

Some Facts about Weight Loss

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“How can I loose weight?”

This must be the most frequent question I hear from my patients. What’s best? Low carb or low fat? Even the experts cannot agree on which diet is the safest and most effective. But despite the controversies, there are some facts that everyone does agree on.

First of all, the best way to loose weight is to make permanent changes in the way you eat and exercise. Short-term fad diets that help you loose weight quickly will not help you maintain your weight loss for the long term.

Also, we know that not all carbohydrates and not all fats are created equal. If you are going to limit carbohydrates, the first ones to remove from your diet are the foods made from refined sugars. These include the obvious cakes, cookies, and candies—but also white bread, and white rice. Select carbohydrates that are made from whole grains, such as brown rice and whole wheat breads.

As far as fats go, we know that “trans fats” are the most unhealthy. These are the fats that go into processed and packaged foods like crackers and chips. Fats that come from certain vegetables like olives, nuts, and avocados are probably good for us.

What about exercise? Once again, you are better off adopting an exercise routine that you can maintain for the long term. Studies have shown that even 20 minutes of exercise a day can be beneficial to your heart, even if the activity doesn’t result in any weight loss. Many women are flocking to new fitness centers designed specifically for women (like “Curves”). These programs are very successful because they offer a quick 30-minute exercise routine that fits with women’s busy lifestyles.

Talk to your doctor or visit your local health education department for more information. Kaiser Permanente offers discounted rates at many fitness centers through out Northern California to help you with your efforts.