

eWellness magazine

Keep it off!

2018-04-24



Health

The secret is simple.

For real weight loss to take place, what you really need to do is... stop trying to lose weight. As a nation, we have become obsessed with weight loss. Everyone I know is on a diet, weight loss gurus have become celebrities and are constantly invited to talk shows, diet books are best sellers, and supplements for weight loss are advertised everywhere. At the same time research

shows that during the past two decades, the rate of overweight and obesity in this country has been rising steadily in alarming numbers.

On the one hand, weight loss diets have become more popular than ever before. We are totally surrounded by all kinds of low fat, low carbohydrate foods that will help us in our pound shedding task. Yet we are all getting fatter. How do you explain this?



Sacrifice Free with Healthy Choices

For me, the answer to this dilemma is quite obvious. We get obsessed with the need to lose weight. We go on strict programs that call for lots of sacrifices. We are used to suffering while we diet; we measure everything, look at food under a microscope, exercise constantly and take diet pills. When we do all of these things some of us actually become lighter. But this becomes difficult and tiresome after a while. We slowly go back to our old ways and then the weight comes back on. You can readily see that the real issue is not losing weight, but keeping it off. In my opinion, the best way to keep it off is when you forget about losing weight and follow a healthy lifestyle.

In other words, the goal is to live a healthy life. By turning your thinking away from the pressure of trying to lose weight and instead of practicing healthy habits, your choices become more meaningful and lasting. Think of it this way, when you sit down to eat dinner, the food you are eating should not be chosen in order to lose weight, but rather to nurture and nourish. This is an important distinction. Living a healthy lifestyle implies that you will be making choices that have overall beneficial effects. For example, when selecting foods for a meal, your intention will be to find healthy, wholesome foods. You are not looking for the latest trendy food that promises a thinner waistline, but rather something that is good for you. And chances are that by choosing the healthiest food available, you will have picked out something that is wholesome and at the same time low in calories. The difference is in the way you make your decisions.



Sleep, the Aid to Weight Loss

I will explain further with another illustration. An important component of a healthy lifestyle is sleep. We have all heard that in order to function properly, to think clearly, and to have enough energy, we need to get at least seven hours of sleep, preferably eight, at night. A good night sleep is part of a healthy lifestyle. However, did you know that there is also a very strong connection between lack of sleep and weight gain?



Studies have determined that lack of sleep may disrupt secretion of the hormones leptin and insulin, associated with appetite and metabolism. When a person is not getting enough sleep, lack of leptin may actually stimulate appetite and lack of insulin may have a negative impact on fat metabolism. When the body is not getting the required amount of sleep, a possible result is weight gain. By heeding my advice, you would work on getting the right amount of sleep each and every night as part of a healthy lifestyle. Creating conditions in your everyday life that will encourage a good night sleep is a great habit that will stay with you forever. In addition, without even trying, you are decreasing your chances of gaining weight.

Stress, the Real Culprit



Similar to getting plenty of sleep, reducing stress is another important piece of a healthy lifestyle. I don't need to go into how we all live under a tremendous amount of stress. You all know that. As soon as we open our eyes in the morning, we could be exposed to stressful situations as we read the latest headlines, run around getting the kids ready for school, or rush out of the house because we are late for an appointment. Not an innocent bystander, the body responds to this intensity by releasing cortisol, the stress hormone. Yep, you guessed it – cortisol can slow down your metabolism, again making it harder to keep the pounds off your thighs and buttocks. Stress is also the culprit when it comes to those naughty cravings for something sweet or high in fat. After a difficult day full of problems, we reward ourselves in the evening with chocolate ice cream, the most sugary, high-fat food ever invented. All the sacrificial, tasteless diet foods you ate during the day have just become useless.

You know what I am going to say now. Everyone needs to include stress reduction techniques as part of a healthy lifestyle. We must all accept that we live under stress. Stress is not going away, no matter how much we wish it would. We must learn how to decrease the negative effects of all this tension.



Taking part in stress reduction activities can also be a lot of fun. You can join a gym, go bicycling with friends, take up boxing and more. Yoga, Tai Chi Ch'uan, and meditation are fantastic centering disciplines. Some people find activities such as knitting, painting, or gardening, helps them get rid of that stressed out feeling. Find something that works for you. Once you include ways of reducing stress in your life, you may notice that you will not have that urgent need to stuff your face at the end of the day.

Cornucopia of Choices



Keep your refrigerator and pantry full of healthy foods. For years, research into nutrition has demonstrated that the healthiest foods come from the plant kingdom. These foods tend to be very high in fiber, full of phytonutrients, and low in fat. Base your diet around whole grains, soy foods, legumes, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables. Seafood, chosen wisely, is heart healthy. If you are a meat eater, be sure to eat small, lean portions. Chosen for their health giving properties, these life-giving edibles just happen to be low in calories.

Chewing and Proper Digestion - the Key

Have you ever thought about the way you eat? For proper digestion, we need to chew thoroughly. This way, saliva can start the process of digestion in the mouth. Chewing thoroughly will cause you to slow down and not gulp down your food. Most likely, you'll eat less at each meal, again helping you to consume fewer calories.

As you improve some of your habits, you may find new challenges. Remember always, when you need to make a decision, choose the healthier alternative, even if it is a difficult choice. Eating out with friends can become complicated once you have started to change your ways. It could be that in the past, eating in a restaurant meant ordering food that may have been deep fried, or food that was very high in fat. Now you don't eat that way, but your friends still do. Do what is best for your health and do not give in to peer pressure. Part of a healthy lifestyle is having confidence in yourself.

Permanent Weight Loss

Following a healthy lifestyle is a daily responsibility resulting in many benefits, one of which could be permanent weight loss. I hope you share this secret so the word gets around. Maybe then, obesity will not be such a problem.