

# Weight Loss Myths

## What You Should Know

### Extra Pounds Don't Matter—And You Can't Lose Them Anyway

by James M. Rippe, M.D.

(NAPSA)—Some diet myths are so powerful that they can stop you from even trying to lose weight.

Fortunately, two of the most discouraging myths, “A Few Extra Pounds Don't Matter” and “You Can't Lose Weight and Keep It Off,” are based on kernels of truth

but learning the whole truth tells a very different story. Here's the whole truth behind these myths:

**Myth #1. A Few Extra Pounds Don't Matter.**

Adding pounds as you add years is so commonplace that many people wrongly assume it's a natural part of aging. They also expect to develop health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes.

While it is true that people gain a certain amount of weight as they age, it doesn't have to be this way, nor do they have to develop these health problems. In a study released in the October 7, 1999 *New England Journal of Medicine* that included over a million adults, the researchers found that extra pounds increase the risk of death among adults.

Weight gain can increase your risk of diabetes, heart disease, unhealthy blood cholesterol levels, breast cancer and such gastrointestinal cancers as colon cancer.

Finding a comfortable, healthy weight is a good idea. You'll not only look better, you'll feel

healthier.

**Myth #2. You Can't Lose Weight and Keep It Off.** You may have heard the same statistic over and over again—95 percent of diets end in failure. No one is going to tell you that it's easy to lose weight, but it is possible.

Reports about diet failure generally use statistics that date back to the 1950s. Weight-loss methods are different today—often employing a sophisticated combination of behavioral strategies and scientific research. For example, an independent research group surveyed a thousand *Weight Watchers* members who reached their weight goal and completed a six-week maintenance program.

This survey found that an average of more than three-fourths of the weight was still lost after one year.

In order to overcome the powerful myth that it is not possible to lose weight, you have to have four components in place.

You have to make wise food choices. You have to be physically active. You have to develop a positive mindset and you have to have a supportive atmosphere.

Sustainable weight loss doesn't automatically happen. You have to put your mind to it and arm yourself with the right tools. A good place to start your diet is by arming yourself with the facts to dispel these weight-loss myths.

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



**Dr. James Rippe**

*Note to Editors: This is the first in a series of articles on weight-loss myths. The next article will explore the truth behind the myth that “willpower is key to successful weight loss” and the myth that “you can lose weight with exercise alone.”*