

Diets Work*

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An asterisk is used to draw attention to something important. When you see an asterisk, there is typically another level of detail or possibly something more you should know about the story. I've spent the better part of my career convincing people to avoid short-term nutritional strategies. Instead, I coach individuals on the value of a sound nutrition plan that helps them achieve health & fitness goals. But here's the reality...diets work*.

With a complete perspective on nutrition it's important to understand WHY diets work. Almost every diet that exist has similarities to others that have come before. Most diets involve: *1) a reduction in the quantity of food (intake), 2) an omission of certain foods/groups and 3) promote health/fitness benefits.* Next, let's dive a bit deeper into HOW diets actually work.

Compelling case: I understand why diets are so appealing to many people. Most diets offer celebrity endorsers or medical professionals touting the diets

benefits. If you wanted to lose weight and proponents of a particular diet claim you can lose 20 lbs. in 30 days, this could be appealing. If you struggle with time management and a particular diet offers pre-portioned meals delivered to your door, this could also be appealing. The question each dieter must ask is, *"then what?" "If I do this diet and achieve results, what happens next?"* Many diet plans are not sustainable so one must contemplate how to eat once the diet is over...

Diets begets diets: One of the biggest challenges of diet culture is one diet leads to the next. People diet, have some success and then usually stop. Once they complete one diet it is only a matter of time before they start the next. Did you ever notice how people talk about starting a diet, but you rarely hear people discuss the conclusion of a diet plan? Diets work but usually lead to

other short-term nutritional strategies (more diets).

False positives: It's hard to convince people not to diet because the truth is they will see results from dieting. As stated earlier, most diets involve omitting foods or greatly reducing calories. It doesn't matter if you are eating more or less carbs, more or less protein or more or less fat. If you reduce the overall number of calories you intake this is a strategy that leads to weight loss. However, because of the significant reduction in calories this can be difficult to maintain. When the diet is over as an individual brings in more calories than the diet

allowed, they begin to gain weight back (*many times more than the initial weight loss*). Did the diet work? Yes. However, just because something brings about change doesn't mean that change is sustainable or ideal.

If you are considering a diet plan its important you do your homework first. Try to understand how and why a particular diet leads to results. Also, think about your exit strategy once the diet is complete. For long-term success with weight management, I encourage you to consider a more sustainable nutrition plan. One that leads to your desired results, fits your lifestyle and can be maintained. But the facts are diets work*.

