

Lose the word 'diet' and still lose weight

By Mandy Kendall

So, the new year is up and running and you may have noticed that a few extra pounds crept on over the holiday season. And they may even have been added to the extra pounds from last year.

If you're anything like me, just thinking the word "diet" makes your body go into fat storing, starvation mode before you've even started. Diets can make us focus on the foods we have denied ourselves even more than when we aren't on a diet. Before the diet you could take or leave an Oreo cookie, but now that you're on a diet you could kill for one.



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I remind myself to remember the advice I used to give to my patients during my time as a chiropractor in England. Don't try to lose too much weight too soon and make changes to your diet and lifestyle gradually.

Here are some quick and easy *Qwik-e* tips to help shift those unwanted pounds without too much upheaval:

Change your diet gradually: If willpower is not your strongest trait, and denying yourself something makes you want it even more, then try weaning yourself off those not-so-good-for-you

foods (you know which ones I mean!) bit by bit. Reducing the number of times a day/week you eat them, or the amount of them you eat at one time, will help stop the cravings that can come with stopping cold turkey. Also, replacing an unhealthy food or drink with a healthier choice, one at a time, will give you a sense of achievement without overwhelming you with total denial.

Set realistic weight loss goals: Aim for 1 to 2 pounds a week. Rapid weight loss can upset our body's sense of how much food it can afford to burn as fuel, versus how much it needs to store for later. Our bodies are very adept at protecting us from starvation. If we drastically reduce the amount of calories we consume, then in the short term, yes we may lose weight and inches, but most of this can be attributed to water loss. After a while the body will recalculate how much it can afford to burn as fuel, and then slow things down to be as efficient as possible with what it is fed. It will also start to store as much away as possible, as fat, just in case the food supply is reduced even more.

Eat consciously: In our busy lives it is easy to fit food in around other activities such as watching television, while at our desks working or even on the run. Concentrating on something else and eating too fast doesn't allow our brains the chance to tell us when we are full, or even if what we are eating is what we need. For at least one meal a day try to take some time to sit, chew and savor your food before you swallow. If the food is not that nutritious, chances are it won't taste so good after being chewed repeatedly and really tasted.

You might find by doing this you actually need much less food before your body tells you that it's full.

Eat and drink little and often: This grazing approach to eating has all kinds of benefits. It helps keep your blood sugar levels balanced, preventing those hunger pangs from

tempting you to a sugary quick fix. Your digestion will thank you for not having to deal with large amounts of food all at once and any lapses in willpower will only constitute a small percentage of your daily food intake. Also a glass of water five minutes before you are due to eat will not only ensure that you are actually hungry, and not just thirsty, but also help make sure you don't overeat too.

Finally, my favorite Qwik-e tip, try not to think of being on a diet. With all the connotations that this word has, and possibly memories of past failures, it is not likely to put you in the most positive frame of mind. Instead try focusing on the fact that you are doing something wonderful for your body. Think of releasing the weight rather than losing it. Try focusing on being more active rather than changing too much, too quickly in your eating habits. When you start to feel better about yourself you will be more likely to want to continue and make some more changes.

Until next time!

Mandy Kendall operates Health Connective in South Lake Tahoe. If you have any questions, feel free to drop me an email at healthconnective@gmail.com, visit us on Facebook, or keep an eye out on Lake Tahoe News for regular Qwik-e tips on how to make healthy changes one Quick and Easy step at a time.