-calorie diet boosted fat loss by 42%, compared to only 8% for a solely low-calorie diet.

Studies also show that dairy lovers are less likely to suffer from metabolic syndrome, whose symptoms include high blood pressure, cholesterol and triglycerides, as well as poor blood sugar control and increased abdominal obesity - all factors that increase risk of diabetes and heart disease.

If you don't eat enough calcium-rich dairy foods - such as yogurt, skim milk and low-fat cheeses - start adding them to your diet or take a daily calcium supplement.

How Calorie-Conscious are You?

Although calorie-counting seems like a tedious task, having a basic knowledge of which foods will send you into a diet trap isn't.