

Let's Get Serious about Diet and Exercise! 4/29/16

Why exercise and eat a healthy diet? There are many reasons; one of the most important is to live longer with fewer medications! Obesity is the second leading cause of preventable death in the USA. In the 1990s, 10% of Tennesseans were overweight, now over 50% are overweight or obese! Childhood obesity is an epidemic in our country because our children are eating what we eat and they are less active.

People gain weight as they age because their metabolism slows down (it starts declining after 30), and poor eating habits, years of stress and lack of exercise start catching up to us, Americans are less active, American women typically don't lose weight gained in pregnancy and the average weight gain around menopause is 10-15 pounds. Sounds depressing but WE CAN REVERSE THIS TREND! Most fad diets do not help someone succeed with long term weight loss. Diets that haven't worked: low fat, just looking at low calorie diets without looking at what you eat. HCG diets (with only 500 cal/d) were a big fad several years ago, long term most women gain the weight back, use of "natural hormones" for weight loss also doesn't work. The women that lose weight and keep it off maintain lifelong healthy diet habits, exercise, stress reduction, healthy sleeping habits and address emotional reasons for overeating or poor self-esteem.

Why listen to me: it is my passion to empower women to better health. It all starts with taking care of our bodies and giving our bodies good sources of nutrition. I want you to feel the best you can and minimize medical problems. On a personal note, I have lost more than 30 pounds on three different occasions during my life and I feel so much better! I am very busy but I find time to balance a busy schedule, healthy eating and exercise. It doesn't take as much work as you think, the hardest part is resetting priorities. There are only 24 hours in a day, and since we can never make the day longer, we have to decide what is important.

Most women don't know the definitions of being overweight or obese. To calculate body mass index (BMI) go to <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi> or

BMI= $\frac{\text{weight (in pounds)} \times 703}{\text{height(inches)} \times \text{height(inches)}}$

Example: weight 150, height 5'4"

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{150 \times 703}{64 \times 64} = 25.7$$

BMI Categories:

Underweight < 18.5

Normal weight 18.5-24.9

Overweight 25-29.9

Obesity > 30

- Overweight is a BMI > 25. Above 25, the risk of diseases increases.
 - o diabetes (4x the risk)
 - o High blood pressure (2x the risk),
 - o heart disease (2.5 times risk),
 - o gall stones
 - o osteoarthritis
 - o cancers: breast, colon and uterine (5x the risk)
- Healthiest BMI for middle aged women: 22!
- Another simple measurement to look at the risk for disease and death is waist circumference (WC). Even if your BMI is normal, a WC >35inches increases risk of dying from heart disease 3x

DIET:

- In women, there is scientific evidence that exercise alone won't cause weight loss (if that has worked for you before, you were probably in your 20's or you were lucky. Diet is the best way to lose weight. Exercise combined with diet helps maintain weight loss better than diet alone.
- BEST DIET? Low carb diets, focus on lean meat, fresh fruits and vegetables. For most women, calories need to be cut but just focusing on cutting calories and not looking at WHAT

is eaten doesn't work. Cutting calories way down, putting yourself in starvation state will cause you to gain even more weight after you stop. In general, I am not a fan of cutting calories below 1500/d

- **MOTIVATION:** Many people have a hard time staying motivated, if that is the case for you, consider weight loss programs such as weight watchers (don't just look at points, choose fresh fruits, veggies and lean protein, avoid the prepackaged food), seeing a dietician or working with a personal trainer may help with motivation, or make it a family affair and involve your children. We talk a lot about good food choices in my family.
- **PORTION CONTROL:** People don't know how many calories are in a portion size (average calorie intake for a typical meal at a restaurant is 1500-2500 calories and salads have just as many or more than a hamburger when you add cheese, salad dressing...). No portion should be bigger than your fist. Try using smaller plates/bowls. Recommended portion size for meat is 4 oz (that is the size of a stack of cards!!!)
- **"Yo-Yo" dieting:** Yo-Yo dieting (starving yourself with fad diets and then regaining the weight) contributes to decrease in metabolism long term, I see many women even as early as in their 30's having a very difficult time with weight loss because their metabolism is low from years of Yo-Yo dieting.
- **BINGE EATING:** Americans eat significantly more on the weekends because of social events, eating out, increase in alcohol consumption...
- **Avoid mindless snacking:** consider the amount of calories you will be getting.
- **DON'T SKIP BREAKFAST:** it really is the most important meal of the day, you should get ~ 25-30 gm, I will make mix plain oatmeal, milk or almond milk and chia seeds in a jar then heat it up in the morning and add brown sugar, cut strawberries or dried fruit, another protein packed breakfast: scrambled eggs and half an avocado. So many people tell me they don't have time for breakfast. That is a choice. My ability to think is too important, so I'm going to eat breakfast (drop in blood sugar causes foggy thinking)
- **"I REALLY DON'T EAT THAT MUCH".** I hear this EVERY day. Most people have food amnesia; they forget what and how much they really ate in a day, especially when they overeat. There are plenty of studies that show recording food at the end of the day instead of writing down as soon as food is eaten is not accurate. There was a study that put a video camera in kitchens of people that were recording their food intake and the average amount of calories "missed" were 1000/d! The biggest culprits: taking bites from our children's food, tasting while cooking, drinking stuff other than water... food diaries are very helpful, there are plenty of apps or websites that you can use. You may not eat that much in calories but the food you eat is unhealthy, what you eat is just as important as how much.
- **How many calories should we be eating?** Figuring out your basic metabolic rate (the calories you need to survive while at rest) and calculate the average amount of calories you burn based on how active you are. <http://www.annecollins.com/calc/5.htm> or <http://www.bmi-calculator.net/bmr-calculator/> (these give you the basic metabolic rate and well as the amount of calories you need based on your activity), consider 1500 cal/d, I am not a fan of going lower except in certain circumstances
- **COMMON OBSTACLES to weight loss:** depression, self-sabotage (you don't try because you "know you will fail"), boredom (either you binge while bored or you think eating healthy will be boring), being in a hurry and eating on the run (I keep healthy snacks around, make extra food in order to have left overs, make batches of smoothies), if you are trying to lose weight and you spend time around people who don't want to lose weight, there are studies that show it is harder to lose weight when you are around people like that!
- Consider using apps or websites
 - www.fitday.com: excellent daily resource
 - www.ediets.com
 - www.weightwatchers.com (going to weight watchers seems to work better than using only the online version)
 - www.sparkpeople.com
 - the daily plate; lose it; the calorie counter; diet.com are several others
 - there are new apps and websites all the time, check out the app store or google

- FLUID INTAKE: This is easy, stop drinking everything except for water, goal: 50-80 oz, more if you exercise. Sound harsh? Drinking sugary drinks (including juices), alcohol, sports drinks, diet drinks, sodas are all associated with weight gain. I allow myself ~12 oz of something else daily and that is coffee. Typically, the only time my son has sports drinks is when he is playing sports or working in the yard. Remember sugary drinks AND diet drinks actually increase food cravings. At least limit all non-water drinks, I suggest <16 oz/d
- It is better to eat 3 meals with 2 snacks than to eat less frequently. Skipping meals slow down your metabolism, causes your blood sugar to drop which causes cravings. We ALL eat more when starved, so if you don't skip meals, you will eat when hungry and not when starved. If busy consider apple with peanut butter, avocado, protein bar... SOMETHING
- LOW CARB: best way for most women especially if you have **PCOS** or pre-diabetes: look up glycemic index (GI) www.glycemicindex.com, goal is to eat foods with GI<55. Before you look up foods on the glycemic index, write down the most common foods you eat, look those up and if GI>55, look for substitutes, if high glycemic food then eat with some protein or healthy fat, for example - banana and peanut butter, add a slice of avocado, consider adding nuts (careful- healthy fat foods are high in calories). Other options for low carb: paleo, limit added sugars to <25 gm/day (look at food labels)
- EATING OUT: If you eat out more than 2-3 times per week, you probably won't lose weight unless you are VERY careful (average caloric intake for a meal when going out is 1500-2500 calories, daily intake should be 1800 or less for most people). Watch the movie "Super Size Me". <http://www.supersizeme.com/>
- Minimize cravings:
 - Drinking more water especially when you have food cravings (for many people the feeling of thirst and hunger pangs feel the same).
 - Eat foods that give you energy longer, foods that have a low glycemic index, see above. For example, whole wheat bread instead of white, peanut, apple and peanut butter instead of chips, or a granola bar or a candy bar.
 - Exercising can decrease cravings but beware – for some people exercise actually increases hunger or makes them feel like they can eat more.
 - Avoid being too hungry, the hungrier you are, the more likely you will overeat. For example, I eat a snack on my way home most days, if I don't I am so hungry that I overeat or make less healthy dinners!
- Supplements: There are many different opinions about vitamins and supplements. Ideally we should get vitamins in our diet. The average American diet is getting so bad that many people don't get the basic nutrients needed for our bodies to function well. The following list is brief and covers some of the basic recommendations. Most well done scientific studies show that the best way to get vitamins is in your diet AND taking too much of a vitamin supplement is harmful. If someone is trying to get you to take a lot of vitamins and supplements, if they are making money off your purchase...are they really doing it for you or for them?
 - Calcium: 1000-1200 mg/day (<40% of teenage girls get enough calcium in their diet, most women get about ½ of the calcium they need in their diet), calcium supplements can make women constipated, cause heart disease or cause kidney stones. Dietary sources: <http://www.stronghealth.com/services/primarycare/pdf/calciumrich.pdf>
 - Vitamin D3: 1000 IU/day (most women get less than half of what they need), this helps maintain normal bone strength. Dietary sources: <http://ods.od.nih.gov/factsheets/vitamind.asp#h2>, or sun exposure without sunscreen for 30 minutes/d, I recommend 1000 IU of vitamin D3/day.
 - Omega 3 fatty acids: 1-3 grams/day. Food sources: anchovies, mackerel, salmon (wild is better than farmed), sardines, trout, swordfish (limit swordfish to 7 oz/week). Benefits include brain and eye development in babies (take while pregnant and nursing), decrease risk for heart disease, improve insulin sensitivity (helps certain types of diabetes and pre-diabetes), decreases triglycerides (a type of cholesterol), possibly reduces depression and symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, RISKS: don't take if you are on a blood thinner, let your doctor know before starting if you are on multiple medications. Other sources: walnuts, chia seeds.

- Folic acid: 1mg/d helps brain and spine development of a developing baby. All women who can get pregnant should take it. The longer you take it the better off you are, so start now.

Exercise:

- When I ask women if they exercise, most hear - are you going to the gym and exercising. THAT is NOT what I mean. First- are you making time to move (cheapest and safest anti-anxiety and anti-depressant). I like to jog, you may like to garden... Second - do what you like but be consistent.
- Exercise at least 30 minutes/day 5-7 times per week. Average calories burned by 30 minutes of exercise (these numbers are lower than we wish): Walking= 100 cals, biking= 50-150, jogging (6 miles/hour) = 230, low impact aerobics= 150, mopping floors= 100. Should be a combo of cardio and strength training (you should strength train 2-3x/wk)
- If you are too busy to start an exercise program then get a pedometer (they are cheap) and have a goal to walk 10,000 steps/day or take 15 minutes/day to walk.
- Fun family activities: things that I do with my family: hike, bike, rock climb, play one on one basketball...
- Cardio: walking, running, swimming, biking, hiking...
- Strength training 2-3 times per week will also help burn fat, improve metabolic rate (ability to burn calories), and help bone strength (lower risk of osteoporosis). There are good examples of quick routines in Shape magazine and on many apps.
- Home options: I have a TRX (great for upper body strengthening), pull up bar with assistance band (great for upper body), spin bike, small weights - 5, 8, 10, I also have exercise bands and a yoga ball.
- Websites/Apps: this is updated all the time so look at apps or google.
 - Increase the amount of calories burned by increasing your heart rate. http://exercise.about.com/cs/fitness/tools/l/bl_THR.htm, <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4736>
 - There are many apps/devices – I use Microsoft band, strava, run keeper, yoga apps, "7 min", TRX apps, apps that use yoga balls and hand weights
- Training for a race (running, walking or biking...) will help motivation, build self-esteem and often introduce you to new people. My son is running in races and doing short sprint triathlons, we are having a blast. I love training with him.
 - Running: <http://www.runnersworld.com/>
 - Bike Races: <http://www.active.com/cycling/>

WHY CONSIDER MEDICATIONS OF SURGERY?

TYPICAL WEIGHT LOSS at one year (based on multiple studies):

Diet/exercise - 7%

Meds - 15%

Surgery - 35-45%

Medications:

There are new meds all the time: Belviq, Qysmia, Contrave, Sadexa and phenteramine (been around for awhile but has more side effects and risks than the newer meds). Using meds will definitely result in more weight loss but sustained weight loss has to also include lifestyle changes.

Surgery: most common recommendation: BMI>40 and >35 with weight related diseases.

Why weight loss is hard:

- 99% of diets fail, most people will gain back the weight they lost and more.
- We are told that supplement will help with weight loss, most don't help maintain lifelong weight loss, short term some may help with weight loss because they are a diuretic (pee out water weight). Vitamin B12 supplements do not cause weight loss - they can improve energy.
- Attitudes towards food and our health affect our ability to lose weight and keep it off. Most women have emotional triggers for poor diet habits or overeating, "emotional eaters" need to

substitute something instead of food when feeling bad. “Bored eaters” need to find something else to do...

- Weight loss is a slow process, if we lost the weight we wanted in a week, we would be much more motivated to continue. Often we are defeated before we get started because if we “can’t do it perfectly, why try”.
- Weight loss is difficult in our society; people around us often do things to make it harder.
- If you mess up, we often spend too much time feeling guilty and that is when we overeat! Don’t waste your time and energy feeling guilty. If you mess up, accept it and do better the next day, don’t defeat yourself. Most people binge when they feel guilty.
- Involve your family and kids, obesity in children is an epidemic because kids are eating what their parents eat and are less active, like we are! The more active you are the more calories everyone burns. Be creative and offer new and healthy food selections (I look at Cooking Light for new ideas). My son has to eat 5 bites of what he doesn’t like and if something is new, he has to try it. Turn off the TV, video games and computer. No one will like it at first but being active makes most people feel better and sleep better. Involve your kids in chores around the house, often they will be more likely to pitch in if they always have and if they are doing something with you. My son talks more when we are working on something together.
- SLEEP! SLEEP! SLEEP! Sleep is when our body restores itself. How much? Studies show that <10% of Americans can thrive on <7 hours of sleep a night.
- Stress and “busyness” decrease our ability to lose weight and reduces our motivation.
- Motivation: for many people, they are not self motivated enough to continue to exercise and eat healthy. Find ways to motivate yourself - get an exercise buddy, make eating healthy a fun game with the kids, eat at home more will dramatically reduce calorie intake and there is evidence that kids are healthier and make healthier choices if they just eat one meal a day with their family at home.

Ideas to help set goals:

- How do you eat: do you sit down, best way to eat: sitting, slowly chewing your food, minimal fluid intake (affects absorption)?
- Do you have a history of eating disorders and appetite fluctuations?
- Food intolerances? Dairy, gluten, corn...
- Do you have episodes of unintentional weight loss and gain, are you aware of how your current diet affects weight
- What behaviors lead to weight gain? (ex. If I don’t go to the store and buy fruits and veggies then we are less healthy that week)
- Are you able to follow a diet and make necessary lifestyle changes?
- What causes you to stop being motivated?
- Can you quickly get back on track after making poor choices?
- Have you ever tried a food diary? (For some it is very helpful and for others too aggravating) consider an app such as myfitness pal, remember don’t just look at calories but also carb intake, added sugars (glycemic index). Consider recording what you eat during the week for 2-3 days and on the weekends since we usually eat differently during those times.
- What things can you easily do to improve your diet?
- What is healthy about your diet?
- What attempts did you make in the past to lose weight?
- Do you think about calories, carbs, portion size when you eat a snack?
- When you do eat most of your calories? (Most eat the majority of carbs at night or on the weekends...all adds up, often eating more than you think)
- Do you eat when you are hungry or when you are starved?
- Do you look at portion size? (Meat - 4 oz which is a deck of cards, good rule of thumb - portion size is the size of your fist unless you are eating veggies)
- Good reasonable goal: lose 1/2-1 lb/week. To accomplish this, you would need to decrease 500 calories/day in food intake or combination of burning more calories and eating less. Consider 1500 cal/d.

- If you aren't losing weight when counting calories, either you are not calculating correctly OR you've limited your calories too much and you are not getting necessary nutrients.
- Exercise: It won't make you lose weight so relax and enjoy it. MOVE! If you are really out of shape, start with 15 minutes of walking/day and increase 10% every one to two weeks (for example - 20 minutes, 10% is 2, so you would increase to 22 minutes). Due to previous knee and hip injuries - I use the 10% rule when I increase exercise. If you are out of shape or you have a history of injuries, don't do exercises that will injure you, like boot camp.
- Do you have support? You better find support. Best places? Home or work.
- Do you know why you overeat or skip meals then binge? Address reasons for overeating: emotional eating related to boredom, depression or eating disorders, remember your triggers for overeating.
- Is a low self image keeping you from being motivated?
- Would weighing yourself weekly be helpful to keep you on task?
- How do you reward yourself? If is it food, find something new (I reward myself with exercise or reading or visiting with family, some like pedicures or massages)
- Relapse prevention: you usually know what makes you relapse: being stressed or busy at work can be triggers. Make sure you have a plan for when these occur and make sure you have support.
- Do you have health reasons that make it harder to lose weight? Labs work to consider: cholesterol panel, diabetes screening, anemia testing, liver and kidney function and electrolytes, thyroid testing, vit D level, hormone levels can sometimes be helpful

Set Goals:

- On a scale of 1-10, how important is it to get to a healthy weight? (1 being not important, 10 being very important):
- On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you will succeed: (1 being not confident, 10 being very confident):
- What is your weight loss goal over what period of time (ex. 10 lbs in 2 months):

- What changes would you be willing to make with your diet (pick 3 things from the above information, ex- plan foods with glycemic index <55, stop all drinks other than water):

- What changes would you be willing to make with exercise:

- What help would you like from me?

*Remember this is a lifelong journey. Please join me on this wonderful journey to better health. ***Self-care is never a selfish act - it is simply good stewardship of the only gift I have, the gift I was put on earth to offer others. Anytime we can listen to true self and give the care it requires, we do it not only for ourselves, but for the many others whose lives we touch.*** Parker Palmer

**If you are perimenopausal or post-menopausal, there is another pamphlet that would also be helpful.