

Nutrition for Weight Loss

Let's get serious and put together a plan. Losing weight is hard work so we need to know what to do and how to achieve the results we want. Here are a few concepts to consider as you start planning your success.

1. Motivation: Be realistic. If you are ready to lose weight you need to be ready to commit 30 minutes, 5 days EVERY week to walking (or more vigorous exercise). You also need to be ready to shop differently, such as trying new foods and/or cooking in a new way. If you're not ready to cut the fast food, chips, beer or wine, you may not really be ready to lose.

2. Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR): This is the speed at which your body burns calories in order for you to exist. That is, the number of calories required to maintain normal body functions (i.e. breathe, have a heart rate, move, etc.). As you become a smaller person your BMR decreases. You can calculate your BMR so that you know how many calories to eat to stay the same weight.

Calculation for BMR: <http://www.calculator.net/bmr-calculator.html>

3. Do the Math:

- There are 3500 calories (kcal) per pound of fat (NOT WATER)
- In order to lose 3500 calories you will have to cut (LESS than your BMR) consistently and anticipate changes depending on your rate of calorie restriction. EXPECT to lose more quickly if you cut more/day but eating throughout the day is important. Don't starve yourself and try to eat 5 times daily (small meals/snacks) to get your body to burn more consistently.

Example:

If you cut 200kcal/day = 17 days/pound (about 2#/month)

300kcal/day = 11 days/pound (about 3#/month)

400kcal/day = 8 days/pound (about 3.5#/month)

500kcal/day = 7 days/pound (about 4#/month)

4. Does Exercise Matter?: It does matter, but doesn't directly help you lose weight. The reason that exercise is important for weight loss is that you are much more likely to be successful in maintaining loss IF you exercise more than 3 times/week. **Exercise does not make you lose weight unless you are exercising more than 4 hours daily.**

5. Get cleared by a doctor before starting a weight loss program. You may need help with appetite suppression if you drop your total kcal intake daily to less than 1200 kcal/day. Medical issues that can affect weight loss:

- Uncontrolled hypothyroidism
- Chronic use of oral steroids
- Severe, untreated anemia