

7 Simple Ways to Lose Weight Now



By Dr. Mike Moreno

Do you often feel unsuccessful in your attempts at weight loss? Do you feel like you've tried every method to lose weight and still can't seem to shed the pounds? With fad diets and work out routines at their peak in popularity, it's important not to lose sight of the basics. Here are some easy tips to help you stay focused and reach your ideal weight.

1 Water Goes a Long Way

Did you know that 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated? Staying hydrated is essential to weight loss. The biggest problem with hydration is the fact that most of us don't even think about it until we're already dehydrated.

Often times when you think you're hungry, you're actually dehydrated. The next time you feel hungry, try drinking 8 ounces of water before eating. This glass of water will take up space in your stomach and, as a result, you are less likely to over eat. Another benefit, one that you may not realize, is that water also helps you metabolize stored fat and eliminate waste. The organs involved in weight loss need water just like a car needs gas.

But what about weight gain from retained water? The idea that drinking more water leads to weight gain is silly and the truth is quite the contrary. Staying hydrated counters water retention. When your body is getting less water, it perceives this as a threat and begins to retain water outside of the cells. This water retention is what leads to swollen feet, legs and hands, and relief will only come when your body is once again, fully hydrated.

The message to take-home is this: water is crucial to losing weight and your overall health. You should be consuming six to eight, 8-ounce glasses of water each day on average. With that being said, keep in mind that caffeine, in any form, as well as alcohol, both count as negative water.

What is negative water? Think of this analogy: Your body is like a gallon jug and every caffeinated or alcoholic beverage you consume pokes a hole in your jug. That is how your body responds to these types of beverages. Too much negative water and you soon will be losing hydration as well as all the benefits I just mentioned. To stay in the positive, add an additional 6-8 ounce glass of water for each

caffeinated or alcoholic beverage on TOP of the amount of water you need daily. You need to stay in the positive – this will help accelerate you to your weight loss goals!

People are commonly concerned with whether or not they can drink alcohol on their road to weight loss. Alcohol consumption has become a big part of our society. Whether it's a glass of wine socially, mixed drink after work or at family gatherings, alcohol is not necessarily bad. In fact, it's been shown that, in moderation, it can be helpful in maintaining your health as it applies to circulation and prevention of heart disease.

However, if you're really in weight loss mode, alcohol can get in the way of you reaching your goals. The biggest problem with alcohol, much like caffeine, is its effect on your body's level of hydration. I always tell people that if they have that glass of wine, a cup of coffee, or even a second glass of wine, just enjoy it. Don't beat yourself up over it. The most important thing to remember is to make sure you drink a glass of water every time you have a drink.

Always focus on hydration and think about your options. If you had a drink, you can always exercise and walk it off. Just know that if you are truly focused on losing weight, it is best to eliminate or keep alcohol to a minimum in order to achieve your goals sooner.

The worst thing you can do is start your day with a cup of coffee or soda, you're starting off in the negative! The best thing you can do, and a great way to consume more water each day, is to drink a full glass of water as soon as you wake up.

Not only will it make a difference in terms of how you feel, but also in terms of weight loss, energy and how the body functions every single day. So do everything you can to keep drinking water. Keep a glass by your bed, use a water bottle that measures the amount you drink, set a reminder on your phone or computer ... whatever you need to do, DO IT!

Remember, a little water goes a long way.

2

Don't Give Up on Carbs

We live in a world obsessed with fad diets that make blanket statements and negative implications about carbohydrates. Quite honestly, I don't advocate diets that deprive you of carbs. Carbohydrates are the fuel source for many vital organs such as the brain, central nervous system and kidneys. While depriving yourself of carbs may lead to faster weight loss in the short term, it is not a healthy or long-term plan.

Eating healthy carbs is essential and there are many varieties to choose from: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, sweet potatoes, brown rice, whole-grain, whole-wheat pastas, etc. Choosing carbohydrate-rich foods that are unrefined or unprocessed promotes good health by providing your body with vitamins, minerals, fiber and the energy it needs. Keep in mind that portion control is critical. It's not about getting full on these foods, but having them complement the rest of your meals.

So how should you be eating carbs?

To help you lose weight, you should strategically place carbohydrates throughout your day. Try to get your carbs in early. My advice is to eat your carbs by 2 pm, consuming 60-70% of the carbs during breakfast and the other 30% during lunch. Your body's ability to process carbohydrates decreases throughout the day, meaning you will more efficiently metabolize carbohydrates in the morning. The more efficiently your body uses the food you give it, the easier it is to lose weight. Eat your carbs in the first half of your day and stick to proteins and vegetables for dinner.

The key is not to deprive yourself of carbs, but to be aware of the type of carbs you're choosing, portion sizes and the time of day you're consuming them. If you do this, you'll be on your way to reaching your weight loss goals.

Just remember – it's all about placement, portion, and the type of carb.

Here are some carbs to avoid and some carbs I recommend...

Carbs to Avoid:

Unhealthy starches like white bread, white rice, potatoes, and pasta.

Recommended Carbs:

Whole wheat breads, pastas, brown rice, barley, quinoa, yams or sweet potatoes, buckwheat.

Take Note: If something you're eating has a label, it's there for a reason. Make sure you check the labels and that "whole wheat" is in the first ingredients listed. Anything that says 'enriched' may imply that the nutritional content has been stripped and it's not whole wheat.

3 Fruit is Not Always Your Friend

Growing up, we were all taught that fruit is good for you, and it is, but too much of a good thing can also work against you. Fruit is a great source of vitamins, minerals and fiber, but you must keep in mind that too much fruit, too late in the day, can lead to extra pounds.

Fruits taste good because they're sweet. No one has described a good fruit as being sour. So what's the source of the sweetness in fruit? SUGAR. Sugar in your body is ultimately stored as an energy source and this storage can lead to weight gain.

Fruit can still be a great energy source if eaten early in the day so your body has time to use the sugar as an energy source and not store it. My rule is "no fruit after 2pm," sound familiar? It is... sugar is a simple carbohydrate, so the same rules apply.

Here are some fruits to avoid, especially when you're trying to lose weight:

- Oranges
- Watermelon
- Cantaloupe
- Grapes
- Pineapple

Here are some fruits that you can eat, but make sure it's before 2pm and of course in moderation:

- Apples
- Pears
- Berries
- Grapefruit
- Bananas

Remember, it's not about eliminating your favorite fruits; it's about eating the right ones, at the right time, and being aware of how much you're eating.

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Fuel Up on Protein

Many of us think we need carbohydrates to get full. The right carbohydrates can add to the enjoyment of a meal, but they don't have to be the main course. Protein can make you full just as easily as carbohydrates, and burns more calories when digested. Choose unlimited vegetables and your favorite protein to make up the bulk of your meal. Make your carbohydrates a smaller portion of the total meal – think 40/40/20.

Some of the best sources of protein are lean meats such as chicken, turkey, and fish. Eggs and soy are additional sources of protein. Tofu is also a great source, even though I don't care for it. Knock yourself out though! Red meat is okay to include too, as long as you stick to the leaner types, have decent portions, and eat it in moderation. If you love red meat, you don't have to eliminate it from your diet. It's about moderation, not deprivation.

The amount of protein you should have in your diet varies based on your size and level of activity, but don't limit protein. Eating a high-protein meal speeds up your metabolism because it takes more energy for your body to burn. Meaning you're burning more calories during the day and losing weight.

Remember, you should be eating because you need energy, and eating a meal that's higher in protein and less carbs means you'll be more energized, instead of tired. Bye-bye food coma!

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Exercise? No, Movement!

Another reason why you aren't losing weight may seem very obvious, but to a lot of us it isn't. It has to do with the nasty old term called "exercise." I prefer to use the word "movement," because a lot of us underestimate the power of the term. Movement doesn't always have to be a long run, swim, bike ride or hike up a mountain. You can find movement throughout the day, every day; you just have to get creative.

Many of us have desk jobs and are stuck in front of a computer all day. The idea of incorporating movement into our workday may seem difficult, but it's not. Make a point to get up and move around. For instance, instead of going to hang out in the break room, take a walk with a co-worker or go out

and grab a coffee (yes, you can have coffee if you have a glass of water!). Find a co-worker that has your same health goals and motivate each other to be healthy and take a walk every day. It's amazing what a two-minute walk can do for your energy level. It's all about changing your habits.

You have to focus on including exercise in your day, and as I said earlier, hopefully the word movement is a more approachable term for you to keep in mind. Life can be busy and you may not find time for exercise every day, but what you can do is try your best. Make exercise a priority, get creative and don't underestimate the effectiveness of movement on any level. It goes a long way and it's an important part in reaching your weight loss goals.

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Resist the Temptation

Often times when you are trying to achieve your weight loss goals, the need for discipline is essential. Some people can resist the temptation to eat unhealthy foods, but if you're not disciplined, then you have to remove them from your presence. If you are the type of person that can walk away, consider yourself lucky, because most people can't.

Everyone has moments of weakness. Whether you're stressed, busy with work, have an event, or are a victim of our friends and family that often sabotage our efforts without knowing it, there are going to be times when you are tempted.

Here are some strategies to overcome these moments...

Keep bad food out of your house and away from your desk. Never go grocery shopping hungry, you'll end up in the chip aisle in no time. I always tell my patients to stick to the perimeter in the grocery store. Most of the unhealthy foods are in the middle aisles.

Always have a healthy snack available to you so you're not starving and reaching for a cheeseburger. Remember a glass of water will go a long way in these situations and can curb your hunger until you can eat something healthy. If you're stressed, try to calm down by going for a walk. Exercise increases your endorphin levels and will allow you to refocus .

It's not going to happen overnight and you're not going to always succeed, but remember -- this is a lifestyle change. If you fall off the wagon, just get right back on. Using these strategies consistently will lead you to a healthier you and pretty soon eating healthy foods will become part of your daily life without even thinking about it.

7

Buddy Up

Motivation and accountability play a big part in your weight loss efforts. Without either of these, all the facts and figures about carbs, protein, and fruit don't matter.

It's a fact that people who use the buddy system for weight loss are more successful in reaching their goals. Having a partner not only holds you accountable, it motivates you to push yourself further. That's sometimes why people hire personal trainers!

I always tell my patients who are trying to get healthy and lose weight to find a friend that shares their goals. This person may be your companion, a friend from work, roommate, family member or significant other. Try to find partners with similar barriers. For example, if you're a new Mom, find another new Mom so you can lose the baby weight together. If you find similarities in your barriers, together you will find creative solutions.

Getting someone involved in your program is extremely helpful and motivating, not only for yourself but for them as well. This is the reason I started "Walk With the Doc" in which twice a week I invite my patients to join me in a 30-minute walk around San Diego. I am their "workout buddy!" And you better believe I'm motivating them the whole way!

Another tool for staying accountable is journaling, for both food and activities. A lot of the time we don't even realize what or how much we're eating, but actually taking the time to be aware of what we're putting in our mouths can be eye-opening. Awareness is the first step to making the necessary lifestyle changes to a healthier you. Writing down your activities allows you get the full picture and see the balance between what you're eating and how much you're burning.

The biggest excuse I usually hear is "I didn't have any way to write it down or remember what I ate or did." Really?! Do I need to add another section on commitment here?

Make sure you keep something with you at all times to write down what you eat. Type it in your phone or do a simple voice memo if you have to, but don't make excuses. When you journal, make sure you write down everything you eat and what portion. You can use things like "the size of a fist" or "handful," you don't need to measure every little thing. Keep it simple!

The Truth

Your health is your responsibility; no one else is going to fix it except you. We can't use our busy lives as a reason not to be healthy. Without your health, your busy life won't matter anymore. If you stick to the simple steps I've outlined in this report, you'll live a much happier, healthier life and prevent future health issues.

I try to make it as easy as possible for my patients, because if it's too complicated you won't stick to it. So find what works for you, and start implementing these simple tips into your life TODAY. Don't wait.

About the Author

Dr. Michael Rafael Moreno, better known as "Dr. Mike," is a graduate of the University of California at Irvine and Hahnemann Medical School (now Drexel University). Following his residency at Kaiser Permanente in Fontana, California, Dr. Mike moved to San Diego, where he now practices family medicine and sits on the board of the San Diego Chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians.



Dr. Mike's book, "The 17 Day Diet" has been on the NY Times Bestsellers list for 45 weeks, including 12 weeks at #1 since its publication date from Simon and Schuster in March of 2011. In 14 months he has sold more than 1.4 million copies. With its growing popularity, Dr. Mike has made appearances on numerous television programs including Good morning America, Dr. Phil, The Doctors, CNN with Robin Meade, The 700 club. He has also made international appearances via satellite for other markets, specifically Australia. His new, highly anticipated cookbook, the 17 Day Diet Cookbook, comes out in March 2012.

In 2008, Dr. Mike launched "Walk with Your Doc," which he participates in every Tuesday and Thursday morning before his workday begins. The program began when Dr. Mike offered to walk with a patient to motivate her to exercise and has since grown into a thriving community.

For more information on Dr. Mike and his programs, go to www.drmiokediet.com.