The Fitness Corner

Facilitating Your Fitness Journey

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The 10 Biggest Weight Loss Mistakes: Part 2

In the last issue of the Fitness Corner, I described the first three weight loss mistakes:

- Going on a Diet
- Trying to Lose Weight Too Quickly
- Trying to Lose Weight without Exercise

In this issue, I describe two more common mistakes when it comes to weight loss.

1. **Starving yourself**. If you've ever gone on a diet, you probably made this mistake. Most diets dramatically change your eating habits resulting in a significant reduction in caloric intake. If you are trying to lose weight, that would seem to make sense. However, the problem is that in order to lose weight, you need to eat significant amounts of food. Starving yourself ultimately leads to weight gain for two reasons. First, as I discussed in the previous issue of Fitness Corner, starving yourself will lead to significant muscle mass loss which in turn, leads to decreased metabolism. It's a vicious cycle that facilitates long term weight gain because your body no longer burns the calories it used to. Keep in mind that this can happen with any caloric reduction but it is especially problematic when calorie intake is severely restricted.

The second problem with starving yourself is also related to reduced metabolism. When you cut too many calories, especially from protein, it prompts your body to conserve calories instead of burning them. Your body accomplishes this by reducing your metabolism (whether you have lost muscle mass or not). This is why long term weight loss works best by employing slight reductions in caloric intake along with increased physical activity.

2. **Making BIG changes in your eating habits**. This is the biggest reason diets fail. They require you to make dramatic changes in your lifestyle, starting with your eating habits. But even if you don't go on a diet, many people who are trying to shed a few pounds make the mistake of significantly altering their dietary habits, which creates a major problem. As human beings, we are creatures of habit. It is much easier for us to do today what

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we did yesterday and will likely do tomorrow. That's why you typically take the same route to work every day. It's comfortable for you. The same goes for your eating habits. Whatever you are eating, good, bad or somewhere in-between, it is easier to continue eating that way today, tomorrow and the next day. Of course, if you are trying to lose weight, this presents a problem because you need to decrease your caloric intake if you are going to be successful. While this seems to present us with a dilemma, I have two strategies that can help you resolve the problem. The idea is to make **relatively minor changes** to your eating habits. One option is to make no changes whatsoever to your eating habits, but start exercising (or increase the amount of exercise if you are already physically active). The key here is to maintain your daily caloric intake. Do not increase it! If you burn off 250 extra calories a day through exercise and maintain your current caloric intake, you will lose 26 pounds in 1 year. You may not think of this as a tremendous amount of weight, but it is a healthful, less stressful way to burn body fat that will stay off!

A second option is to make one modification to your daily eating habits that results in a 150 to 300 calorie reduction. I discussed this approach in the last issue of Fitness Corner. This will create less stress in your life because of the modest change you are making in your daily eating habits. You will not lose weight quickly, but you will lose it more healthfully and in a way that will keep it off.

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Lifestyle Coaching

It is with great pleasure that I introduce my Lifestyle Coaching program. Lifestyle Coaching is designed to help you lose weight, improve your health and fitness, and enhance your work/life balance. By utilizing a variety of processes, tools and techniques, you will reduce stress, improve your work performance, and most importantly, feel better about yourself.

Lifestyle Coaching works because it takes a holistic approach to your development. Specifically, we address the mental, emotional, behavioral and psychological elements of body shape, health, fitness and their impact on your life. By looking at the "whole person", we greatly increase your chances for long-term success.

Lifestyle Coaching is also effective because it is based on a simple premise: The best way to improve your health and facilitate permanent weight loss is to make minor, reasonable modifications in your eating habits and to slightly increase your daily level of physical activity.

To learn more about Lifestyle Coaching, visit my website at www.holmesfitness.com and request a FREE CONSULTATION to begin the process that will change your life!