

# Twelve Weeks To A Thinner And Healthier You!

Well, winter is almost over and our weather will continuously improve. Unfortunately, the increasing warmth will remove the trick of wearing coats and sweaters to hide extra pounds! Isn't it time to get ready for summer (and the rest of your life) by reducing your layer of body fat? Here are a dozen weight loss tips for doing just that! An easy way to see a dramatic change by the start of summer is to commit to making one dietary change each week. Continue with the previous week's change while adding a new one each week going forward. By the end of the twelfth week you will have made 13 significant positive alterations to your health and weight not to mention your self esteem and clothing! You will be pleased with the results you and others see.

## 1. Don't eat the same way you did as a kid!

Frequently, my patients tell me "I was never overweight as a child or teenager." As we get older, our daily calorie requirements drop due to metabolic changes and decreased physical activity. Consequently, the room for treats such as sweets and high fat foods declines. Nutrient-dense and portion controlled foods such as fruits, vegetables and lean protein sources such as skinless chicken, fish and lean cuts of steak provide maximum nutritional support while keeping our caloric intake within the parameters of our bodies needs.

## 2. Use smaller plates!

In a research study of eating habits, people were offered two sizes of plates for their meals. More than 98% of patients with the highest Body Mass Index (a tool used to assess whether one is underweight, normal weight, overweight, or obese) chose the larger plate. A bigger plate tricks your eyes into thinking you are eating less than you really are. Use a smaller plate and get a smaller belly!

## 3. Keep healthy snacks on hand!

Chips in the pantry, candy in a jar, ice cream in the freezer, an empty vegetable bin and the meat cooler full of sausage and hot dogs are obvious temptations that will ruin any diet plan. Keep each of these away from your home and store low fat, low calorie treats such as fruits, vegetables, low fat cheese and low fat proteins in your fridge or pantry instead.

## 4. Don't look at foods other than those on your plate while eating!

Viewing additional foods while eating tends to make our minds think we have more eating to do and results in greater caloric consumption. Avoid buffets but if you must eat at one choose a seat that places your back to the serving line.

5. Decrease the efficiency with which you eat!

I just reviewed an interesting weight loss study that noted more than 90% of obese folks at a Chinese buffet opted for forks as their eating utensil even when offered chopsticks. Use the chopsticks where offered or eat with your non-dominant hand to wield your fork in other situations (at home or away) to decrease the efficiency of your food consumption. Resultantly, you will slow down your eating which will allow you to experience feeling full sooner and eat less. This will decrease the calories you consume not to mention the entertainment novice chopstick users and non-dominant hand fork wielders provide for their dining companions as food drops to the plate or the floor! If you lessen your inhibitions, you too will soon find yourself and your meal companions engaging in belly laughs - laughing is one of the most efficient calorie burners known! A word of caution, if you are visiting your Grandmother Cornelia (my brothers and I knew her as Neno) who sets her table with the finest lace tablecloth or has exquisite brocade seat cushions, this may be the meal to use the utensils or hand with which you have the greatest coordination (if you would like to be invited back)!

6. Don't clean your plate!

Another study demonstrated that of restaurant patrons who were the heaviest, 94% cleaned their plates so there was no food left. I am a firm believer in heeding Mom's advice but this is one rule you need to ignore!

7. Don't fast or skip meals!

If you do either to lose weight these strategies can backfire because your hunger is likely to increase to the point that at your next meal you eat many more calories than you normally would or give into a food temptation such as candy or other sources of empty calories. Regular food intake in smaller amounts five to six times a day will keep your metabolism higher.

8. Stay well hydrated!

Frequently, we perceive a relative lack of body hydration as hunger and turn to food. Numerous dietary studies clearly demonstrate that dieters who have sufficient intake of fluids throughout the day are more successful than dieters that don't. Here is another good reason to obtain a physician's advice before and throughout a diet!

9. Don't follow fad diets or buy into nutrition myths!

No good scientific evidence is available that supports dietary plans based on combining foods, omitting certain food groups or eating only at certain times of day. Diets such as these don't promote sustainable weight loss or improve your health. Once again, always see a physician for weight loss assistance. Your health is at stake!

10. Avoid weight loss injections!

Although highly advertized, there are no injections that are both safe and effective for weight loss! (They most certainly will lighten the weight of your wallet or purse but that is the only weight loss that will occur!) Be very leery of those practitioners, clinics or others that purvey such snake oil nonsense! Rest assured, if such nostrums were effective and safe all physicians would use them!

11. Chew your food more!

Researchers have monitored the chewing habits of buffet patrons and discovered that the heaviest one-third among them chewed their food an average of 11.9 times before swallowing. The middle one-third chewed an average of 14 times and the leanest one-third chewed 14.8 times.

12. Don't attack, reconnoiter your food first!

In the same study mentioned in #11 above, it was observed that the leanest buffet goers took a lap around the buffet line first, to plot out what they wanted to eat. The more overweight patrons charged right in and as a result ate significantly more food and as a result consumed an excessively higher number of calories! Make your choices wisely with full knowledge of what is available!

Finally, I will add one more suggestion to make this a "Baker's Dozen"!!! (I must be true to my name!)

13. Don't skip breakfast!

A simple habit, but doing so raises your risk of obesity by 450 percent!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

As I have stated throughout and you have heard it from many other knowledgeable sources, always see a physician prior to starting any weight loss program! I would be honored to assist you!

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