



Red Flags of Fad Diets

New diets appear all the time, making it a challenge to separate fact from fiction. Judging accuracy is easy when you watch for the “red flags of junk science.” Think twice if:



- A diet promises a quick fix
- There are dire warnings on the diet plan
- A diet lists “good” and “bad” foods
- Recommendations are based on testimonials (no research) or just one single study
- It sounds too good to be true
- Eliminates one or more food groups



Healthy Halloween

Many parents wonder how to handle Halloween and all that candy that goes along with the holiday. Should you be the one that gives out apples or bottled water? This is a great question, and one that is fairly controversial in the health-related field. Our answer to this question at PNT is one of moderation. Moderation is the national stance of the American Dietetic Association when it comes to a healthy lifestyle. If you feel lead to give the apple or water out, go for it! But do not feel that this is the only way you can promote good health. Good health incorporates a healthy understanding of being able to enjoy all foods within moderation. You can also choose to give out candy and chocolate. Allow the parents of the children accepting your treats to do their part in allowing their children to consume them as part of their healthy eating plan – in moderation. **Happy Halloween from PNT!**

Don't Be “Spooked” By the Truth on Dieting

The magic bullet. Everyone is looking for it when it comes to weight loss and weight management. Diets that either require minimal effort, or quick weight loss – both are the most luring of all. But quick weight loss only puts you at high risk for quick regain. Be very afraid.

Keeping It Off!

In most instances, taking off the weight is not the most difficult issue – it is keeping it off. Changing the behaviors that caused the original weight gain is a key component. PNT has counseled hundreds of weight loss clients and we have found many common denominators as to what the real issues are with people struggling with this most difficult issue.

All or Nothing Mentality. Moderation is a difficult concept for many people to grasp. Society has labeled foods and food behaviors as “good” and “bad.” This has caused us to feel like we are “good” when we do things such as eating fruits and vegetables and feel “bad” when we do something such as enjoy a decadent dessert. If you

can convince yourself to look more at your eating patterns as opposed to a single food or a single meal, you will be well on your way to finding a lifelong lifestyle that promotes good weight management.

Improper Food Timing. Many diets teach us to eat as little as possible to achieve weight loss. When you are in this type of dieting mentality, many have a tendency to either skip or eat very little at breakfast. Work is busy enough to only allow for a quick lunch so that may be a low calorie frozen meal or something similar. You think you are being “good” by having just a piece of fruit for an afternoon snack. But you get home and you find it very difficult to remain in control of your eating from that point on. The problem is that you are eating too little calories in the front part of the day, which causes you to overeat at night.

Poor Planning. Proper planning is vital for a healthy lifestyle. Once you get to the readiness stage to commit to the healthy lifestyle scenario, you will find time to plan good food patterns for you and your family. If you look at other things in your life

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that are important to you, you find time to do them. Think of a sports team that you follow or a child's after school activity. You find time to do those things because they are important to you. We all lead busy lives, but the high priority items will take precedent in your life. It may be a matter of reorganizing your priorities. Once you do, meal and snack planning is not too hard with all the great resources out here now.

Patience. You did not put your extra weight on overnight and you should not expect to take it off overnight. This may be the most important thing to understand if you want to have long term success. For most people, a healthy weight loss trend is 1-2 pounds per week. This allows a progressive weight loss without excessive loss of lean tissue, which is the driver of your metabolic rate. We lose lean tissue with age, so we don't want to do anything on purpose to decrease your percentage of lean mass. Extreme dieting does just that.

Components of a Good Weight Loss Plan

In addition to the considerations mentioned above, a good weight loss plan will have these core components:

Foods from All Five Food Groups. The National MyPyramid plan was developed based on sound research. In order to achieve all the vitamins and minerals your body needs each day, you should be eating food from all five food groups, which include grains, vegetables, fruits, milk and meat and beans. Vegetarians can achieve their needs through non-meat protein sources.

Food You Will Enjoy For The Rest of Your Life. The diet you need to follow must be a plan you can follow for life. One of the reasons people re-gain their weight is because they go back to their old unhealthy ways of eating. Find an eating plan includes the allowance of eating some of your favorite foods – even if they are high in calorie and/or low in nutrient value – within moderation.

Foods You Can Buy at the Supermarket. A good weight loss plan should allow you to get the foods within that plan at a local grocery store. Otherwise, it is generally unrealistic to follow long term.

Foods that Fit Your Budget and Lifestyle. Since the food you eat on your weight loss plan needs to be food you can consume long term, it must fit your lifestyle and budget guidelines. It is good to challenge yourself to try and appreciate new foods, but also find pleasure in eating those foods. Contrary to popular belief, healthy foods can be purchased on a tight budget. (See the January 2009 edition of *Nutrition Tidbits* for more information on that!)

Regular Physical Activity and/or Exercise. There is no way around the energy balance equation. A calorie deficit (more calories burned than taken in) translates into weight loss. Consistent physical activity will yield more calories out, which is vital for any weight loss plan. For those wanting to keep their weight off, research shows that regular exercise is key to that plan. However, the benefits of regular exercise go beyond weight management.

Contact PNT to find the perfect plan just for your specific lifestyle!

The Lifecorder Plus: The Next Generation Physical Activity Monitor for a Healthy Lifestyle

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