



## Nutrition Nibbles

### Rethink the Latest Fad

by Kelley Colditz

If you have ever tried to lose weight, you have undoubtedly looked for “easier” or “quicker” ways to reach your goal. We all wish we could “melt the pounds away” like the magazines say...but the truth is that real, healthful, and long-lasting weight loss generally does not happen overnight. We call those quick-fix diets and pound-melting menu plans, “fad diets.” They are advertised in popular magazines, on television, in news specials, and just about everywhere else for a couple of months before they either disappear or come out with a “new and improved” version. Following a fad diet usually involves buying a big book of rules, special recipes, and rigid eating plans. Fad diet plans tend to be difficult to stick with and never teach you healthy, long-term eating habits.

There is some “truth” behind many of these diets and you will probably be able to lose some weight on them because they follow the basic principle of restricting or reducing the number of calories you consume. However, drastic weight loss of 10-50 pounds in a week is impossible without losing muscle, bone, and water weight too. Healthy weight loss is slower, maintains your body’s structure including muscles and bones,

and focuses on reducing calories while increasing exercise in realistic amounts. Ask a dietitian and she’ll say, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!”

Here are a few “Do’s” and “Don’ts” when looking for a healthy eating plan:

**DO:** See who wrote or developed the plan. Was it written by a Registered Dietitian (RD)? A Physician or Doctor (MD, PhD)? A television celebrity? Check for credentials and make sure the person has some formal education in nutrition, not just a crazy idea and some extra cash to publish a book.

**DON’T:** Follow a plan that promises rapid weight loss of greater than 2 pounds per week. A healthful eating plan generally produces weight loss of ½-2 pounds per week while maintaining muscle mass, supporting bone health, and preserving hydration.

**DO:** Make sure the plan fits into your lifestyle. If you are expected to make shakes 3 times per day but work on the road or don’t have a blender...well, it probably won’t work for you. Are you a chocolate fanatic and looking into a “ZERO CHOCOLATE” diet? Chances are

### Summer Slim-Down Secrets

Now that you know what **not** to do to lose weight (follow a fad diet), you may be looking for a few solid strategies to kick your weight management into high gear. Here are a few solid strategies to slip healthy habits into your daily lifestyle and they are all dietitian-approved, promise!

•**Sneak in some extra exercise:** extra physical activity = extra calories burned = additional weight loss

- o Get up ½ hour early a few mornings this week and power walk.

- o Take 2 or 3 stretch breaks during work and do some lunges, squats, biceps curls, triceps dips, and crunches. A tone body appears thinner and any additional muscle you build burns a few extra calories when at rest.

- o Park further away from the office than usual or take public transportation to work so that you have to walk a few more steps.

•**Start your day with breakfast.** Jump-start your metabolism by re-fueling after a long night’s rest. Try:

- o Measure ½ cup old-fashioned oats, mix with water, 1% milk, or soy milk, cook up and top with fresh fruit and a sprinkling of nuts.

- o Scramble an egg or two, mix-in some spinach and salsa, and serve with a whole-grain English muffin.

- o Wrap a banana with 2 Tbsp all-natural peanut butter in a whole-wheat tortilla for an easy on-the-go breakfast.

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## Rethink the Latest Fad continued...

you will not be able to stick with it, and may actually end up gaining more weight when you ditch the plan and go on a chocolate eating spree. Look for eating plans that encourage all the food groups in moderation and do not completely restrict a single food or food group.

**DON'T:** Expect any diet to be easy. Changing the way you eat is a major lifestyle change and can be challenging to stick with, but the rewards of a happy and healthy body are worth the work! Set realistic short and long-term goals for yourself and find non-food related rewards, like a trip to the city, a movie night, an hour-long massage, or a golf day trip. Stay positive and leave yourself reminders of why you are doing this. Do you want to be able to walk your child to school? Do you want to dance the night away at your daughter's wedding? Do you want to take a walking trip in Europe? Post photos, make notes, and ask family and friends for support – you can do it!

### Resources:

- For more guidance on a healthy, well-balanced diet, check out Choose My Plate: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/myplate/>

[index.aspx](#)

- For more information on fad diets, check the American Dietetic Association's "Popular Diet Review" to see how Registered Dietitians weigh in on different diets and eating plans: <http://www.eatright.org/dietreviews/>

## Believe It Or Not!?

- McDonald's plans to downsize the calorie count of their famous Happy Meals by 20%, starting in September. In an effort to please the public, McD's will decrease their Happy Meal french fry portion and add a serving of fruit (apple slices) to each little box. Parents will also have 3 kiddie beverage options to choose from: the new fat-free chocolate milk, low-fat milk, or soda. I like that fruit will now become a regular part of the kiddie meal -- that makes me happy! 😊
- McDonald's also plans to lower the sodium content of their entire menu (with the exception of desserts and sodas) by 15%. Expect to taste less salt by 2015.
- [Click here for more info on McDonald's menu changes.](#)

## Slim-Down Secrets continued...

•**Pack a lunch.** You'll save calories and cash at the same time! Packing your lunch makes an easy and more affordable way to get in some healthy, filling, low calorie produce along with a serving of whole grains, some lean protein, and a little heart-healthy fat. Sample brown-bag lunches include:

- o Tuna sandwich (tuna packed in water, mixed with a little low-fat mayo or olive oil, celery and onion; on whole wheat bread with lettuce and tomato) + a fresh peach + a low-fat yogurt

- o Hummus on whole wheat pita bread topped with tomatoes, lettuce, and sprouts + a handful of fresh strawberries + a string cheese stick

- o Mixed green salad topped with grilled chicken breast, your favorite veggies, some fresh berries or sliced nectarine for a hint of sweetness, and 2 Tbsp light balsamic vinaigrette. Enjoy a few whole wheat crackers on the side.

•**Stay hydrated with water.** Drink plenty of water (aim for 8 cups/day) to feel fresh and cut down on nagging hunger pains.

•**Cook more often!** Cooking dinner at home will help keep a lid on your daily caloric intake and your budget. Don't know what to make or how to make it? Scope out some new recipes online. Don't have much time? Cook the spread-scratch way. Look for healthy items that are partially prepared and will save you some time in the kitchen like bagged lettuce, pre-cooked chicken, minute brown rice, frozen vegetables, and pre-sliced fruit. Don't like cooking? Get over it and cook big—make enough to last at least 2 nights or to stock the freezer for another day.

## My Favorite Food

Many of my clients wonder (and some even have the courage to ask!) what I eat at home. I usually reply, "Food!" But for those of you who want specifics, here you go... This past week I had the opportunity to teach the last **Funfoodle** class of the summer series. It was so much fun creating Ratatouille Super Heroes with nine little 3-6 year olds!

You guessed it, I've been eating a lot of ratatouille lately--a French stewed vegetable dish made of up eggplant, red bell pepper, zucchini, tomatoes, onion, garlic, basil, and thyme. Yum, yum, you should try some! [Click here for \*The Joy of Cooking's\* ratatouille recipe.](#)