

April Weighing In 2015

Is Obedience a Cure for Obesity?

Oh the wonders of the sugar-laden American/Western diet along with a sedentary lifestyle!

Right now, more than 1.4 billion adults are overweight. It is predicted that more than half of our global population will fall into that category within 15 years, according to the McKinsey Global Institute.

The global weight loss market is worth almost six hundred billion dollars, and yet our obesity numbers continue to rise at a shocking rate.

Obesity now surpasses hunger as the world's biggest health crisis.

An increasing number of researchers are now warning us of sugar's addictive effects and properties, and comparing it to cocaine. Sugar has been added to almost all processed food and now makes up 13% of the American adults' caloric intake. It should be less than 5%, according to the World Health Organization and the Obesity Society. Worldwide sales of packaged foods soared to a massive \$2.5 trillion in 2015. So we shouldn't be surprised that it is nearly impossible to avoid sugar in a Western diet. And the large amount of sugar we ingest is causing obesity to spread to the next generation. Children are becoming increasingly obese because they have become sugar addicts.

There have been efforts by the White House to push to make school lunches more healthy; but what a failure! There's been an effort by New York City to try to ban sugary drinks. Didn't work!!

So how do we fix this? Diets fail almost 90% of time. If diets themselves worked well, we wouldn't have an obesity problem! No, the answer has been found in patients who are obedient in successfully following a healthy dietary regimen. The answer lies in learning to eat correctly for ourselves and becoming disciplined to continue the new healthier habits throughout our lifetime.

There are those who promise miracle cures without having to do this. Dr. Oz is my main source of bad health information with his regular promotion of weight loss supplements like "green coffee bean miracle weight loss tea".

The typical skeptic that I am, I look out for this pseudoscience, and I try to correct it with my patients. I decided several years ago that I could be more effective as a weight loss physician if I could deliver some health benefits to my patients greater than just putting them on medication.

I knew that most modern diet plans rarely succeed in the long run. I wanted to teach people how to lose their weight but also how to maintain their weight loss for long-term. One way to make them successful in losing was to punch holes in their thought process of 'eat less, exercise more.' Hunger is the first myth that's got to go down the road. Any diet that leaves you hungry, you will not follow. That's why we ask you to eat three meals a day. And it isn't that we are forbidding you to eat foods that you like. No, we are asking to make healthier choices to enjoy.

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I hear patients often say, "The diet was great, but I just couldn't stick to it." As weight loss progresses, any suffering gets harder to sustain and harder to deny. Negative emotions and expectations from unsuccessful dieting are going to happen. The most common negative feelings include guilt, shame, failure, depression, and despair which bring on binge eating. We go through a cycling process. But, the obedient patient who follows the program to the letter does not experience these negative emotions.

"Obedience is the virtue that determines whether a person is either a servant or a rebel. The Life of Integrity is built on obedience of God's statutes and nothing else."
— Israelmore Ayivor.

If our staff at The Weigh Station could get our patients to become obedient to what we're asking them to do, our success rate would be much greater than what it is. What we are doing is asking you to follow simple instructions to reach a goal that has been out of your grasp for multiple reasons. It's just not following the book and taking supplements. It's about trusting us and following the program to the letter.

Recently I saw a nine year old child who weighed 180 pounds. When I took a dietary history from his mother, I learned that he ate Pop Tarts for breakfast with a Coke; lunch was a sandwich on whole wheat bread and bag of chips and a Coke. For dinner, the family usually ordered out fast food, and that could be Mexican, hamburgers and hotdogs and fries, or pizza, and always a soft drink for him.

After this poor child was continuously ridiculed at school for his weight, his mother decided it was time to do something to help him. Just by their willingness to make some minor changes, we saw a dramatic change in this child's life. His mother made him obey her about what he ate, but then she was also obedient in following what we asked her to do.

As you continue your journey in weight loss this week, remember that the tighter you control your cravings---the yearnings of your flesh--- the greater your success will be. Be obedient in following our program to the letter. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible speaks a lot about obedience. In the Ten Commandments, we see how important the concept of obedience is to God. Deuteronomy 11:26-28 sums it up like this: "Obey and you will be blessed. Disobey, and you will be cursed."

As we look forward to Easter Sunday, remember that Easter is all about new beginnings. We shake off the old man and put on the new. Begin with a new willingness to be obedient to the cause and finish the course that you set for yourself. You will be so glad you did when you reach your goal!

Happy Easter
Chuck Shaffer MD

Why Pork Rinds are a Problem...

Pork skins, also known as pork rinds, are a crunchy fried snack food that have become quite popular among those following low carb diets like Atkins. They are made by chopping, cooking and smoking pieces of pork skin, before deep-frying the pieces in 400-degree-Fahrenheit lard. This causes the skins to puff-up, giving pork rinds their unique, airy and crunchy texture.

Many patients have asked if they can have these on our program, after all they are high in protein right? The answer to this question is no, but let us explain why. At first glance they seem to be a perfect fit. One ounce of fried pork skin contains 17 g of protein and no carbohydrate, making them a low-glycemic food. The problem is that The Weigh Station's goal is to create a healthy life style change. We want to educate you on the best quality foods out there, the kinds of food that are going to nourish you and not harm you. Pork rinds are not this type of food.

Nutritionally pork rinds are simply a poor choice. For one, the protein in them isn't biologically available, meaning it's unusable. This is because the protein is coming from gelatin, which lacks all essential amino acids needed by our bodies.

Additionally, most commercially available pork rinds have added MSG, another no no for addressing one's health. MSG is known to increase blood pressure and trigger migraines. It can also cause fluid retention and put added stress on the kidneys.

As a take away consider this, not everything that makes people lose weight is healthy. I once had a patient that had reached maintenance and said that he did so by eating only hotdogs and iceberg lettuce during the entire program. I became extremely concerned and explained that these two foods have very little nutritional value and although they are approved for the program, they certainly aren't meant to be eaten exclusively. His response; "Well I lost weight!". Yes he lost his weight but at what cost? Absence of essential nutrients overtime will only make our bodies weak, depleted and prone to disease. Being skinny doesn't make you healthy (any cancer patient can vouch for that).

Food is medicine and at The Weigh Station we believe whole-heartedly that if you follow our recommended guidelines, including a variety of complete proteins and low glycemic fruits and vegetables your health will improve. Please be weary of low-carb snack foods. It is our job to guide you in the right direction.

-Tricia Foley, MS, RD