

But Doc, Diet and Exercise Ain't Workin'

January 2012



Michael Cheikin MD
Holistic Medicine and Psychiatry
610-239-9901 www.cheikin.com

If a doctor offered you a “procedure” to lose 25 pounds (the minimum most Americans want to lose), and tells you that over 5 years, there would be a 95% chance of gaining it back, and probably more, would you go for it? Of course not! Well, this is the data on “Diet and Exercise”.

As we struggle to get a handle on the epidemics of obesity, diabetes, heart and chronic disease, we have gone through phases (fads) of specific strategies. “Diet and Exercise” has been accepted for many decades as the best way to lose weight. Physics, the study of energy, was applied to the body: Energy In (Food) – Energy Out (Exercise and Muscle) = Net Gain or Loss (Weight). Since we see and live the evidence that science can rock our world (flying, antibiotics, internet, etc.), we believe this simple equation applies to human metabolism.

The latest fad, gastric bypass surgery, is essentially a forced extreme diet. It does “successfully” cause weight loss and improved diabetes-related chemistry, which is why it’s being paid for. But it also places the person at risk for nutritional deficiencies and unknown long-term effects.

The usual explanation for a re-gain of weight is “well, the person didn’t sustain their exercise or diet”. 95% of people didn’t? We all know people who are ridiculously diligent, can’t lose a quarter-pound, and yet gain two pounds after the most minor “indiscretion”. The science of metabolism is advancing, and it keeps telling us that Diet and Exercise, while important, is not a sufficient explanation. Galileo, Columbus and Atkins were heretics; yet, their science prevailed. Atkins biggest discovery was not that “carbs are bad”, but that all calories are not equal—people can gain or lose weight independent of total calories!

Science has recently discovered that abdominal fat acts like an endocrine gland, putting out specific molecules that affect hunger, satiety, metabolism, and inflammation. That euphoria we feel after consuming a Big Mac or Cinnabon, followed by the hunger, bloat or fatigue a few hours later is not just guilt, but the effects of manipulative food chemistry. Accumulating thousands of chemicals (called the “cocktail effect”), beginning in-utero probably is involved with our epidemics of poor health in adults and children. Excess dieting or exercise stresses our adrenal, thyroid and other systems, which affect our metabolism in complex ways. We accept that yo-yo dieting and even the Atkins diet can permanently alter our metabolism. When we excessively diet or exercise, and as we get older, something changes in our metabolism; our weight “Set Point” goes up. The set point for waking up is similar—it’s easy to get up later, but hard to wake up even ½ hour earlier.

Critical Questions that Need to Be Answered: 1) What is the role of toxins in our food and environment on health (including sugar, high-fructose corn syrup, trans fats, artificial sweeteners, genetically modified foods, pesticides and industrial chemicals)?; 2) What causes the “Set Point” to go higher and is there a way to “Re-Set”?; 3) Accepting that the foods we are eating today, even if organic, are different than 100, 1,000 or 10,000 years ago, what are the critical nutrients and amounts we need? (the RDA’s have minimally changed since the 1950’s). 4) What are the molecules that fat makes and how do they work?

In future articles, I will explore (and further bash!) our concepts of fats, cholesterol and carbs.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This general information should not be used to make decisions about medical care without the involvement of an experienced practitioner.

Footnotes and Reading Materials (Books followed by ISBN number)

See www.cheikin.com for related articles related articles on: Cortisol, Weight Loss Resistance and others.

Campbell, TC & Campbell TM: The China Study: The Most Comprehensive Study of Nutrition Ever Conducted... 1932-100-385.

Ballentine, Rudolph: Radical Healing: Integrating the World's Greatest Therapeutic Traditions... 0609-804-847

Moritz, Andreas: Timeless Secrets of Health and Rejuvenation. 9780-9792-75753

Furhman, Mark: Disease-Proof Your Child. 0312-338-082

The contents of this article are copyright 2006-2012 by Michael Cheikin MD and may not be reproduced without express written permission.

Michael Cheikin MD is a holistic physician, Licensed in Medical Acupuncture and Board Certified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation ("Physiatry"), Pain Management, and other areas. He specializes in obscure, chronic and severe problems that have not responded satisfactorily to other methods of healing. Dr. Cheikin has extensively studied yoga, diet and metabolism, Ayurvedic, Chinese and energy medicine and other alternative modalities for over 30 years. He designs balanced, natural, individualized health programs for adults and children utilizing a combination of education and counseling, whole foods and supplements, detoxification programs, medical yoga, and medical acupuncture. Specialized state-of-the-art biochemical testing is often used to assist with diagnosis and monitor responses. 610-239-9901 or www.cheikin.com

2/7/12-10 diet_and_exercise_bL.doc