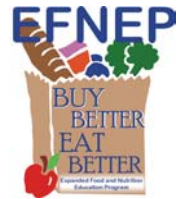




Family Nutrition In Action

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New Year's and Weight Loss

With the beginning of each New Year comes a sense of excitement and expectation. For many, it is a time to set new goals and make New Year's Resolutions. In this country, *losing weight* is among the most popular of these resolutions. If weight loss is your goal, be sure to keep good nutrition and exercise in mind. Select an approach to weight loss that is healthy and that you can live with.

Quick Weight Loss Won't Last

Avoid *fad diets* and *quickie* weight loss programs. These may help you lose a few pounds quickly – but most people gain their weight back quickly as well. A *fad/quickie* diet is fairly easy to recognize. It is a diet that:

- Claims that a particular food or herb can burn fat.
- Requires you to eat large amounts of 1 type of food (for example: only grapefruits one day; only cabbage soup the next day).

- Is very strict, requiring specific foods at specific times of day. (For example: orange juice at 7:00 am; no bread after 6:00 pm.)
- Claims that you will lose more than 2 pounds a week.
- Does not recommend even moderate physical activity such as walking
- Does not provide warnings to people with diabetes or other chronic diseases or conditions.

A diet with even one of these characteristics is not a healthy choice.

Choosing a Healthy Weight Loss Diet

A healthy approach to weight loss can be as simple as eating smaller portions of a variety of foods and getting a little more physical activity. However, some people need or prefer an actual diet plan. A healthy weight loss diet is one that:

- Considers your current eating habits and the foods that you like.
- Considers the weight that is appropriate for you.
- Recommends a weight loss of 1-2 pounds per week – no more!
- Teaches good food habits for your lifetime – not just for weight loss.
- Provides a support system (telephone calls, group meetings...)
- Incorporates physical activity.
- Considers pre-existing health risks such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

A diet with these characteristics is a healthy choice.

More to Think About

When you decide to loose weight, set realistic goals. You may believe that you need to loose 30 pounds, but even a small weight loss can improve your health. Physical activity is important to loose and keep weight off. Sleep is important too. Getting a good night's sleep can help control your appetite.

Loosing weight can be very hard. To be successful, you must be up to the challenge. The best time to begin a weight loss program is when you are ready – not necessarily at the New Year!

For additional information, contact your local County Extension Office:



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