D-E-I-T: A Four Letter Word

Tennessee On the Move @ Vanderbilt
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Who’s been on a diet?

- Atkins
- South Beach
- Hollywood 48 hour Miracle Diet
- Weight Watchers
- Jenny Craig
- The Zone
- Slim Fast
- Cabbage Soup
- the list goes on and on...
Did it work? Do they work?

• Why are Americans still gaining weight?
Prevalence of Obesity

- 14.5% obese in years 1976-1980
- 22.5% obese in 1988-1994
- 30.5% obese in 1999-2000

- based on NHANES surveys

(Flegal KM, et al. JAMA. 2002;288:1723-1727.)

1991

1993

1995

1998

Data is not available  <10%  10% to 15%  >15%

(*Approximately 30 pounds overweight)
Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System
U.S. Adult Obesity Prevalence (BMI >30) in 2004

http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/gisbrfss/map.aspx
Causes.

- Many interrelated components
  - inherited (genetics)
  - metabolic
  - behavioral
  - psycho-social
  - environmental
  - cultural
  - socioeconomic

(U.S. DHHS. Healthy People 2010. 2nd ed. 2000)
How to keep control?

- Is dieting the answer??
  - NO!

- Why is dieting “bad?”
  - Why is diet a “four-letter word?”

![Garfield cartoon](https://example.com/garfield_cartoon.png)
Diet: A four-letter word

#1: Inaccurate Claims and Promises

- Tout or ban a specific food or food group
  - Focus on “right” and “wrong”
- Suggest that food can change body chemistry
- Blame specific hormones
- Faulty science
- Nutrition inaccuracies
#1: Inaccurate Claims and Promises

- Rapid weight loss is not FAT loss
  - Initial quick weight loss is typically WATER, especially on low carb diets.
  - To lose 10 pounds of fat in one week, you would have to eat 5000 less calories per day or burn 5000 additional calories per day!!!
#2: Require Restrictive / Restrained Eating

- People feel deprived and constantly FEAR losing control
- Leads to overeating and guilt

#3: Not Tailored for You

- Cookie-cutter mentality
- One approach doesn’t work for all lifestyles, backgrounds, tastes, goals, etc.
#3: Not Tailored for You

**Causes & Factors related to weight**

- inherited (genetics)
- metabolic
- **behavioral**
- psycho-social
- environmental
- cultural
- socioeconomic

**Strong environmental influences**

- Dining out, portion sizes, advertising, diminished physical activity opportunities
#3: Not Tailored for You

- No help with trigger situations
  - Examples:
    - Celebrations
    - Holidays
    - Emotions
    - Peer pressure
#4: Reinforces the “diet mentality”

- Go on it to lose weight and go off it once weight is lost
  - Has a start and end
- All or nothing philosophy
  - [Gradual approach is more likely to result in long-lasting changes]
  - Diets generate weight loss not weight maintenance

All bad??

• Some pros to dieting:
  - Structure: set plan / guidelines
  - Early excitement (not likely motivation)
  - Quick results → continued effort
  - Possible increased awareness
    • Label reading
    • Self-monitoring

• Not all diets / diet programs are “bad” but most must be tweaked to work for an individual
All bad?? - Recent Research

- Comparison of the Atkins, Ornish, Weight Watchers, and Zone Diets for Weight Loss and Heart Disease Risk Reduction - *JAMA* Jan. 5, 2005

- All 4 diets resulted in moderately significant wt loss at 1 year (no diff btw diets)
- Strong association between self-reported adherence and weight loss
- These popular diets can reduce wt and several cardiac risk factors under realistic conditions, but only for the minority of individuals who can sustain a high dietary adherence level.
Pros and Cons of common diets

• Low carb diets in general
• Atkins’ Diet
• South Beach Diet
• Low fat diets in general
• Weight Watchers
Low carbohydrate diets (in general)

• Cons
  - False claims (e.g., “good” and “bad” labels inappropriate, insulin effects, etc.)
  - Severe CHO restriction
    • Restricts food groups entirely
    • Ketosis not natural, possible health risks
  - HIGH protein, HIGH fat
  - No long-term evidence (weight or health)
  - Low carb products

Pi-Sunyer FX. Am J Clin Nutr 2002;76:290S-298S.
Low carbohydrate diets (in general)

- Pros
  - Restricts intake of many “problem” foods
  - Focuses on label reading and possibly watching portions
  - Can generate weight loss (at least over the short-term)
  - Possible “metabolic advantage”
    - Over the short-term ($\leq 6$ mo), some studies have shown that low carb diets lead to > wt. Loss than low fat diets
    - Thermic effect of protein > than CHO and fat
    - Possible difference in efficiency of other metabolic pathways

Atkins’ Diet

- **Major restrictions early**
  - many people extend this phase
  - nutritionally inadequate
- Not concerned with saturated fat

+ Meets tastes of some individuals - “easy” diet
+ Quick weight loss (water) exciting
The South Beach Diet

- Low calorie diet but claims not to be
- Food and nutrition inaccuracies
- First phase is very restrictive

+ Promotes healthy foods, such as lean meats and most vegetables and fruits, in phases 2 and 3

Low fat diet (in general)

- Over consumption of low-fat products can lead to weight gain
- High carbohydrate intake (of simple carbs) can increase blood lipids without enough physical activity

+ Replacing high fat foods with lower fat alternatives reduces caloric intake → weight loss
+ Nutrient-rich fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat
Weight Watchers

- Some individuals don’t like the point system
- Group dynamics differ and the group in your area may not work for you
- Cost can increase if you buy into the extras (food scales, magazines)

+ Focuses on lifestyle change (low-fat nutrition, exercise, and group counseling)
+ No forbidden foods
+ Seemingly sound nutrition advice
Diet: A four-letter word

#1: Inaccurate claims and promises

#2: Require restrictive / restrained eating

#3: Not tailored for you

#4: Reinforces the diet mentality and does not lead to long-term weight loss
The SOLUTION

• Combine wt. loss and wt. maintenance together = WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

- Lifestyle approach to weight control
  • Lifestyle is everything about the way we live—an interaction of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, values, behaviors, and interactions with our environment.

- Start with maintenance!

The SOLUTION

• Tailored for you.
  - Start from where you are right now

• All foods can fit.

• Progress not perfection.

• Focuses on lifestyle behavior modification.
  - Nutrition, physical activity, stress, sleep, work, priorities,…
  - Incorporates problem solving and coping strategies

The SOLUTION

• Go it alone

OR

• Seek help (recommendations and guidance) from a weight loss / weight management expert
#1: Self-monitor
- Example: food journal - place where you ate, duration, mood, & simultaneous activity.

**Food Journal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food (detailed description)</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Time (start/stop)</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th>Concurrent activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Lunch</em>: Turkey on wheat (lettuce, tomato, mayo)</td>
<td>Desk</td>
<td>11:45-11:55</td>
<td>Stressed</td>
<td>Reading email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Chips Ahoy cookies</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 oz. Dr. Pepper</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steps

#2: Identify priority areas
- What are your eating trends, trigger situations, emotional influences,...?

• Examples of problem areas
  - Grabbing food for other reasons than hunger
  - Eating very quickly
  - Putting off exercise
  - Big snacks
  - Skipping meals and overeating later
  - Too tired to exercise
  - Eating out of habit

Steps

#3: Choose only 1 or 2 changes to make

- Create action strategies for triggers...
- Make changes gradually
  - Cut problem foods down by 25% at a time
  - Try a new behavior 3 days/week instead of going “cold turkey”
  - Choose one area at a time
- Do not move on too quickly

Helpful Hints

• Create action strategies for triggers
  - **Emotions**: devise a list of activities to cope with emotions other than food (e.g., listen to music, take a bath)
  - **Social pressure**: mentally practice ways to decline food, mentally plan how much alcohol you will drink, carry on conversations away from food
  - **Cooking**: don’t nibble while preparing food, try chewing gum
  - **Impulse control**: plan your snacks and keep them handy, plan your meals, go no longer than 5 hours without eating

Steps

#4: Monitor your progress

- Helpful hint: Think Positively
  - Focus on progress, not shortcomings
  - View small setbacks as a learning opportunity
  - Give yourself positive feedback daily
  - Set realistic goals

Steps

#1: Self-monitor

#2: Identify priority areas

#3: Choose 1 or 2 changes to make (take action)

#4: Monitor your progress
Maintenance Success

• What works??

• Findings consistently associated with those who maintain weight loss
  - Exercise
  - Self-monitoring
  - Skill in using coping strategies

Any Questions or Comments?