

# HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT WITHOUT FEELING HUNGRY

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## Cut the carbs and keep the fat

If you are concerned about being overweight you will probably have been avoiding fatty meats and full-cream dairy products, getting most of your protein from white meat and fish, and most of your carbohydrates from starchy foods like rice, bread, pasta and potatoes. You will be eating some salad and vegetables and trying not to eat too much. And you will not be losing weight! Or if you are losing weight, then sooner or later you will almost certainly put it on again.

The author Zig Ziglar advised overweight people to stay away from cottage cheese. '*I say this,*' he wrote, '*because nobody but fat folks eat cottage cheese.*' He may have been joking, but many a true word is spoken in jest. For when you restrict your diet to low-fat foods you feel so hungry that you end up eating more and putting on weight. It's been well documented that most people who go on low-fat diets don't manage to stay on them for long, and even if they succeed in losing weight for a while, they are usually putting it on again within a year.<sup>1</sup> What is not so well known is that people who do the opposite, who change to a diet that is relatively rich in protein and saturated fat and who cut down on carbohydrates from starchy foods and low-fat foods, not only lose weight but find it easier to keep their weight down.

The idea of eating more fat in order to lose fat sounds ridiculous, but it's more to do with eating fewer carbohydrates than eating a lot more fat. Wing's and Phelan's 2005 study, mentioned above, showed that it's possible to lose weight without restricting one's fat intake if one cuts down on the carbohydrates. This was not news. As long ago as 1932 some very overweight British patients were divided into two groups. One group was put on a high carbohydrate, low-fat diet, and the other on a low carbohydrate, high-fat diet. In those days 'high fat' meant high in animal fats, which are mostly saturated. They didn't have huge factories processing vegetable oils and vast quantities of margarine and other low-fat spreads and shortenings. So what happened? The patients on the low-fat diet lost on average 49gm of weight per day, but the ones on the high-fat diet lost 205gm a day.<sup>2</sup> The lesson from both studies is that if you want to lose weight you should reduce your intake of carbohydrates, not fat. It is carbohydrates that make people put on weight.

The same is true for children. In 2006 it was found that among healthy Swedish 4-year-olds from well-educated families, those eating a lower percentage of fat generally had a higher body mass index.<sup>3</sup> In particular, Table 3 of their research

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<sup>1</sup> Wing R R & Phelan S. *Long-term weight loss maintenance. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 2005, 82 (1 Suppl): 222S-225S.

<sup>2</sup> Lyon D M & Dunlop D M. *The treatment of obesity: a comparison of the effects of diet and of thyroid extract. Quarterly Journal of Medicine* 1932; 1:331-52.

<sup>3</sup> Garemo M et al. *Metabolic markers in relation to nutrition and growth in healthy 4-yr-old children in Sweden. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 2006; 84:1021-6.

report showed that the children who ate less saturated fat were more likely to be obese.

Some Swiss researchers looked at five independent dietary trials and concluded that, '*Low-carbohydrate, non-energy-restricted diets appear to be at least as effective as low-fat, energy-restricted diets in inducing weight loss for up to 1 year.*'<sup>4</sup> In plain language, they discovered the wonderful fact that if you restrict your carbohydrate intake you can eat as much as you like of anything else and you will lose as much weight as you would on a low-fat, calorie-limited diet!

More recently, a study of 29 different weight-loss trials published in 2012 concluded that people who consume dairy products do not put on more weight than those who don't, and that, where they are making a conscious effort to lose weight by limiting their calories and taking exercise, they will lose more weight if they include butter, cheese and full-cream milk in their diets.<sup>5</sup>

Why is this? As I have already said, when we eat carbohydrates in the form of starchy foods like bread, potatoes, pasta or pastry, the body's digestive system starts converting them into glucose, which it needs for fuel. And if our body finds that we have kindly provided it with more fuel than it needs right now, being a prudent kind of being it stores the excess for future use by converting it into fat. Actually our digestive system can manufacture glucose out of sugars, starches, fats and even proteins. With sugars the conversion process is very fast. It starts even before the sugar reaches our stomachs. With starches it takes longer, but with fats and proteins it takes the longest of all. So when we use fat rather than starch as our main source of energy glucose is released so slowly into our bloodstreams that we can use it up for energy purposes as it becomes available, and there is no need for our bodies to store it as fat for future use.

If Jack Sprat really ate no fat he was probably fatter than his wife was!

### **Satisfying the ghrelin goblin**

A second reason why eating more fat helps you to lose weight is because, calorie for calorie, people on a fatty diet don't feel so hungry. We know this is true if you have a high-protein diet, because in 2011 Marks and Spencer paid for some research to be carried out on a range of high-protein foods they wanted to market branded as 'Simply fuller longer'. According to the *Daily Mail's* report on these trials, the subjects didn't feel particularly hungry in spite of cutting their calorie intake by 40%, because a diet containing a high proportion of protein-rich foods creates a feeling of fullness faster than one containing more carbohydrates or fat.

You may not be able to afford to feed a family regularly on Marks and Spencer's meals, but the fact is that obtaining your energy needs from protein and saturated fat rather than unsaturated fat and carbohydrates will satisfy your hunger for longer. This

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<sup>4</sup> Nordmann A J et al. *Effects of low-carbohydrate vs low-fat diets on weight loss and cardiovascular risk factors: a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials*. Archives of Internal Medicine, February 13, 2006; 166(3):285-93.

<sup>5</sup> Mu Chen et al. *Effects of dairy intake on body weight and fat: a meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials*. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, October 2012; vol. 96 no. 4:735-747.

means you will end up eating less overall, so your food bill may be no more than it is now.

Since about 2005 there has been a lot of research into something called 'satiety', which in layman's language means 'feeling full'. It is gradually being discovered that a carbohydrate-based diet doesn't make us feel that we've had enough to eat, probably because it isn't the kind of diet our bodies have been made for. The British Egg Information Service, for example, lists five different trials that have compared the weight losses of people who eat egg-based breakfasts or lunches with those who eat typical weight-loss meals. In every case the egg eaters lost significantly more weight, because they felt full for longer. In one trial subjects who ate two eggs for breakfast every day lost 65% more weight than subjects who ate a bagel with the same number of calories!<sup>6</sup>

There was a very interesting BBC Horizon programme in 2014 that featured two doctors who were identical twins. One was put on a high-fat diet, and the other on a high-carbohydrate (sugar and starch) diet. The high-fat doctor, Xand van Tulleken, ate sausage, bacon and scrambled egg for breakfast, while the high-carbohydrate doctor, Chris, ate cornflakes, crumpets and jam. At lunchtime they were invited to eat as much as they wanted of the foods they were each allowed. Xand had had enough after consuming 855 calories but Chris, his identical twin brother, didn't feel satisfied until he had consumed 1,250 calories. The explanation given was that protein suppresses the production of ghrelin, which is the hormone that stimulates feelings of hunger, so Xand's protein-rich food satisfied him sooner and he didn't feel the need to eat so much at lunchtime. And he lost 2.5kg more weight than his brother did.

In 2010 Weight Watchers changed their approach to dieting with a new and apparently successful 'Pro Points' plan, in which greater emphasis is given to foods high in protein and fibre rather than foods which are low in calories and saturated fat.

Foods rich in protein are therefore the best choice for keeping your weight down. In fact if you have managed to lose some weight already then you can help yourself to keep it off simply by eating more protein! In Maastricht 148 middle-aged men and women lost weight over 4 weeks on a low-energy diet.<sup>7</sup> After that they were encouraged to keep to the same diet for another 3 months, with regular counselling sessions to keep them going, but during this period half of them were allowed to eat an additional 48gm of protein a day. They all regained some weight, as dieters generally do after their early efforts, but the people who ate the *additional* protein gained on average only half as much weight as the others did, presumably because they didn't feel so hungry. 48gm of protein is about what you'd find in four rashers of bacon, five large eggs, two cod fillets, or a small (190gm) sirloin steak. That's an awful lot of extra food to eat every day, yet it helped them to put on less weight than the 74 people who didn't eat it.

Unless you are a vegetarian, this is wonderful news! It means that if you eat eggs and red meat and chicken skin and full-fat cheese, and drink full-cream milk, you will

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<sup>6</sup> Van der Wal J S et al. *Egg breakfast enhances weight loss*. International Journal of Obesity, October 2008; 32(\*10):1545-1551.

<sup>7</sup> Westerterp-Plantenga M S et al. *High protein intake sustains weight maintenance after body weight loss in humans*. International Journal of Obesity, 2004; 28(1):57-64.

almost certainly lose more weight than if you stick to skinless poultry, starchy foods and low-fat dairy products. Remember again that meat, eggs and full-cream milk are the kinds of food people ate in my childhood, when hardly anyone was overweight or obese. Personally, I started eating butter and drinking full-cream milk again when I was 67, and 5 years later I weigh about 6 kilograms less.

In any case many 'low-fat' foods are loaded with carbohydrates and sugar. Most low-fat yogurts, for example, are no-no's for diabetics, because they contain far too much sugar. What is the point in buying a low-fat yogurt to lose weight if it has added sugar ready to be converted to glucose and then into body fat, and if it has lost much of the nutritional content of the full-cream milk it was made from? After all, milk, fat and butter are among the best sources of vitamins A, D, E and K, and because these vitamins have to be dissolved in fat before the body can use them they are most easily absorbed when we get them from full-cream milk rather than plants.<sup>8</sup> That's one reason you shouldn't feed semi-skimmed or skimmed milk to babies. Low-fat products are not a healthy option.

Farm animals like cows and sheep that feed on grass, which is a cereal crop, munch away for much of the day, whereas wild animals like lions and tigers who eat meat manage happily on one meal a day. So by obtaining more of your calories from protein-rich meat and cheese and eggs you won't feel so much need to snack between meals, and you will find it easier to lose weight and keep it off.

Food scientists are also telling us that the 'energy density' of food has a major impact on satiety, and that we should choose foods that have a low energy density.<sup>9,10</sup> So far as I can tell this is simply a highfaluting way of telling us to choose foods which don't have many calories in them! However, the British Nutrition Foundation has produced a chart listing the energy density of some common foods. Table 1 shows some of the best things to eat to feel full without putting on weight. You can see more in the Feed Yourself Fuller Chart on the Foundation's website, [www.nutrition.org.uk](http://www.nutrition.org.uk).

Table 1: Some low energy-dense foods

Very low energy dense foods	Kilocalories per gram	Low energy density foods	Kilocalories per gram
Cucumber	0.10	Apples	0.47
Mixed salad	0.19	Vegetable soup	0.52
Chicken noodle soup	0.19	Low-fat yogurt	0.76
Broccoli	0.33	Baked beans	0.81
Carrots	0.35	Bananas	0.95
Oranges	0.37	Baked potatoes	1.36
Pears	0.40	Boiled eggs	1.47

<sup>8</sup> Fraps G S & Kemmerer A R. *The Relation of the Spectro Vitamin A and Carotene Content of Butter to its Vitamin A Potency Measured by Biological Methods*. Texas Agricultural Bulletin, February 1938; No. 560.

<sup>9</sup> Benelam B. *Satiation, satiety and their effects on eating behaviour*. Nutrition Bulletin 34: 126-173, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> Rolls B J. *The relationship between dietary energy density and energy intake*. Physiology & Behavior 97:609-615, 2009.

## **Crack the snack addiction**

Snacking is a major problem for most people who want to lose weight, because it is a habit difficult to break. I must say that I tend to go in search of a snack or a drink when I'm doing some work and I want a break, especially if I'm finding it hard going for some reason and I want an excuse to stop. What I do is keep a jar of pickled baby beetroots, gherkins or pitted olives in the cupboard and eat one or two of them for a snack. Or sometimes I simply drink a glass of filtered water. Water is absolutely the least energy dense substance we can consume, and most of us would benefit by drinking more of it. Actually in the light of what I was saying just now snack addicts might do even better keeping some cold chicken or salt beef or seafood in the fridge. Snacking on protein assuages hunger more effectively than crunching pickled onions.

Better still, learn to live a snack-free life. Just as we get into the habit of snacking by snacking, so we can get into the habit of not snacking by not snacking. If you can hold off snacking completely for 2 or 3 weeks then you should find that you have started to make a new non-snacking habit. The ability to form habits is really useful if you take the trouble to form good ones, because then you can live the way you want to without thinking about it.

The habits that are hardest to change are those that are embedded into us when we are young. So if you don't want your children to grow into fattened up snackers don't give them snacks between meals. When I was small my mother told me not to eat between meals because 'it would spoil my appetite'. She thought that minced beef and cabbage would do me more good than jam sandwiches, so she wanted me to leave enough room for my dinner, disregarding the fact that a growing boy has room for both. What is clear is that she tried to keep me off snacking, and perhaps that is one reason why I've never had a weight problem.

Recently I listened to an interview with a woman whose parents split up when she was 8 years old. She comforted herself by snacking, and by the time she was 22 it had become such a habit that she weighed 21 stone. An asthma attack put her in hospital and she realized that unless she could stop eating she would not live very much longer. It is terribly important from year one to avoid comforting your children with food. Don't give them snacks when they are unhappy. Don't train them to associate eating with feeling distressed. If you do they will instinctively turn to food when they find themselves in unwelcome situations in later life, and they may do terrible damage to their health. Milk or some other healthy drink would be fine, or preferably a cuddle, song, story or some other diversion, but not a snack!

One obvious way we can all avoid snacking is simply not to buy the kind of food we are tempted to snack on. In my case it's biscuits and chocolates. A box of chocolates that survives my presence for more than 2 days can consider itself very fortunate indeed. KitKat bars, Snickers bars, Big Macs, individual pork pies and single portions of chips each contain about 500 calories. For many people that's a quarter of their daily energy requirements. It doesn't take many snacks like those to transfer a pound or two from your bank account to your waistline.

According to Professor Paul Kenny, who also made an appearance on the Horizon programme I mentioned, the snacks most likely to put weight on us are those which contain fat and sugar in equal calorific proportions, such as glazed ring doughnuts, chocolate biscuits and cheesecake. When he fed rats sugary food they didn't put much weight on, and when he fed them fatty food they didn't put much weight on, but when he fed them foods which contained both fat and sugar in equal proportions they wouldn't stop eating them. They became sedentary and overweight. Sounds familiar? For some reason foods containing fat and sugar in equal proportions act like a drug: our brain tells us to eat more and more of them. In my experience there is only one defence against such temptations: cross them off the shopping list!

### **Don't sugar the pill**

The comedienne Victoria Wood reckoned she had discovered some effective sugar replacement therapy: it was called chocolate.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately ordinary chocolate contains lots of sugar, and by now you will know that sugar is just about the worst thing to include in your diet if you want to stay slim and fit. The only thing you can do is bite the bullet and cut it out. I can still remember deciding in my teens to stop taking sugar in my tea. It took about 3 weeks before it stopped tasting disgusting, but eventually I preferred it that way. Fortunately there are now many 'no added sugar' soft drinks which taste fine, and if you can't survive without muesli and jam or marmalade for breakfast then at least you can buy reduced sugar versions of them.

If you feel you are too addicted to that sweet taste to survive without it, you could resort to using artificial sweeteners like saccharin or sucralose. Extensive research has demonstrated that they are not harmful in reasonable quantities, and they have no calorific value so they won't put any weight on you at all. Sucralose is sold in a granulated form very much like ordinary sugar, so it can be used in drinks and cooking in the same way. Stevia is a more natural option. When you are looking for a sugar substitute don't buy one derived from fructose, the fruit sugar. Fructose is as bad as ordinary sugar for putting on weight, particularly around the stomach.

### **Small fork diet**

With a name like Alan Sugar you wouldn't expect that particular business guru to be an authority on dieting, but he has one excellent piece of advice on the subject. He calls it the 'small fork diet', and it amounts to this: simply eat smaller quantities of food. I don't go all the way with that, but one thing is certain. If you are restricting your intake of carbohydrates and sugar and you are taking a reasonable amount of exercise yet are still not losing weight, there is only one solution: eat less!

### **Weight loss and exercise**

For people who need to lose weight, the other side of the coin is exercise.

The main benefit and importance of exercise is that it improves your health. Life insurance actuaries predict that a 40 year-old who exercises at least occasionally will live about 2 years longer than someone who hardly ever exercises, and research

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<sup>11</sup> Victoria Wood. *Mens Sana in Thingummy Doodah*. 1990.

shows that athletes who specialize in endurance sports and mixed sports live longer than average, principally because they are less likely to suffer coronary heart disease.<sup>12</sup>

Most people think that exercise will help them to lose weight because any calories burnt as fuel for physical activity won't be stored as body fat. Actually, things are not quite as simple as that, as I explained earlier in the book. You may lose body fat, but you will not lose the same amount of weight because your muscles will grow larger. Nevertheless regular exercise will help you to lose weight, for the following reasons:

- Exercise requires energy. When you exercise after fasting there is little or no sugar in your blood, so your body is forced to obtain the energy it needs from stored fat. So if you exercise before breakfast you will use up body fat and hence lose some weight.
- The self-discipline required to exercise regularly will strengthen your self-control in general, and so help you to keep to a healthy diet.
- Regular exercise will make you feel better physically, mentally and psychologically, so you'll be less likely to resort to comfort eating.
- Regular exercise will increase the size of your muscles so that they can burn more energy in a given time. This means that you'll be able to burn up fat faster.

Whether or not you need to lose weight, adequate exercise is as necessary for good health as a healthy diet is. You can learn all about that in my book, *'Twenty-First Century Nutrition and Family Health'*.

**THIS ARTICLE IS AN EXTRACT FROM MY BOOK, *'Twenty-First Century Nutrition and Family Health'*.** Based on over 500 published scientific papers, it explains in a readable way the dietary causes of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and other illnesses, exposes the false information we are fed by the food manufacturers, and tells how you and your children can enjoy a truly healthy lifestyle without great expense. You can buy it post free from my website [www.booksforlife.today](http://www.booksforlife.today).

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<sup>12</sup> Teramoto M & Bunqun T J. *Mortality and longevity of elite athletes. The Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport, July 2010.* Sports Medicine Australia.