

[IMAGE]

Simplifying Weight Loss: 3 Key Principles to Guide Your Program

By Editorial Staff

Losing weight can seem pretty complicated sometimes, and justifiably so, particularly if you're the one trying to do it. Which diet should I follow? How many calories should I eat? How often should I exercise? What *kinds* of exercises should I do? The information out there these days is staggering and can prove overwhelming – exactly the opposite of what you need on your plate, so to speak, when you're already faced with an issue that has likely plagued you for years.

Fortunately, in wading through the reams of information, advice and suggestions, we can whittle down weight loss to a few simple principles. Follow these three strategies and weight loss won't be the mystery you thought it was; it will be an achievable goal well within your sights.

1. Load Up on F & V: Fruits (F) and vegetables (V) aren't just healthy options because of their micronutrient composition; they're vital to weight loss because of their low caloric footprint. Consider that a medium apple only has about 100 calories, while a cup of broccoli only contains about 30 calories. So eat F & V to your heart's content; after all, as Dr. G. Douglas Andersen says, "How many people do you know who are 20 pounds overweight because of those late-night binges of apples, oranges, strawberries or melons?"

weight loss - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark *2. Eat Less Fat:* The body requires a certain amount of fat, but it's a fact that fat contains more calories than the other macronutrients – carbohydrates and protein. Every gram of fat consumed equals 9 calories; eat the same gram of carbohydrate or protein, and it's only 4 calories. Those calories can add up quickly and impact weight loss (or lack thereof) significantly (see why below).

3. Burn Baby, Burn: No matter the strategy employed, here's the most fundamental principle when it comes to weight loss: You need to expend more calories than you consume, pure and simple. While body metabolism can help burn calories while you're resting, one of the best ways to increase metabolism – and burn tons of calories – is with regular exercise. A pound of body fat is equivalent to about 3,500 calories;

burn an extra 3,500 calories a week and you'll lose a pound of body fat. Do that consistently and enjoy the results!

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