

August Weighing In 2014

The Mirror: Truth or Deception?

I am sure many of you remember the Snow White story where the Wicked Queen demands, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest one of all?" The mirror revealed ---to her shock---what she could not see herself. Sometimes the mirror reveals to us what we cannot see ourselves during our journeys of losing weight. For many of you, though, your mind does not allow you to see the truth that the mirror tries to reveal.

I've seen this many times with my patients. Your minds play tricks on you while you work hard on your journeys to lose weight. I hear you say to me, "I really can't see any improvement." The distortion comes from what's inside of your brain. It's called having "fat eyes." The actual evidence is clear that you are doing exceptionally well. In fact, many of you have lost over 200 pounds. But you still don't see it because even though you keep staring in the mirror, you are looking with a distorted self-image. Even if your clothes are falling off of you, you may get excited but it's still not enough; you continue to beat yourself up over your appearance. It's so easy to become obsessed over the reflection in the mirror that you begin to notice every flaw or bulge. Being unhappy about the imperfections you see can and does negatively affect your self-image. Without a healthy amount of self-esteem, you lose the motivation to lose weight in a safe and effective way. If you continually focus on the negative, you will not be able to understand and appreciate that you may be losing that significant one pound per week and be safely on your way to achieving a healthy weight loss goal. To help to gain a better perspective of how you really look in the mirror, it may help you to have before and after pictures taken about every month to put on your refrigerator so you see your improvements.

In order to be successful, however, you need to do away with concealing the truth when talking to us during your appointments. Let me explain. Many people come and describe what they see in the mirror and are very distraught. But those people conceal the true cause of their weight gain. This leads to disaster. This past week, for example, I reviewed the chart of a lady who has come for 64 weeks. During this entire time she has lost only a total of about 35 pounds. I noticed that she would gain four and then lose three. Then she would gain six and then lose three again. For her it was a never-ending roller coaster. It took many weeks to finally get her to confess that she has a "Cheat Saturday." Yet when we spoke throughout those 64 weeks she insisted she followed the program to the letter. What she originally concealed caused her disaster. Her common complaint was, "But I don't see any results when I look in the mirror..." I replied, "Don't you see why not?"

So the next time you look in the mirror and you make harsh judgment of yourself, remember how far you've come. To get to where you're going may take you a little bit longer than the next person, however, don't continue to focus on the negative. Focus on the positive aspirations that you started with and that you are continuing to achieve on a day-to-day basis.

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If you're going to look in the mirror every morning or every evening, use the opportunity to feel the excitement that comes with weight loss. Write encouraging notes to yourself on adhesive tape or memo paper and highlight them. Write down the results you've achieved so far. Keep a weekly tabulation of how much weight you've lost and retrieve it whenever you feel the need to cheat on your food program.

Here is my final thought for you from the apostle Paul who reminds us, “ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which is the Lords." (First Corinthians 6:19 - 20.) We all recognize that God has done so much for us. It should be our delight, and indeed our privilege, to obey his commandments to take care of our Temple. So the next time you look at your temple in the mirror, praise God for what you see. Remember, you are not where you started; you are further down the road than you ever thought you would be.

Blessings to all,

Chuck Shaffer M.D.

Sweet and Sour Cucumber Salad with Fresh Dill

(Makes 4-6 servings)

Ingredients:

2 large cucumbers or 4 garden cucumbers, thinly sliced

1 T coarse grind sea salt

1/2 cup white wine vinegar

3 T Stevia In the Raw Granulated Sweetener

1/2 tsp. fresh ground black pepper

1/4 cup chopped fresh dill



Instructions:

Chop ends of cucumbers. Slice into thin slices. Put cucumbers in a colander placed in the sink and sprinkle with 1 T coarsely ground salt. Mix with your fingers so all the cucumbers have some salt on them. Let cucumbers sit and release water for 15 minutes.

While cucumbers drain, wash dill, spin dry or dry with paper towels, and then finely chop. Combine white wine vinegar, Stevia, and fresh ground black pepper, then stir in the chopped dill.

After 15 minutes, pat cucumbers dry with paper towel. (Most of the salt should have been washed off by the water that was released.) Put cucumbers into a plastic bowl with a tight-fitting lid (or use a Ziploc bag.) Pour dressing over cucumbers and stir to combine. Refrigerate cucumbers with dressing for an hour or longer, turning the bowl over a few times if you're around. Serve cold.

This will keep in the fridge for a day, best to eat them fresh.

Nourishing Your Plateau

Obesity is a complicated disease, as you well know losing weight is not as simple as calories in versus calories out. Many hormones play a role and unfortunately chronic inflammation from having extra weight can hinder your ability to lose fat. Healing your body from the inside out is key to successful weight loss. Eating the right foods certainly helps. Make sure you are getting plenty of antioxidant rich foods like strawberries, blueberries, spinach and peppers in your diet. If you have been eating your stage 2 veggies and following the program without recent success consider adding these key nutrients:

Vitamin D: Low vitamin D has now been conclusively linked to obesity and the metabolic syndrome. Through research, we know that vitamin D helps slow down the increase in the number of fat cells that accompany gaining weight.

Vitamin D enables your body to tolerate inflammation. Vitamin D and magnesium deficiency are common in highly dysfunctional fat (the fat cells that are difficult to get rid of- these cells cause higher levels of inflammation and cause detrimental hormones to be released).

A half hour of sun exposure gives you 10,000 IU of vitamin D. Overweight individuals should get at least 2,000 IU per day and likely need doses ranging from 4,000 IU – 8,000 IU per day to support healthy metabolism. The winter months are especially problematic because we do not get the sun exposure we need.

Calcium: A lack of calcium can increase cravings for carbohydrates but newer science shows that supplemental calcium and supplemental vitamin D, in combination, can increase the rate of fat burning in humans, regardless of carbohydrate cravings. Studies show that higher calcium intake is associated with better weight loss over time. It is important that you have a good vitamin D level as well since it is directly related to calcium's ability to work efficiently and has also been linked to fat loss. Avoid calcium carbonate or citrate, instead look for more absorbable forms like calcium AEP or coral calcium (900 mg/day is recommended).

Pine nut oil: If you are craving sweets or are hungry on this program try adding pine nut oil. A recent randomized, double-blind cross-over trial showed that pine nut oil helps regulate appetite. Within 30 minutes of ingesting 3 grams of the oil, women reported a 29 percent reduction in the desire to eat. Researchers showed this was because satiety hormones like CCK and GLP1 became significantly elevated a result that lasted four hours. Many people who take Pine Nut Oil report their head feels more awake. Pine nut oil can be taken with meals or between meals, as needed. For effective healing of gastritis, peptic ulcers and other conditions related to an inflammation of the gastrointestinal lining (such as acid reflux, IBS, or ulcerative colitis), it is recommended to take at least 5 grams (one teaspoon) of extra virgin pine nut oil three times daily 30 to 60 minutes before a meal.

Selenium: A minor deficiency in selenium is fairly common and can affect weight loss in a negative way. Deficiencies in this case are usually due to poor mineral content in our soil. IF our crops aren't grown in nutrient rich soil, they will be lacking in minerals as well. Selenium supports efficient thyroid hormone synthesis. Without it the thyroid can slow down making it difficult to lose weight. To ensure that you are getting the levels of selenium you need make sure to eat wild salmon, cod, shrimp and egg yolks! Shiitake mushrooms are also an excellent source.

Magnesium: It is estimated that only about half of Americans get the RDA for magnesium daily. Low intakes have been linked to type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, osteoporosis, heart disease, migraines and leg cramping. To ensure you are getting enough magnesium include dark leafy greens in your diet (Swiss chard and spinach are good examples). Halibut and almonds are also good sources.

Talk to the Dietitian if you are frustrated. This is not a one size fits all program, we are dedicated to your personal success!

To Your Health-Tricia Foley, MS, RD, CLT