

FIGHT FAT: FOR GOOD!

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED
TO KNOW **ABOUT HOW TO LOSE**
WEIGHT ONCE AND FOR ALL!

By Scott Herkes

Why do so many people stick with their weight loss journey and exercise programs for about two months and then dribble back to their old ways? Are they cursed with bad genetics? Are they weak? Is it a fundamental lack of desire?

I think, it may be education ... and failure to plan.

Most people fail to achieve their goals because they never put together a plan of action. For example, don't just say you want to lose 20 pounds and that's your plan. Research shows that setting a definite goal that is measurable will help you achieve what you are setting out to do. In fact, by not setting a hard and fast goal, there is a high probability you will fail. It would be better to say, "I will lose 20 pounds of fat by June 30th and I'll measure my progress by getting a body fat assessment every two weeks."

To achieve that goal, if you start April 1, you would need to lose approximately 1.6 pounds of fat per week. Now you have shorter term milestones as well as a longer term goal. Tell people what you are attempting to do, visualize it, and write it down. Lay out a game plan so you can make it a reality. Get a little *obsessed!*

Now that your goal is set, the real question is ... Do you know how to lose weight (fat) without the usual starvation strategy? This is where the education begins.

Greatly reducing your caloric intake is unhealthy. It won't get you very far and it also isn't permanent. If you are going to go through the effort to make the change, why not make it permanent? That will



require a lifestyle change, with a special focus on eating habits. I think when people hear “lifestyle change,” they get scared because they like their life and don’t really want to change it. Lifestyle change sounds like, “You better take your medicine because it’s good for you,” but it sure isn’t pleasant.

I always laugh when I ask someone if they’d like to taste a product and they say, “Oh, that’s OK, I can choke down anything.” They are in the mind-set that says if it’s good for you, it must not be very tasty. Well, if you have to “choke it down,” you probably won’t stick with it for the rest of your life either. Making a “lifestyle change” has to be something that is easy to maintain and is actually enjoyable in the long term.

For most people, weight loss is synonymous with pain and deprivation. Conventional wisdom says it’s simple: calories in versus calories out. Deprivation is a major part of that formula. It hurts, it isn’t fun, and it makes people grumpy. Couple that with the nutritional advice that you should only eat three times a day, don’t eat anything after 7 p.m., eat lots of fruits and vegetables, and eat lots of fiber, and you are heading down a trail of pain and a meal strategy that may not support a healthy active lifestyle. People have been trying to follow that advice for years. So why is the obesity rate still skyrocketing? Maybe because conventional wisdom really isn’t very good ... or maybe because there is really more to it than calories in/calories out

Let me describe a different way. Eat six times a day. People who start doing this often say, “I can’t believe how much I eat every day!” “I have so much more energy!” Or, “I’m losing body fat and eating more than before!” Bizarre? Not really. You will lose body fat if you give your body what it needs, when it needs it, in the proper amounts to efficiently process nutrients.

The “trick” is what you are eating, in what quantities, and how often. It’s really not a trick but it is kind of like a magic formula. It does work and doesn’t require starving yourself.

In fact, quite the opposite. You won’t lose body fat if you starve yourself. Our bodies are quite adept at survival and periods of starvation is something that

we as humans had to endure, at times, over many years of evolution. You may lose some “weight” at first if you starve yourself, but then comes the plateau.

Your metabolism adjusts, your hormones adjust, and body fat is stored because you are now in “starvation mode.” Your body is programmed to survive with or without your help. Or you may get past that plateau and then look gaunt and unhealthy since you are losing so much muscle mass. Now you look like a smaller version of your old self. Not the look you were after?

adapt to your caloric intake by adjusting metabolic processes to conserve energy. Dump muscle, slow down the metabolism, store fat...survive! Following are just a few helpful tips to get you started in the right direction.

Know your body fat percentage. All weight loss isn’t good. If you are losing muscle, you are going to struggle to meet your weight loss goals. If you are just using the scale to judge your progress, you are missing a major point. Get an accurate body fat assessment



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You lose muscle because muscle requires energy, and since your body doesn’t have the energy intake to support that much muscle, it adjusts by getting rid of it. This slows down your metabolism, so now you have to eat even less to lose weight, and your body struggles to hold on to precious stored energy by storing fat.

It’s all about survival. Your body doesn’t know the difference between you not eating because you chose not to eat, versus you sitting in a cave waiting out a storm so you can hunt for food and eat again. Your body’s reaction to this condition is the same. It will try to

every couple weeks so you can adjust as necessary.

Eating five or six times a day is “crucial.” Your body will adjust very quickly to this increased eating pattern by producing more enzymes to digest food at those times as well as speeding up your metabolism. You will experience increased energy levels as well.

Get protein with your carbs at each meal and snack. Many people don’t get enough protein and by simply increasing their intake, they feel a big boost of energy. I hear many people describe almonds as their protein

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preference. That wouldn't be my first choice. Almonds are a good source of fat but not too good of a protein source. Biological values for almonds or nuts is approximately 30 percent. Not nearly as good as eggs or whey at 100 percent. Since protein will only stay with you for approximately four hours, it is important to eat it regularly.

Sugar is the enemy. High glycemic foods equate to faster carbohydrate breakdown and higher blood sugar levels. Less processed foods typically have a lower glycemic index. That is a good thing. Vegetables also tend to be lower glycemic carbohydrate choice. Fruits contain many good nutrients but be careful how much you eat since they can contain quite a bit of sugar.

Resistance exercise is important for fat loss. If I had a choice between cardio exercise or weight lifting to lose body fat, I'd choose weight lifting. It is best if you can do both. For each decade after age 30 we lose a few percent of our muscle mass if we are sedentary. Lifting weights will help you stop the loss and even increase muscle mass. More muscle mass will speed up your metabolism, help you to lose body fat, increase your strength and improve balance to prevent injuries and improve your self esteem – just to name a few benefits.

Don't work out first thing in the morning on an empty stomach. After sleeping all night you have a greatly reduced muscle glycogen level in addition to being in a catabolic (muscle breakdown) state. Pushing your body to generate energy while you are in this depleted state will inevitably be counterproductive because you will break down muscle tissue.

Eat high quality, fast-absorbing proteins and possibly some carbs immediately after the workout. After a strenuous workout, our muscles will absorb more nutrients than any other time during the day. This phenomenon is greatest about 15 minutes post-workout and diminishes in the next few hours. Consistent post-workout nutrition will be very beneficial and aid in the muscle recovery and repair process.

You have to eat fat to lose fat. Essential fatty acids are important to your health and a key ingredient

in losing weight. The western diet typically has an abundance of omega 6 and 9. It's omega 3 that is severely deficient for most people. An omega 3 fatty acid is highly recommended even if you eat fish a couple times a week. The benefit of omega 3's could fill this page. I recommend doing at least 1.5 grams of EPA/DHA daily. Essential fats are beneficial for inflammation, brain function, relieving depression and hormone regulation – just to name a few.

Calories are important. Find out how many calories you burn each day and make sure you include exercise calories in this equation. It takes 3,500 calories to burn a pound of fat. If you put yourself in a calorie deficit beyond 2 pounds per week, you will probably lose muscle mass. Don't starve yourself.

Fruits, vegetables, fiber, lean meats, nuts and healthy fats should make up the bulk of your food choices. Supplements can really help to fill in when we are very busy or when we just need some higher quality nutrition. It's back to the old 80/20 rule. Eat good food 80 percent of the time and supplement 20 percent for maximum health.

If someone gives you a "diet" and they don't ask about your specific exercise calories, or they advise you to drink watered down orange juice throughout the day to keep your blood sugars regulated, or they ask you to eliminate food groups.... RUN!!! Those are fad diets!

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