

5 Weight Loss Tips to Change Your Lifestyle

Losing weight and staying healthy is easier than you think

1) Ditch the Diet

Remember Atkins? Or The Zone? All those “low fat” snacks and “low calorie” drinks? We all probably know by now that fad diets don’t work and “healthy” packaged goodies are anything but. I know we all really want to believe that that bag of chips is good for us, but, and this may hurt, they’re just as bad as the full-fat versions. Empty calories that leave you hungry again in 20 minutes. You know how they get the fat percentage in packaged foods down? Up the sugar intake! As if we weren’t full of sugar already.

If you want to achieve real weight loss you have to eat clean. That means foods with ingredients you can actually pronounce! Foods that grown in the ground or on a tree. Perishable items. You know...fruits and vegetables. ;) Basically, avoid the middle of the grocery store and stick to the outside aisles, that’s where you’ll find the real food.

Here’s the reality. There’s no secret gimmick or shortcut to weight loss. It can be tedious and disheartening at times - salad doesn’t taste as good as french fries. That’s just a fa. It’s hard, but when you reach your goals and you feel your best, there is no feeling like it.

While we’re on the subject of not dieting, we have to stress, DON’T SKIP MEALS! It will only make you hungry enough to eat an entire pizza [AND skipping meals actually tricks your body into thinking there’s a shortage of food](#), ergo, it will hold onto calories like they’re discounted designer purses on Boxing Day.

Ok, after all that, here’s one shortcut: learn to love black coffee. Seriously.

2) Follow the 80/20 Rule

This may seem counterproductive to what we just said, but no one can perfect 100% of the time. We can all be perfect 80% of the time though.

[The 80/20 rule is simply this: 80% of the time, eat clean, real food, 20% of the time, eat that poutine.](#) Ok, we kid, but you get the point. If you eat three meals a day then three meals that week can be “cheat”.

[Weight Loss Tip: What Exactly is the 80/20 Rule?](#)

You have to allow yourself some room to indulge. Sorry, but that glass of wine is a necessity in life! Obviously, don't take this as an excuse to indulge with an entire cake, but if you have a treat that you love, then you should allow yourself to enjoy it.

The real secret to weight loss and longevity of health is balance and really, it has to be a lifestyle that is realistic - eating perfect 100% of the time is maybe realistic for a while but we all fall off and feeling like we failed is often what triggers all those bad habits to come rushing back in. We often think it's too hard so we just give up entirely.

3) Don't Like The Gym? Don't Go

Now before you go tossing all your workout clothes out in celebratory rebellion, let us explain what we mean.

This concept follows much the same mentality of the 80/20 rule in that what most often trips us up in our weight loss attempts is the notion that we have to be perfect, we have to be the gym rat in there lifting and running every day. That's simply not the case.

For some of us, gyms are places of worship. The day is not complete until you get your session in, but for others, gyms are not ideal. Let's face it, the lights are waaaayyy too bright, and why is it always so cold?! If you really hate going, then don't go. You won't stick to a fitness plan and you'll end up back on the couch in four months back to being sedentary.

Physical fitness comes in many forms and too often we follow the image that we see on health magazines of smiling people in gym gear barely sweating on the treadmill. Nope. Sorry. What else is out there?

Find your happy medium. [Little know fact: walking a mile or running a mile is the exact same thing. The caloric output is the same.](#) In fact, walking at 12:30 or more a mile burns more calories than running at 10:00 a mile. Pop in your headphones and listen to an audio book while you take a nice evening walk, or walk/ride your bike to work if you can. Play sports or go kayaking or paddle boarding in the summer. Whatever tickles your fancy, but find that activity that you enjoy and will stick with. Don't be a slave to the concept of the gym if you absolutely hate going.

4) Reduce Stress

Stress cause weight gain. It's a proven fact that high levels of cortisol can lead to increased levels of fat, in particular, belly fat. Which causes more stress, then more fat, then that entire cake we mentioned above to cope with the never-ending cycle.

It's a complicated science, and one we won't try to completely explain. [WomenToWomen.com has a great article breaking down the release of insulin and cortisol due to stress](#), but essentially, when we feel stressed, our adrenal glands release cortisol and adrenaline thinking our body needs more fuel for that "fight or flight" moment. When that fuel isn't used, it is stored as excess fat and causes weight gain.

[Weight Loss and Adrenal Stress: How to Keep Calm and Lose Weight](#)

We're not being chased by animal predators these days and our stress is much less physical and more physiological, but the effects are the same with many of us experiencing high levels of stress and cortisol release throughout the day.

So how do you combat this? It might seem cheesy, but you must must must find a way to relax and take time for yourself throughout the day. The 80/20 rule also applies to time management; try to make 20% of your time for yourself and 80% for work, household needs, errands, etc.

Some tricks we find useful are:

- Getting a good night's sleep. Try going to bed at the same time every night. It seems simple but the difference it makes is huge. Training your body when to shut down each night promotes relaxation and helps your body hit REM. Pick a time and stick to it. That includes the weekends; if you're going to bed at 11pm on the weekdays and 3am on the weekends you're not getting the benefits. Try to keep the weekends within an hour or two of the weeknights.
- Shut your phone off. It's important to separate your personal and work life and smart phones do not help that. You can't be available 24/7, no matter how much people expect you to be. Again, pick a time, say 9pm, and shut, It. Off. That means, no Twitter browsing, no Instagram liking, no responding to emails. Telephone use is the exception, but it's so crucial to be able to shut off for part of the day.
- Read. We ingest information all day every day, but how many of us take the time to sit down and read? Taking even an hour every couple of days to make yourself a cup of tea and read a chapter of a book or an article you've been wanting to get to can really help you relax. Bonus: reading has been proven to strengthen cognitive abilities and sharpen your mind.

[Need some more stress-relief tips? 10 Relaxation Techniques That Help Zap Stress Fat](#)

5) DRINK WATER

Sorry for the all-caps, but this one is so easy and so many of us miss it. *Guilty* The minimum recommended intake is eight glasses a day: that's eight glasses at 250ml each....so two litres. Some experts even recommend as much as three litres, but really, there's no limit to how much water you should be drinking in a day.

Water can be boring though. Fact. There are a lot of products and tricks to make your water interesting though:

- Replace your meal-time beverage with water. Put down the soda or milk and have a glass of water. The flavours from your meal will cover the water.
- Put in some fruit. [Get yourself a infuser water bottle](#) and add some raspberries and mint, or strawberries and lime. It's refreshing, easy, and much better for you than those packaged water sweeteners or flavoured water.
- Out for happy hour drinks? Add a big glass of water with every drink. It will keep you hydrated, and, depending on how many you have, alleviate any potential hangovers.

We hope these weight loss tips will help you on your journey to good health! Remember, the most important step you can take to weight loss is to commit to it and understand it's a lifestyle change. Eat right, sleep more, and find your balance. And along the way, [check back with us](#) for some great articles, information, and products to help you.