

# Why Diets Don't Work!



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The information provided in this program is for general educational purposes, has not been reviewed nor approved by the NHS and is not intended to take the place of advice from your medical professional.

You are solely responsible for your health care and activity choices.

*“The problem with severely restricting diets is that they jolt your body into starvation mode, preventing your body from burning unwanted fat and storing more fat and calories for you to survive on.”*

*When the body can no longer get its calories from food it looks to get some of its calories from lean muscle. This results in muscle loss. Less muscle means a slower metabolic rate causing stalled weight loss or even worse weight gain.”*

- Dr. Mehmet Oz

# Why Diets Don't Work

One diet does not work for everyone.  
If it did, there would only be one diet, right?

Typically, when we hear the word “diet” we conjure up images of a long list of foods we have to avoid. That’s because this is how most “diets” work. According to the dictionary, there are two definitions of diet:

① the kinds of foods a person, animal or community habitually eats (for example, vegetarian, vegan or paleo diet);

① a special course of food to which one restricts oneself, either to lose weight or for medical reasons.

When I refer to the word “diet” I mean it in the “abundance of foods enjoyed because they support an individual’s health” context, not a restrictive “you can’t eat **that**” diet or “you can only eat 1200 calories a day” diet.

Restrictive strategies set us up for failure in the long run. As a society, we've been falling victim to the diet mentality for way too long and then blame ourselves because it doesn't work. It's not your fault! ANY restrictive diet will have a yo-yo effect. When you deprive your body of the nutrition it needs, it keeps track. Once you go off the so-called diet, your body knows what it was lacking and your willpower is just no match. Again, it's NOT your fault. This is why diets don't work long-term, not to mention the damage that can be done to your health with overly restrictive diets. If only we knew this years ago!

**Dieting truly doesn't work...on SO many levels!**

Sample session  
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# Commitment

Over the course of this program, you're going to learn how to eat to feel better, look better, have more energy and lose weight for the long-term.

**Please realize and remember that you are amazing just the way you are!**

You are not the number on your scale. Yes, I know what it's like to have that as a big focus because I've been there too. If the scale stresses you out, feel free to hide it for a while as you focus your energy and eating healthier, improving your digestion, being more active and taking better care of yourself. This is a great opportunity to put some focus back on YOU.

**To make progress towards your goals, you have to be involved and participate 100%.**

I promise it will not be complicated, restrictive or feel like deprivation. Quite the contrary; you are going to learn that food is good and you don't have to fear it, be deprived of it or demonize it in order to reach your goals.

# Be Open

There's a quote I love that says, "If you want something in your life you've never had before, you'll have to do something you've never done." This quote can apply to all areas of our lives, so just keep it in mind as you go through this program.

Decide that you will truly participate, and give it your all. Be curious, open minded and focused and you'll learn many things that will help you on your journey to better health, including reaching and maintaining your ideal weight. Be open to new ideas, new foods and learning to tune in to the signals your body is giving you about the foods you eat. This is your chance to step out of your comfort zone and explore new foods, new tastes and new possibilities.

As your health coach, I'm here to support you, answer questions and check in with you along the way.

**Get ready for new experiences!**

**BE EXCITED!**

# Using a Food Journal

One of the things many people find helpful is to keep a **food journal**. This can be a big help for tracking things like how many fruits/veggies you're eating, if you're getting enough protein and carbs for fuel and if you're consuming an adequate amount of healthy fats. It helps you become more conscious of what you're eating and how different foods may affect you. Journaling can help you make better choices and plan your meals accordingly.

You may prefer taking pen to paper to track manually or you might find it more convenient to use an app such as MyFitnessPal. Whatever your method, I highly recommend tracking your food for at least the first 30 days. If you have big goals, you may want to consider tracking for at least 60 days...our bodies are where they are because of how we have supported it – or not – over a long period of time. It takes time to accomplish our goals, so tracking can help.

I find it highly beneficial to pay close attention to how you FEEL after you eat. Notice which foods make you feel good and energized and which ones make you feel sluggish, bloated, gassy, tired, light-headed or give you brain fog after a short time. Really try to tune in to which foods give you energy and which ones cause symptoms of any kind.

Every body is different. What works for some, may not work for you.

Many people are sensitive to *something* which can cause unnecessary side effects or reactions (bloating, gas, headaches, brain fog, etc.), so paying close attention to how you feel is key. Foods that don't agree with us can also cause inflammation, which may hinder weight loss. What's more, often people are eating very healthy but aren't aware that something they're eating may be the cause of their "feeling off."

Just because a food is supposed to be healthy doesn't mean it's healthy for YOU, and your unique body. By understanding this and realizing that each of us is one of a kind, it can be a huge eye-opener when you discover the foods that work for you...and those that don't!

“Let food be thy medicine  
and medicine be thy food”

~Hippocrates



# Goals and Calorie Counting

One thing you'll notice about this program is that there isn't a huge focus on counting calories.

Some people are more comfortable tracking calories and that's fine. But watching calories alone does not equate to healthy eating and balanced nutrition. Together, we're going to place a strong emphasis on making food choices that feed our body on a cellular level, not just counting calories. When the focus is solely on counting calories, the focus is on a number rather than the value of nutrition. There are many people that count calories, focused on say, 1600 calories a day, but they're not doing their health any favors because the number becomes more important than WHAT they're eating. So, quality (of food) over quantity (of calories) is what we'll be focusing on here.

It is helpful to have a daily calorie range goal that is in alignment with your health and/or weight loss goals. It is important, though not to become so focused on a number. This can backfire, resulting in your not eating enough, making you feel guilty for enjoying food and causing more stress.

I think counting calories has its place and can be helpful when the number doesn't become the most important thing.

# What Else To Track

Even if you've decided to put the scale away for a while, you'll want to get your starting weight and measurements, and body fat %, if possible. You can do this at the gym with a personal trainer or with a body fat caliper at home. (A caliper is available for a nominal price on Amazon) If you can't do this measurement, don't worry about it.

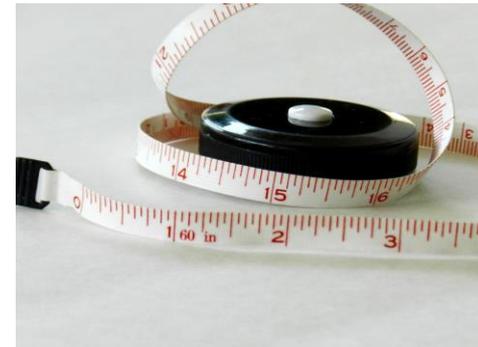
The important thing is to not obsess over the number on the scale and do not weigh yourself more than once a week! Don't worry about where you're starting. You may not like where you are right now, but the only thing that matters is **the direction** you're going. That's where you want your focus. Sound good?

As you go through this program and implement new habits, **there may be weeks where there are no changes on the scale but you may see changes in measurements or how your clothes are fitting, which is exciting!** This is change and the scale is not always the best indicator of progress.

You'll want to take measurements of the following areas:

- Chest (across nipple line)
- Waist (above belly button at smallest part of your waist)
- Hips (legs together and measure the widest part across buttocks)
- Arms (biceps, relaxed at sides)
- Thighs (at widest part, with legs together)

Be sure to record your measurements along with the date they were taken.



# Your Support System

Another important aspect of making diet and lifestyle changes has to do with your support system. Do you have the support from one or more people? Maybe it's your spouse, significant other or another family member or perhaps it's a friend or coworker.

Change isn't always easy so having people that understand your goals that can support the changes you want to make, can make it easier. Do you have people in your life that are rooting for you?

Surround yourself with people that have your best interest at heart and truly want you to succeed. Share your goals with someone that will be there to cheer you on and give you encouragement when you need it.

# Are You Ready To Get Started?

One of the most significant things you can do to start implementing a healthier diet is to add fresh, whole foods – and more organic foods, when possible.

**We're starting with vegetables** because they're one of the foods that are typically missing in most diets (or we just don't get enough of them) and because of all the AMAZING health benefits they offer, such as:

- ✧ strengthening the immune system
- ✧ improving liver and kidney function
- ✧ improving intestinal flora (good bacteria)
- ✧ improving digestion

Vegetables are high in vitamins, minerals, amino acids and fiber, all of which are important to a healthy diet.

To minimize exposure to harmful pesticides and herbicides, choosing organic produce is best. However, not everyone's budget can afford all organics, so start with what you can afford.

I have included the “**Dirty Dozen**” as one of your handouts. This is a list from the Environmental Working Group (EWG) that includes the fruits and vegetables which contain the highest levels of pesticides and herbicides. Referring to this list when shopping will help you have an idea of the produce that is most important to buy organic whenever possible. Since this list changes from year to year, you may also want to download the free “Dirty Dozen” app by the EWG to be sure you always have the most current list.

# Get Your Veggies

Make a list of the vegetables that you and your family like. This is a good place to begin. Can you come up with a list of 8-10 to start with?

Next, make a list of vegetables that you are willing to try..

Let's face it, not everyone loves vegetables just plain. I'll be sharing 6 ways you can enjoy them in just a bit.

**TIP:** Rotate your selection of veggies. Think 'colorful' – the more colors, the more variety of nutrients you get.



## Note:

- If you need to be on a low oxalate diet, be aware of the type and amount of greens you are consuming and stay within the recommended amount as recommended by your doctor.
- If you are taking medications, such as a blood thinner like Coumadin, talk to your doctor before adding greens to your diet, to ensure that the amount and type of greens, such as kale, are appropriate to your needs due to the high vitamin K content.
- Check with your doctor before making changes to your diet and/or exercise program.

# Adding In

You're going to work towards your goals one step at a time, in order to fully implement each habit. This will ensure that it becomes part of your lifestyle and then, eventually, it will become second nature.

The first step starts with "ADDING IN." Sounds good, doesn't it? Instead of making a long list of what we CAN'T have, let's start with foods that are good for us and add in more of those.

By ADDING IN lots of super healthy, nutrient-dense foods that give your body what it NEEDS, you will reduce cravings for empty calories, which make you feel hungry again within a short period of time, thereby making you consume even more calories.

For example: you have a delicious salad for lunch with lean protein, lots of fresh veggies and some healthy oil, you will feel good, comfortably full, and have energy, right? When you do this, the less tempting something sugary or processed is going to seem.

Our first goal is going to be to eat as many nutrient-rich foods as we can so that we crave less of the unhealthy, processed foods. This can also help with our energy levels and mood.



# Be Adventurous!

Remember...be brave, be adventurous! This is your chance to try new things. I remember trying kale for the first time, experimented with different recipes to find my favorites and now it's one of my very favorite side dishes!

Try adding one or two new vegetables to your salad this week and see what you think. If you normally like romaine lettuce, have that and add some dandelion greens, Swiss chard or another new green that sounds good or interesting to you.

Vegetables can be enjoyed in a variety of ways: steamed, sautéed, eaten raw in a salad or as snacks. Vegetables make great stir fry dishes. Many make a great "green smoothie" (one of my personal favorites) and are fabulous juices.

Add some protein and a healthy fat like avocado or an oil-based dressing (olive oil, coconut oil, avocado oil, flaxseed oil) to your salad. Adding protein, either animal based or plant based, will keep you full longer than just a salad with veggies. Your body will absorb more nutrients from the vegetables when you add a little bit of fat rather than using a fat-free dressing, which also may be stripped of other nutrients.

# The Super Six Ways to Eat Your Veggies

I came up with 6 different ways you could start enjoying them, so I'm sharing them with you. Coincidentally, they all start with the letter 'S'.

- ◆ **Soups** - homemade – super simple, quick and easy
- ◆ **Salads** - dark leafy greens and 2-4 other veggies with protein & healthy fat
- ◆ **Smoothies** - add veggies to your smoothie – super quick and easy
- ◆ **Sides** - with lunch and dinner (steamed, sautéed, roasted, raw)
- ◆ **Snacks** - veggies and hummus for example
- ◆ **Sandwiches** - add some greens and other veggies to make your sandwiches more nutrient-dense; choose lettuce wraps for grain free/gluten free option.

For me, the easiest ways are soups and smoothies, but see what you like. Taste and texture is the name of the game. Don't think boring and bland; there are so many ways to add great flavors.

*“Diets that are rich in vegetables and fruits are protective against many cancers. There is an enormous amount of work on this,”* says Lee Wattenberg, a professor at the University of Minnesota who has been studying cancer prevention for 30 years. *“Over the last decade a fairly large number of prevention compounds have been found in fruits and vegetables. When you look at the totality, it's quite impressive.”*

# It's All About Baby Steps

Remember, the goal is to add more “real food” that your body recognizes and can absorb and utilize nutrients from.

Adding vegetables to your diet may seem like a simplistic thing to start with, but it's an important first step and you will most likely soon notice a difference in how you feel.

If you don't typically eat vegetables most days, you can start with a goal of 2 servings per day (a serving is between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and 1 cup) starting today. Work your way up to 3 or 4 servings over the next few weeks once you figure out which ones you like and can add easily.

If you already typically have 2 servings a day, kick it up to 4 servings per day, then work up to 6 which is a great goal.

Remember: these are general recommendations. You may find that you feel better eating certain vegetables, so be aware of how you feel after you eat.



# To-Do

- ❑ **Food Journal** - Focus on how you feel. Be really aware and observant of how different foods affect you. Once you slow down a bit and pay attention, you're likely to notice things you didn't notice before. This is also a great way to make sure you're getting your veggies. Either journal pen-to-paper or use the MyFitnessPal app.
- ❑ **Make a list of the 8-10 veggies you and your family like most and include more of your favorites.**
- ❑ **Make a list of 4-6 new veggies you would like to try.**
- ❑ **Choose 2 ways from the Super Six Ways to Eat Your Veggies and try 2 new vegetables before the next session.**

Have a great week!

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