

[IMAGE]

How "The Biggest Losers" Keep the Weight Off (and How You Can, Too)

By Editorial Staff

Anyone who's followed the popular TV series, "The Biggest Loser," over the years understands two things instantly: 1) Even people who are significantly overweight / obese can lose dramatic amounts of weight by changing their diet, exercise and other habits. 2) Once they lose the weight (and leave the weight-loss-conductive confines of the show), it can be difficult to maintain the weight loss. That's why in too many cases, on the show and in "real life," people end up in a vicious cycle of weight loss, weight gain, weight loss and so on.

A new study may provide an important clue as to how people who lose weight can keep it off. The study actually tracked some of "The Biggest Loser" participants and determined that while many actually regained some or all of their original weight after leaving the show, the ones who were able to maintain their weight loss (or even lose more weight) did so because they modified an important variable: exercise. Specifically, participants who successfully kept the weight off six years after the show (average weight loss: 13 percent compared to pre-show weight) had increased their physical activity by 160 percent compared to 34 percent in weight "regainers," who were actually 1.1 percent heavier, on average, than their pre-show weight.

weight loss - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark The moral to the story? Keep exercising! If you're trying to lose weight, burning calories is key to dropping pounds; if you're trying to maintain it, a physically active lifestyle not only keeps you fit physically, but also keeps you in the fitness mindset, which is equally as important when it comes to maintaining a healthy weight in the long term.

Note: Experts suggest that when first trying to lose weight, particularly significant amounts, diet may be more important than exercise, since poor eating habits – particularly excessive consumption of high-calorie, nutrition-sparse foods – often cause more weight gain than exercise can burn off. For example, a cheeseburger with fries and a milkshake could account for 1,000 calories or more, depending on the fast-food establishment; whereas burning 1,000 calories could require several hours of physical activity (depending on the exerciser's weight and activity intensity). It's also vital to change eating habits because in

today's processed, fast-food world, it's far too easy to give in to temptation. Your doctor can tell you more about how to combine proper diet and regular exercise to take the weight off and keep it off for good.

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