

Weight Loss-R_x

Happy June!



Other than for its entertainment value, I'm really not a fan of the show "The Biggest Loser". Until this month, my main complaint has always been that, in order to make the show interesting, they make it look like the key to weight loss is exercise and that's what the show focuses on 95% of the time. They almost never talk about nutrition. Nothing on glycemic indices, meal timing, macronutrient makeup, etc. Yet study after study shows that, while moderate aerobic exercise is good for your heart and lungs and resistance training is great for developing attractive muscle, exercise is NOT the key to weight loss and, in fact, has very little effect at all. Unless you are a professional athlete, there is no way you are going to burn off a bad diet. This is why you see a lot of overweight people who can run a marathon or play racquetball for hours. Another thing that really irks me about the show is that they have actually had Subway as a sponsor, which is the most ridiculous thing I can think of. Huge hunks of bread with two little slices of meat slathered with mayo? Seriously?

But this month, a pretty sobering study (click [here](#) to read it) was published that gives us yet one more reason to not use the show as the authority on how to lose weight. A team of researchers has been continually following the 16 participants from Season 8 of the show, which aired six years ago, in the fall and winter of 2009. Of the 16 contestants from that season, 14 of them agreed

to take part in a really well done follow up study that was conducted in cooperation with the NIH (National Institutes of Health). So how did these contestants do in the six years since the show? Well only 1 of the 14 had actually continued to lose any additional weight since the show ended and 6 of the 14 were just as heavy or heavier than before they started! On average, the contestants had put back on 80% of everything they had lost.

Why? Are they lazy and gluttonous? Actually, no. Most of them were continuing to eat well and exercise every day. The reason they put their weight back on is that the very quick, very drastic weight loss had wrecked their metabolism. Compared to before starting the competition, their metabolisms had, on average, slowed down by an equivalent of 500 calories/day. And today, six years later, their metabolisms continue to be almost 500 calories/day slower than before they started. Scariest of all, the contestants who did actually keep some weight off were the ones who experienced the worst reductions of all in their metabolisms! Now to be clear, I am not talking about slow, steady, healthy weight loss like you are achieving with Weight Loss Rx. I am talking about 7-10 pounds a week, every single week for 6 months like they do on the show. It seems that when we lose that much weight in such a short time our bodies actually think we are starving and do everything possible to hold on to fat reserves.

Depressing, I know. But there are things we can do about it. While we still have a lot to learn, here are some of the things that almost assuredly help to increase our metabolism.

1. Low carb, high protein diet- in other words, when cutting calories, cut carbs first, fat second, and lean protein.... never. It is basically impossible for human bodies to store protein as fat. Note- when I say low carb, I mean starchy carbs and sugars. There is nothing wrong with peppers, blueberries, kale, apples, etc. But there is everything wrong with breads, pasta, potatoes and sweets.

2. Muscle- Again, exercise is great for us, but for fat loss, concentrate mostly on resistance training (lifting weights). You can burn just as many calories from resistance training as you can from aerobic exercise. And unlike an aerobic session, the muscle you build from resistance training will continue to burn calories even at rest.

3. Eat often- at least 3 times a day. Forage, like a squirrel. This will let your body know that food is plentiful, and that you are not starving. Therefore it will be more willing to let go of some calories.

Lastly, never give up. If you are struggling to keep losing weight at the same rate you did when you first started with us or even if you have fallen completely off the

wagon, ask for help. We will work with you to get you to your goal. There is always a way.

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Sincerely,
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