

## DIETS DON'T WORK!!!

*Un-diet your way to health, happiness, & your personal best!*

- **Dump dieting forever!** Diets don't work! They increase your loss of lean body mass vs. fat, they slow down your metabolism, and they make weight re-gain more likely. Also, most are nutritionally inadequate and overly restrictive, which can lead to fatigue, sleep disturbances, anxiety, depression, food preoccupation, and binge eating.
- **Focus on health and fitness, not weight!** The number on the scale says nothing about your body composition or your health and fitness status. Look for improvements in your energy, strength, endurance, flexibility, resting heart rate, blood pressure, or blood cholesterol levels as true measures of success. Recognize that health, fitness, and beauty come in many shapes and sizes.
- **Move your body!** Not because you have to, but because it's fun and it feels good. Do activities you enjoy (whether it's organized sports, working out at the gym, dancing, hiking, or doing yoga). But don't overdo it. Too much exercise, like too much of anything, can be harmful. Adequate rest, along with adequate food & activity, are critical for health, fitness, and well-being.
- **Relate to food as nourishing fuel!** It's not a comforting friend or a fattening enemy. It's fuel! If you don't provide your body with adequate, high quality fuel, it will not perform well.
- **Let the Pyramid guide you!**
  - Enjoy a variety of vegetables and fruits (at least five servings per day) for their disease-fighting phytonutrients and fiber.
  - Choose tasty whole grains (like brown rice and whole wheat breads, cereals, and pasta) for their energy-yielding complex carbohydrates.
  - Include with each meal a good source of protein (fish, poultry, lean meat, tofu, beans, or low fat milk products), for its high satiety value.
  - Add just enough olive or canola oil, nuts/seeds, and avocado for a healthy dose of unsaturated fatty acids. Use plenty of garlic, herbs, and seasonings for flavor.
  - Drink plenty of refreshing water.
- **Legalize all foods!** There is no such thing as a "good" or "bad" food; only good or bad diets. All foods (even pizza and chocolate) can fit into a healthy eating plan.
- **Listen to your body carefully!** Make a distinction between physiological and emotional hunger. Eat when you are physiologically hungry, and stop when you are physiologically full. Nurture your emotional needs without food. (If you're lonely, call a friend. If you're stressed, meditate.)
- **Slow down, and eat mindfully!** It takes ~20 minutes for your brain to get the message from your stomach that you've had enough to eat. Sit down, eat slowly, and pay attention to (and enjoy) every mouthful. Separate eating from other activities (like studying, talking on the phone, or running to class) so you can focus on hearing your body's physiological signals.
- **Plan ahead!** Healthy eating doesn't just happen; you have to make it happen. Take time to plan nourishing meals and snacks. Keep in mind that your body needs to re-fuel every 3-5 hours.
- **Maintain perspective!** Realize that what you eat at one meal or on one day does not make or break anyone's eating plan. It's normal to sometimes eat more (or less) than what we physiologically need. But, don't worry, it takes days and days of over (or under) eating to affect your health or weight.