

The Fat Frenzy

Every source of media is jumping on the low fat, no fat, lite, protein not carbs diet saga. The calls coming in on diet confusion to health professionals are on the rise and the population seems miffed at what is clearly the best strategy for reducing fat. Let's shed some light on the confusion.

Any registered nutritionist and diet specialist continually come up with the same recommendations. A diet high in complex carbohydrates, rich in vegetables and fruits, low in fat and lean protein that does not exceed your daily caloric requirements will maintain a healthy weight and ward off disease. Sounds simple doesn't it. Then why is the population in frenzy about fat intake and high protein diets? I believe it is the quick fix syndrome. Why take the scenic route when the short cut will get you there far quicker.

How Much Fat?

No more than 25-30% of your total daily calories should come from fat. If your daily requirement is 1800 calories then approximately 500 calories of that will be from fat. 1 gram of fat is approximately 10 calories. Therefore, on an 1800-calorie diet, 55 grams of it should be fat. It is difficult to know down to the gram, but if you get in the habit of choosing whole foods low in fat then you should be on track with your grams. Most people who eat more than their share of fat grams do so because they eat too many calories in a day. If you lower your calories you will magically lower your fat grams too.

High protein diets

Diets high in protein have people losing weight across the country. It's true. The reason is not because it is a high protein diet; it is because they are eating less food! Think about it. High protein foods are not easily accessible, they take time to prepare and your options are limited. Carbohydrates on the other hand are in abundance, easy to whip up and taste so good they are hard to say no to. Guaranteed that if you drop even 15% of the carbs you are eating, your diet will likely be in the recommended daily amounts still and you will not need to replace the calories with protein. A long-term high protein diet has the potential to damage your kidneys. If you can't sustain a diet long term regardless of the reason, why start it in the first place.

High on the hog

The reason we want a short cut to the ultimate figure is because we live far too well and take too many shortcuts with our diet. The high sugar and fat foods are readily at our fingertips. Life is busy and drive thru's are a way of life. It is time to plan a little more sensibly and eat less lavishly if you are serious about dropping your weight. This includes reducing your consumption of alcohol. 3 or 4 beverages daily adds up to weight gain unless you reduce your calories from somewhere else.

The Short Cut

May save some time but the risks and detours are far greater. The intensity and need for concentrated effort can be exhausting requiring frequent stops along the way. The unknown along this route can be exciting yet overwhelming and longing for the scenic route prevails when you feel lost along the way. You know the scenic route will be more enjoyable. Longer yes, but attainable. There is comfort in familiarity and you have time to stop and smell the roses along the way. In order to make the drive successful for everyone it takes a little planning and acceptance that time will get you there. And of course, use the right map!

Learn more about fat and living lean. Plan your route with Team Fitness. March is nutrition month. We invite you to join us for an informative lifestyle seminar "The Fat Journey" March 11th in the Landmark IV Conference Room 1. As well, we will be taking our outdoor series to 'Save On Foods' for a shop smart tour. Our tentative booking date is March 28th! Please reserve your spot for either event: teamfitness@shaw.ca.

