

WHERE DIETS GO WRONG

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WHERE DIETS GO WRONG

When we discover that we are heavier than we want to be, we have a natural inclination to eat less food. We may skip lunch or eat only a tiny amount of our dinner in the hope that if we eat less our body will burn off some of its fat. But that is not necessarily true. Eating less actually makes it more difficult to lose weight.

Keep in mind that the human body took shape millions of years ago, and at that time there were diets. The only low-calorie event in people's lives was starvation. Those who could cope with a temporary lack of food were the ones who survived. Our bodies, therefore, have developed this built-in mechanism to help us survive in the face of low food intake.

When researchers compare overweight and thin people, they find that they eat roughly the same number of calories. What makes overweight people different is the amount of fat that they eat. Thin people tend to eat less fat and more complex carbohydrates.

Losing weight is not something one can do overnight. A carefully planned weight loss program requires common sense and certain guidelines. Unfortunately, there's a lot of misinformation floating around and lots of desperate people are easily duped and ripped off.

Every day one can open a magazine or newspaper and see advertisements touting some new product, pill or patch that will take excess weight off quickly. Everyone seems to be looking for that "magic" weight loss pill. Millions of Americans are trying to lose weight, spending billions of dollars every year on diet programs and products. Often they do lose some weight. But, if you check with the same people five years later, you will find that nearly all have regained whatever weight they lost.

A survey was done recently to try and determine if any commercial diet program could prove long-term success. Not a single program could do so. So rampant has the so-called diet industry become with new products and false claims that the FDA has now stepped in and started clamping down.

Being seriously overweight and particularly obesity can develop into a number of diseases and serious health problems, and it is now a known fact that when caloric intake is excessive, some of the excess frequently is saturated fat.

The myth is that people get heavy by eating too many calories. Calories are a consideration it's true, but overall they are not the cause of obesity in America today. Americans actually take in fewer calories each day than they did at the beginning of the century. If calories alone were the reason we become overweight, we should all be thin. But we are not. Collectively, we are heavier than ever. Partly, it is because we are more sedentary now. But equally, as important is the fact that the fat content of the American diet has changed dramatically.

People who diet without exercising often get fatter with time. Although your weight may initially drop while dieting, such weight loss consists mostly of water and muscle. When the weight returns, it comes back as fat. To avoid getting fatter over time, increase your metabolism by

exercising regularly.

Select an exercise routine that you are comfortable with and remember that walking is one of the best and easiest exercises for strengthening your bones, controlling your weight and toning your muscles.