

Why Diet and Exercise Don't Work

For years, the weight loss mantra has been, “eat less, exercise more.” Yet, the research shows that 90% of the people who lose weight in this manner simply gain it back. Why is this so?

Well, as we mentioned on page one, appetite, metabolism and mood are all controlled by messenger chemicals in the body. When you restrict calories, the cells of the body assume that there is a “famine” going on. In response, cells send chemical messengers that reduce metabolism (the rate at which you burn calories). This conserves the body’s energy during the “famine.”

Because your metabolism is lower, your energy is reduced, so you become less physically active. Your mood also changes because you feel deprived, so your body is attracted to foods that enhance mood—particularly carbohydrates. When food is available, other chemical messengers are released to stimulate the appetite and program the body to store energy (fat) in preparation for the next famine. Thus, a vicious cycle of “feast” and “famine” ensues.

In addition, fat itself acts like a gland, secreting its own chemical messengers. One of these is a hormone called leptin. Leptin is supposed to increase your metabolism and reduce your appetite. However, inflammation blocks the action of leptin.

Inflammation is very common in most Americans because of the large quantity of chemicals in our food, water and air. Inflammation causes fluid retention, and since it is very common for Americans to have intestinal inflammation, it’s very common to have excess fluid and fat in the abdominal area. Since a gallon of water weighs eight pounds, it is very easy to have 5-15 pounds of excess water stored in the tissues of the body.

One can see that unless one changes the type of chemical messages being sent by the cells, one is fighting a losing (or “gaining”) battle. Conversely, by getting our cells sending the right chemical messages, we can increase energy, reduce appetite, enhance mood and have a better functioning immune system. There are four basic keys to achieving this goal, as follows.

1. Don't worry about calories, just eat quality food

The single biggest reason why so many Americans are overweight and sick is because we are eating refined and processed foods. These foods are lacking in vitamins, minerals, enzymes and other phytonutrients the body is looking to obtain from food. When we eat these foods, we may be getting enough calories, but we still feel hungry because the body is still looking for the nutrition it needs.

Refined sugars (sucrose, high fructose corn syrup, fructose, etc.), white flour, polished rice, processed vegetable oils, margarine, shortening and just about all processed and packaged foods fall into this category. If you want to lose weight and be healthy, you must start eliminating these foods from your diet and replacing them with whole, natural, unprocessed foods that are nutrient-



rich. When you do so, your body will get the nutrition it needs and stop telling you it is hungry.

Of course, if you focus on the negative (what you shouldn't be eating) you'll never succeed. The way to succeed is to start incorporating more whole, natural foods into your diet. Eat the foods that are good for you first and your body will start craving the good foods while your desire for the “junk” foods will diminish. For help in learning how to do this, talk to the person who gave you this newsletter or consult some of the books listed under “Additional Help and Information.”

2. Don't put yourself on a guilt trip, instead seek out pleasurable experiences

If you stop and think about it, the biggest reason people “pig out” on junk food (or acquire any other bad habit, for that matter) is because they are unhappy. Being unhappy sends the wrong chemical messages to your cells. So, “beating yourself up” mentally and emotionally for being overweight is only going to perpetuate the problem.

Conversely, it has been *scientifically* documented that pleasurable experiences (such as loving relationships, laughter, enjoyable activities, time spent in nature, etc.) cause the body to send out chemical messages that reduce inflammation, enhance immunity, promote healing, improve metabolism and otherwise enhance health and well-being. In fact, the biggest single factor in having a long and healthy life isn't your weight, your diet or your exercise level—it's your attitude. People who experience pleasure in life live longer, healthier lives.

So, instead of being hard on yourself, be gentle with yourself and find ways to experience pleasure in your life. Find activities you enjoy (walking, gardening, swimming, dancing, etc.) and do them. Treat yourself to a massage or a pleasant bath. Make friends. Make love. Do things that help you find joy and fulfillment.

Furthermore, enjoy your food! Make a decision to enjoy whatever you decide to eat (even if it isn't the healthiest food). This means taking time to notice the color, aroma, texture and taste of each bite. It also means eating your food slowly and chewing it thoroughly. A good way to train yourself to do this is to put your fork or spoon down after each bite and take some nice deep breaths while chewing. If you just do this, you'll automatically eat less and feel more satisfied.

3. Eat small, but balanced meals on a regular basis

Here is a sure-fire recipe for *gaining* weight, even on good food. Skip breakfast and eat a big meal right before going to bed. This puts your blood sugar on a roller-coaster and results in a daily famine-feast cycle. You aren't hungry in the morning, so you don't eat. Your body, thinking it is starving sends messengers to lower your metabolism and energy level throughout the day. By night, your body is starving, and you eat too much. However, since you

