



June Newsletter

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The Weigh Station

“I’m doing everything right, but the weight is not going anywhere.”

To protect identities, I’ll call this patient Terri (yes, that’s my wife’s name, but she’s not the patient). Terri had come into the office for her visit and said she was not losing weight even though she was strictly following the program. She only needs to lose about 30 lbs to be at her ideal BMI; her current BMI is 29, as you can tell she is moving along quite well. However, she expects to have lean body mass within 2 months, which is possible if the program is followed correctly.

Trying to find a solution, I questioned her and asked about her habits and what she had been doing. Once again, she stated she followed the program closely and had not strayed away. The more I questioned her, the more she opened up and I realized she had not been eating enough. I communicated this to her and expressed the importance of eating the correct portions. She returned the following week and had lost 3 lbs. Her situation has brought me to conclude weight loss can be so elusive.

It is already known dieting does not produce long lasting results. Many people who diet become frustrated and return to their old habits, causing setbacks and even more frustration. The Weigh Station is not a “diet”, it is a lifestyle centered around knowing and understanding your food and how it affects your body’s metabolism. A diverse diet helps ensure your body is receiving a wide range of micronutrients to function optimally.

However, there is no “one size fits all” when it comes to losing weight; there are numerous factors, such as genetics or undereating, that play a role. The best way to troubleshoot the lack of weight loss is to tackle it like a physician. First, I generate a hypothesis on what I think you are doing. The next step is to collect data and test different solutions until the problem is successfully solved. This may take some time because every patient is unique.

Many individuals have trouble losing weight due to simple or common mistakes. Nonetheless, I urge you to resist the temptation of returning to a restrictive diet as it will only set you further away from your goals. Like most Americans, we sit at our desk and use a computer for the majority of the day and live a sedentary lifestyle. Going to the gym or simply walking for 30 minutes everyday will make a big difference.

Patients often tend to misjudge portion sizes which is why we ask you to weigh and measure foods. I often place the artificial fat glob in patients hands to test their visual acuity and ask them to guess how much it weighs. So far, no one has given me the correct answer. Some say using a smaller plate helps, but relying on the size of your dishes is not the best way to learn portion sizes or measurements. You must weigh and measure until lean body mass starts to appear. Keeping a food journal and tracking what you eat helps give us an idea of what you're doing in case you have any questions or concerns.

If you have more than 20 lbs to lose and have not had much success despite eating relatively healthy, there is a chance you may have some degree of insulin resistance or metabolic syndrome. If you are insulin resistant your body is more inclined to store calories as fat rather than burning them as fuel. This simply means you're more likely to gain weight from eating foods that a person with a healthy metabolism eats without consequence. This usually makes many people upset. Fortunately, this can be improved by a low carbohydrate diet, exercise, and medication. We check for insulin resistance in most patients; if you feel you have any of these symptoms we will be happy to check for you, too.

Exercise is key to losing weight and boosting your energy. I highly recommend you take time to exercise. You do not have to go to a gym or do weight training; walking or taking a stroll through your neighborhood (if you are able to do so) is a good alternative. However, be sure to not over exercise. Exercising too much promotes hunger which can be a barrier for some as it makes it nearly impossible to control your appetite and you'll be more likely to eat unapproved foods.

I cannot stress enough how important sleep is. Our brains and body rely on a variety of hormones that regulate when we eat and sleep. Because of circadian rhythms, we function better when we wake up, sleep, and eat at the same time everyday. Too little sleep is associated and linked to weight gain.

The next time I quiz you on what you're eating, know it's not meant to cause you stress. We're simply trying to find out how we can help and offer assistance.

Blessings,

Magnesium

While you may think of magnesium as just another mineral found in the body, it is actually extremely important to a variety of different mechanisms. In fact, magnesium is involved in over 300 different enzymatic reactions. This includes, but is not limited to, bone strength, immune health, muscle function, heart health, energy levels, and the regulation of blood pressure. You are probably wondering, "What does any of this have to do with my weight loss goals?". One of the major roles of magnesium is helping in the regulation of blood sugar and insulin levels. In turn without the proper levels of insulin, glucose may be stored as fat rather than burned as energy. Magnesium has also been found to aid in relieving water retention. We often hear from patients that they feel bloated and cannot tell if the weight we are recording is their true weight or reflective of being swollen. Magnesium helps to regulate fluid balance within your body. With a healthy level of magnesium you can feel more confident when you walk in the door for your weekly weigh-ins knowing what we weigh is more likely a true measurement. Finally let's talk about stress. Patients come in knowing that they stuck to the program perfectly that week and become discouraged when they see that they didn't end up losing weight. Come to find out they had an incredibly stressful week and that is when we know; it was the stress that kept you from losing the weight. When you are under stress your body releases a hormone called cortisol which slows down your metabolism. But never fear! Magnesium is here! Research suggests that magnesium helps in the regulation of cortisol and therefore helps you combat those stressful weeks that keep you from losing weight. Now all of this is fine and dandy, but you need to know where to get your magnesium. Magnesium is found in fiber rich foods such as vegetables. It can also be found in unfiltered water, or "hard" water. Magnesium supplements are also available at the pharmacy. I could go on and on about what else magnesium does for your body but I'll leave you with what I have gone over so far so you can absorb just how much magnesium aids in your weight loss.

Sincerely,

Meagan, your friendly Weigh Station pharmacy technician.

Sources: [Mr. Vitamins](#) and the [National Institutes of Health](#)

Recipe of the Month

SALMON OVER SPINACH RISOTTO

Makes 4 serving



Ingredients

- 4 (4 ounce) Atlantic salmon filets
- Kosher salt and ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, divided
- 4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ stick) unsalted butter, divided
- 8 ounces spinach, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ small yellow onion, chopped
- 1 small stalk celery, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium head cauliflower, cored and florets grated
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fish stock
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup heavy cream
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese (about $\frac{3}{4}$ ounce)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F. Season the salmon generously with salt, pepper, and 1 tablespoon of the dill.
2. Preheat a cast-iron skillet or other oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Heat 2 tablespoons of the butter in the skillet, then place the salmon in the pan, skin side down, and sear 3 to 4 minutes. While searing, use a

spoon to continuously baste the salmon with butter. Flip the salmon over, then transfer the skillet to the oven and bake for 5 to 7 minutes, until the fish flakes and a thermometer reads 145°F when inserted in the thickest part of the filet.

3. While the salmon is baking, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter in a saute pan over medium heat. Add the spinach, onion, and celery and cook for 2 minutes, then add the cauliflower and saute for 3 minutes. Add the garlic, remaining tablespoon of dill, and fish stock and simmer until the stock has evaporated and the cauliflower resembles rice, about 5 minutes.
4. Add the heavy cream and Parmesan to the risotto and stir until the cream has reduced by about three-quarters, about 2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Divide the risotto among 4 plates and top each plate with a piece of salmon. Store leftovers in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 4 days.