



# Wellness News Network™

Your Source for Health & Wellness Information

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## Eat Smart for Healthy Weight In 2021

Presented by:

Do you want to make 2021 the year you finally kiss excess weight goodbye? You're not alone - losing weight is one of the most common New Year's resolutions. With rates of obesity and related diseases skyrocketing and life expectancies dropping, it is a smart goal for many people. But it is not always easy to do in a sustainable way — by the end of January, most dieters are back to their old ways.

In a culture brimming with diets du jour, why can't we lose weight and keep it off? While several individual factors may be at play, many people give up because they feel overwhelmed by restrictive meal planning.

The trick is to start with dietary changes manageable enough to stick to for good. Here are five basic recommendations, which research indicates can jump start you to a lifetime of healthy eating.

### Check Your Motivation

What is your motivation for losing weight? People who focus solely on their appearance and clothing size often make choices that are counterproductive to overall well-being. This narrow focus leads to crash diets, "yo yo" dieting, diet pills and prepackaged foods that are high in additives and low in nutrients. All of which are detrimental to long-term health.

Instead, make achieving optimal wellness your primary motivation for losing weight. Focus on how your life will improve when you have more energy to engage in activities with friends and family. Also, imagine how a healthy weight will prevent disease, increase longevity, and boost quality of life.

### Avoid Soda

There is one simple change that we cannot recommend highly enough — stop drinking soda and soft drinks! Clever marketing has made soda seem like a normal part of our diet, but it provides no nutritional benefit and its calories add up swiftly.

### Cut Down on Refined Carbs

The simple carbohydrates in white bread, pasta, white rice and commercial baked goods are greatly responsible for the pounds we continue to pack on. The reason for this is not just their high calorie counts.

The body converts dietary carbohydrates — especially the simple carbohydrates in sugar and refined white flour — into glucose, which moves through the bloodstream to fuel all cells throughout the body. Cells can also get energy from dietary fat, but the body defaults to the quickly available energy from glucose before burning fat.

### TRUE OR FALSE:

The body converts dietary fat into glucose

ANSWER: False

### QUESTION:

The hormone responsible for appetite control is:

- a. insulin
- b. leptin
- c. cortisol
- d. glucose

ANSWER: b. leptin

### TRUE OR FALSE:

High fructose corn syrup contributes to weight gain in the abdomen

ANSWER: True

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When there is too much glucose in the bloodstream, the body converts it to fat. When the body has fewer carbohydrates to tap as a source of energy, it burns fat instead.

A meta-analysis of thirteen clinical trials compared the results of low-fat/low-calorie and low-carb diets. The research consistently shows that the low-carb dieters not only lost more weight but also improved their cardiovascular health. They were more likely to stick to the regimen than their low-fat/low-calorie counterparts, suggesting that a low-carb diet is more sustainable for long-term weight loss.<sup>1</sup>

It is essential to focus primarily on cutting out refined carbs, such as processed white flour, pasta and baked goods. On the other hand, do not avoid carbohydrates from nutrient and fiber-rich whole foods, such as unprocessed whole grains, whole fruits and whole vegetables.

## Don't Fear Fat

Grocery store shelves attest to our cultural obsession with low-fat and fat-free foods, but our collective weight does not speak well for their effectiveness. That is because contrary to what marketers would have us believe, a very low-fat diet does not lead to sustainable weight loss.

Multiple studies reveal that people who regularly consume natural, full-fat dairy products are less likely to gain weight than those who choose low-fat or fat-free dairy. And they are significantly more likely to keep it off over the long-term.<sup>2</sup>

Think about enjoying a hunk of regular cheese versus "light" or fat-free cheese — which is more satisfying? Not only does the "real" cheese taste better, but its high fat content makes it more satiating. That's why higher fat consumption is associated with lower overall calorie consumption.<sup>3</sup>

A type of fat called medium-chain triglycerides — found in coconut and palm kernel oils — may even actively reduce body fat in overweight individuals, according to one study.<sup>4</sup>

The secret is to focus on "healthy" fats. These include olive oil, naturally produced full-fat dairy products, raw unsalted nuts, and avocados. On the other hand, avoid fried foods, processed meats, red meat and commercially produced baked goods.

## Don't Go It Alone

Implementing dietary changes is not always easy. Our office can offer advice or point you to trusted local resources. We can help you make smart choices while meeting your body's nutritional needs. Make a commitment to achieving a healthy weight today. Call our office and schedule an appointment.



## Quote to Inspire

*“A healthy outside starts from the inside”*

*Robert Ulrich*

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