

'Dieting could make you fatter'

'Low-calorie diets may cause muscle loss'

By Maria Gonet
Nutritionist

IT is really remarkable that with all the hundreds of fast weight loss products on the market today and specialists promising fast weight loss, people are actually getting fatter. Wouldn't you think that if one could buy (no matter how expensive) fast weight losing product, which delivers what promises, most of the people would be slim as most of the people have the money. Similarly if all the available to us fast losing diets worked, we would by now live in the all slim-body land. As this is not the case I dare to tell you that "all diets that are below the essential energy requirement (fast losing diets) of your body are a guaranteed recipe for failure."

Most popular diet books and weight-loss programmes seen to be designed to distort your nutrition and promote disease. They are so opposed to human physiology that a cynic might conclude, their main objective is to keep one coming back repeatedly to highly profitable and terribly unsuccessful weight-loss schemes for the rest of their lives.

Analysis of twelve popular diets by Dr Paul Chance of Rutgers University shows that all of them rely on reducing your calories to the point where the amount of food eaten is seriously deficient in essential nutrients. One of these famous diets for example, provides one-quarter of the RDA (recommended daily allowance) for zinc, only one-third of the RDA for calcium, half the RDA for niacin and riboflavin, and deficient amounts of multiple other nutrients. No one can be healthy on such regimens.

Low-calorie diets not only deprive your body of nutrients, they also cause devastating muscle loss. Nutrition scientists have known for decades that re-

ducing calories to 800-1200 per day, which is below the body's essential energy requirement to maintain vital functions, causes you to cannibalize your own muscle for fuel. On these diets, muscle provides up to 45 per cent of the energy deficit. If the deficit in the essential energy requirement is 500 calories per day, then up to 225 calories will come from muscle breakdown. In only four weeks on such a diet, you can lose 3, 5 lbs of vital muscle.

Why is muscle so important? The adipose cells that store body-fat have little metabolic activity and burn very few calories. Fat sits like dead-weight, until it is used for fuel. Muscle is always in motion. Muscles are in constant dynamic tension to hold up your skeleton and enable you to do every movement you make.

But much more than that, muscle is the engine of your body where almost all your energy is created by burning of fats, carbohydrates, and proteins in the mitochondria of each and every cell. Studies show that even an ounce of muscle lost, lowers your basal metabolic rate of fuel consumption, and reduces your ability to burn bodyfat.

For most people, long standing, wrong nutritional habits are difficult to change and most of them want fast fix, not considering any long term consequences. The average consumer does not know (or presumably does not care) that they are losing muscle along with the fat. All they want is weight off now. Promising rapid weight loss, the weight loss industry continues to push low calories confections and accessories and preventing people from changing their wrong eating habits and developing healthy lifestyle.

The second commercial hook known to everyone in the business, is that rapid fat

loss means guaranteed fat regain, setting up the customer for the essential repeat business. The physiology of it all has been known for fifty years. Rapid fat loss alerts your body's potent defenses of its energy reserve. It immediately increases the quantity and activity of an enzyme called lipoprotein lipase, its main mechanism for collecting digested fat from your bloodstream and stuffing it into fat cells.

So lipoprotein lipase starts grabbing every molecule of fat, even stopping your body using it for energy. You have to burn even more muscle to make up the deficit. But muscle is harder and dirtier for the body to burn than fat (after all it is your basic structure). So your metabolism slows down, immediately reducing your ability to burn fat. You also get a build-up of toxic wastes from burning proteins, which makes you sick and cranky. This activity does nothing to curb your appetite.

So you also grow progressively more ravenous. When you can't stand the discomfort any longer and succumb to real food, lipoprotein lipase has become so efficient that you can regain six weeks of painful fat loss in almost as many days.

The big problem is, you don't regain any of the lost muscle. This loss reduces your ability to burn the fat you have, and sets you up for further fat gain.



Maria Gonet is a nutritionist with the Altaf Al-Essa Counselling Services, Tel: 5715413 or 5715410.



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