



TOP EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE WEIGHT LOSS

Forget crash diets if you want to lose weight and keep it off for good you need a longer term approach. The right diet for you is of course one that you can stick to and enjoy but you also need to consider certain lifestyle behaviours as well. The secret to long-lasting weight loss is often a fundamental shift in what and how you eat. One reason people fall off their diet plans is because they become too restrictive. Instead, try following a plan that focuses on variety and choice.

Here we look at proven ways that can help you lose weight and keep it off

Cut Calories

The best diet for weight loss isn't complicated, expensive or follows the latest fad diet. If you want to achieve weight loss you need to be in a calorie deficit. Sounds obvious but it is surprising how many people have no idea how many calories they actually need and how many they are eating. Portion distortion, grazing constantly through the day, overeating, consuming vast amounts of calories in take aways, restaurant meals and drinks all lead to [over consumption of calories on the daily basis](#) and in turn weight gain. One of the reasons why the [Japanese are one of the healthiest and leanest population](#) is because they have a much better relationship with food. They also eat smaller portions, do not snack and stop eating before they are full. This all means they eat roughly 25% calories than many Western countries. Overall energy balance is fundamental to weight loss so track initially and work out what you need to be eating to create a deficit. Working with a nutritionist can help you devise the right plan for you that works.

Importance of Sleep

Both poor sleep patterns and altered circadian rhythm has been shown to be associated with weight gain. Both affect metabolism and energy expenditure. A disrupted circadian rhythm may be why [shift workers](#) are at an increased risk of obesity. In addition [short sleep duration](#) has been shown to increase obesity risk. It is likely that poor sleep quality increases hunger and cravings due to disruption of hunger hormones - ghrelin and leptin.

Lower Stress

Stress is known to increase the risk of weight gain due to the rise of cortisol and [glutamate](#) which appears to increase appetite. Similarly techniques such as yoga and meditation not only helps lower cortisol levels but also increases [nerve growth factor \(NGF\)](#) which may help us to eat less. Take time daily to de-stress using

mindfulness, meditation and relaxation practices. Perhaps factor in a walk to help unwind and consider magnesium salt baths each night to calm the body and mind.

Exercise

We all know exercise is important for overall health. Not only does exercise burn calories, but it also builds muscle mass and jump-starts metabolism. While you may have seen headlines in the press stating exercise does not make you thin. The truth is that the right kind and amount of exercise can make it easier to lose weight (and fat in particular), if you combine it with proper dieting principles. Resistance training in particular can help support muscle mass and improve body composition as you lose weight.

Some studies suggest exercise increases BDNF which [supports brain health](#) and may reduce appetite. [Exercise also boosts endorphins](#) which may also cause us to eat less. The bottom line with weight loss is you need to create an energy deficit and increasing your exercise is one way to help achieve this.

Eat Sufficient Protein

High-protein diets have been shown to superior when it comes to weight loss. Eating sufficient protein keeps you feeling fuller for longer, reduces appetite and [increases fat burning](#). That does not mean to have to avoid carbs but whatever plan you follow do ensure it is sufficient in protein for your needs. Working with a nutritionist we can calculate what is best for you.

Reduce carbs esp refined carbs

Both reducing overall carbohydrate intake and refined carbs (e.g sugar, white bread, pasta etc) can lead to weight loss. Partly this is because overall you are also reducing calories, but refined carbs are high glycemic foods which can disrupt blood sugar levels and cause insulin spikes. Long term this can lead to insulin resistance and weight gain. When you reduce carbs you naturally increase protein and fats - this can improve satiety. There is also research to suggest such an approach also [increases metabolism](#) without any change in calories.

Include fibre rich foods

Fibre rich foods like vegetables and fruits are typically low in calories but incredibly filling. Various studies have shown including [fibre rich foods](#) like vegetables in your diet aids weight loss. Fibre also supports a diverse gut flora which in turn produce short chain fatty acids like [butyrate](#) which appears to have weight loss benefits. Other foods that are very filling include soups. Various studies have shown regular soup eating helps people feel fuller leading to less calorie consumption. [One study](#) found women eating soups twice daily led to 50% greater weight loss than consuming the same amount of energy as high energy-dense snack food. So consider including soup regularly in your diet either as lunch or snack.

Drink more water

Water helps you stay hydrated and energised through the day. Include at least 2 litres of water per day which has been shown to increase the calories you burn daily. This is known as [water based thermogenesis](#).

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