

RJ Ahmann Company Prevention Newsletter



...for the health and well-being of you and your family.

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Fad diets have been around for decades. New ones surface regularly while some older ones fall in and out of popularity.

They become popular because most promote quick weight-loss solutions and make it easy to reach short-term weight-loss goals.

And every year Americans spend billions of dollars on weight-loss programs and products, looking for a cure to help them magically shed pounds effortlessly in an attempt to have movie star bodies.

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Fad Diets: What's all the Hype About?

Learn to Recognize Fad Diets:

By the time you read this, there may already be a new best-selling fad diet book out on the market. Fad diets come and go, but can generally be defined as a weight-loss plan or aid that promises dramatic results. As a general rule of thumb, diets or diet products can be considered fad if they fit any of the criteria below:

1. Claim to help you lose weight very quickly, more than 1 -2 pounds per week.
2. Promise you will lose weight and keep it off without giving up fatty foods or starting an exercise program.
3. Base their claims only on “before and after” photos.
4. Offer testimonies from clients or “experts” in weight loss, science, or nutrition — they are more than likely just being paid to act the part.
5. Draw simple solutions from complex medical research.
6. Limit your food choices and do not encourage you to get balanced nutrition by eating a variety of foods.
7. Require you to spend a lot of money on such things as seminars, pills, or prepackaged meals in order for the plan to work.

The following pages explain and compare some of the most popular fad diets available today, because with so many available, understanding each one can become overwhelming.

*“If a diet
sounds too
good to be
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The Atkins Diet Overview:

Atkins provides a series of dietary phases. The first phase is called the "Induction" Phase and it's during these 14 days dieters are to follow detailed instructions exactly. The point of this phase is to kick-start the body into lipolysis/ketosis, during which the metabolism can be switched to one that primarily burns fat for energy.

During Phase Two, the diet becomes less restrictive and more appetizing mainly by increasing the allowable vegetables and raising carbohydrate levels. When dieters approach their weight goal, they establish their "critical carbohydrate level" for maintenance, which is the highest number of grams of carbohydrates per day they can eat, without beginning to gain back their lost weight.

Eating options for Atkins dieters places no limit on the amount of saturated-fat-laden products, such as meat, cheese, eggs, butter, and oils consumed each day. Large amounts of these foods are advocated and encouraged, without the need to count calories or exercise.

A limited amount of carbohydrates can be introduced in Phase Two, but Atkins dieters should still deter from eating cake, potatoes, pasta, and sweets. Fruit and dairy are also extremely limited.

The South Beach Diet Overview:

South Beach is described as "neither low-fat nor low-carbohydrate," but rather a method that teaches dieters to rely on the "right" carbohydrates and the "right" fats.

Similar to Atkins, this plan is divided into phases. Phase One lasts 14 days and is the strictest by totally eliminating fruit, bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, sugar, alcohol, fast food, and baked goods from the diet. Its goal is to promote eating three meals a day so that dieters aren't left feeling hungry and cravings for starches and sweets are eliminated. Phase Two allows gradual reintroductions of foods like pasta, bread, fruit, and cereal, although dieters can't eat them all at once or in excess. Phase Two lasts until dieters reach their weight loss goal and are ready to move into Phase Three, which is all about maintenance, and is considered more of a "way of life," than a phase.

Eating options for South Beach dieters includes avoiding highly processed carbohydrates found in baked goods, breads, snacks, and soft drinks, as well as being cautioned against low-fat prepared foods, which only replaces fats with carbohydrates. To compensate for the overall cut in carbohydrates, South Beach dieters are allowed ample fats and animal proteins in meals such as chicken, turkey, and fish, along with nuts, milk, cheeses, and yogurt.

Also similar to Atkins, exercise and calorie counting are not required to lose weight with the South Beach diet.

The Zone Perfect Diet Overview:

The Zone urges dieters to view food as the body's medicine, rather than an object of pleasure or means to satisfy hunger. Dieters are urged to follow the ideal ratio of

carbohydrates, proteins, and fats: 40-30-30, and to eat at least five times a day, which should include three meals and two snacks.

Eating options for Zone dieters includes a variety of ZonePerfect Nutrition products; however, it is not essential to purchase special food to follow the Zone diet plan. Dieters are urged to eat the "proper ratio" of low-density carbohydrates, dietary fat and protein, and avoid refined carbohydrates and use their own hand as their guide. For example, a serving of protein should be about the size and thickness of one's palm. And since the Zone classifies carbohydrates as either favorable or unfavorable; if a dieter chooses favorable carbohydrates, they are allowed two "big, loose fists" worth of it. But if they choose an unfavorable carbohydrate like pasta, the portion is only as large as one "tight fist."

While no food is absolutely banned, Zone dieters are urged to keep unfavorable carbohydrates like bread, pasta, and potatoes to 25 percent or less of their total carbohydrate allotment, and to consume caffeine as little as possible.

Besides the 40-30-30 concept, and different from Atkins and South Beach, another key component in the Zone diet is daily exercise. Aerobic and anaerobic activity is highly recommended.

Dr. Phil Diet – The Shape Up! Plan Overview:

The Shape Up! Plan is characterized as a balanced approach to weight management, consisting of high fiber foods — including complex carbohydrates, whole grains, fruits, and vegetables — balanced with lean protein and healthy fats.

The plan emphasizes seven key points:

1. Right thinking for self control
2. Healing feelings, the key to emotional control
3. No fail environment
4. Mastery over food and impulse eating
5. High-response cost, high-yield nutrition
6. Intentional exercise
7. Your circle of support

A main principle of this plan is the "high-response-cost, high-yield foods" concept. According to Dr. Phil, this means that an ideal food is a sunflower seed because several steps must be taken before calories are actually ingested in comparison to a bean burrito with sour cream, which is easily eaten with minimal effort.

The plan urges dieters to watch their portion sizes, load up on foods that are high in nutrients and fiber, and pick foods that take some work to consume such as broccoli, shelled peanuts, and fish. Also, similar to the Zone diet plan, Shape Up! recommends and encourages vigorous exercise for 20 minutes, at least three times a week.

No food is forbidden, but fast food, and food that is easily consumed should be avoided or significantly reduced. In addition, the plan recommends keeping troublesome foods, such as cookies and potato chips, off the shopping list and replaced by veggies and other healthy snacks.

Resources available:

For more information on these fad diets and more, check out the recommended links below:

- **The American Dietetic Association (ADA):** <http://www.eatright.org/Public>
With nearly 70,000 members, the American Dietetic Association is the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals promoting optimal nutrition, health, and well-being.
- **The Diet Channel:** <http://www.thedietchannel.com/index.htm>
This Web site provides expertise on weight loss, sports nutrition, low fat and heart healthy diets, diet and cancer, preventative nutrition, and a healthy lifestyle. Contains links to over 600 information packed diet articles.