

Beware of Super-Strict Eating Plans

How many times have you said to yourself, “This time I’m really going to do it. I’ll be very strict and lose 10 pounds as quickly as possible?” Three days into your yogurt-and-carrots diet, a plate of cookies gets passed around the office and—well, you eat them all.

When Your Body Says “No Way!”

If this has happened to you, there’s nothing wrong with your self-control. It’s just that your body doesn’t like to be treated so strictly. It responds with cravings that can drive you straight down to the corner bakery. There’s a way out of this dilemma. The trick is to give up “dieting” with its short-term goals of losing a set number of pounds and develop a sensible weight management plan that you can live with for the rest of your life.

Taking the Long View

Many a diet’s downfall begins in the planning stages with an attempt to

lose too much, too fast. The goal is to get the diet over and done with to get back to “normal” eating. When you take the long view, you change your normal eating just a little—so that gradually you return to the weight that’s healthiest for you. It may be as simple as substituting herbs for butter on your vegetables. Make each small change a lifetime habit.

Variety—the Spice of Life

Avoid holding yourself to the same old cup of fat-free yogurt each and every morning. Learn to prepare nutritious and varied low-calorie breakfasts, lunches and dinners. It’s true that learning takes time, but anything that changes your life is going to take time and thought. Here are some tips for adding variety to your meals without adding pounds to your waistline.

- Experiment with different grains: bulgur wheat, barley or couscous instead of the same old rice or pasta.
- Try a new spice each day: tarragon in the salad dressing or turmeric to turn your rice golden.
- Combine textures: crunchy vegetables or fruit with creamy yogurt. Apples with oatmeal.
- Use your kitchen appliances: make low-fat veggie sauces, shakes and fruit desserts.
- Try an exotic fruit or vegetable. Replace that apple-a-day with mangos, kiwi, star fruit or tangerines.
- Be a kitchen-chair traveler. Try a different cuisine each week: Japanese, French, Italian or Indian.

Mouth watering already? Go ahead, try a new idea today. And don’t feel you have to wait till morning if it’s a breakfast idea. Have it for dinner. Then have dinner for breakfast. By varying your menu, you keep your taste buds happy and your body satisfied every day for the rest of your life.

Be a kitchen-chair traveler. Try a different cuisine each week: Japanese, French, Italian or Indian.

