

Weight Loss Tips: Lose It For Life!

(Ron Jones, MS, ACSM Health/Fitness Instructor, Corporate Wellcoach)



“Don’t dig your grave with your own knife and fork.”
--English Proverb

As a Wellcoach and Health/Fitness Instructor, I've heard many excuses, diets, and scams to lose weight. After sorting through all the misinformation, certain concepts and principles emerge—the real deal for permanent weight loss—the bottom line. Below is what you need to know based on science and my experience as a health professional working with hundreds of people over the last decade to coach them successfully towards healthier eating behaviors—now it's your turn. 😊

Nutrition & Weight-Loss Concepts



“It’s stupid to die because of what you eat.”
--Angela Proudfoot, Pro Drag Racer

- **Nutrient vs. Caloric Density:** Start thinking about the density of your food. How many nutrients vs. calories does your food have per serving? Are your food choices packed with calories but virtually no nutritional value (like most Americans), or do you choose foods that are loaded with nutrition while remaining low-calorie? Basically, you need to start “thinking about” the effects of what you are eating on your body—BEFORE you eat it! Mindless eating results in you waking up one day confused and asking yourself how you gained all those pounds. Mindful eating of healthy foods will reduce unhealthy weight gains—or prevent them altogether. **Think before you eat!**

“Balance is the key with nutrition.”
--Jack LaLanne

- **Energy Balance:** What goes in with many people does not come out. Basically, the energy you put into your body (calories consumed) needs to be used. If the calories are not used, they are stored as fat. You have two choices to reduce fat weight—either put fewer calories into your body or take more out—it's that simple. Putting less in requires mindful eating to STOP “before” you exceed the energy needs of your body for its daily activity levels. Taking more out means you physically exercise more. To accelerate weight loss, you do both—consume less calories when eating while burning more calories with exercise. No magic “Western” bullet with me—just proper eating and regular exercise!

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Top Ten Weight-Loss Principles

- 1. BALANCE, VARIETY, & MODERATION:** *Diets Don't Work!*
 - Fad diets typically do not have balance, variety, and moderation. Without these three key ingredients, it is impossible to maintain an eating program “for life.” There are endless new diets being created—always ask yourself if they have balance, variety, and moderation. If not, throw them out!
 - ***Wellness is a lifestyle. Eating healthy is something you do for life—not just during a fad diet.*** We know diets don't work, so stop wasting your time and money with them. Be reasonable by using the above principle to eat consistently with balance, variety, and moderation—for life!
- 2. EAT BREAKFAST:** *Start Your Day Right!*
 - You only have a two-hour metabolic window to eat after you wake up in the morning. If you don't eat within two hours of waking, your metabolism will slow down for about the next 24 hours and go into “fat- storage” mode which is exactly the opposite of what you want. You need to give your body the signal to burn as many calories as need for *full function and “High-Performance Health”* by giving it fuel within two hours of waking.
 - I've had people start eating breakfast that never changed what they were eating the rest of the day, and they immediately started to lose weight. I know this sounds crazy, but they “ate more to weigh less!” It is all about metabolism. Kick your metabolism into high gear with a healthy breakfast then charge into your day with increased energy and vitality—*Yahoo!*
- 3. MEAL TIMING:** *Fuel Your Fire!*
 - Going too long between meals has a similar effect to not eating breakfast—you slow down your metabolism. Unless you are sleeping, try not to exceed a 4-5 hour window between eating.
 - Ideally, your window is even closer to 3-4 hours between meals. I like to see people eating about 5-6 times per day. The in-between meals should be smaller and lighter.
- 4. WATER:** *Are Ya Yellow?*
 - Staying hydrated has plenty of assorted health benefits. It helps with weight loss specifically because as the water fills your stomach, it activates the “stretch receptors” in your stomach wall that in turn give signals to your brain that you are filling up. Basically, you “pre-fill” your stomach with zero calorie water instead of higher calorie food. Most Americans are chronically dehydrated; unless you want to look like a dehydrated raisin, don't make this serious mistake!
 - To determine if you're hydrated or not, look at the color of your urine. If your urine is very yellow, drink more water. If your urine is very pale yellow or clear, then you are properly hydrated.

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5. **5-A-DAY:** *Fruits & Veggies=↑ Nutritional Value & ↓ Fat/Calories*
 - Filling up primarily with low-fat and low-calories fruits and veggies will help you reduce the available space for higher fat/calorie foods.
 - Additionally, fruits and veggies have many other health benefits that junk foods do not significantly produce like fiber, vitamins, minerals, and water. Some fruits and veggies also reduce the chances for getting certain types of cancer.

6. **PORTION SIZES:** *I Can't Believe You Ate the Whole Thing!*
 - Dietary experts claim if Americans ate proper portions of food but never changed their food choices that we could significantly reduce obesity in our country. Even if you are eating junk food—just stop eating so much! The “portion distortion” with most people is completely out of control. Many restaurants now serve so-called individual dinners that are closer to “five” dinners in portion! Plates are larger—now even oval instead of round to pack on more food. A serving of meat is only 3.5 ounces (the size of a deck of playing cards). When is the last time you saw a restaurant portion of meat like playing cards? Maybe sushi in 1955!
 - Try the “1/3 Rule” for eating by Steve Ilg of Wholistic Fitness™. Fill your stomach with 1/3 food, 1/3 water, and leave it 1/3 “empty.” Leaving a little empty space will help with both digestion and calorie control.

7. **EMPTY CALORIES:** *“If man makes it, don't eat it!” –Jack LaLanne*
 - People routinely eat junk food that has no nutritional value but is very high in calories; thus, the calories are “empty” because they have no significant vitamins and minerals. Junk foods are high in calories per small serving, and they quickly add on the pounds.
 - **Danger!** It might not seem like you are eating a lot of volume, but per gram junk foods are LOADED with fat and calories. Think about where these foods are in your daily eating then work to reduce them.

8. **RELAXED & MINDFUL EATING:** *Slow Down...*
 - It takes about 20 minutes to actually “feel full” after you have eaten enough food. If you eat too fast, you can easily overeat within 10 minutes but keep right on eating because you don't feel satisfied. By eating slowly, you allow your brain and stomach enough time to communicate properly and you aid digestion by chewing your food more completely. Relaxed eating also promotes “mindful” eating. Be mindful of what your food does to your body—will your choices hurt or help you? Think before you eat!
 - Slow down enough and you might even “taste” your food—what a concept! Many people's eating more closely resembles that of a starving animal than that of an appreciative human being thankful for their food—be thankful for the food, those that brought it to you, and your health to eat it. Food is about more than not being hungry...slow down, think enough about what and why you are eating, and you'll find this out yourself...

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9. **EXERCISE:** *The Only Real Fountain of Youth*

- If I could put all the benefits of exercise into a pill, I'd be the richest man in the world! There isn't much that exercise can't help with in terms healthy aging—it is the closest thing to a fountain of youth you'll ever find. For optimal function, healthy aging, and injury prevention, your weekly exercise regimen should include cardio (for heart), strength (muscle tone), and muscular flexibility/joint mobility. While exercise is great for keeping weight off, it is NOT the most optimal for taking the initial weight off. The average adult only burns about 600 calories per hour in a "hard" workout. A bacon double cheeseburger can exceed 1,100 calories—do the math. You're in the hole if you think exercise alone can bail out your poor eating—and "the hole" I'm referring to could be your early grave! ☹
- To accelerate weight loss, use the strength component of exercise to increase your muscle (lean mass). Having more muscle increases your metabolism; this means you burn more calories at rest—while you sleep, sit, drive, and breathe—people with lean bodies burn off excessive fat calories and thus keep the body to a healthy fat to lean mass ratio.
- ***The Ultimate Advantage=Use exercise with proper eating to maximize weight loss and weight maintenance!***

10. **CONSISTENT ENDURANCE:** *Stick With It!*

- Again, quick-fix diets don't work. ***Less than 5% of people that lose weight actually keep it off!*** Wellness and healthy eating are long term—a "lifestyle." The most successful people with PERMANENT weight loss lose about three pounds per month. This might not sound like much, but at the end of the year, it's over 50 pounds! The general recommendation is to lose between ½ to 2 ½ pounds per week. Weight loss beyond 2 ½ pounds puts you at greater risk for losing muscle (lean mass). Remember that loss of muscle will "decrease" your metabolism and make it harder for you to keep the weight off for the long term.
- ***It is best to take the slow but steady path—consistent endurance with Wellness will get you there safely...enjoy your journey.*** ☺

Put These Into Action NOW For Permanent Weight Loss!

1. **Balance, Variety, & Moderation**
2. **Eat Breakfast!!!**
3. **Meal Timing**
4. **Water**
5. **5-A-Day**
6. **Portion Sizes**
7. **Empty Calories**
8. **Relaxed & Mindful Eating**
9. **Exercise**
10. **Consistent Endurance**

* Ron Jones (8.12.08)

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