

Weight Loss Resolutions

A wonderful thing happens in January every year. People commit to new fitness and weight loss programs as part of their new year's resolution. Why is this so wonderful? It increases awareness about the importance of diet and exercise and improves the health of those involved. Unfortunately, most people fall off of the proverbial wagon after the first month or two.

The Problem with Traditional Weight Loss Programs

The problem with many weight loss systems is that they cater to the masses without considering individual need. They use a "one size fits all" approach. This approach works for some but leaves many to ponder why the weight will not come off the way it used to.

Most diet plans are based on Calorie consumption. Not enough thought is given to the *quality* of the Calories being consumed. For example, there are a number of companies that provide Calorie controlled meals. This concept works well for portion control; however, the quality of the food being used is poor and as the age old adage goes – "You are what you eat." Chemicals, radiated foods, ultra pasteurization, processing, lack of nutrient density, genetically modified foods, cloned meats, unidentified food intolerances, etc. all taint many of these so called "healthy foods". Many of these factors can cause internal inflammation when ingested leading to an increased risk for cancer, heart disease, diabetes, *weight gain* and more.

As if that were not bad enough, weight

loss is not just about Calories. The concept of the Calorie is based on the amount of heat a food generates when it is burned in a sealed chamber. Although Calorie estimation can be useful, it does not take into consideration the affect that food can have on hormone levels. To make things even more confusing, different foods can affect people's hormones differently. For example, some people do not tolerate carbohydrates very well. For these individuals, carbs cause excessive insulin production which in turn tells the body to store fat. This can happen even if the individual is not "over eating" on Calories.

Exercise Programs

Exercise is also a critical and key component for successful weight loss. The common perception is that performing cardiovascular exercise is enough to help a person with weight loss. This concept is not entirely true. *Cardio* is over rated as a form of exercise. Although it helps tone blood vessels, it does very little for muscle tone. The key to weight loss with exercise programs is achieving adequate lean muscle mass. I am not talking about working out with weights to become Hercules. Many fear that this will happen, but it is just not true. The fact of the matter is that muscle utilizes energy. The more tone your muscles, the more energy your body expends while at rest. Additionally, maintaining solid muscle tone as we age has been shown to increase the life span.

A common problem with exercise is time. People typically do not want to take an hour or more daily to go to a gym and

exercise. I recommend *The 10 minute rule*. Everyone has at least 10 minutes to give to exercise. The key to this rule is that the exercise must be intense. Try the following exercises: push-ups, pull ups, lunges, and squats. Perform two sets of each exercise within a 10 minute time frame. Don't worry if you can't perform a lot of repetitions of these exercises when you first get started. The key will be consistency over time. If you do it daily your body will get stronger and build lean muscle mass. As this happens you will notice your clothes fitting better, your energy increasing, your sleep improving, etc. Do not weigh yourself on a scale. As you lose fat, you will gain muscle. Therefore, your weight may not fluctuate as much as you want it to. Weight is not as important as body composition.

Once Again, Common Sense Applies –

People are different and unique. No one diet is right for everyone. The same can be said for exercise. No one program is right for everyone. If you are having problems with weight loss, know what your options are. You might not be responding for a number of different reasons. Specialized genetic and laboratory testing can help you identify what type of diet and exercise program will work better for you. Put the odds in your favor before you get frustrated with a lack of progress.

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