



## **Slim Down Strategy**

**[www.SlimDownStrategy.com](http://www.SlimDownStrategy.com)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

I tried to lose weight for many years unsuccessfully. I can't even count how many diets I tried, and all of them failed for one reason or another.

Sometimes I would lose a few pounds. Once I lost 40 pounds, but I gained it all back within two months of going off the diet. That was a real let-down.

Some of the major diets I tried included:

- The Atkins Diet – I got tired of meat very quickly.
- The low fat diet – I gained weight!
- The low calorie diet – I was always hungry.
- The cabbage soup diet – I got bored quickly.
- The negative calorie diet – I got bored quickly.
- The ice cream diet – Didn't work.
- The grapefruit diet – I don't like grapefruit.
- Weight Watchers – Got tired of counting points.
- Jenny Craig – Didn't work.
- Slim Fast – I was always hungry.
- NutriSystem – I hated their food.

There were so many others I tried but it seemed like nothing worked. It seemed like I was always hungry, or the food wasn't to my liking, or they just didn't work for me.

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But I stumbled upon the secret to losing weight quite by accident. My body started having weird cravings one day, and I satisfied them. That was all. I just satisfied my cravings.

Soon I was losing weight. I lost a couple of pounds the first few days, but I don't know exactly how much it was because I wasn't really weighing regularly. I wasn't on any special diet, so the weight loss was unexpected.

I kept losing more weight as I kept eating this way. I was so shocked that I was losing weight, because I wasn't actually trying! I was just eating what my body was telling me to eat!

I thought maybe it was a fluke, or maybe I was sick, so I made an appointment with my doctor for a checkup. I told her I was losing weight even though I wasn't dieting and I was worried.

She asked me about my diet, how much I was exercising, whether I'd had any illnesses, and some other questions. After running some tests, she concluded that I was fine and suggested that I make an appointment with a nutritionist friend of hers.

I made the appointment and about a week later I went to see her. I told her I'd been losing 3-5 pounds per week but I wasn't dieting, and I was concerned about my health.

After I told her what I'd been eating and how often, and then she knew exactly why I was losing weight. She told me not to worry, that I was actually eating what I should be eating.

Then she explained to me the Holy Grail of weight loss. I was so shocked when she explained something that no diet book I'd ever read, and no fitness video I'd ever watched had told me before. She told me how humans REALLY lose weight!

I was really shocked and excited at first. Then I actually got a little angry. Why hadn't anyone told me this before? Why had I been spending hundreds of dollars per year on books, DVDs, classes, shake mixes, soup mixes, and pre-packaged meals? Could it really be this simple, and yet no one had told me the truth?

Well the results spoke for themselves. Within 6 months I'd lost 40 pounds – a feat I'd only matched once before and I'd gained it all back after I went off the diet.

I kept eating the same way, and with a year I'd lost all of the weight I wanted to lose – 80 pounds in all! Best of all, I've kept it off for over three years now!

So how did I do it? Well, first of all I learned to listen to my body. The human body has a remarkable method of keeping itself healthy. It knows what it needs.

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The trouble is, most of us don't know how to listen to our bodies. We're trained from a young age to crave sweets and treats. We grow up being fed sugary cereals, toaster pastries, cookies, candy, pizza, French fries, and other "comforting" foods. Most kids are never given truly healthy foods because their parents don't want to take the time to get them to learn to enjoy those foods.

Surprisingly though, humans have a built-in ability to figure out what they should be eating at a given time. If someone is seriously lacking vitamin C, they will begin to crave things like oranges and lemons. If they are dehydrated, they will crave not only liquids, but foods like watermelon and apples that are high in water content.

The problem lies in the fact that we don't know how to listen to what our bodies are telling us. Over the years we spend being stuffed with cookies and candy, we lose our internal ability to judge what we really need to be eating.

Some people, like me, naturally bring this ability back. For me, it just happened and I didn't understand it. I actually thought something was wrong because I was losing weight even though I didn't feel I was eating any less than before.

Others need help. They don't yet know how to listen to their bodies, so they have to train themselves. It's actually very easy to train yourself to listen to your body, it just takes a little bit of practice.

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One of the best things about listening to your body is that you won't have to feel deprived or hungry. When you eat what your body is craving, you naturally eat less.

You see, when you're eating all of that junk food that is nutritionally lacking, your body needs to continue to signal to you that you're hungry so you will eat more and more. If it never gets enough of the nutrients it needs, it will keep you perpetually hungry!

Once you start listening to your body and giving it what it needs, you'll find yourself naturally losing weight. Your body won't hold on to that extra fat anymore, because it won't think it's starving. And you won't feel deprived because you'll still be able to eat many of the foods you love!

The primary goals of this plan are to:

- ✓ Increase your metabolism.
- ✓ Help you lose weight without being hungry.
- ✓ Teach you how to eat for the rest of your life.
- ✓ Keep you motivated to stick to the diet.

We need to rev up your metabolism so you will lose weight faster, even while eating plenty of food.

We need to keep you happy and motivated. We need to make sure you aren't hungry, so you'll be less likely to cheat. And we need to teach you how to keep the weight off!

So let's get started, shall we?



## **LEARNING TO LISTEN TO YOUR BODY**

Your body is a remarkable instrument. It is precisely calibrated to work at maximum efficiency naturally. If you take care of it properly from your early years, it will continue to run at peak efficiency. However, if you abuse it and neglect it, it will begin to wear down quickly.

Since most of us grow up eating a lot of junk foods like candy, cookies, cake, pizza, and potato chips, our bodies are never given enough of the different nutrients it needs. Those foods are empty calories that cause us to gain weight, but don't actually provide us with any vitamins or minerals.

Since our bodies don't get enough nutrients, they continually crave more and more food. Our bodies keep telling us to consume more, because we think we are starving! Surely we must not be taking in enough food if we aren't getting those nutrients, right?

In the wild that would rarely happen except in times of famine.

Animals instinctively know what types of foods they should consume, how much, and when. They don't overeat, because they get the right nutrients.

The only time animals in the wild have trouble getting enough of the right nutrients is during times of famine, when their food supply is threatened.

During times of famine, a body's normal reaction is to conserve energy. This is done by putting on weight. The body stores fat to be converted to energy later when there is no food available.

Additionally, the metabolism slows down in order to keep that weight on as long as possible, so it lasts as long as necessary to keep the body alive during the duration of the famine. This is a natural part of life.

Humans have evolved to eat foods that aren't nutritionally adequate. There are very few nutrients in French fries or a chocolate bar. Even the "healthy" foods we eat are often cooked until most of the vitamins have been destroyed.

In order to learn to listen to your body again, you have to start paying very close attention to the foods you are craving. Usually the body has cravings for certain foods based on nutrients it isn't getting enough of.

For example, a human living in the wild in the wintertime would be without many nutrients for several months. All of the fruits and vegetables would either be long stored-away by animals or buried under snow.

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During this time, their primary food source would probably be animals. They would probably have to eat mostly fish and animal flesh until the plants began to produce again.

After a while, that human would very likely begin to crave the liver of the animals he killed. Liver is extremely high in vitamin A, containing about 443% of the RDA of vitamin A in just 3 ounces! It is also high in iron, and contains a small amount of vitamin C and calcium.

In the winter, liver would probably be that person's only source of vitamin A. It would be very natural for that person to crave liver, even if they had never liked liver before, and they probably wouldn't even realize why they were craving it!

You're probably not going to start craving liver, because you probably have plenty of other sources of certain nutrients you need.

For example, let's say you are desperately craving pizza. What are the primary ingredients in pizza? Well, there's the crust, which you probably aren't genuinely craving. Pizza crust is usually devoid of any nutritional value unless it is a whole wheat crust.

It also contains tomato sauce. Tomato sauce is high in vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, and vitamin B. It also contains smaller amounts of several other vitamins and minerals.

Finally, it contains cheese. Cheese is high in calcium. Calcium is, of course, needed for strong bones, healthy teeth, and many other things.

There may be other toppings on pizzas, but few of them would have enough nutritional value to make a difference unless you were craving a very specific type of pizza like spinach pizza.

More than likely this signals that you're either low in one of the vitamins in tomato sauce, or you're low in calcium. In this case, instead of eating pizza, you should try having something healthier that is made with tomatoes.

Optionally you could also create a homemade pizza that contained a whole wheat crust, fresh tomatoes, and a low fat cheese.

By breaking down whatever you're craving, you can learn to figure out what it is your body is really looking for. This is the key to finally losing weight!

There is one important thing you should know about cravings. They aren't ALWAYS indicative of your body needing something. Usually they are, but cravings can also be caused by:

- Hormonal changes (pregnancy, premenstrual syndrome)
- MSG (monosodium glutamate)
- Food addiction

- Depression

These are just a few of the issues that can cause cravings. It can be difficult to tell whether a craving is legitimate or not, but if you substitute something similar and you're still experiencing the craving, odds are the craving was not a legitimate health craving.

MSG is one notable cause of cravings. It has been proven to be very addictive, and food manufacturers and restaurants will often put it in their food to make people crave it.

You should avoid eating foods that contain this addictive substance whenever possible. Eating food that contains MSG will only make you crave more of it, and this perpetuates obesity.

Almost all restaurants use MSG in their food, even if the employees don't realize it. McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, Taco Bell, TGI Friday's, Chili's, Applebee's, Denny's... these are all reported to use MSG. And those are only a few of the restaurants that do! Kentucky Fried Chicken is reportedly one of the worst of these. They use MSG in every chicken recipe, their salad dressings, their gravy, and other things!

MSG has many harmful effects. It has been linked with:

- Diabetes – It causes the pancreas to produce three times more insulin than normal!

- Autism
- ADD and ADHD
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Migraines and General Headaches
- Brain Lesions
- Obesity
- Other Degenerative Diseases Like ALS and Parkinson's

MSG and aspartame (the artificial sweetener) belong to a dangerous group of substances known as excitotoxins. These toxins are believed to be responsible for causing or at least greatly aggravating all of the above conditions and more.

If you aren't going to avoid MSG and aspartame, your cravings are going to be more difficult to identify properly. You will probably have a lot of "false positives" and you'll likely be craving things your body isn't physically craving.

I don't normally advocate cutting anything out of your diet completely, even salt, sugar, and fat, but these are two substances that I highly recommend you avoid.

Sometimes you will consume some accidentally. These substances can often be found hiding under different names and in very unexpected places, but you should learn to read the label of everything you buy and avoid anything you know contains either.

## **EATING FOR YOUR BODY**

Once you've discovered how to listen to what your body wants, it's time to interpret these cravings and give your body what it wants.

If you're craving pizza, it's probably the tomato sauce your body is asking for. In this case, you could try having some healthy tomato soup, some tomato juice, or a nice, fresh tomato salad.

If you are craving something healthy like watermelon or broccoli, by all means indulge! But of course most people tend to crave things that they really love to eat. Maybe watermelon is your favorite food, and if so, that's great. But most people have less healthy favorites like pizza and French fries as their favorites.

Remember, MSG can cause you to crave foods that your body doesn't need. You have to break away from the addictive cycle, so you should at least cut down on MSG if you don't eliminate it entirely.

I find I crave cheesecake a lot. For a long time I thought maybe I was craving the calcium, but then I realized I don't just crave cheesecake, I crave strawberry cheesecake!

Once I started eating fresh strawberries once a cheesecake craving hit, I rarely craved it anymore. Sometimes I would still want cheesecake after I ate strawberries, which signaled that I just wanted the flavor of

cheesecake. I knew that wasn't a real craving, so I had to make the decision to either ignore the craving, or give in and indulge.

The thing is, you CAN give in and indulge from time to time. You just can't go overboard if you want to lose weight. I would have a very small slice of cheesecake, eating slowly and savoring each bite for the longest time possible.

If I was still craving it after that slice, I would wait at least two hours before giving in again, for another very small slice. And each time I had to decide whether to indulge or not. The strength of the craving was the major deciding factor in whether I would indulge.

Life is short. It's too short to deny yourself entirely. Once I realized that, it was easier for me to lose weight. You see, sticking with a diet is really tough when you never get to eat anything you enjoy!

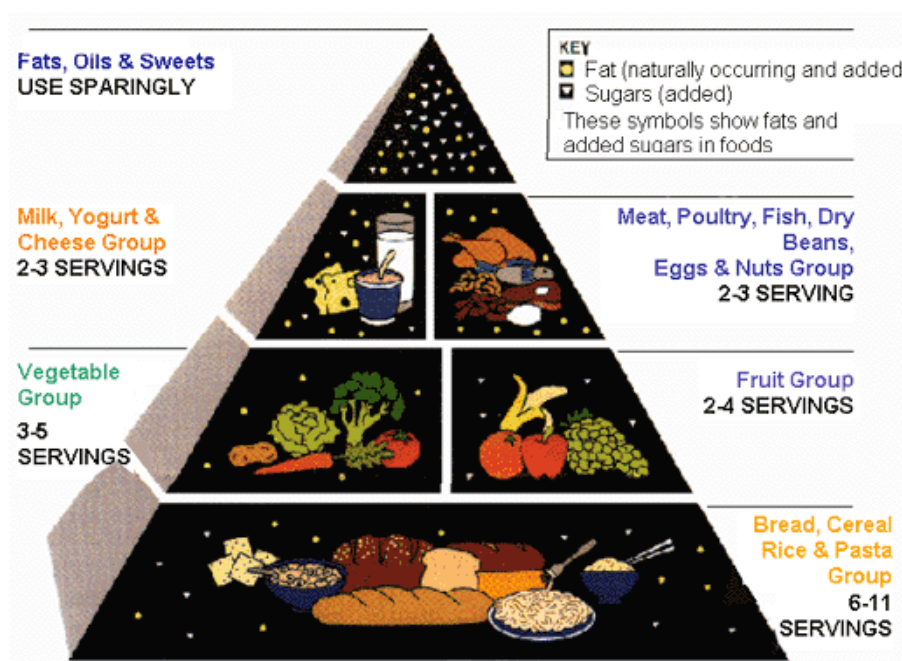
But when you allow yourself treats and indulgences from time to time, it's a lot easier to keep going. You have more of a reason to keep it up.

You remember the four food groups, right? Unless you're relatively young, you were probably taught about the four food groups in school. Supposedly those were the foods we needed to make up a healthy diet.



These days, it's all about the "food pyramid". The USDA has devised a new way of teaching people about the right foods to eat, dividing foods up even further. It contains 6 groups of foods instead of four.

Well, this food pyramid is actually a lot smarter than the original four food groups, because it actually distinguishes fats, oils, and sweets from healthier foods. Additionally, fruits and vegetables are in two different groups.



The Food Pyramid

As you can see, the largest group is the base of the pyramid. This group contains breads, grains, and other starches (like corn and potatoes). This is the group the USDA believes you should eat the most of.

These grains and starches help give you energy, but they can be loaded with carbohydrates that can raise your blood sugar. It's best to stick with whole grains, and go easy on the really starchy foods like potatoes.

The USDA recommends that adults consume around 6 to 11 servings of grains and starches per day. Be careful to monitor your portion sizes carefully! A single slice of bread is one serving, but a slice of thick-sliced bread is TWO servings, and a standard 6-inch sub sandwich roll is THREE servings!

The next level of the pyramid contains fruits and vegetables. Originally fruits and vegetables were in the same food group when it came to the "four food groups", but a distinction needed to be made.

You need to eat both fruits AND vegetables in order to have the healthiest possible diet, so the USDA decided to draw a separation between the two.

Ideally, you want to have at least 3-5 servings of vegetables and 204 servings of fruit each day. A typical serving of vegetables is 1 cup raw or  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked. A typical fruit serving is 1 small fresh fruit or  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup canned fruit.

The next level of the pyramid shows dairy and protein. The dairy section is smaller than the meat section, because you don't need as much milk per day as you do protein.

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You should be getting at least 2-3 servings of dairy per day, preferably low-fat or non-fat. This could include things like milk, yogurt, or even low-fat ice cream.

Proteins include meats and seafood, dried beans, eggs, cheese, and peanut butter. Yes, cheese is included in protein rather than dairy.

You want to get 4-6 ounces of protein daily, ideally from low-fat varieties such as most seafoods, egg whites, low-fat cottage cheese, and skinless poultry. Tofu is also a good choice if you like it.

The final group includes fats, sweets, and alcohol. You should keep these to a minimum. Remember, you do need some fat in your diet, but excessive fat can lead to obesity, especially when consumed with excessive amounts of carbohydrates.

You should have a maximum of 1-2 servings from this group per day, especially when trying to lose weight.

It's not easy keeping track of all of these things, so I don't actually worry too much about counting each and every serving and adding it all up during the day.

What I do is I develop menus for the week, and I plan each meal in a specific way. That way I don't have to worry about adding things up, because it all happens quite naturally.

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Here's an example of how I do things:

**BREAKFAST**

3 servings grains

1 serving fruit

1 serving protein

1 serving dairy

**LUNCH**

4 servings grains

1 serving fruit

2 servings vegetables

1 serving protein

1 serving dairy

1 serving fat (if not at dinner)

**DINNER**

2 servings grains

1 serving vegetables

2 servings protein

1 serving fat (if not at lunch)

**SNACK**

1 serving fruit

**SNACK**

1 serving vegetables

That's 3 meals and two snacks per day, which might seem like a lot of food when you're dieting, but it's not. You **MUST** keep eating regularly

to keep your metabolism high. If you don't, your weight loss is going to be much slower than you'd like.

As you can see, this gives me each day:

9 servings grains  
3 servings fruit  
5 servings vegetables  
4 servings protein  
2 servings dairy  
1 serving of fat

This is a good balance. It's right in the middle of the grains, on the low end of protein and dairy, and on the high end of fruits and vegetables.

That's what really got me the best weight loss, because fruits and vegetables are obviously lower in fat and calories than meat and dairy, and I stayed right in the middle for grains to give me enough energy without overeating.

This is what a typical menu would look like:

### **BREAKFAST**

3 servings oatmeal (small bowl)  
1 serving applesauce (in the oatmeal)

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1 ounce bacon or ham

1 cup non-fat milk (half over the oatmeal)

**LUNCH**

2 sandwiches with:

2 slices whole grain bread each

lettuce and tomato

1 ounce low-fat turkey on each

1 tbsp. mayonnaise (half on each)

1 apple

1 cup non-fat milk

**DINNER**

Noodle Stir-Fry with:

2 servings whole wheat pasta

1 cup steamed broccoli

2 ounces grilled chicken

Herbs and 0 calorie seasonings to taste

**SNACK** (between breakfast and lunch or lunch and dinner)

1 cup cantaloupe cubes

**SNACK** (between lunch and dinner or after dinner)

1 cup salad with fat-free dressing

As you can see, this keeps you eating all day long, and you get a considerable amount of food each time. If you're hungry, eat! Just be sure you're really hungry.

It can be quite difficult to tell if you're actually hungry or if you are just bored or depressed and want to eat. Before you eat anything, try to listen to your stomach, not your head.

If your stomach is growling or pinching, you're really hungry. If it isn't, then you just want to eat.

Remember, you can indulge sometimes, too. If you're craving corn chips, go for it! But grab out a handful and put it into a bowl, do NOT eat straight from the bag!

It's very important to learn portion control. You can't eat unlimited amounts of almost any food without gaining weight. Yes, you can eat to your heart's content on cucumbers or lettuce, but most foods need to be limited.

In the next chapter, I'm going to make a list of foods you can eat whenever you're hungry, including foods that you can have in practically unlimited quantities.

We'll also look at some food substitutions you can use to satisfy cravings for higher-fat foods. While this won't always work, sometimes it does.

Whenever you can cut calories with substitutions, it's a great thing!

## **FOODS YOU SHOULD EAT**

This chapter is all about telling you what you can safely eat. We're going to talk about foods you should eat whenever you're having a craving for something fattening, stuff you can substitute for the bad stuff.

The main thing is to keep your fridge and cabinets stocked with plenty of foods you can eat in unlimited or substantial quantities.

First, let's talk about some things you can eat in unlimited quantities. These are foods that, if you eat them until you feel like you're going to puke, you still shouldn't fear gaining any weight!

These are also foods that contain vitamins, minerals, and other essential elements. They are foods you can feel good about eating, and you don't have to feel guilty, even if you overeat them. They are also rich in antioxidants and perhaps other important elements that scientists haven't even discovered, yet!

### **Foods to eat in unlimited quantities:**

- ✓ Apples
- ✓ Asparagus
- ✓ Beets
- ✓ Blueberries
- ✓ Cabbage
- ✓ Cantaloupe



- ✓ Carrots
  - ✓ Cauliflower
  - ✓ Celery
  - ✓ Cranberries
  - ✓ Cucumbers
  - ✓ Dill Pickles (Kosher or Hamburger Dill)
  - ✓ Fresh Herbs or Dried
  - ✓ Garlic
  - ✓ Grapefruit
  - ✓ Green Beans
  - ✓ Greens (All Types)
  - ✓ Honeydew Melons
  - ✓ Lemons and Limes
  - ✓ Lettuce
  - ✓ Mangoes
  - ✓ Mushrooms
  - ✓ Onions
  - ✓ Papayas
  - ✓ Peaches
  - ✓ Peppers (All Kinds)
  - ✓ Pineapple
  - ✓ Radishes
  - ✓ Raspberries
  - ✓ Spinach
  - ✓ Strawberries
  - ✓ Tangerines
  - ✓ Tomatoes
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- ✓ Turnips
- ✓ Watermelon
- ✓ Zucchini

You can combine these ingredients into delicious recipes that taste great, too. This will help keep you motivated. The better tasting the food is that you're eating, the more likely it is you will stick to the system.

These ingredients can work very well together. For example, you could take some of the vegetables like tomatoes, cabbage, onions, carrots, zucchini, celery, and green beans and make a very nice soup. You could also use unlimited fresh herbs or dried herbs to flavor it.

You could make a nice fruit salad using various fruits, flavorings, and herbs. Mint and cilantro both go very well with many different types of fruits, and lemon or lime juice with a touch of salt can make a sweet fruit salad a bit more savory.

Lemon juice can also be used on its own, with herbs, or blended with fruit to make a dressing for salads. A salad of spinach and sliced mushrooms tastes amazing with a vinaigrette of raspberries, cranberries, or strawberries with lemon juice, red wine vinegar, salt, and pepper.

Experiment with using these ingredients to make various recipes. You can also add small amounts of foods that aren't on the list, comprising a recipe mostly of these items and using other foods as flavorings.

For example, you could make a soup using these vegetables and using a small amount of boneless, skinless chicken breast to flavor it and add protein. Or you could make a delicious salsa with tomatoes, onions, jalapeno peppers, cilantro, and lime juice, and then serve it over lettuce with a \_ cup of black beans.

The combinations are practically endless, especially when you start using foods that you can't have in unlimited quantities to bring flavors together.

Now you need to know some flavorings you can use in unlimited quantities. Some condiments are high in sugar or fat, and you should avoid these for the most part. You can enjoy small quantities of them, but it's best to limit them.

**Flavorings to enjoy in unlimited quantities:**

- ✓ Mustard
- ✓ Vinegar (All Types)
- ✓ Spices (No Sugar, No or Low Sodium)
- ✓ Herbs
- ✓ Lemon Juice
- ✓ Lime Juice

Make sure the flavorings you buy do not contain MSG.

There are many seasonings on the market that do. The salt replacement Accent, in fact, IS monosodium glutamate, so avoid this one at all costs! Look for flavorings that contain as little sodium as possible, but you don't have to avoid it completely.

Next, let's look at some various types of proteins you can add to the unlimited foods to bring a meal together and make it more filling. You should limit these foods to smaller servings, but you should make sure to use some of these every day.

**Proteins to enjoy in smaller quantities:**

- ✓ Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breast
- ✓ Turkey Breast
- ✓ Most Types of Fish
- ✓ Lean Beef
- ✓ Beans (All Types)
- ✓ Other Lean Meats
- ✓ Tofu
- ✓ Nuts

Lean meats, beans, nuts, and tofu are filling. They also provide nutrients like iron that are essential for a healthy body. They should be used more as a flavoring for other foods than a major part of the meal, especially when trying to lose weight.

Vegetarians can obviously leave meat out entirely, opting for vegetable-based protein sources. There is a lot of controversy about whether soy-based products like tofu are good for you or not, but I personally use it in small quantities.

**Flavorings to enjoy in smaller quantities:**

- ✓ Salt
- ✓ Ketchup (Preferably Sugar-Free)
- ✓ Olive Oil (Limit Carefully)
- ✓ Agave Nectar (Liquid Sweetener, Natural, Won't Spike Blood Sugar)
- ✓ Soy Sauce (High In Sodium, So Limit)

You shouldn't eliminate salt from your diet completely, as your body does need a bit of salt to run properly. But these should be limited as much as possible.

Olive oil is one of the healthiest oils you can use. Studies have shown that people who consume around two tablespoons of olive oil daily for one week show less oxidation of LDL cholesterol, as well as higher levels of antioxidants in their blood.

Olive oil can help protect against ulcers and gastritis. It may help prevent colon cancer. It contains vitamin E and phenols. In short, it is probably the best fat you can possibly consume.

As with nearly anything, it should be consumed in limited quantities. It is still very high in calories, and of course, is pure fat. Eating enough of it will cause you to gain weight, but it should still be used in small amounts because of its protective benefits.

Agave nectar is a natural sweetener that comes from a type of cactus. It tastes very sweet, but it won't spike your blood sugar like process sugar, honey, syrup, and other sweeteners. It's also considered much safer than aspartame and other chemical sweeteners.

## **FOODS YOU SHOULD AVOID**

Now that we've talked about the foods you should eat, let's talk about the foods you should avoid at all costs. These are foods that can really screw up your weight loss efforts, and it's best to avoid most of them completely, or carefully restrict them.

For the most part, you should feel free to enjoy the foods you love, just in lesser quantities. Unfortunately, many of the foods you love will contain these "forbidden foods".

Because I believe in indulging on occasion in order to keep yourself happily sticking to your weight loss plan, I don't exactly advocate cutting these foods out completely.

What I do suggest is that you limit these foods very carefully, indulging in them only when you are having a desperate craving for them and you feel like you might go overboard and binge if you don't have them at that moment.

### **Sugar**

Sugar, specifically white sugar, is a very bad substance. I highly recommend avoiding it as much as possible. While it's unrealistic to expect you to never eat anything that contains white sugar again, you should try to avoid it whenever possible.

Sugar is believed to be a major instigator of diabetes. It causes blood sugar levels to rise rapidly, and then they can cause an over-production of insulin.

When you have too much insulin in your body, it can cause your cells to hold on to fat. It can also cause your liver to create extra fat from the calories you consume. Excess insulin can cause blood clots that lead to stroke and heart attack, raise LDL (bad) cholesterol levels, and can cause plaque to form in the arteries. It can also raise your blood pressure by causing your kidneys to retain salt.

If your body continuously produces too much insulin, it can lead to a condition known as insulin resistance. Insulin resistance can lead to severe obesity, and it can make it extremely difficult to lose weight.

Sugar is one of the worst substances you can eat, and I highly recommend avoiding it. Remember, sugar isn't found only in cookies, cakes, and sodas. It can be found hiding in places you wouldn't expect it. Sugar is often found in salad dressings, gravies, sauces, condiments, cereal, and even bread and breaded meats!

### **White Flour**

White flour is another substance that causes blood sugar levels to rise very rapidly. White flour is used in most baked products, as well as various types of breading, and even as a thickener in many sauces.

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Like sugar, it is a substance that causes very severe blood sugar spikes, which can then lead to crashes. White flour is one of the worst culprits, so I highly recommend avoiding it as much as possible.

White flour is found in so many different things, it will be difficult to avoid them all. If you're a huge fan of baked goods, it will be almost impossible to avoid it altogether.

If you aren't going to cut out white flour completely, I urge you to cut down sharply on your consumption of it. White flour is one of the worst things you can consume, and second only to sugar, in my opinion.

Switch to whole grain products whenever possible. Limit white flour products, and only indulge in them on rare occasions. I like to have cake on birthdays, but for the most part I try to avoid white flour completely.

## **Potatoes**

I know potatoes are delicious. In fact, they are one of my favorite foods. But they spike blood sugar. Potatoes are very high in carbohydrates, and they are "bad carbs" – the kind that raise blood sugar very quickly.

Sweet potatoes, on the other hand, don't raise blood sugar so quickly. Even though they are technically "sweet", they just don't have quite such an extreme effect on blood sugar levels.

If you're going to eat potatoes, I do suggest eating sweet potatoes rather than other types of potatoes. Not only will they not spike your blood sugar, but sweet potatoes are also very high in vitamins, while white potatoes have very little nutritional value.

### **White Rice**

White rice is another major cause of blood sugar spikes. It is consumed around the world, and people believe that because Asian people eat a lot of white rice and seem to be so thin and healthy, that white rice must be healthy.

The problem is, they aren't looking at the other factors involved in the health of so many Asians. Asians tend to get a lot more exercise than Western people. They eat far less meat and junk food. They consume a lot more fresh fruits and vegetables. And they eat a lot of healthy seafood.

Because white rice causes these extreme blood sugar spikes, you should substitute brown rice for white whenever possible. The blood sugar spikes are mitigated by the fiber, which is left intact on the outside of the grains in brown rice. In most cases, high-fiber

ingredients won't cause the type of blood sugar spikes seen in their refined counterparts.

There aren't a whole lot of foods that I would suggest avoiding completely. Basically, if a food has little or no nutritional value, it's not worth eating and should be avoided.

You can indulge in these foods on occasion, but I would keep it to no more often than once per week. That doesn't mean you can have white rice once per week, potatoes once per week, sugar once per week, and white flour once per week! It means you should have ONE item per week that contains one or more of these items.

And remember to control your portion. Just because you can have these items only once per week does not mean you should eat an entire cake at one sitting!

## **WHEN YOU SHOULD EAT**

You should eat when you're hungry. It's that simple. The trick is in learning how to know when you're actually hungry, and when you want to eat because you are tired, bored, stressed out, or just craving food.

This is actually harder than it sounds for many people. After years, perhaps decades of eating for the wrong reasons, you may have to train your body to recognize hunger again.

Hunger usually involves stomach pinches, pains, or growling. If your stomach isn't growling, you're probably not really hungry. But this isn't always indicative of hunger. Sometimes you may feel food moving around in your stomach from your last meal, and this may mimic very closely the feeling you have when you're hungry.

Before you rush to eat after your stomach starts growling, wait just a little while to see if the growling subsides. If it doesn't go away in 10-15 minutes, or if you feel weak or jittery, it's probably true hunger. If the growling goes away, it might have been the feeling of food being digested.

I suggest eating several smaller meals per day rather than 3 large ones. When you eat smaller meals, you can help boost your metabolism. The more often your body is consuming food, the faster your metabolism will become.

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You see, your body will digest food slowly to make the energy it gets from food and the full feeling last as long as possible if it thinks it isn't getting enough food. When you're consuming a lot of food regularly, it realizes that there is an abundance of food, and it will respond by digesting food quickly and giving you plenty of energy.

I don't recommend waiting a certain amount of time between meals. Ideally you'll be eating every 2-4 hours, just small amounts, but you may need to eat an hour after a meal, or you may not feel hungry for 4-5 hours. Just learn to listen to your body's own hunger signals.

You should aim for eating smaller, almost snack-sized meals about 4-6 times per day. Eating three meals per day will mean you're eating more at each meal. This can spike your blood sugar and cause you to crash, leading to cravings when you're not actually hungry.

Eating a lot at one meal can also cause you to experience something commonly known as "food coma". This is mostly caused by eating a large amount of food at one time, especially foods that are high in refined carbohydrates.

It takes a lot of energy to digest food. It can be especially taxing when your blood sugar spikes and crashes. This causes energy to be diverted from other systemic functions, causing your brain to feel "foggy", and the rest of your body to feel weak and tired.

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While the tryptophan in turkey can indeed cause sleepiness, it is probably mostly the “food coma” effect that causes you to feel so tired and sluggish after a holiday meal. Thanksgiving and other holiday meals are usually very high in carbohydrates and sugar, and people tend to overeat at these meals.

The same thing can happen to you anytime you eat a large meal, especially one that is high in refined carbohydrates. When you eat smaller, lighter meals, you will feel energized after eating, rather than tired and run-down.

Remember, the primary goal of eating smaller meals throughout the day is to keep your metabolism charged up. The higher your metabolism, the faster the weight will melt off.

## **WAYS TO GET EXERCISE**

Getting exercise is very important to increase your metabolism and help you burn fat. You don't have to bench press 250 pounds or run the Boston Marathon to get exercise. There are some very simple, easy, and fun ways to get exercise!

And don't tell me you don't have enough time to exercise! There are opportunities to get exercise all around you. All you have to do is take them!

We're going to look at some ways you can work exercise into your day, no matter how busy you are. Let's face it, almost everyone is busy. We all have things like school, work, and children to deal with. Most of us don't have nearly as much time as we'd like to complete our daily tasks, must less to exercise and get any entertainment! But there are ways to work exercise into your normal day!

In addition to pursuing activities you may really enjoy such as bowling, tennis, swimming, hiking, and other physical activities that might be enjoyable, you can use these tips to make sure you get more exercise every day.

### **Walk More**

Most people don't enjoy walking. I've seen people wait for 45 minutes for a broken elevator rather than walk up three flights of stairs. I've seen people circle a packed parking lot for 20 minutes just to get a

parking spot that is 5 spaces closer to the doors, when they could have already been inside and had half of their shopping done! It's madness!

I purposely park further away from the doors. The only times I purposely park close to the doors are when it's after 9 PM, when the weather is bad, and when I'm in a real hurry because I have a prior engagement or an emergency to attend to.

You should park beside the furthest cart rack in a parking lot. Not only will you be able to return your cart easily instead of abandoning it haphazardly in the middle of the lot (one of my pet peeves), but you will get some exercise without spending a lot of extra time. It only takes about two minutes to walk across a large parking lot, but the exercise you get is very beneficial.

Take the stairs whenever you can. Elevators are helpful if you have many flights to ascend, or if you're carrying packages, or if you have small children with you, or if you're already extremely exhausted or injured. But you should take the stairs whenever it is feasible.

Don't go looking for excuses to make the elevator "feasible", either. If you aren't sick, exhausted, injured, or overburdened, taking two to four flights of stairs isn't likely to kill you!

You can also get more walking in during your day in other ways. Instead of taking your car down to the end of the driveway to get your

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mail, just walk. Don't drive your kid three blocks down the street to play with a friend, walk them there.

Start looking for ways to get more walking into your day. It has been said that it takes at least 20-30 minutes of aerobic exercise at a time to have a benefit, but recent studies have shown that may not be true. One study showed that people who exercised a total of 20-30 minutes each day in increments of just a few minutes at a time still experienced the same cardiac benefit as those who exercised for 20-30 minutes at one time.

Plus, it doesn't make a difference to how many calories are burned whether you break it up or do it all at once. You will also benefit from increased muscle, and muscle tissue burns a lot more energy than fat tissue!

### **Television Workouts**

Most people watch a lot of television. The average American watches 28 hours of television per week, about 4 hours every day! That's a lot of time wasted in front of the tube!

You can put that time to good use by exercising while you are watching television. There are plenty of exercises you can do in front of the TV.

- ✓ Walking on a treadmill

- ✓ Riding an exercise bike
- ✓ Sit-ups and crunches
- ✓ Lifting weights
- ✓ Toe touches
- ✓ Pushups
- ✓ Leg lifts
- ✓ Walking in place
- ✓ Bouncing on a rebounder (mini trampoline)
- ✓ Using a stair stepper

These are all fun, healthy, and not very disruptive of your television watching. You can do many of these exercises while reading a book or magazine, catching up on the local news in the newspaper, or listening to music, too.

### **Office Workouts**

There are plenty of things you can do at your desk while you're at work or school, too. Students and office workers often find that they don't get enough exercise, because they spend most of their day sitting down. They may have to walk from class to class or run errands, but for the most part, they are very sedentary all day.

This is where it comes in handy to perform exercises that can be done while sitting at a desk. While it won't exactly be aerobic exercise, it will help you tone your muscles. Not only will you look better, but remember, muscle burns more calories than fat!

Stomach crunches will help you get your stomach muscles toned. Simply suck in and hold your stomach muscles tight and taught for several seconds, then release. Perform this action continually throughout the day whenever you think about it.

You can also walk around doing this during the day. You'll be toning and building your abdominal muscles while also sucking in and making your belly look flatter!

You can pull your toes upwards and stretch your calf muscles. Just point your toes up toward your knees as far as you can without it becoming painful, hold for a few seconds, and release. Repeat this several times. This can also help prevent blood clots, which are more common in sedentary individuals.

Your bottom may also be somewhat flabby. If so, you can clench your gluteus maximus muscles tightly while sitting in your desk. Hold briefly, and then release. This will help build and tighten your buttocks.

These types of exercises will also work for other parts of your body, including your back, biceps, triceps, forearms, and thighs. Just clench your muscles, hold briefly, and release.

Remember to be careful not to injure yourself. Too much of a good thing is not good. Don't stretch your muscles until they are painful. A

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slight discomfort is completely normal, but pain is not. Never work out until you feel pain!

I hope you can see how easy it is to get exercise. You can find time here and there, whenever and wherever you can. Any exercise is better than no exercise at all!

## **STAYING MOTIVATED**

Staying motivated on a diet is crucial. If you can't stay motivated, all is lost. You will end up going off the diet, and you might not even want to give it another try.

So many people end up giving up on their diet. They throw up their hands in frustration and exclaim, "I can't do this!" But the fact is, you CAN do it. You just have to know many different ways to keep yourself motivated.

There are so many ways to stay motivated on a diet. Different people will be more motivated by one factor than another, so it's important to know a number of different motivational methods. You need to find the ones that work for you and stick to them.

We're going to go over some of the most powerful ways to stay motivated. You may find others that work better for you, and if so, that's great! Stick to whatever works for you!

For now, we're just going to discuss those that seem to work for a lot of people. You can use these to start, and add your own later as you find them.

### **"Thinspiration"**

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“Thinspiration” is a term that a lot of dieters use to describe finding photos of people who have bodies they would like to have, and using those photos to inspire them to stick to their diet.

You should look for bodies that are somewhat similar to your body type. If you are a woman with a classic pear shape, don’t expect to be able to look like a waif model. If you are a guy who is only 5’3”, you might never look like Brad Pitt.

While it’s nice to shoot for the stars and dream big, you also need to be realistic. You may never look like those celebrities, or even close. If you are extremely obese, you may be shocked when you’ve lost most of your weight to see sagging skin, stretch marks, and cellulite everywhere.

I’m not saying this to discourage you. In fact, it’s just the opposite! I’m trying to get you to be realistic. You may never have a perfect body. But you CAN choose people you would like to look SIMILAR to. Just don’t expect miracles!

Cut out various photos and put them all around. Put them on your desk, tape them to the refrigerator door, tuck them into books... keep them around you all the time. This can be a very powerful motivator, especially if you are more interested in losing weight to look better!

### **Mirror Therapy**

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I like to keep a large, full-length mirror near where I eat. When I was dieting, I kept a full-length mirror near my seat in the dining room, one near my home office desk, and another in the living room near the sofa. They would be a constant reminder of what I looked like as I ate, so I would have a major incentive to eat less!

You could also scatter mirrors throughout your house so you see yourself constantly. I know I had stopped putting mirrors in the house years before I reached my highest weight, because I couldn't stand looking at myself. But eventually I realized that it was actually very motivating to see myself!

### **Diet Buddies and Clubs**

One of the biggest motivators of all is another person, or a crowd of people! When other people are watching your progress, you have a lot more incentive to stick to a goal. You don't want to fail in front of someone else, or a group of others!

You should try to find a diet buddy, or join a diet support group. Most areas have a branch of overeater's anonymous. If there isn't a local chapter of one of these support groups, start one!

You can also team up with friends, family members, or coworkers. You can get together in pairs, or in small groups. You can have meetings, and call each other whenever you experience problems. Use a system that is somewhat like alcoholics anonymous.

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If you don't know anyone else who is trying to lose weight, and you can't join or start a support group, you should look for support from family members or a professional. Seek help from a doctor, nutritionist, personal trainer, or other professional. Everyone needs support!

### **Fear Death**

Perhaps the biggest motivator is to constantly remind yourself that being overweight can be deadly. The more overweight you are, the more likely it is that it will cause you serious health problems, but even being 20 pounds overweight can be a health risk.

Find articles that discuss the medical risks of obesity and put them around you. Read them daily. Sometimes scaring yourself is the best motivator of all!



## **KEEPING THE WEIGHT OFF**

Once you've lost the weight, you need to learn how to keep it off. Most people do gain the weight back after they lose it, because they go right back to their old habits.

As you get closer to your goal weight, you will need to start easing into the lifestyle that you will continue for the rest of your life.

You will need to remember to keep cutting out the biggest sources of blood sugar spikes, including sugar, white flour, white rice, and potatoes. You will need to continue consuming plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, healthy seafood, and other lean proteins. And you will need to continue getting some exercise.

Always remember that if you don't continue the lifestyle, you are doomed to repeat everything you've just been through. You'll have to deal with the pain of being overweight, the embarrassment you feel when you go out in public, the difficulty losing the weight, the aches, pains, and discomfort of being overweight, and all of those other issues.

That's something you don't ever want to have to go through again, right?

Never let go of the things you're feeling right now. Never forget the struggle. Never forget the pain. Never, ever forget.

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Once you let go, once you get past it and you move on, you cannot forget. If you allow yourself to forget what it was like, you'll be back on that road to obesity before you know it.

It's a good idea to keep a lot of photos of yourself before you lost the weight. Keep a journal of how difficult your dieting is. Write notes in it about how horrible you feel, how embarrassed you are, how your life is miserable. Keep all of this together and look at it regularly.

Yes, it will be painful to dredge up those memories of when you were so unhealthy, but it will help you stay healthy.

The emotional pain you feel will be nothing compared to what your friends and family would feel if they lost you because you had a heart attack or stroke due to obesity, or the pain you would feel if you gained all of the weight back.

Keep eating healthily. Keep exercising. Keep living the healthiest life possible.

Never, ever forget.

## **CONCLUSION**

It's a tough road to lose weight. Most people fail and fail before they are finally able to lose all or most of the weight they need to lose, and many never do.

But losing weight is so incredibly important, and so valuable to your health, your appearance, and your self-esteem. You can't ever stop trying.

Yes, it is hard! Yes, it is frustrating! And yes, you will probably feel like giving up on many occasions! But you can't let these things get you down! You can't let it get to you! You can't let ANYTHING stand in your way.

I know it's hard. I know you may feel like you can't do it, and maybe you feel like you're doomed to be overweight forever. But trust me, it IS possible. You CAN lose weight, you CAN be healthy, and you CAN be the person you've always dreamed of being.

Please don't ever give up. I once thought it was impossible, too. I once thought I would be overweight for the rest of my (probably too short) life. But I did it. And if I did it, YOU CAN DO IT!

[www.SlimDownStrategy.com](http://www.SlimDownStrategy.com)

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