



**BILL FAULKNER**

**THE JOURNEY TO  
SUSTAINABLE WEIGHT  
LOSS: A ROADMAP TO  
SUCCESS**

IS A MOTIVATIONAL, INSPIRING AND COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE THAT OUTLINES THE NECESSARY STEPS FOR INDIVIDUALS TO ACHIEVE THEIR WEIGHT LOSS GOALS EFFECTIVELY AND SUSTAINABLY.

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## **Introduction**

No doubt like so many others you struggle to lose weight. Being one of the largest markets out there, there are countless weight loss products, programs and equipment to be had. How much money have you wasted on them? And what really works?

Are you frustrated and fed up with all the methods, diets and pills you have tried? Don't make your weight loss more complicated than it is, and don't be down on yourself for failing in the past. There is a way – you can lose the weight you want to!

With our busy lives, and more and more technology being introduced all the time along with the conveniences of fast food, it sure is hard to stay active and eat a healthy, balanced diet. But if you know how to do it, it can be done, even with a busy lifestyle. Everyone is busy in their own ways, so there has to be a way for everyone, right?

As you may have figured out, weight loss and staying fit are eternally linked. The less active you are, the easier it is to gain weight, especially as you grow older. But when you are active and you have a raised metabolism, you may just start losing the weight without even realizing it at first.

We are going to look at all the reasons why we gain weight, who we need to talk to when we decide we are ready to lose the weight, why keeping yourself on a schedule actually helps you to lose the weight, weight loss secrets, plus many other subjects that will help you to learn how to finally take the weight off and keep it off – once and for all!

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## Why We Gain Weight

- **We eat more calories than what our body needs in a day, so the excess gets stored as fat.** Our bodies are designed in such a way that in times when it was harder to get food, our bodies could be prepared by having stored extra calories in times of plenty in the form of fat. Now, with as easy as it is to get food, a lot of people tend to overeat, and this is a severe problem that causes many to become overweight or obese.
- **Genes play a factor as well by setting basic parameters on the metabolic efficiency of your body.** People who are overweight many times have very efficient metabolisms, meaning they need less caloric intake than others, and they store the excess as fat. You have a greater risk of being obese if one parent is and an even greater risk if both parents are. However, genes only determine a tendency towards a higher or lower metabolic efficiency, not what your actual body metabolism will be.
- **Your metabolic rate.** Besides genetics, your metabolic rate depends on how active you are. It is said that every ten years past our mid-twenties we lose about 10% of our metabolic rate. This probably does not have to do completely with age, however, but instead with how active we are. The more active we are, the more muscle mass we can retain, or even build, and in turn the more fit we are because muscle tissue is metabolically active whereas fat is not. On the other hand, if we lead a basically sedentary life, we are much more likely to be able to gain weight as we lose muscle mass.
- **Eating patterns.** People's eating habits make a huge difference in determining their weight. When foods high in fat or sugars are favored, this of course can cause much weight gain. Also, how you serve the food, i.e. do you put the portions on everyone's plate or do you bring it all to the table and serve it the food family style where everyone can take as much as they want? Portion size is one of the main reasons people eat too much. Also, how have you learned to eat? If you are a fast eater, you may not even realize the cues your stomach gives you that it is full

- **Larger portion sizes.** Over time, larger portions of food have become the norm, especially at many restaurants. Weight has also gone up because of this.
- **Exercise or the lack thereof.** Exercise is essential to a healthy lifestyle and to maintaining a healthy weight. When you exercise, especially when you include strength training in your workouts, you gain muscle mass and raise your metabolism and in turn the muscle helps to burn more fat. In turn, you will weigh less, and you will look leaner and firmer because muscle takes up less space than fat. Plus, strength training helps reduce the risk of accidental injury, improves your bone density, helps with digestion and helps in lowering your blood pressure, cholesterol and triglyceride levels.

As you can probably see, even if you have a history of the genes in your family making it easier to gain weight than other people, diet and exercise are the two main factors that affect your health and weight. Regular exercise is essential to getting to and maintaining a healthy weight – and so is what you eat, how you eat and how much you eat. Learn portion control. This is usually a huge factor for most people, and they do not realize how much they are actually eating. A portion of food the size of your fist is generally all that should be eaten at one time, because that is the size of your stomach as well.

Eating several small meals a day, rather than two or three big ones, will help you to be able to eat less and also not be hungry in the early days of forming this habit. Another important thing is to not skip breakfast, as this sets up your metabolism for the day. If you don't eat breakfast, your body will go into defense mode and store more fat because it will think you are starving.

Try slowing down your eating as well if you have the habit of eating fast. This way you can feel the signals from your stomach when you have had enough, before you stuff yourself full. When you have done that, you know for sure you have eaten too much. On a scale of 1-10 of fullness, we should feel right in the middle, around a 5, when we are done eating. It takes some practice, but you can learn this trick and you will feel so much better knowing you did not stuff yourself to the maximum capacity.

Another thing to watch of course is your intake of fatty and sugary foods. We all need nutrients, including healthy fats, to keep us balanced, but eating a lot of junk food and sugary drinks will attribute greatly to us gaining more weight. Processed foods don't

generally have a lot of nutrients in them, or any at all, and they are high in salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats.

In today's busy lifestyles, we may not realize how often we are eating these foods. If you are one who is always ordering out for work, or going out to dinner as well, this is not going to keep you healthy because you do not have the control as to what is being put in your food (except special ordering at a restaurant) and it is much harder to make sure you are eating the right kinds of things and getting all of your nutrients. Going out to eat is fine occasionally, but be sensible in what you are choosing, and you don't have to clear your plate of the large servings you will most likely be given.

## Is Dieting Necessary for Weight Loss?

When most people think of losing weight, they think of going on a diet. Many times, this means finding some fad diet that is probably popular at the current time and trying to follow all of its crazy rules and recipes, like lemon juice, cayenne pepper and maple syrup. But honestly, who enjoys these things? Do you like cutting out entire food groups such as carbohydrates or drinking crazy concoctions that simply do not taste very good and do not fill you up?

It is doubtful that anyone does. Yes, there are other diet plans out there that have a lot of merit to them, and if a diet is the way you want to go, then researching the different ones out there is very advisable so that you can find a reasonable, sensible diet plan that is not going to harm you or make you go crazy with hunger, causing you to fail in the end anyway.

### **The Downsides of Dieting**

- **Fad Diets** – These diets usually consist of removing one food group entirely from your diet or drinking an unusual mixture of ingredients to get you to lose weight. Not only can these be unhealthy and dangerous at times, they can leave you feeling hungry or drained from not enough nutrients. In the end, even if you do lose some weight at first, these diets usually fail because they are too restrictive and as soon as you stop them you wind up gaining all the weight back, plus more sometimes.
- **Counting Calories** – Sometimes counting every little calorie we take in is very bothersome and frustrating to people. Because of this, some people may give up on their diet altogether.
- **Eating Too Little** – Dieting for some people means just eating very little. If you do not follow a proper diet plan, and think that just not eating is the way to lose weight, you will quickly find out that besides being very hungry you will not feel good at all because you are not getting enough nutrients. You are also confusing your body's metabolism with this starving method – it might not make you lose weight much at first as your body starts to store all the fat it can when you do

eat. Plus, on the serious side, if you do this extremely enough and long enough, you could wind up in the hospital.



## Choosing the Right Diet Plan

When you are ready to choose your diet or eating plan, there are certain things that you must take into consideration to make sure that you are picking one that will help you to attain the weight loss goals you have and to make sure you are staying healthy. Some diets, as we mentioned, do not contain a balance of nutrition that your body needs, and can therefore make you very ill, and won't help you to lose weight properly.

- **Realistic Expectations:** You must realize that losing weight takes time and depending on how much you have to lose will depend on how long it will take you. You do not want to take on a plan that promises you to lose a lot of weight in a short amount of time, as that is most likely going to be a very unhealthy and unsafe option for you. After the initial two or three weeks when weight gain might be up because of water loss, you should be losing around 1-2 pounds a week to maintain healthy weight loss.
- **The Right Nutrition:** Make sure you look over any diet plans you are considering thoroughly and see what they allow or suggest for you to eat. If it has a balanced-looking diet to it with the right amounts of foods from the food groups, you are probably looking at a plan that is safe. Any of the fad diets that cut out whole food groups, or make you starve yourself or drink strange concoctions are not safe. You also want the right amount of protein, carbohydrates, fiber and make sure you are getting no more than 30 percent of your calories from fat per day.
- **Doable for You...or Not?** While you are researching different diet plans, make sure it is something that you think would suit you and your lifestyle. If you are a very busy person who is not home a lot, look for a plan that has convenience as well as healthy choices. If you wind up choosing a plan that you don't stick to for whatever reason, you will wind up failing and you will then most likely go back to your old ways, but now feeling worse than when you started out.
- **Calorie Level:** Make sure that the plan you choose has you eating enough calories. You essentially want to cut out enough calories so that you can lose those 1-2 pounds a week. You have to weigh this all against you and your activity levels, as how many calories you need each day will vary from person to person

depending on how active they are and their weight. You might want to work with a trained health professional to help you decide which is best for you.

## Who to Approach When You Want to Lose Weight

Now that you've decided you want to lose weight; you should include some other people in your weight loss journey. These people can help you with many aspects, including choosing your diet plan, setting your goals and encouraging you along the way.

- **A Therapist:** Some people know they overeat, and how unhealthy it is for them as well, yet can't seem to stop their overeating no matter how hard they try. Many of these people eat for emotional reasons and will try to hide their hurt and other feelings with food.

This is someone who should seek the council of a therapist or other professionals trained in this specific matter so they can get the proper support. In some severe cases, it will take checking themselves into a clinic designed for this purpose so that what their nutrition and how much they are exercising can be closely watched and guarded.

- **A Dietician:** A dietician will have a wide range of knowledge that can help you to understand your body and to help prepare a food plan that will fit your particular needs, because in most states they are required to get a medical license before they can become a dietician.

Their goal is to help you eat healthier, and in turn you can lose weight. Because of this, dieticians are set apart from anyone who promotes a fad diet because they are not necessarily nutritionally sound for you. A dietician will also help you to figure out how many calories you need to consume in a day and to balance your intake of all the various food groups that you should be eating from.

- **A Physical Trainer:** A lot of people may have never learned to exercise properly. A physical trainer will make sure that you do, and will push you to attain your goals, and can also probably help set your goals. They will oversee your exercise routine in a gym, giving you both cardio and strength-based exercises to follow.

The main goal of a personal trainer is to see to it that you get fit, and they also educate you on how to do that properly for yourself. Each person is different in their needs, and a personal trainer can adjust your training program to fit you just

right. Over the course of the weight loss process, both the physical trainer and the dietician may give you advice in changing up your diet and your workout routine as you begin to gain more muscle tone to help support your new muscles.

- **Friends and Family:** When starting your weight loss journey, you may want to let friends and family know what you are doing so that they can be supportive of you. It always helps to have people you know and trust and that stand by your side in any endeavor.

You can even have a friend, or your spouse, keep you accountable to keep you from sneaking any extra snacks or sweets, or to keep you on your exercise regimen. You will likely be more successful in the end if you have someone come alongside you (even over the phone if they are long distance) who will help encourage you when you are reaching your goals and to help push you when you start to struggle. Then, when you do reach your final goal (or even mini goals throughout) you can celebrate your achievements with the ones you love.

## Why Maintaining a Daily Schedule is Critical

The next step in planning your weight loss goals is to set up a daily schedule for yourself. You need to decide when the best time for you to exercise is. For instance, if you are not a morning person, getting up two hours earlier than you are used to is probably not a good plan because you are likely to miss many mornings.

At the same time, if your job causes you to work late into the evenings frequently, scheduling your workouts for after work is not a wise idea either. You can also schedule out your meals, including the times you eat each day, and schedule out what your meals will be. The best thing to do is to schedule them out for a week at a time, and make a list and stick to it, so when you go shopping you will not be as tempted to impulse buy or stray off of your diet.

- **Keeping Yourself in Check:** If you have a specific schedule to follow, you are more likely to stick to your goals by writing everything down in a journal or other recording device like a smartphone. But, if you do miss a scheduled workout, or have an extra snack, you can keep note of it and vow to do better the next time.
- **Knowing What You Are Doing Each Day:** Having what time you are supposed to be doing your workouts or eating your meals written down can keep you in the know ahead of time, and in this way you can schedule things around your workout times, rather than scheduling over them and just missing workouts altogether. This can be easy to do, and if you start doing this, it will eventually snowball into increased times where you are missing your workouts, until you are thrown off track completely.
- **Lose More Weight:** By keeping yourself on a schedule, you will tend to lose more weight in the end because you will be likely to not miss any workouts (or very, very few in the long run). If you keep going back and forth and missing your workouts, or skipping a meal and confusing your body's metabolism, you will have a much harder time maintaining a steady rate of weight loss.

## Weight Loss – What You Should Never Do

Dieting is a huge industry, and at times people get suckered into this fad or that, or the latest diet pills and supplements. You need to be careful about what products you choose, or what methods you decide to use, and not fall for something that can cause you harm instead of helping you. There are several dos and don'ts when it comes to weight loss that you should know about, here are some of the don'ts:

- **Never starve yourself, fast, or go on a diet that has too few calories.** As mentioned previously, when you drastically cut major amounts of calories to lose weight, you are losing muscle mass and possibly causing yourself major health risks. In the end, you will also wind up gaining all your weight back.

This method will lower your metabolism, the thing you want raised, and will cause a shift toward a higher percentage of body fat which increases your risk for metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes. It is advisable that you do not cut your daily calories to below 1200; otherwise you will have a hard time getting all the nutrients you need, fueling activity and satisfying your hunger.

- **Don't take supplements or over-the-counter diet pills if you are unclear as to what their effects are.** These products are many times hyped up by a lot of empty promises that do not deliver, and they could cause you harm. Although the over-the-counter diet pills may not appear dangerous, they can still do you harm because they are loaded with caffeine and diuretics.

These can cause you to become dehydrated and have imbalanced electrolyte levels. And just because a product says it's made from all-natural ingredients it doesn't mean it is safe or healthy for you. These products can also be a huge waste of your hard-earned money. It is safest to forgo the supplements altogether and to rely on eating a healthy and balanced diet to get all your nutrients and lose weight.

- **Drop the detox and cleansing plans.** Cleansing your body to get rid of toxins is totally unnecessary. Cleansing only causes weight loss from water loss and stool, and they can be dangerous, plus you run the risk of becoming dehydrated and having electrolyte imbalance among many things. Losing large amounts of water,

especially on top of fasting without medical advice is very risky. Your body is well designed and detoxifies itself on its own, so forcefully cleansing it out is totally unnecessary and could cause serious complications.

Instead, you just need to be aware of what you are eating. If you really still feel the need to cleanse, eat foods with plenty of fiber and drink a lot of water.

- **Stay away from all forms of purging.** There is no safe way to do this. It includes forcing yourself to vomit, chewing up your food and spitting it out and abusing laxatives. These methods are commonly seen in colleges, but they can cause very serious health conditions and are the first step in developing eating disorders.

The acid in your stomach is very strong, as it is meant to break down the food you eat. Repeatedly forcing it through your esophagus and mouth can cause erosion of the esophagus, mouth and your tooth enamel. This increases your risk for certain cancers, tooth decay and more. You will also experience dehydration and again an imbalance of electrolytes as a result of a loss of fluids.

Any form of purging is extremely dangerous and risky for your health – it is no way to lose weight! If you have a problem with this, seek medical help immediately.

- **Don't be obsessive about things like exercising.** Extreme exercising can put you at great risk for injury, cause severe wear and tear on your body and cause dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. Plus, you are psychologically turning exercise into a form of punishment for eating.

The recommended doses of exercise vary greatly from the intense workouts some people put themselves through, bringing it down to around 30 minutes of cardio five days a week or 20 minutes of 3 days a week of vigorous intense cardio and 8-10 strength training exercises, twice weekly. Despite recommendations from health officials, however, some people still think extreme exercising is ok to do and they go way beyond what is healthy and let it control their lives.

Instead, do regular exercise for all the health benefits so you can get relief from things like daily stressors, which can cause the release of cortisol which increases appetites and stimulates fat storage.

- **Do not use legal or illegal drugs for weight loss.** Using drugs that are not intended for weight loss is a very bad idea that can be very dangerous. The risks that go along with abusing drugs such as cocaine, speed, attention deficit disorder drugs, thyroid medicine and diabetic medications for weight loss outweigh any health benefits by far that you might get from the weight loss itself.

Risks include of course physical and psychological addiction, social and financial problems, ruining your relationships, anxiety, very bad headaches, stroke and heart, lung or kidney problems. Using any drugs for purposes that are not intended is highly discouraged because of the potential dangers.

- **Do not rely on tobacco use for weight loss.** Smoking has countless health risks to begin with, yet some people use it for weight loss because nicotine has been shown to be an appetite suppressant. But again, the risks from smoking far outweigh any weight loss benefits, as smoking harms almost all the organs in your body.

Plus, it causes cancer, cardiovascular, respiratory and other disease and reduces the health of the smoker overall. Plus, if you do quit, weight gain is generally a very common side effect.



## Industry Secrets

There are several things that the weight loss industry is not telling you – nor do they want you to know. Their business is booming thanks to all the fads, gadgets and pills out there that they are selling to people desperate to lose weight. Unfortunately, the only thing in most cases that is getting lighter is peoples’ wallets. Many of these things do not work, and only a small percentage of people buying into one of them manage to lose the weight and keep it off.

### **Some of These Industry Secrets Include:**

- **Most weight loss product ads deceive the buyer.** A majority of the weight loss products you hear about on the radio and see on infomercials don’t even do what they claim to. Even so, consumers are lured into buying these products with promises like “Lose the weight and keep it off”, “Eat whatever you want” and “no diet or exercise required”. Basically, if it sounds too good to be true, it most likely is.
- **Just because they say it’s “scientifically proven” or “doctor-endorsed” doesn’t mean it works.** These claims are typical as well, but they never tell you anything about where the studies were made or by who so that you can check out the validity for yourself.

And what does it really mean anyway? Often these so-called health professionals have a financial interest in the product, and probably did not review the scientific evidence. If it was reviewed, they may not have even used acceptable review standards. Why would you want to risk your health on such a thing?

- **Just because the government allows a product to be on the market does not mean it is safe for consumers or that it does what it claims.** There is a huge misconception that the government would not allow a product on the market if it could potentially be harmful to you. People tend to think that the government has to pre-approve them first, but many times that is not the case.
- **Products touted as ‘natural’ or ‘herbal’ are not guaranteed safe.** People also assume that just because a product is made of natural ingredients means it must

be safe as well. But until the FDA receives evidence that a product is harmful, the companies are free to put their products on the market.

Not everything you hear is true, and you shouldn't believe it. There are plenty of products that claim to do things that they just do not, and you should steer away from products making high and lofty claims.

Don't buy into the claims of fad diets, either. Anything that requires sudden and radical changes to your eating patterns is very difficult to sustain over time. They will send you into a quick cycle of weight loss which is always followed by a rebound period where you gain the weight back and then some in certain instances once you're normal eating resumes. Plus, the next time you try to take the weight off, it makes it all that much more difficult. There are no health benefits to these diets, and if any one of them worked, do you really think there would be the need for new ones?

You also can not count on the money back guarantee. You have about as good of a chance on getting your money back as having the product actually do what it claims to.

There is also no quick fix or magic pill that will help you to finally lose weight. If the product is making such claims, you can just about guarantee that they won't work.

## How to Maintain Your Weight

Once you have reached your target weight, you'll want to know how to maintain it, so you don't put all that hard work to waste! Educating yourself ahead of time will help you when you are at the point where you have attained your weight loss goal. You wouldn't want to ruin the celebration you will want to have, and you of course want to continue on with your newfound healthy lifestyle.

- **Don't skip any meals!** Remember, your body's metabolism will take this as a signal that your body is starving and will begin to store fat for reserves. Make sure you keep up with eating your meals, scheduled out as you have been. Besides, if you skip a meal at one point in the day, it could mean you overeat later on when you are just so hungry.
- **Keep eating a variety of foods.** This will help you to keep getting all the nutrients and vitamins your body needs to stay working properly. It will keep you feeling healthy, energized and protect your body by keeping it healthy. You can include choices from whole grains, fruits, vegetables and lean proteins.
- **Keep up the exercising!** Don't get lazy and slack off on your exercise routine now. You have gained the knowledge of what kind of a workout is right for you, and probably how to change it up every once in a while, as well if you had instruction from a personal trainer.

Changing up your routine is a great idea to keep you from getting bored, and to keep your body guessing. As long as you are always combining your cardio and strength training, you will continue to stay fit and feel strong and healthy, all while protecting yourself further from illnesses coupled with your healthy diet.

- **Adjust your daily caloric intake.** Many people wonder if they should increase their daily caloric intake right away. It is probably advisable to do so but do so gradually. Try starting with just 250 calories more a day. After a week, weigh yourself.
- You'll probably still have lost some more weight. If this is the case, add another 250 calories, then weigh yourself a week after that. Repeat these steps until you

see that your weight has remained the same when you weigh yourself for the week. If you gained a bit, take away some calories, 100 at a time, until your weight evens out and remains the same from week to week.

- **Keep drinking that water!** Don't forget to have at least eight glasses of water a day to keep your body working well. Water aides in digestion, increases your energy and helps rid your body of toxins naturally. Plus, you will stay hydrated and healthy.
- **Keep eating frequently.** Eating five to six small meals a day as you have probably already learned to do is a good thing to continue doing, as this keeps your metabolism up, and keeps you feeling satisfied. It is important to continue this as well because you don't want to fall into the trap of increasing your portion sizes again if this was a problem before. You will throw yourself all the way back to square one eventually. In the very least, you will gain a bunch of the weight back you worked so hard to shed.
- **Don't let the junk food back in.** Now that you've developed your healthy habits, why ruin it by going back to your old ways and eating junk food? You have discovered plenty of delicious tastes to satisfy all your cravings with healthy foods. Keep your intake of fruits and vegetables up to several servings a day, preferably 6-8.
- **Take your daily vitamins.** Remember to keep taking your daily vitamins as well. Doing this will help assure that you acquire all the vitamins you need each day and it will help you to maintain your healthy weight as well.

## The Secrets of Staying Healthy

Everybody wants to live long and healthy lives; nobody wants to count on getting any severe diseases. Although we can't predict or prevent every situation, there are ways to help protect ourselves that can make our lives fuller and healthier overall.

- **Prevention and early detection is the first thing you should consider.** Most people dread going for a yearly physical, or even the dentist cleaning every six months, but having good doctors and keeping these appointments in your life will help you to stay healthy because your doctor can detect things that you can't on your own.

Knowing your family history is also important because if there is any history of heart disease or cancers in your family your doctor can keep any eye out for symptoms and do testing on you regularly.

- **Love the people you are with.** Make sure and spend time with the ones who surround you daily such as your spouse, children, other family members, friends and coworkers. Enjoy the time you spend with other people, plus maintain healthy friendships. These relationships are needed to make you feel fulfilled in life.
- **Get eight hours of sleep.** Although many people find this one difficult to do because of how busy we can get in our lives, it really is very important to leading a happy and healthy life.
- **Find something you are good at.** All of us have times where we need to be doing something we really enjoy, and most of these are things that we excel at. This is usually something that makes us feel good inside as well and can even be soothing and stress relieving.
- **Manage your stress – don't ignore it!** Everyone has stressors of some kind, and it is important that we handle our stress so that it does not get out of hand and consume us.

When you are riddled with worry and stress it can literally make you sick in many ways. Daily walks can help clear your head, and make sure that you are not over-filling your agenda for each day or letting other's schedules dictate your day.

- **Find balance in your life.** Don't try to take on too many projects at work or let work consume you. Find a balance so you are still able to enjoy all the other things around you like your hobbies and your friends and family.

Although financial times can be tough, it is still so very important to find time to spend at least with your family, the ones you are working so hard to keep safe and provided for.

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## The Advantages of Staying Healthy

The benefits of staying healthy are boundless. It doesn't just mean that you are happy with the way you look and can fit into that new outfit. Being healthy has to do with your whole physical, mental and social well-being.

- **Your Physical Health:** Keeping yourself physically healthy can help you all around. Not only can it help you to take part in daily activities such as being able to walk, move and bend, but it allows you to be physically able to take care of your loved ones around you who depend on you.

It can be financially beneficial if you avoid diseases that were preventable and that would be very costly.

- **Your Mental Health:** If you do not have a good mental health, your physical health will also be affected. Many people don't realize just how important their mental health is to their overall well-being. If you allow yourself to be over-stressed or for that stress to rule your life, it can make you sick.

Stress can raise your blood pressure which increases your risk of a heart attack or stroke. You need to deal with your stress in positive ways like through exercise, meditation or therapy. Don't deal with stress by things that can damage your overall health like smoking, drinking or eating unhealthy foods.

- **Disease Prevention:** Making sure you are eating a healthy diet is vital to your overall health and staying healthy. The foods you choose to eat can have a direct impact on your health.

Phytochemicals are important for your health and could prevent things like heart disease, specific types of cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. They are found only found in certain foods like berries, spinach, olives and kale. Eat a low-fat diet full of lots of fruits and vegetables plus whole grains to help protect your cardiovascular health.

- **Long Life:** Striving to live a healthy lifestyle can be a big factor of you being able to live a long and healthy life. Although you can't prevent all health problems and



some of them are out of your control, a lot of the most significant ones you can help to avoid by living healthy.

With the leading causes of death being chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer, having lifestyle choices that include controlling the foods you eat, keeping your weight at a healthy level, how much you exercise and how you deal with the stressors in your life can have a huge impact on keeping these diseases at bay.

Living a healthy lifestyle can also improve your mood and give you greater self-esteem and mental focus. You will be stronger; have a higher stamina and you will be able to get a better night's sleep.

Other benefits of a healthy lifestyle include improved digestion and a lower blood pressure. Keeping yourself healthy can also help ease or eliminate back problems and back pain plus improve your posture, enhance coordination and balance, and lower your resting heart rate.

## Conclusion

Now you are ready to plan and start out on your weight loss journey. As you can see, you don't need to buy into some crazy diet, machinery or drinks. There is no quick fix as many ads would like you to believe so that you will buy their products.

The best things for you to do to take charge of your health are to change things like your diet, your activity levels and keep your mental health in check. When you take the time to assess your current lifestyle habits, sitting down with your doctor and other professionals like a nutritionist and a physical trainer, you will be able to develop a weight loss treatment that is designed especially for you.

Learning as much as you can about your body and how it operates, your family health history, and how to manage your physical and mental health will help you to keep healthy for many years to come. With as many advantages as there are to living a healthy lifestyle, if you are determined and can keep yourself motivated and focused on your goals, you will, with the proper amount of time, reach those goals. It takes hard work and determination, but you can do it!

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