

Lose 10 Pounds without missing a bite

New Year's Resolution diets are all over the magazines, the newspapers, the television and the Internet. And why not? A fresh new year is the perfect time to start a healthy diet and to trim your waistline. Unfortunately, for most of us, February brings a chill to even our best intentions.

Despite popular belief, losing weight is not about willpower - depriving yourself of those treasured carbs. Successful weight management simply takes planning. If you plan your meals ahead of time and buy all the right groceries, healthy eating becomes the easy choice. You won't eat what you don't buy.

These 10 simple goals will get your diet into shape - without Calorie counting, fad dieting, starving yourself or depriving yourself of your favorite foods.

- (1) Plan your meals with a weekly grocery-shopping list - and stick to it! A list helps you to stock up on healthy snacks and stops you from putting junk food in your cart.
- (2) Eat breakfast every morning. Eating a balanced breakfast kick starts your metabolism (you burn more fat) and will give you more energy during the day.
- (3) Brown bag it! Packing your lunch saves calories and money. Anything from a chicken sandwich to chili soup with fruit/yogurt will do the trick.
- (4) Drink water, skip the juice or pop. A can of coke has 140 Calories, the same amount of orange juice has 170 Calories – 2 of these every day will put on 3 pounds of fat a month!
- (5) Have a salad with dinner. You'll get your veggies and vitamins, plus it also fills you up before the fatty appetizers and main course arrive!
- (6) Don't buy junk food (and hide your car keys after 7pm!). Out of sight, out of mind - you won't be tempted if it is not there. Depend on good planning, not strong willpower!
- (7) Serve yourself only one scoop! One scoop of rice, pasta, casserole or one piece of bread. If you are still hungry, make a bigger salad - it doesn't keep well, you'll want to finish it!
- (8) Limit alcohol to moderate amounts. One glass of wine, a bottle of beer and 1.5 ounces of any hard liquor each have about 120 Calories. Just two beers a night will pack on 2 pounds in a month! On special occasions, alternate your favorite alcoholic beverage with a soda water and a slice of lime between each drink.
- (9) Work up a sweat for one hour every day! Exercise helps you burn fat and build muscle tone. Join a fitness class, walk with a friend or try snowshoeing!
- (10) Reward yourself with a treat once a week. What's your favourite "cheat" to look forward to - fries, pizza or chocolate? Stick to a small amount once a week. You won't gain weight, and you won't get bored with your diet.

Retiring early and fitting into your old shorts by summertime, have one thing in common – they both require good planning ahead. Set your goal, make your list and stick to it. With all of the great-tasting, low-calorie options lining grocery store shelves these days, it's never been easier to "fit" into those shorts. Simple goals, for example "have a piece of fruit with lunch," are a great place to start. Keep a record of your progress in your agenda, with a little check mark on the days that you achieve your goals. The best news; retiring early is so much more fun when you are fit!

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