

## Diet and Exercise Myths BUSTED!

You've read so many diet, exercise and weight loss tips, tricks and methods that promise to shape you up and trim you down in a matter of moments, but have you ever stopped to question some of the advice you read? The fact is there's a ton of advice that either has no scientific support or is just utterly useless when applied to real life situations.

Here's a selection of diet and exercise myths BUSTED...

**DIET MYTH:** Avoid eating carbs in the evening if you want to lose weight.

**THE REAL DEAL:** It's your total daily calorie intake, not what time you eat certain foods, that determines whether you lose weight. And as you know, your intake has to be less than your expenditure to put you into a negative energy balance in order to lose weight. Furthermore, your body adapts when your average calorie intake over a week or more is lower than your expenditure, not as a result of one day of restriction. It's an averages game! Reducing carbs in the evening may only work due to the fact you're probably consuming fewer calories in the day by adopting this practice. But you need to understand it's the type of carbohydrate that matters the most. Choose fibrous carbs in the evening, such as vegetables, brown rice or whole wheat varieties to help to keep your bowels healthy and body satisfied and energised. Avoid sugary or refined carbohydrates, such as white bread, pasta, sweet jams and deserts instead, which are more likely to be stored as fat.

**DIET MYTH:** You can spot reduce fat through your diet.

**THE REAL DEAL:** No diet will determine where you will lose weight. So, I'm afraid to say that a 'flat tummy diet' or 'thigh slimming diet' is a fallacy. Your fat distributes itself according your genetic predisposition and gender. Typically, women will store weight in the lower part of their body (thighs and bottom) and men typically around their stomach. When you lose weight, it will come off first in the areas you don't have the problem before eventually reducing from your problem areas! So, the key is a sensible, healthy eating plan that will not disrupt your metabolism as quick weight loss methods will do. This will provide the best chance of losing the final stubborn pockets of fat. Exercise instead is where you can target certain body parts. Again, you can't spot reduce through exercise, but you can tone and shape those areas of contention! High intensity exercise such as circuits and sprint efforts will be most effective.

**DIET MYTH:** You need 8 glasses of water a day to lose weight.

**THE REAL DEAL:** Right, I'm not saying that hydration doesn't help weight loss, because it does, but having to pee every 20 minutes seriously interferes with life! Your fluid intake will depend on your activity levels, bodyweight and sodium levels in your body. Use the colour of your urine as a guide to whether you're hydrated fully or not. If it runs clear, then you're on track. If your urine is dark, then you need to consume more water. So, the 8 glass quota is to be used as a guide, and not etched in stone. JustSlim.net takes all your personal body statistics into account when prescribing water intake, ensuring you hydrate at the level suitable for you. Believe it or not, too much water can be detrimental, as it flushes out vital solutes from your body, such as sodium and potassium, that are needed for proper cell functioning.

**DIET MYTH:** A salad is a healthy meal choice.

**THE REAL DEAL:** A salad can be comprised of many ingredients, so it's these that determine whether a salad is healthy. Typically, if it's full over colour and crispy then it's likely to be low in fat and high in fibre. But if it's covered in creamy dressing and contains one of the particular salad offenders then it's likely to be loaded with saturated fat and salt. These offenders include: creamy dressings, excess oil, croutons, bacon bits, boiled egg yolks and pasta. The best salads include plenty of green leaves, crunchy peppers, carrots and tomatoes, topped with protein boosting lean turkey, chicken, tuna, boiled egg whites or mixed beans, with a balsamic vinegar dressing on the side.

**DIET MYTH:** Just one bite of desert won't do any damage.

**THE REAL DEAL:** This is like telling an alcoholic to have just a little sip of wine! The reason you need to lose weight is probably because you just can't have one bite! That harmless bite triggers your blood glucose levels to rise, and then crash dramatically, so you crave more and more. If you want some chocolate cake, plan it for your treat day and saviour every mouthful. Just make sure you compensate your calories during the rest of the day and have the mind-set right to get back to your plan immediately after the last bite has been enjoyed. JustSlim.net allows a treat meal per week and automatically adjusts your diet plan by reducing your calories to compensate.

**EXERCISE MYTH:** Lifting weights will make me bulk up.

**THE REAL DEAL:** Complete and utter rubbish and my bone of contention with most female clients! You only bulk up with a combination of heavy weights using a specific muscle

building protocol, increased calorie intake, including high protein and increases in testosterone. As women it's actually really difficult to bulk up. However, increasing the amount of lean tissue you have is essential and desirable. This lean tissue, developed by including some weights, circuits and interval training into your regime, simply replaces fat so that you look leaner and longer with better tone and definition. Weights make for a fantastic weight loss exercise plan. What's more, your metabolism will increase too so you burn more fat. Don't be afraid of weights, embrace them and your body will thank you. And I forgot to mention that weight training increases your bone mineral density too, reducing your chances of osteoporosis. Ok, rant over!

**EXERCISE MYTH:** I have bad knees/bad back so I can't exercise.

**THE REAL DEAL:** All the more reason for you to do some exercise! The fact is, our body likes to move, it's not designed for long periods of inactivity, being desk or vehicle bound. This is when it develops imbalances, aches and pains. Exercise is a crucial way of developing muscle and stability to protect your joints and reduce any pain. Now of course you must check with your doctor if you have a special condition or injury, and seek advice on what type of exercise to do, but I'd advice the following...

If you have knee problems (worn cartilage or similar) then you will benefit from non-impact exercises such as cycling. Also, strength exercises such as squats, lunges and step ups, will help to strengthen your quad muscles and take the strain off of your knee.

For back problems, again do non-impact exercises and try yoga and Pilates to strengthen you core, essential for protecting your back.

Exercise increases blood flow around your body, which delivers valuable nutrients to your tissues for recover and repair, as well as helping to mobilise stiff joints and remove the chemical signals of pain that sit within our body.

So, there you have it, my diet and exercise myths uncovered. Remember; find out the facts before acting on the fiction. Good luck!