

Weight Loss Myths

What You Should Know

Calories, Metabolism & Genes

by James M. Rippe, M.D.

(NAPSA)—Two dieting myths can be obstacles to achieving lasting weight loss. First, some diets tell you that certain kinds of calories—like those from fats or carbohydrates—are to blame for weight gain. And the second myth is that you can't lose weight or keep it off if you have the wrong metabolism or genes.



Dr. James Rippe

Fortunately, neither of those myths is entirely true.

Myth 1: Calories don't matter—avoid fat or carbs to lose weight successfully.

While avoiding fats or carbohydrates may help you to lose weight initially, such restrictions are hard to maintain—and only work because they reduce calorie intake. A balanced diet is what works best for sustained weight loss.

Both fats and carbohydrates are essential nutrients and when you cut out a nutrient, you eliminate the potential health benefits that come with it.

Not all fats are alike. For example, the saturated fats found in cold cuts and baked goods are not kind to your heart, but the fats found in olive oil and fish actually help lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce heart disease risk.

While you may want to minimize eating sugary foods, nutritionally speaking it's important to

include *wholesome* sources of carbohydrates such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes and non- or low-fat dairy products.

Myth 2: You can't lose weight if you have the wrong metabolism or genes.

Although there are individual factors that make weight loss more or less of a challenge, each can be overcome with the right knowledge and tools. Understanding your personal circumstances and how they affect your metabolism and your weight loss helps develop approaches and strategies that work for you.

Some people are genetically more vulnerable to weight gain but biology is not destiny. Weight gain only happens when a person eats too many calories and/or burns too few. For people who find the right balance between food and physical activity, genes do not make a difference.

The typical American underestimates caloric intake by about 400 to 500 calories per day. Women tend to underestimate their caloric intake by 20 percent. Studies of many weight-resistant women found they were not losing weight because they were eating more calories than they thought. Their metabolism was fine. That's where a structured weight-loss program can help.

Dr. James M. Rippe and Weight Watchers have written "Weight Loss That Lasts: Break Through the 10 Big Diet Myths."



Note to Editors: This is the third in a series of articles on weight-loss myths. The next article will explore the truth behind the myths that "what you eat can boost your metabolism" and "how you lose weight doesn't matter."