

The Magic Key to Weight Loss

That word “magic” got ya, huh? Everybody wants the easy way out. Something that won’t take a lot of time or effort. God forbid we should sweat a little. Unfortunately, sweat is exactly what we need. The key to weight loss is this.. Increase your metabolic rate, don’t count calories! (Well, within reason!) This is very simple and most of you know this...at least idealistically. It’s akin to explaining the stock market..you know, “buy low...sell high.” Do we always listen to this sage advice? Don’t be silly! We take risks, try new things, sell short, sell long, buy penny stocks no one ever heard of all in the name of making a quick buck. Well, while the stock market is a gamble, losing weight doesn’t have to be. We shouldn’t need to try to latest weight loss “miracle diet pill” or “super-duper ab shaper and thigh toner balancing machine” thinking it’s a quick way to lose inches and pounds.

The principle is simple. Because the body has a built in shut-down system which slows your metabolic rate in response to decreased caloric intake, it’s much smarter to MOVE MORE rather than to EAT LESS. You heard me. Just because you aren’t in college anymore doesn’t mean you can’t find an hour a day to move your butt. Besides. Eating is fun and keeps us alive. Why stop?

Now I’m not saying eat whatever you want. We “over 35” women have to be conscious of calorie intake, but not neurotic about it. We’re not burning the same amount of calories as we used to. Did you know that those of us in perimenopause and menopause are subject to “weight creep?” For instance, when a woman’s body prepares the uterus for pregnancy, the act of releasing the egg and then shedding the lining uses up over 500 kcals per month. So, let’s do the math. If we stop burning 500 cal per month with just that one natural function, we can put on almost 2 pounds a year. That’s 2 a year that we don’t pay attention to. Add to that sitting behind a desk, sitting behind the wheel picking up and driving your kids to and from ballet and martial arts practice and it can add up to 5 or 10 pounds a year!

While you’re moving more, you need to think and eat smart. Fat has 9 calories per gram. Protein and carbohydrates have only 4. If you develop new substitutions, you can enjoy food without feeling deprived. For instance, substitute yogurt for sour cream. Use sliced cucumbers instead of crackers. Try mustard on your turkey instead of mayonnaise. Make sure you eat small meals that include some kind of protein 5 or 6 times a day. Starchy carbohydrates (bread, pasta, rice and potatoes) retain water. Stick to fibrous carbs like green vegetables and one or two fruit portions a day. This isn’t hard, we just don’t like to deny ourselves anything. I often tell my clients to have one cheat day where they can have anything they want. Brownie? Go for it!! Chicken wings? Have at it! When you eat clean, you’ll find that when you DO cheat, you’re body feels it. You’re tired, bloated and overly full. You won’t want it as much or one bite (or wing!) will satisfy you.

And here’s another nifty fact that might surprise you. There’s a new study from the University of Minnesota that found that women who weighed themselves daily lost

twice as much weight over the course of 2 years. Weigh yourself at the same time every day. A woman's weight can fluctuate between 1-3 pounds per day. But weighing in kept these women in line and on track with their good eating habits.

Now, repeat the magic words... *burn* calories don't deny them. Have a healthy diet, give yourself permission to cheat now and then, but most importantly walk, run, ride, lift, play tennis, power garden-- do SOMETHING that makes you sweat and raises your metabolic rate.

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