



Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter 1 – Anatomy of the Elbow and Arm

Chapter 2 - What is Tennis Elbow?

Chapter 3 - Tennis Elbow Activities

Chapter 4 - Dangerous Movements

Chapter 5 - R.I.C.E. Principles

Chapter 6 - 7 Simple Steps

Chapter 7 - Bonus #1 – Top Exercise to Prevent Relapse

Chapter 8 - Bonus #2 - Dangers of Anti-Inflammatories

Chapter 9 - Bonus #3 – Audio Recording with Tennis Elbow Sufferer

Chapter 10 - Bonus #4 – Audio Interview Transcript

Chapter 11 – Bonus#5 – Step-by-Step Videos

Chapter 12 – Bonus #6 – Personalized Exercise Journal

Conclusion

Introduction

Welcome to Tennis Elbow Secrets Revealed! My name is Geoff Hunt and I am a personal trainer in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. I have provided many years of personal training to a wide variety of clients as well as working extensively as a consultant to health centers on nutrition and exercise.

My main reason for writing this eBook is because like millions of people around the world, I suffered from Tennis Elbow for 7 years. The difference is that I am a survivor! Perhaps, like many you, I was not aware that I even had tennis elbow until I did some research into the pain and discomfort I was experiencing in my right arm. The pain started out as a dull pain but progressively got worse over time. There came a point where I could not even lift or carry a simple grocery bag! It was then I knew there was something serious going on and had to take action if I wanted to get control over this pain and discomfort. After all, I was at the ripe old age of 26.

I tried everything under the sun to treat my tennis elbow. Over 7 years of tennis elbow pain suffering, I literally spent \$789.97 on physiotherapy, anti-inflammatories, specialized rehab exercise equipment, massage therapy and acupuncture. None of it worked. I talked with a trusted family member, who happens to be a doctor and expressed my frustration of trying to find a solution to my tennis elbow pain. He was not much help as he could only recommend physiotherapy. I was on my own but determined to find the solution.

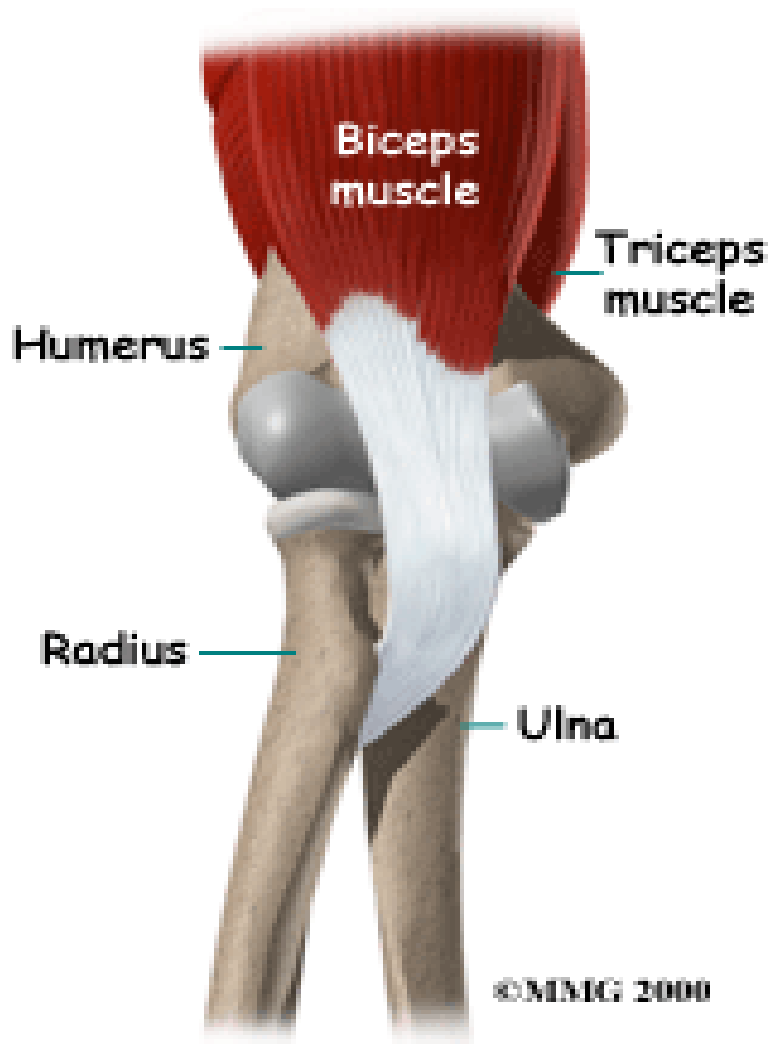
When you have tennis elbow, simple tasks such as using a screwdriver, hammering a nail, raking leaves, snow shoveling and sometimes painting became unbearable and impossible to complete. I knew I had to take aggressive action in order to beat this tennis elbow. After many years of research, studying and documenting, I have come up with a simple tennis elbow system that will get you back in shape in no time at all. The best thing about my system is that anyone can perform these activities in the comfort of their own home and save hundreds of dollars on physiotherapy, medical bills, prescription medication and anti-inflammatories.

I am revealing this extremely important information to you today! The time is now for you to implement the exact strategies in this eBook so you can get back to all the everyday activities that you have put on the

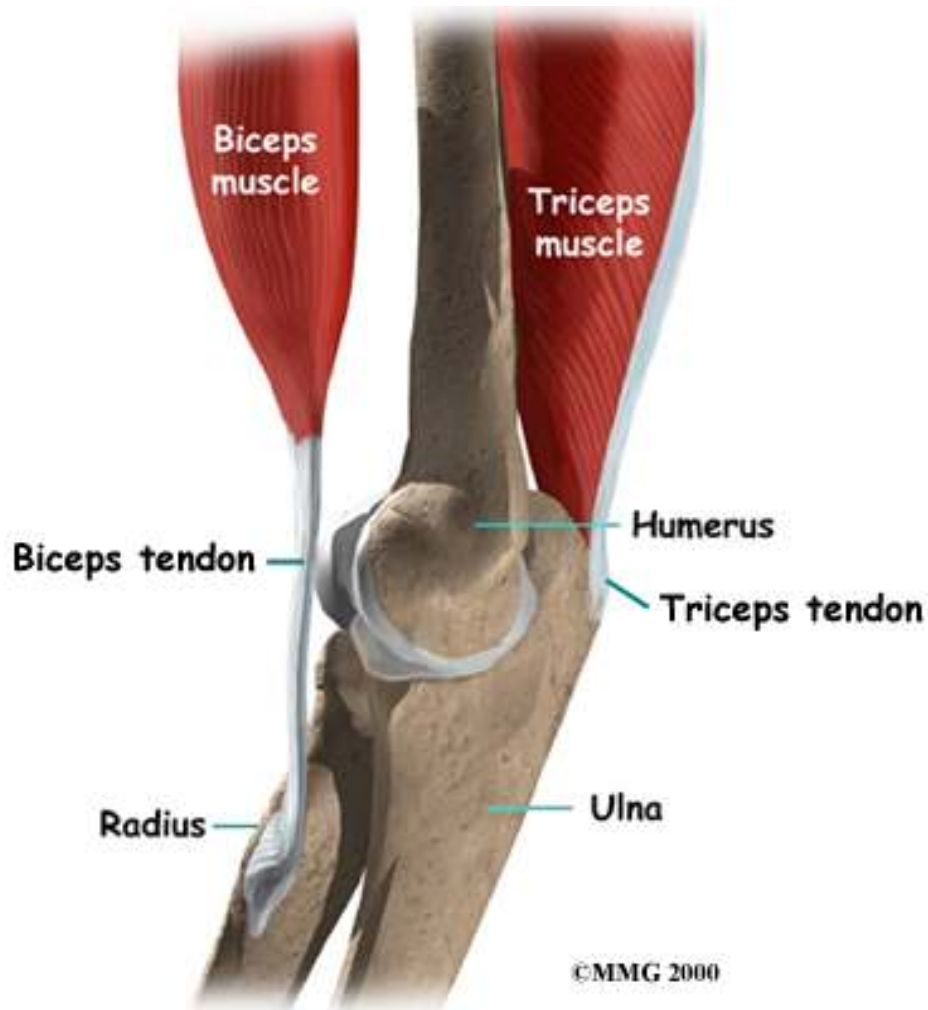
shelf because of your tennis elbow suffering. I am confident you will benefit greatly from this eBook and my tennis elbow system. It is now up to you to take action! Tennis elbow relief is finally here. Enjoy!

Chapter 1 – Anatomy of the Elbow and Arm

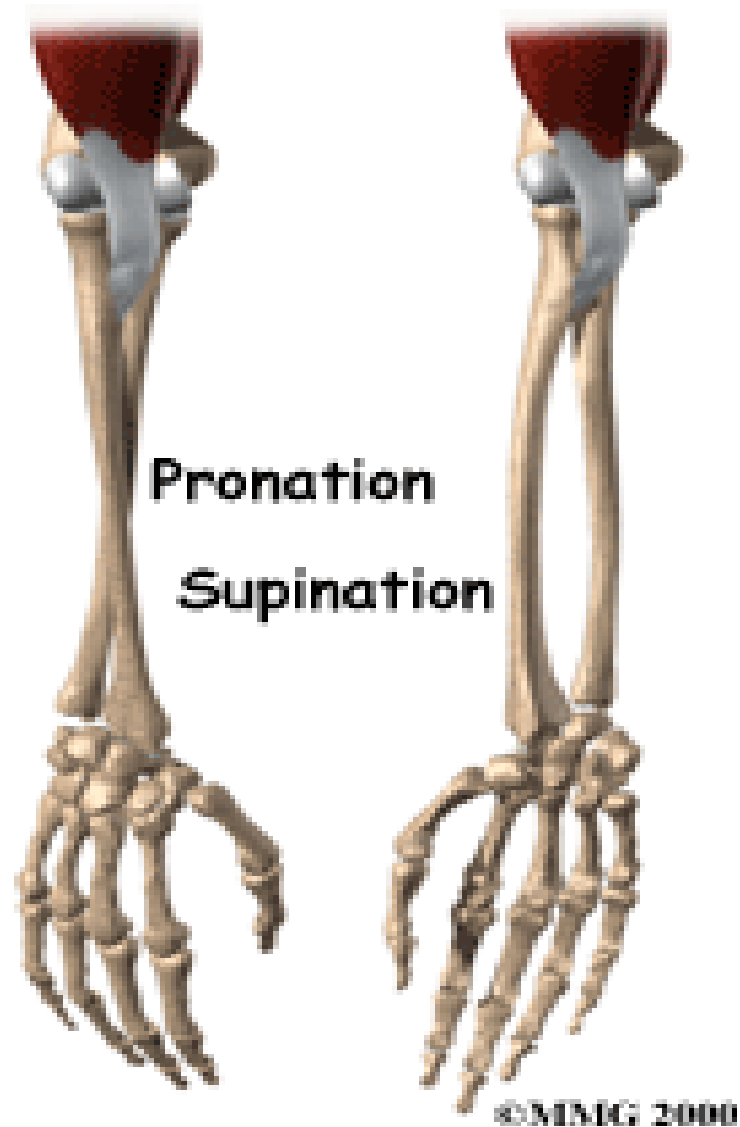
The elbow is what is referred to as a hinge joint. Articular cartilage encapsulates cushions and protects the surface area of the elbow joint. The largest muscle of the arm, the tricep, attaches to a point on the ulna called the olecranon. When the tricep contracts, the elbow extends and your arm becomes straight. On the contrary, when you flex your bicep, your tricep shortens and your elbow is forced to bend.



Bones such as the humerus(upper arm bone), ulna and radius(forearm bones) meet to form the elbow joint. The actual hinge movement and motion of the elbow joint is the ulna bone moving. A portion of the radius bone sits against the humerus bone which allows the forearm bone to twist and turn.



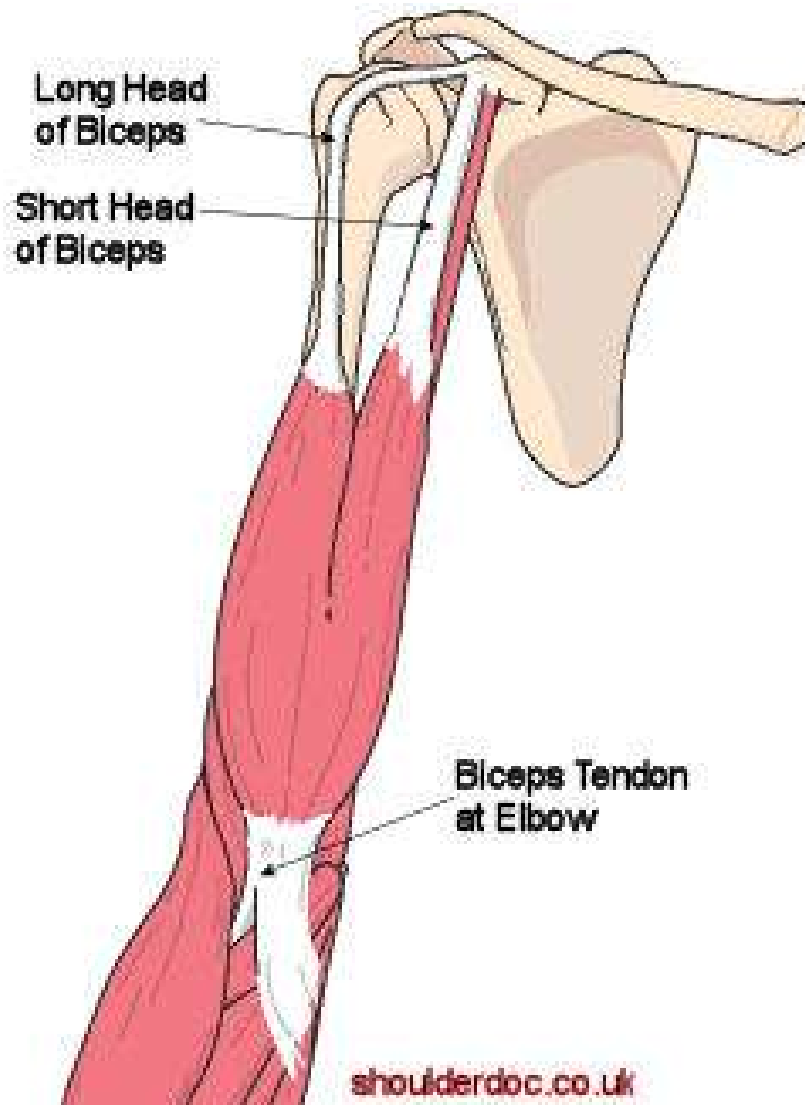
The twisting and turning motion of the forearm is referred to as Pronation and supination. More specifically, Pronation is when you turn your palm facing down. Supination is when you twist or turn your forearm as to your palm facing upwards.



The Bicep Muscle

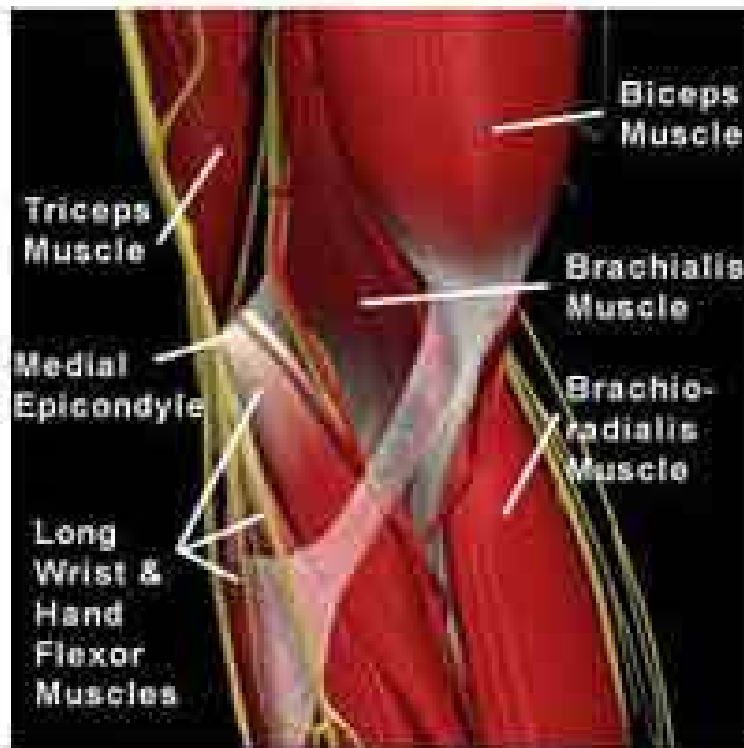
The bicep muscle comprises of about 1/3 of your upper arm muscle. Its origin is at the scapula/shoulder blade near the shoulder joint. The bicep muscles second attachment point is at one of the two forearm bones, the radius.

The term “bicep” refers to the two heads of the muscle. The top head originates at the glenoid fossae and the short head at the coracoid process. The primary function of the bicep is elbow flexion; in other words, to bend your arm upwards towards your body. This movement is assisted by two other muscles, Brachialis and Brachio-Radialis.



A secondary function of the bicep muscle is supination of the forearm.

Left Elbow (Anterior View)



The Brachialis muscle originates at the lower half of the upper arm (humerus), and inserts onto the other forearm bone called the Ulna at the Caronoid Process, its action is flexion of the elbow joint.

Brachio-Radialis aids in the flexion of your elbow and the rotation of your lower arm from a palms down (pronation) position to palms up (supination) and vice-versa.

The Tricep Muscle

The triceps Brachia muscle is a key muscle to proper arm function and is the main muscle responsible for extension of the arm at the elbow. A strain to the triceps muscle can be a serious injury and if not treated properly can put you out of commission for awhile.

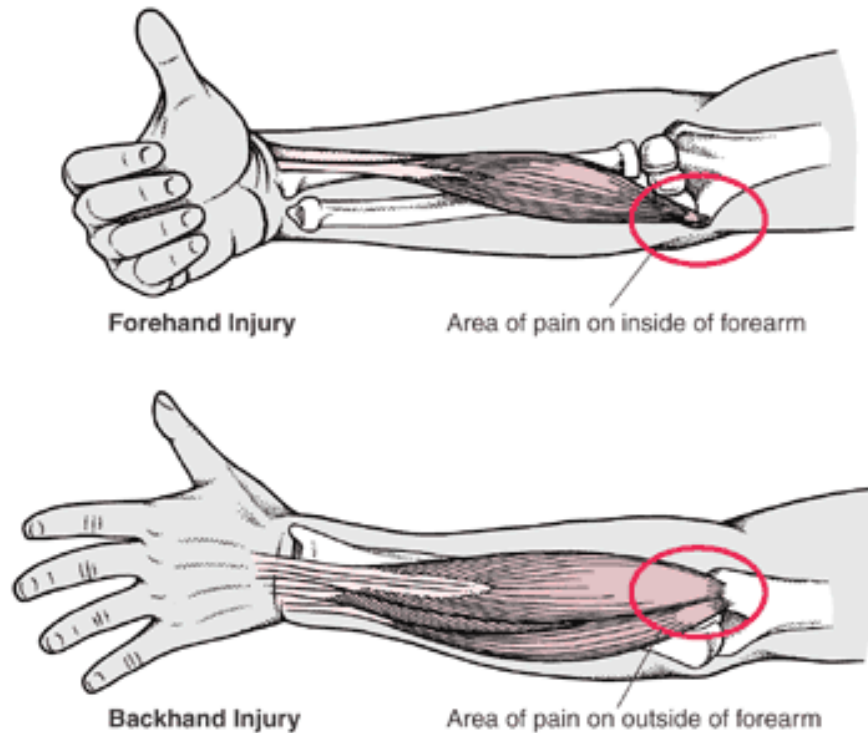


Chapter 2

What is Tennis Elbow?

The definition of Tennis Elbow in Webster's dictionary is "inflammation and pain over the outer side of the elbow usually resulting from excessive strain on and twisting of the forearm". In simple layman terms, the muscles in the forearm that are responsible in moving the

wrist and fingers attach to a tendon that is connected to the bone structure in and around the elbow area. If you reach over to your elbow with your opposite hand and feel a little bump towards the top of your elbow north of the actual elbow, this is actually where the inflammation starts.



Tennis elbow sufferers frequently report pain on the top, outer region of the elbow. The pain may travel down the forearm and sometimes into the hand and even the fingers. Any sort of activity that involves grasping may be painful. For example, picking up a briefcase or hammer, tennis elbow sufferers feel discomfort in something that sounds so simple but can be very painful if left untreated.

Some tennis elbow pain sufferers report not even being aware of how they got tennis elbow in the first place. I ask them how they got Tennis elbow and for the most part they answer with, "I have no idea. One day I made a motion to grasp, grip or pick something up and I felt a sharp pain shoot down my arm."

For many sufferers, the root cause can be traced back to a repetitive motion that they perform on a regular basis. The problem is that they are not aware that the movement they are routinely performing is of a high risk nature.

Chapter 3 - Tennis Elbow Activities

Not all activities promote tennis elbow. Nevertheless, there are certain activities that are more likely to aid in the development of tennis elbow over many years. There are specific movements that each one of these activities below has in common.

They all involve in some way or another, a tight grip with the fingers and hand. The other is the rotation of the elbow with a forward or backward motion with of course the arm bent.

After numerous months of research, I have concluded that the following activities are "high risk" in the development of tennis elbow. If you frequently participate in these activities, this is a red flag of why you are experiencing pain and discomfort in your elbow and forearm.

The first activity is participating in any type of racquet sport; sports such as Tennis, racquetball, squash, and even fencing. These sports promote tennis elbow because of the nature and intensity of the grip needed to perform and maintain over an extended period of time. The excessive strain on the forearm and tendons that connect the muscle to the elbow break down over time resulting in small tears to tendons and muscles.

Plumbing is another high risk activity. The reason plumbing is a common tennis elbow contributor is because again of the constant gripping and force needed to crank on a wrench. The pressure needed to loosen bolts and tighten plumbing accessories puts an intense strain on the tendons and muscles from the elbow all the way to the hands and fingers.

An activity that just about everyone has to do at least once a year, usually in the Fall is Raking. A simple and sometimes enjoyable event the constant tight gripping on the rake and the rotation on the elbow causes stress on the forearm muscles resulting in small tears and inflammation. You will not develop tennis elbow simply by raking an hour or 2 a day for 2 or 3 days but for example, a landscaper who uses a rake or shovel for 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year is more likely to develop tennis elbow.

The fourth activity, again, we've all done it, some people voluntarily and some not so willingly is painting. Everyone has painted at some point; whether it's a bedroom, fence, small deck or patio. For individuals who paint for a living or as a hobby, they are constantly at risk of developing Tennis Elbow. I'm sure some painters are better than others but painting requires a steady hand with precision stroking. You need a flexible wrist, a sharp eye and a tight grip. The tight grip and elbow rotation on the rake handle contributes to the Tennis Elbow. Paint rolling on a ceiling is another high risk activity that promotes tennis elbow. This is because the tendons that enable you to stretch back your fingers and wrists (known as the extensor tendons) all come together fixed into the elbow region. Repeated movements of the wrist, especially those meeting resistance, such as spiking volleyball, will make your tennis elbow worse.

Last but not least is food preparation with a knife. We all prep food with knives, some more so than others. It has been found that people who are at higher risk of developing Tennis Elbow are people who cut and butcher meat and meat products. Their job requires them to grip tightly on the knife handle and therefore repetitive strain on the forearm, elbow, hands and fingers. Jobs such as a butcher frequently report complications and symptoms of tennis elbow.

Although your daily routine may or may not involve one of the specific activities, a combination of more than one of them together would put you at higher risk. Use pain as your guide as to whether you are overdoing it. Everything in moderation applies to all life's aspects.

Chapter 4 - Dangerous Movements

The most dangerous movements that can cause tennis elbow are movements that cause a substantial amount of force. The most dangerous involves rotating your elbow while your wrist is bent or a jerky throwing movement. An example of this would be throwing any type of ball. Throwing a ball requires a tight grip with your fingers and then the forward throwing motion of your arm where your elbow rotates causes strain on the elbow. Performing this motion regularly especially for baseball pitchers can lead to onset tennis elbow.

Another dangerous movement involves a tight grip on something while rotating your wrist. The classic example of this is using a screwdriver. We've all used a screwdriver and we've all suffered through trying to drive or crank a 2 inch screw into a piece of wood or wall. The burning sensation you feel in your forearm that leads to your elbow is how you develop tennis elbow. Imagine if you had to do this all day long in your job? One would expect to develop tennis elbow.

The next most dangerous movement that can lead to tennis elbow is hitting an object with your hand. An example of this would be playing volleyball. The forward motion of your hand and the downward motion of the arm and impact of the ball create a lot of force and tension on the tendons and muscles that spreads out from the hand through the forearm and into the elbow. Overtime you may start to get inflammation in your elbow and eventually develop tennis elbow.

Let me emphasize that these movements are dangerous when your arm is extended out in front of you or away from the body. The further you move your arm away from your body the more tension and stress is put on these tendons and muscles as there is a force put them.

Chapter 5 - R.I.C.E. Principles

I bet many of you have heard of the R.I.C.E. principle. It has been around and used for many years to treat various injuries, mostly muscle related tears, swelling and inflammation.

Because you are feeling pain you must deal with the damage that has been done to the tendons and muscles around the elbow joint and forearm muscles and flexors. This is the acute phase of an injury. Let's go through the R.I.C.E. principle:

R – R means Rest. I don't mean or expect you to be completely bed ridden at this point. I simply am referring to avoiding all activity that could potentially aggravate your injury. Complete rest may lead to the muscles seizing up on you which could lead to further damage and longer rehab time. You want to keep your elbow mobile and keep blood flowing to the tissues and muscles. This will aid in the healing process. Use pain as a guide to what you can and cannot do. At the slightest sign of pain, stop immediately.

I – I stands for ice. At the first sign of inflammation use ice. Preferably use an ice pak on your elbow wrapped in a tea towel, small towel or t-shirt. Never put ice directly on your skin as this may lead to tissue and skin damage. Ice cubes in a zip lock bag or a bag of frozen peas or corn will work just as well as an ice pak. Apply the ice to your elbow region for approximately 10-20 minutes, 3 times a day. When the area becomes numb, you should stop icing your elbow. Never ice an area of the body for longer than 30 minutes as you may be inflicting tissue and cell damage.

C – C is for compression. Use a bandage or wrap over the ice pack to help decrease swelling and inflammation. You should never tighten the bandage or wrap to the point of cutting off blood flow. You should not feel pain or a tingling sensation while using compression.

E – E is for elevate. Raise and rest your arm so that it is above the level of your heart. You can prop it up on a couple of pillows or on the arm of your couch. What you are trying to achieve here is to decrease the swelling in your elbow. By elevating your elbow there is less blood pooling and therefore you decrease the inflammation.

It sounds complicated but it is very easy but you must implement it in order to full recover from your tennis elbow injury and pain. The steps are simply but need to be followed. It is recommended that you implement the RICE principle every 4 to 6 hours for up to 48 hours after the injury. If you do not experience pain relief within 48 hours I recommend that you consult your doctor or hospital as there could possibly be something more serious going on like a broken bone.

Once you have completed the RICE principle and your elbow and muscles feel healthy enough, you want to start increasing strength and endurance in the tendons, ligaments and muscles around the elbow and forearm.

Tennis Elbow Stretching

In order to get the full benefit and results from the Tennis Elbow Secrets Revealed program, stretching **before** the 7 simple steps and exercises is vital to your success.

Please perform these exercises before you start with the exercises.

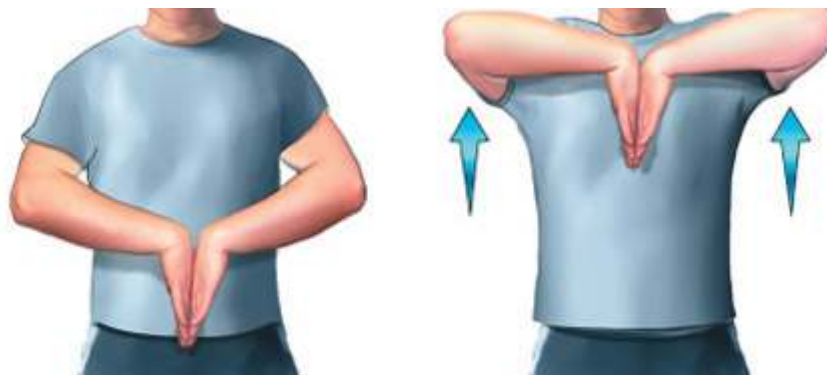
1. Prayer Stretch



How to perform the prayer stretch:

- Starting position is standing with your palms together in front of your chest, with finger tips at chin level.
- Slowly lower your hands toward your waistline, keeping your hands close to your body and your palms together until you feel a mild to moderate stretch under your forearms.
- Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 4 times.

2. Reverse Prayer Stretch



How to perform the reverse prayer stretch:

- Start with the backs of your hands together in front of you at your waistline, with your forearms parallel to the floor.
- Slowly bring your wrists up toward your face by bending your elbows until you feel a mild to moderate stretch in your forearms. Keep the backs of your hands together and your hands close to your body.
- Hold for 20 seconds. Repeat 4 times.

Chapter 6

Seven Simple Steps

These 7 simple steps were the secret to healing my tennis elbow for good. After 7 years of agonizing pain, blowing nearly \$800 on physio, gym memberships and anti-inflammatories; you name it, these 7 steps were the solution and answer to my tennis elbow.

In order to get the full benefits and maximum results from my tennis elbow system, I cannot emphasize enough the importance of implementing **All Seven Steps**. If you do not incorporate the seven steps in the order I have indicated below, your results may vary. Let's get started:

Important: Swelling and inflammation is part of the healing process, that's why it's so important to implement the RICE principles after the exercises.

STEP 1 – Forearm flexor and extensor stretching

From a standing or sitting position, extend and straighten the arm that you are experiencing the tennis elbow in out in front of you parallel to the floor with the palm of your hand facing up. With the other hand, reach out and grab the fingers of your hand and bend your hand downwards toward the floor. Remember to keep your arm as straight as possible and use only enough force to the point where you do not feel any pain. Continue and hold this stretch for approximately 20-30 seconds. Please follow along in the exercise journal for prescribed number of sets and repetitions.



Next, again with your arm extended straight out in front of you parallel to the floor but this time with your palm facing downwards toward the floor. With the other hand, reach out and grab the fingers of your hand and bend your hand downwards toward the floor. Remember to keep your arm as straight as possible and use only enough force to the point where you do not feel any pain. Continue and hold this stretch for approximately 20-30 seconds. Please follow along in the exercise journal for prescribed number of sets and repetitions.



STEP 2 – Wrist Flexion

For this exercise, you will need either a can of soup or for the stronger types a 1 liter of soda. Place a soup can or 1 liter of soda in your hand with palm facing upwards. Support your forearm at the edge of a table or on your knee so that only your hand can move. Bend the wrist up slowly go past parallel to the floor, and then lower slowly. Please follow along in the exercise journal for prescribed number of sets and repetitions. For those using the soup can, once you can easily perform 15 repetitions for 3 sets, you can then move on to the heavier 1 liter soda bottle.

Diagram 1A - Starting position for wrist flexion on coffee table.



Diagram 1B - Finishing position for wrist flexion on coffee table.



Diagram 2A - Starting position for wrist flexion using the arm rest of a computer chair.

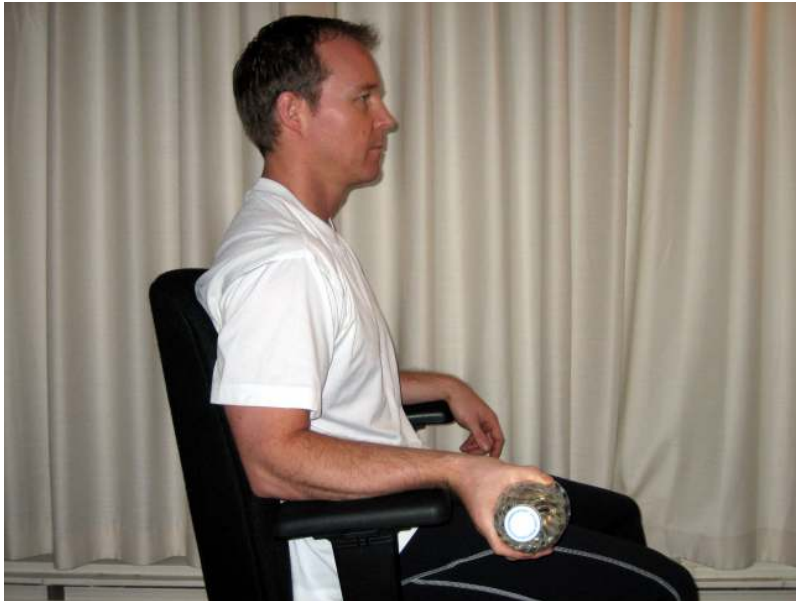
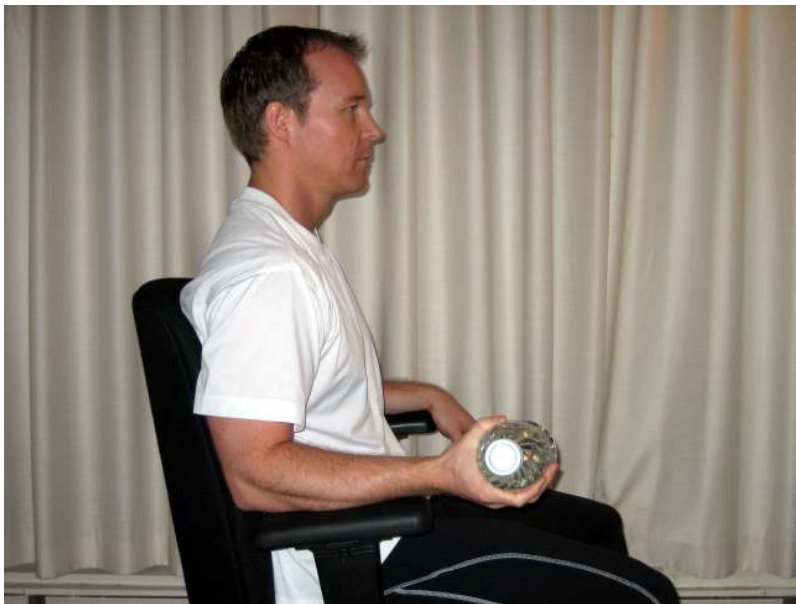


Diagram 2B - Finishing position for wrist flexion using the arm rest of a computer chair.



STEP 3 – Wrist Extension

For this exercise, you will again need the can of soup or a 1 liter of soda. Place a soup can or 1 liter of soda in your hand with palm facing downwards toward the floor. Support your forearm at the edge of a table or on your knee so that only your hand can move. Let the wrist down slowly go past parallel to almost 90 degrees with your forearm and then slowly come back up to parallel with the floor.

Please follow along in the exercise journal for prescribed number of sets and repetitions. For those using the soup can, once you can easily perform 15 repetitions for 3 sets, you can then move on to the heavier 1 liter soda bottle.

Diagram 3A - Starting position for wrist extension using a coffee table for support.



Diagram 3B - Finishing position for wrist extension using a coffee table for support.



Diagram 4A - Starting position for wrist extension using the arm of a computer chair for support.

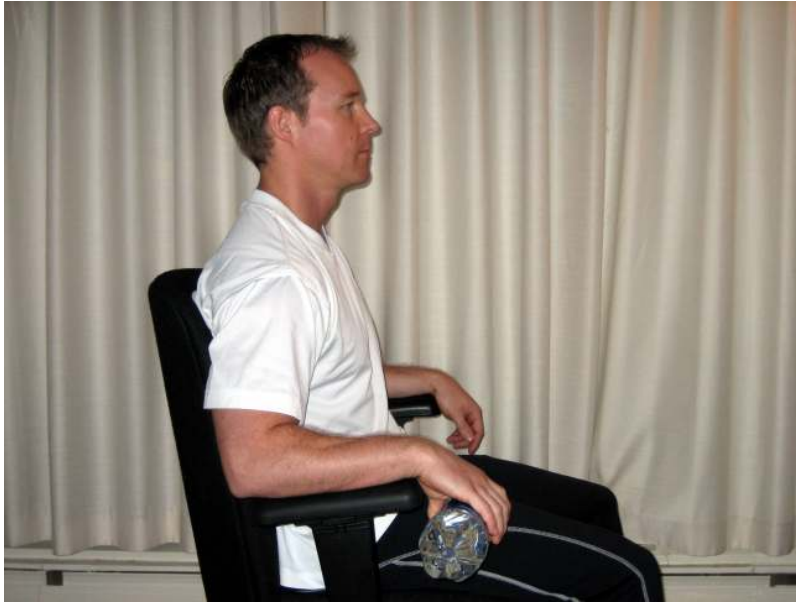
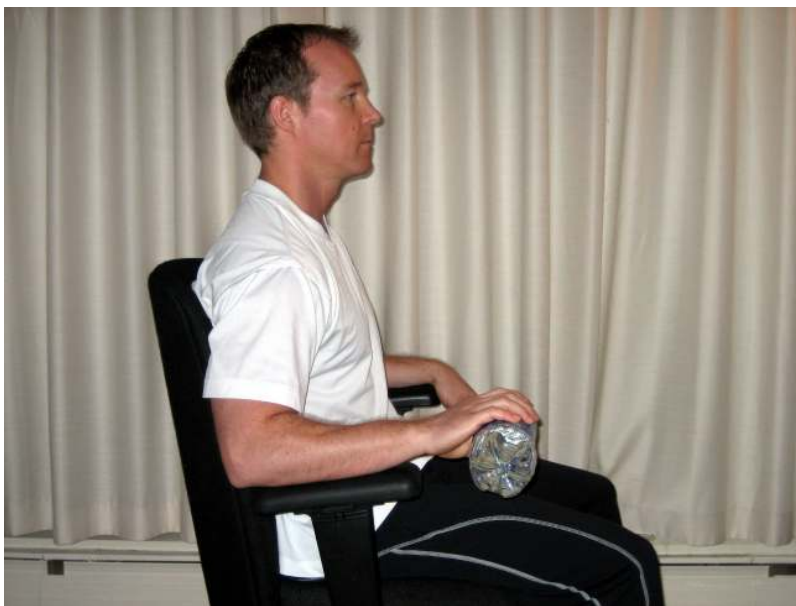


Diagram 4B - Finishing position for wrist extension using the arm of a computer chair for support.



STEP 4 – Forearm Pronation/Supination

For this exercise, I recommend you use a hammer, wrench, something that you can get a nice grip on. Once you have something in your hand with forearm supported by the arm of a chair, your knee or coffee table. Rotate hand to palm down position, return to start position (hammer perpendicular to floor), rotate to palm up position, repeat.

To increase or decrease the resistance, try moving your hand farther away or closer towards the head of the hammer. In other words, if you are grasping the hammer at the very end of the handle and the head of the hammer is the furthest away from your hand, then this will be the most challenging and greatest resistance for you. Please follow along in the exercise journal for prescribed number of sets and repetitions.

Diagram 5A - Forearm Pronation/Supination starting position for beginners.



Diagram 5B - Rotate to the left keeping your forearm on the arm of the chair.



Diagram 5C - Rotate back to the right keeping your forearm on the arm of the chair.



Diagram 6A - Forearm Pronation/Supination starting position for stronger, more advanced users.



Diagram 6B - Rotate to the left keeping your forearm on the arm of the chair.



Diagram 6C - Rotate back to the right keeping your forearm on the arm of the chair.



STEP 5 – Finger Extension

Interweave a thick rubber band around all five fingers. Keeping your elbow as straight as possible [but if you feel pain when you completely straighten your arm only straighten as far as you can without pain], try to straighten and spread your fingers outwards as if you were going to catch a softball. Hold for three seconds, then let your fingers relax naturally; do not close your hand completely. For added resistance, use a second rubber band. Repeat for 25 repetitions for 3 sets.

Diagram 7A - Staring position for Finger extension (Note: Do not let your fingers fully collapse or come together).

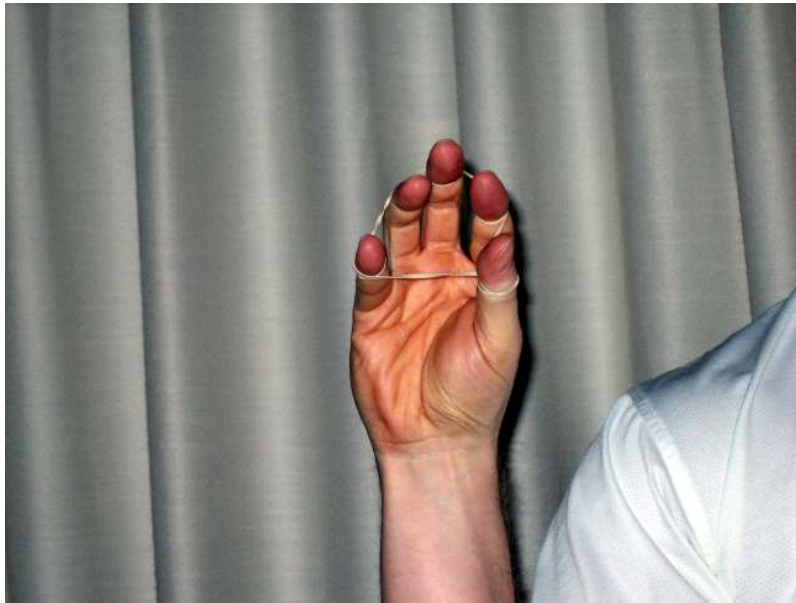


Diagram 7B - Finishing position for Finger extension (Note: Spread your fingers as wide as possible).



Step 6 – Broomstick Forearm Extension Exercise

For this exercise, all you need is a broomstick, a piece of rope or string about 2 feet long and your trusty water bottle.

Tie the string around the middle of the broomstick, you may need to wrap some tape so the string doesn't slip, and tie the other end of the string around a **full** water bottle.

Bring the broomstick up to parallel to the floor with your hands shoulder width apart. Slowly start winding the water bottle up towards the broomstick by rotating each wrist separately. Wind the water bottle all the way up and then reverse the action and wind it all the way down. Perform this exercise 2 times (up and down is considered 1 repetition).

Diagram 7A – Starting position



Diagram 7B – Half way there (Notice how right wrist is turned and left remains straight)



Diagram 7C – All the way up



Step 7 – Tennis Elbow FlexBar

For this exercise, you will need the tennis elbow flexbar (Don't have the flexbar?, you can **order one by clicking the link below**:

<http://www.on2url.com/app/adtrack.asp?MerchantID=140346&AdID=480130>

- Hold the flexbar in the hand of your arm that has tennis elbow. Make sure your wrist is in extension. (Your wrist is cocked to the right if it's your right arm.)



- Grasp other end of FlexBar with the other hand facing away.
- Keep involved wrist in extension. In this case, your right wrist.



- Twist the FlexBar by flexing the uninvolved wrist(in this case the left wrist), while keeping the involved wrist(the right wrist) in extension.
- This allows your involved wrist to be loaded with force.



- Bring both arms in front of body at shoulder level with elbows straight
- Keep involved wrist in full Extension(right wrist cocked towards the ceiling) and uninvolved wrist in full flexion(left wrist cocked down towards the floor).



- Slowly “untwist” the FlexBar allowing the involved wrist to move into flexion, while maintaining the flexed position of the uninvolved wrist
- This is an eccentric contraction of the involved wrist extensors
- Follow along in the online exercise journal for the number of sets and repetitions.



If you don't have the **Tennis Elbow FlexBar**, don't worry - you can **Order one** by clicking on the link below:

<http://www.on2url.com/app/adtrack.asp?MerchantID=140346&AdID=480130>

These are the 7 simple steps that anybody can do from the comfort of their own home and you should start to see results within the first few days. After all the research and money I have spent on tennis elbow, these 7 exercises and stretches combined with the RICE principle are guaranteed to get you back on track to a pain free life without tennis elbow.

Exercise and Workouts For A Happy Elbow

It is not uncommon for tennis elbow sufferers to routinely be involved with working out at a gym or fitness center. It's great that you are serious about your health and staying shape. When you are suffering from tennis elbow, the absolute worst exercises you can perform that could potentially make your tennis elbow worse and minimize the chances for recovery is working out with dumbbells!

The reason why dumbbells are dangerous is that they allow you to increase your range of motion which may put your elbow at an unnatural angle which puts excessive strain on the supporting tendons, ligaments and muscles that stabilize your elbow joint. If you consistently have poor exercise form or put your elbow joint in a compromising position, then you are doing more harm than good, all though your intentions may be good.

If you must workout and continue your gym routine, I highly recommend you stick to barbell exercises and avoid using dumbbells all together.

Below is a simple barbell exercise routine that I recommend you stick with:

Incline Bench Press



Set the incline bench at about a 45 degree angle. Sit on the bench with your feet flat on the floor a little more than shoulder width apart. Position your back firmly against the bench. Using a grip slightly wider than shoulder width, hold the bar over your upper chest with your arms straight. Slowly lower the bar and make slight contact with your upper chest area. Drive the weight straight up over your chest until your elbows are locked, or close to it.

Flat Bench Press



WHAT NOT TO DO



Lie on a flat bench and firmly position your feet flat on the floor a little more than shoulder width apart. Keep your back flat on the bench! Using a grip broader than shoulder width, hold the barbell above your body, then lower slowly to the middle of your chest. Without bouncing the weight off your chest, drive the barbell up over the middle of your chest until your arms are straight and your elbows are locked. Lower the bar down slowly.

BentArm Barbell PullOver



Lie on a bench, head over the end, with your feet flat on the floor. Hold bar with hands about 14" apart. Keep elbows in at all times! In a semi-circular motion, lower the bar to the floor slowly and as far as comfortable. Pull bar back using the same path. Keep your head down and do not raise your hips.

Bent Over Barbell Row



Position your feet at about shoulder width apart. Bend over so your back is as close to parallel to the floor as you can and hold bar with an overhand grip and with hands a little wider than shoulder width. Keep legs slightly bent. Hold bar at arm's length straight down. Pull bar straight up to the lower part of your chest. Slowly lower bar back to starting position. Keep your head up and back straight at all times, and do NOT swing or use momentum to lift the weight!

Seated Barbell Military Press



Raise a barbell to your shoulders. Sit at the end of a bench, with your feet at about shoulder width, flat on the floor. Keep your chest high and your back straight. Press bar to arm's length overhead. Use a slow, steady motion, without swinging. Lower slowly to starting position

Barbell Front Raise



This exercise works your front delts. Stand with your feet about shoulder width, with your back straight and hips locked. Use a shoulder width grip. Start with the bar at arm's length against your upper thighs. Raise bar in a semicircular motion until it is directly overhead. Do now unlock elbows. Lower bar slowly back to starting position.

Standing Bicep Barbell Curl



Possibly the best biceps exercise! With your hands shoulder-width apart, grip a barbell with an underhand grip. Stand straight up with your shoulders squared and with your feet shoulder-width apart. Let the bar hang down at arm's length in front of you, with your arms, shoulders and hands in a straight line. WITHOUT leaning back or swinging the weight, curl the bar up toward your chest in an arc. Keep your elbows in the same place and close to your sides. Bring the weight up as high as you can and squeeze the biceps at the top. Lower the weight slowly, resisting all the way down until your arms are nearly straight.

Bicep Preacher Curl



Using a preacher curl bench and an EZ curl bar, make sure the seat is adjusted to the right height. When you sit, the seat should not be so low that the shoulders are elevated nor so high that you're hunched over the pad. Grasp the bar using a shoulder width grip. Curl the bar upward in an arc. As you begin, be careful not to swing or rock to get it moving. The goal is to make the exercise hard on the biceps. Curl the bar towards your chin, but keep in mind that the resistance is greater at the beginning of the rep. Go down SLOWLY and work the muscle on the way down as well

Seated Overhead Barbell Triceps Extension



Hold barbell or EZ Curl bar with your hands about 6 to 8 inches apart. Sit at the end of a flat bench with your feet firmly on the floor and your back straight. Raise bar overhead to arm's length. Lower bar behind your head in a semicircular motion until your forearms touch your biceps. Return to starting position. Your elbows and upper arms should NEVER move. Can also be done standing.

Lying Tricep Press



Sit on a flat bench holding an EZ-Curl bar with an overhand grip. Lie back so that the top of your head is even with the end of the bench. At the same time, extend your arms over your head so that the bar is directly over your eyes. Keep your elbows tight and your upper arms stationary throughout the exercise. Holding your upper arms in a fixed position (this is key); slowly lower the bar until it almost touches your forehead. Then press the bar back up in a slow, sweeping arc-like motion. At the finish, lock your elbows completely.

Close Grip Bench Press



Just like the flat bench barbell press but with your hands only 12 - 14" apart, centered over your body. Works more of the inner pectorals and triceps.

Chapter 7 – Bonus #1

The Top Exercise to prevent Tennis Elbow from Reoccurring

The best exercise you can do to help prevent your tennis elbow from coming back is to do the Ball squeeze, hold a tennis ball in your palm. Squeeze the ball firmly and hold for 3 seconds, then relax. Repeat until the muscles in your forearm are fatigued. Perform this exercise once a week.

Try keeping the tennis ball in areas around your workplace, desk or couch where it is easily accessible and it also serves as a reminder to prevent the tennis elbow from coming back.



Chapter 8 – Bonus #2

Possible Side Effects of taking Anti-Inflammatories



Many tennis elbow sufferers resort to consuming anti-inflammatory painkillers to alleviate pain associated with tennis elbow. Many are not aware of the possible dangers and side effects of regular usage of anti-inflammatory painkillers.

Anti-inflammatories can sometimes cause the lining of the stomach to bleed and over time a stomach ulcer may develop. Bleeding may be severe that it could be life-threatening. The elderly are more susceptible to this problem, but nonetheless it may occur in anybody. If you are taking anti-inflammatory painkillers and you develop abdominal pains, pass blood or black stools, or vomit blood, then you need to stop taking the anti-inflammatories and see a doctor.

You are at a higher risk of stomach bleeding if you are taking anti-inflammatories plus warfarin, steroids, or low-dose aspirin. These combinations of medicines should only be used if absolutely necessary or advised by your doctor.

Some people require an anti-inflammatory painkiller to ease pain because we all have different pain tolerances. I recommend you talk with your doctor because he/she may be able to prescribe another medication to protect the lining of the stomach from the effects of the

anti-inflammatory painkillers. This usually prevents bleeding and ulcers from developing if you take anti-inflammatory painkillers.

Usually, you should not take an anti-inflammatory painkiller if you have a past history of a peptic ulcer (duodenal or stomach ulcer) unless under the supervision of a doctor.

Asthma

It has been reported and documented that some people with asthma, symptoms such as wheeze or breathlessness could be made worse by anti-inflammatory painkillers. Seek medical help if your asthma suddenly becomes worse after taking an anti-inflammatory painkiller.

Some other side-effects which sometimes occur include: Nausea (feeling sick), diarrhea, rashes, headache, dizziness, nervousness, depression, drowsiness, insomnia (poor sleep), vertigo (dizziness), and tinnitus (noises in the ear). If one or more of these occur they will usually ease off if you stop taking the tablets. There are also a number of other uncommon side-effects - reference the leaflet in the pill packet for details.

Chapter 9 – Bonus #3

Audio Recording

As a fourth bonus to my tennis elbow eBook is a 30 minute audio recording that I did with a tennis elbow sufferer by the name of Jason Bax. Jason suffered from tennis elbow for many years and is now using my tennis elbow system to rehabilitate his tennis elbow back into shape.

Please click on the link below to listen to the audio recording. Depending on your internet connection speed, download times may vary:

http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/tennis_elbow_secrets.mp3

Chapter 10 - Bonus #4

Transcript of Audio Interview

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/TennisElbowSecretsaudio transcript.doc>

Chapter 11 – Bonus #5

7 Simple Steps Videos

Below are video clips of Steps 2, 3, 4 and 7 that you can use as a guide to using correct form when you are performing these exercises in the comfort of your own home. In order to get maximum results from these 7 simple steps, you need to have the correct form. Using these videos as a visual guide will ensure you have the correct form to getting your tennis elbow back in shape.

Click on each clip below to play the video:

Step #2A – Wrist Flexion

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/videos/wrist-flexion-videos/wrist-flexion-videos.html>

Step #3A – Wrist Extension

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/videos/wrist-extension-videos/wrist-extension-videos.html>

Step #4A – Forearm Pronation/Supination

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/videos/forearm-pronation-supination/forearm-pronation-supination.html>

Step #7A – Broomstick Forearm Extension

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/videos/broomstick-forearm-extension/broomstick-forearm-extension-exercise/broomstick-forearm-extension-exercise.html>

Step 7 – Tennis Elbow FlexBar

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/videos/flexbar-exercise.htm>

Chapter 12 - Bonus #6

Personalized Online Journal

To keep you on track to curing your tennis elbow from home, please download and follow the journal I have created for you. The journal plans out your week, with your exercises over a 12 week period. Please follow the journal and track your progress and success.

Important: If you are experiencing swelling and inflammation, stay with the RICE method and do not start the exercise program.

Click below to download your journal,

<http://www.tenniselbowtips.com/journal.xls>

Conclusion

You now have the knowledge, information and step by step process on how to combat your tennis elbow for good. The most important aspect of my tennis elbow system is to be pro-active with these steps. Be sure to follow the exercises and frequency schedule as indicated throughout my system. I cannot stress enough how important it is to follow my prescribed routine.

It has been my great pleasure in delivering this tennis elbow system for life to you. As a subscriber to my tennis elbow tips newsletter, I will keep you up to date with the latest news and research into tennis elbow. Keep checking your email for periodic updates from tenniselbowtips.com. If you have any feedback about what you have read or have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email at info@tenniselbowtips.com

I thank you very much for your interest and purchase of my tennis elbow system. It is now up to you to implement these steps today and cure your tennis elbow for good! I wish you nothing but success and health in the future.

To Your Health

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff Hunt', with a stylized, flowing script.

Geoff Hunt

Flab to Fab

A Step-By-Step Program To Your Success

Table of Contents

Topic Page No

Foreword
4

Introduction – Life is for Living
5

Part I: A Body for Life – to Love and Cherish

Chapter 1: Assess your Body
9

Chapter 2: Commit to Change!
13

Part II: Your Lifetime Journey – A Whole New Beginning

Chapter 3: What's Eating You?
16

Chapter 4: Supplements that Support
22

Chapter 5: Exercising Everyday
25

Part III: The First Four Weeks...Stay on Track

Chapter 6: Take pictures and start a journal... Very important! 29

Chapter 7: Week One... Why do I pee so much?
32

Chapter 8: Week Two... Will I always be this sore?
35

Chapter 9: Week Three... Am I really hitting those “10’s”?
37

Chapter 10: Week Four... Hang in there – Keep pushing!
40

Part IV: Midway Point Blues...Don’t Give Up

Chapter 11: Please... Throw your scale away!
44

Chapter 12: Week Five... Trick your body! **47**

Chapter 13: Week Six... Double-check your portions!
49

Chapter 14: Week Seven... Chug, you need that water H2O!
53

Chapter 15: Week Eight... 2/3 of the way, great job!
56

Part V: There’s the Finish Line...Keep Pushing Forward!

Chapter 16: Prepare for the “BIG” finish!
59

Chapter 17: Week Nine... Cut back on Carbs!
61

Chapter 18: Week Ten... Drink more water than ever!
64

Chapter 19: Week Eleven... Double the Cardio!
67

Chapter 20: Week Twelve... PUSH to the FINISH!
69

Part VI: Body For Life...You Did It!!

Chapter 21: Congratulations!
71

Conclusion – Reap the Benefits
73

Bonus I
Workout - Even When You Can't! 75

Bonus II
Tips to Speed up the Weight Loss 78

Bonus III
Breathe Strong and Lose Weight
81

Bonus IV
Diet Right – Fight Food Allergies
84

Foreword

Think about it—how many times have you stood before the mirror and liked what you see? Almost all the time there is dissatisfaction with the way your body looks. Either the thighs are too big, or the arms are too flabby or the waistline isn't slim enough or you feel you look too bloated...the complaints and the self-criticism go on and on. To make it worse there are all these perfect bodies that stare out at us from the glossy magazines in the grocery stores aisle as we buy the muffins and the cheese cakes!

This ebook is not just another ordinary diet book—it's about making peace with your weaknesses and creating for yourself a body you can comfortably live with the rest of your life. It's about developing the right mindset and adopting a lifestyle to stay healthy and fit. What inevitably happens is that one gets tired of a diet or cannot keep up with the exercise regimen—this ebook is not about to let you give up! It will be your guide, companion and your support in your endeavor to change.

It's not easy to make a change in your life all at one go. But here's a proposal that 12 weeks is enough to make that beginning towards a changed life and body. Take one day at a time and one week at a time and at the end of the 12th week you will find yourself looking good, feeling good and a much happier person. This book will be there with you from Day One till the end of the Twelfth Week.

You will learn the importance of knowing your body, before you push it into something that might not suit it. You will find help to get yourself into the right mindset, find the diet and exercise that suits you and hurdle over the challenges of wanting to give up halfway. You will find help to clear some of the confusing things that happen to your body as you are trying to change—like those frequent trips to the restroom. You will value the role of water, food and exercise.

The aim of this ebook is to help you achieve a body for a changed lifestyle and inspire you to mentor others to get it too. Once you succeed—which you will indeed—you will be ready to be the support for your friends and family to create a body for health and happiness.

Go the distance and know that you are supported in your bid to change your lifestyle and get that body you love!

Introduction – Life is for Living

When we lose twenty pounds...we may be losing the twenty best pounds we have! We may be losing the pounds that contain our genius, our humanity, our love and honesty.

~Woody

Allen~

Yes, we need to lose the extra twenty pounds, or fifteen or five pounds—but at the cost of a healthy life? That is not an option at all! What we need to do is lose the weight after much deliberation about what is the right way. We need to lose those extra pounds but we need not drain our genius, our humanity, our love and honesty. We need to lose the extra baggage to the extent that it makes us loving, enthusiastic, mentally brighter and physically lighter. Each person has a different mental framework and body type and the weight loss process has to be adjusted accordingly. What worked for Sally might not be right for Harry. Losing extra pounds should not be at the cost of sacrificing the things you like to eat and starving and not having the physical and mental energy to enjoy your life because life is for living.

Making Life Worth Living

It's not enough to lose the weight to look good. What's even important is to lose the weight to be stronger—both mentally and physically, to be more enthusiastic to the possibilities it brings, to be able to love and enjoy relationships and to be free of diseases and ailments that could slow you down. Life has to be made worth it and in your target to lose the weight; one of the prime motivators should be to want a life that is worth living.

List the things that you enjoy doing and find out what you actually manage to do. Often it's the job stresses and financial necessities that pull us down to ignoring our body and enriching our lives. In the workplace we put ourselves into the professional gear, which ensures a cool, calm and efficient drive, taking up every challenge and delivering the deadlines. Then we come and we are too tired to cycle with the kids, or too hungry to make a healthy meal or just too angry to enjoy our lives.

Slow Down, Fast

“Slow down—you move too fast—you got make the morning last...” who doesn't want to follow what the song advises and just feel groovy? What you need to know is that you can! You do have the time to live life—and you need to begin by wanting a healthy body. Do it for yourself. Don't do it because you want to look good at Thanksgiving and Christmas—do it because you want to look and feel good and healthy all the time of your life for the rest of your life.

Decide to slow down a bit and examine what it is that you wanted to do in life and why you haven't been able to do it. You will find that you just didn't have that strength and stamina to pursue that hobby because your body was too tired, your mind was too tired and you couldn't motivate yourself. What it basically means is that it's time to slow down and pay attention to your body. Find out what it's trying to say to you. Hear it cry out to you—"please take care of me"! That's when you begin to realize that it is in your hands. You can decide the quality of your life by improving the quality of your body.

Why Weight Loss?

Because the more you load your body, the more strain it has to take. Every little thing adds up to make your body heavier and unhealthy. The sedentary life thanks to the hours in front of a computer or TV, the unhealthy meals and skipping meals altogether, the lack of fresh air, the anxiety caused by stresses—all this contributes to a heavier body. You might not notice but inch-by-inch, the weight creeps up on you and one day you wake up to find that you are far from your healthy weight.

Extra weight bogs you down. What you see in the mirror upsets you and you develop a very unhealthy body image. But there is more to it than just having a depressing self-image—inside, your body is dealing with a lot more. Your heart has to pump harder, the blood pressure in your arteries increases, your spine has to deal with the extra weight, your knees begin to hurt and you even fall sick more because you aren't exercising enough and building the right kind of antibodies and resistance to infections.

Losing weight would not only make you look better but feel better too. No one is saying you have to have a look of a supermodel—not at all! In fact, being too thin has its hazards. What you need to achieve is your ideal body weight. Losing just a few pounds has a great effect on your body and life. There is no need to fit into the images doled out to you by the entertainment and advertising industry. What you need your body to be is the one that would make you happy and healthy.

Picture yourself Perfect

Build a desirable image of yourself. Be realistic and don't try to stretch yourself too far. Try not to build an exotic image that is practically not attainable—that would only serve to de-motivate and derail your efforts. Don't get carried away with wishful thinking. Find out what your ideal weight should be and work towards it. Picture yourself running up the hill, playing ball with your kids, shooting hoops with your pals and being able to walk up the stairs without panting. Picture yourself looking good and wearing what you like and not having to cringe away in beach towel at the seaside. Picture yourself happy and living a life to its fullest.

There are many people who have lost weight, just enough to enjoy themselves more. They have been successful at losing the weight because they haven't only gone by the looks. They have gone for the big picture and the long-term benefits. They haven't tried to lose weight just to look great at a wedding. They have planned it out, taken the harder way of eating healthy, exercising well and have been mentally tuned to a better lifestyle.

Picturing yourself, as you want yourself to be and improving your lifestyle has to begin with you. You must know what you want to and how to get there. As you read on you will learn how to make a commitment and how to chalk a roadmap to achieve your goal. There is no quick fix and no magic pill. Starving yourself to be two pounds less will always boomerang and spoil the picture of yourself and the efforts you are making to attain it.

Get a Body for Life

Bill Phillips, the force behind the body-for-life offers a way to change your lifestyle through a comprehensive eating, exercising and living program. What he assures anybody who wants that body for life is that following a very specific routine will not only give you the body you want—but that you learn how to change your lifestyle to keep that body for life. Bill has written a book check www.bodyforlife.com while the EAS (Experimental & Applied Sciences) <http://www.eas.com> holds a "million dollar" challenge every year to encourage people to get that body for life.

The aim of this program is to get you into shape and change your lifestyle by challenging you to adopt a very specific routine, which is one that is formulated on the following lines:

- Eat 6 small meals per day for 12 weeks.
- The meals must include 1 portion of protein and 1 portion of carbohydrates.
- For two of the meals each day, the person has to eat a portion of vegetables.
- One portion is considered to be the size of the palm of your hand.

That's the eating part in a capsule. The next part of this program is intense working out. It motivates people to hit what is called the "10's"—the point when you think you just can't do it any more but you push on. Hitting these "10's" would basically mean that you are exercising till the point when you are ready to give up but you keep at it and do at least two more repetitions of the exercise. It could be any exercise of your choice, but you have to hit the 10's.

This combination of controlled but frequent diets and intensive exercising is healthy and gives phenomenal results. There is no starving, there is plenty of flexibility in the exercises you want to do—because what's important is that you push the 10's. Over 2 million people have managed to change their life thanks to

the body for life program. The only ones who dropped out did so because they couldn't sustain their motivation and go the distance. That's because this program demands a lot of commitment from the competitor. There has to be a lot of planning and a lot of self-motivation through out the 12-week program.

But it is not impossible because people have taken up the challenge and got the body they wanted and kept it for life. A judicious blend of commitment, planning both diet and exercise, adopting the right mental outlook and staying focused is what is needed. Nothing comes easy in life but it is possible to get that body for life if only you get that support from the right sources to hold you up when you feel like dropping, to tell you what to eat, when to eat, how much to eat, how to work out, when to work out and basically keep you motivated.

Guide to the 12-weeks

Here's a guide to how this ebook is going to assist and motivate you in getting that body in shape for a changed and enriched lifestyle in that 12-week period:

- You will first learn to honestly assess your body, its needs, its weaknesses, allergies and problems that have to be dealt with right away. You will also learn to appreciate your body—every person has a special beauty and charm—and you will learn to respect your own beauty rather than be harsh on yourself.
- You will, on the basis of your assessment, decide on what you would like to change and how much weight you need to lose and you will learn how to commit to this decision.
- You will learn about the right diet, the secret foods that help you along the way and the ones that sabotage your course.
- You will find the right exercise—a routine and activity that you can easily do rather than give up half way.
- You will learn to motivate yourself and deal with the mid-diet blues. You will learn to stay the course and avoid the monotony and mental surrender.
- You will learn what it's going to be like week after week till you get to the goal.
- And most importantly—you learn how to stick to the right lifestyle, maintain your body shape, your weight and lead a happy life.

Loss or Gain?

This isn't yet another diet book—this is an earnest attempt to give you a positive frame of mind and focus on gaining a body for life rather than losing a few pounds here and there. You eat what you like eating—instead of depriving your body of food. You pick an activity you love doing—not force yourself into a cold swimming pool. You weave activity into your hour of watching TV—not give up the TV altogether. The goal is focused on gain—not on loss. There is no stepping on the scale and no denying your body what you want. It's all about gaining a mental determination and physical strength. It's all about gaining a life worth living. The feeling that you get from changing the way you look and feel through healthy eating and exercise is one that nobody can replace.

Part I: A Body for Life – to Love and Cherish

Chapter 1: Assess your Body

I used to look in the mirror and feel shame, I look in the mirror now and I absolutely love myself.

~Drew Barrymore~

Almost everyone is embarrassed with his or her weight. Even the seemingly perfect supermodel is likely to have a grouse about weight. Some one once said that you cannot be rich enough or thin enough but that is certainly not a dictum to live by. One day you have to look in that mirror and love what you see, warts and imperfections and all. What's more important is to have a body that allows you to live healthy and happy and that's what you need to commit to.

The way to begin is with a fair assessment of your body and lifestyle as it is today. First thing to keep in mind—no one is perfect—do not pick on yourself and magnify your flaws. This is not the time to be critical. All right, you do have a bit of a belly and loose muscles in your upper arms. You also have too much of weight on your hips. These are the things that you want to change—so note them down but remember this is just what you see on the outside. Now think about how your body feels—when you have to run to catch up with your kid or the bus? You certainly can feel the extra bits wobble when you rush up the stairs but do you know what your body is going through inside? Do you feel out of breath? Do you feel tired? What kind of health problems affects you? What kind is your body and how overweight are you really?

Measure the Excess

You cannot pronounce yourself as obese or overweight just because you think you are. Measure your height, your weight and find out what the desirable weight should be. You have to set a target and get to it, not only will you look great from the cosmetic point of view but also from the aspect of health. Here's what you will have to keep in mind when you begin to assess your target weight:

- **Body mass index** – The doctor would be in a best position to tell you the ideal weight by adjusting your body weight according to your height and arriving at your body mass index (BMI). A healthy BMI is between 25 and 29. A BMI of over 30 indicates obesity. It's a good idea to calculate the BMI of your spouse and kids and set a family target. In case of a BMI indicating obesity—there is no need to be alarmed and stressed—take it as positively as you can and set an example to your family and friends by working to get it down.
- **Waist circumference** – Are you an apple or pear? Some people tend to collect fat around the hip and thighs making you a pear. Some have all the

fat deposits around the waist making you an apple. While pears get away with less health risks, the apples are at more risk for high blood pressure. Measure your waist—if you measure more than 40 inches or 102 centimeters in case you are a man and more than 35 inches or 88 centimeters if you are a woman—you need to set some goals.

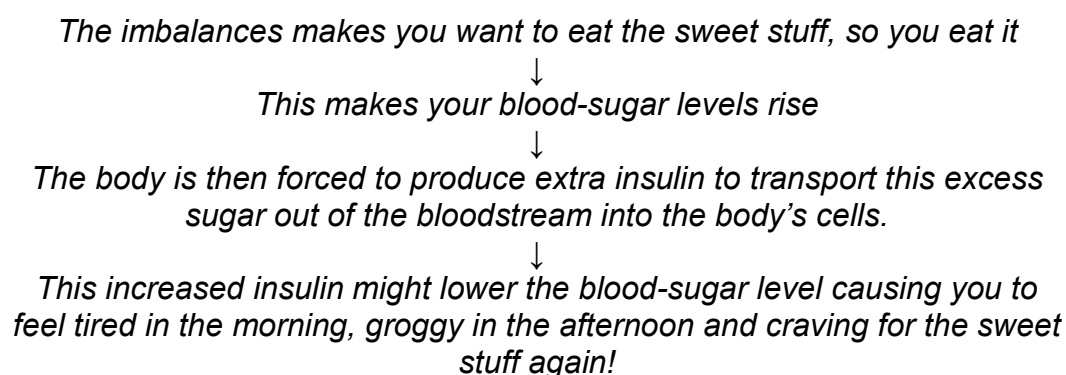
- **Family history** – Sometimes it's hereditary. If obesity runs in the family, you might be predisposed to weight gain but that is no excuse. Sure your ancestors were fat but you can prevent it. If you are the kind whose weight gain is because of DNA, then you have all the more reason to opt for a lifestyle and habits that incorporate a healthy diet and a lot of exercise.

Your Body's Inside Story

More than often, what you see on the outside is a manifestation of what's actually happening on the inside. It's a fact that the internal balances and imbalances determine the external balances and imbalances. Your stomach might not just stick out because of too much fat—it could be because of bloating. No amount of crunches can fix the bloated belly—you have to find out what is causing it, the food you eat or a health issue. Here are some issues you need to factor in when you are assessing you body:

- **Blood Sugar** – Imbalances in the blood sugar levels can be reasons behind weight gain. That's because these imbalances make you crave for sweet, sugary and starchy foodstuff. If you've skipped a meal and tend to feel irritable or you wake up in the morning feeling tired (even though you have had a good night's rest), it could be because of fluctuations in the blood sugar. This is very common and one of the reasons behind weight gains.

It's kind of like this:



Not only do you feel fatigued, irritable and prone to eating the wrong food items—you also begin to put on weight. Excess insulin stimulates the conversion of sugar into glycogen—but if you have too much glycogen

already, it would convert the sugar into triglycerides—that raises your cholesterol and fat. The insulin also makes the fat rest around your middle and lead to fluid retention. You might not know it, but it could be imbalances in your blood sugar level that is contributing to the weight gain.

If you feel you might have a problem with blood sugar, consult a doctor and schedule some tests. Being aware of the blood sugar levels helps in weight loss and health gains. Imbalances in blood sugar are best dealt with through the right kind of diet. You would need to eat foods that release sugar very slowly into the bloodstream rather than all of a sudden at one go. These foods include whole grains, beans, pulses, fresh fruits and vegetables excluding the potato. You can add protein like tofu, eggs, meat and fish to help stabilize blood sugar imbalances. You would also need to eat regularly, have healthy snack and have some doctor recommended supplements. Not only can you control the blood sugar but also lose some of the extra weight.

- **Thyroid** – This gland has also been found guilty of making people put on weight. The thyroid produces hormones that determine the temperature and the metabolism of the body. If you have a sluggish thyroid, not only will you feel prone to the cold, but you also might have a slow metabolism and be putting on a lot of weight. Not only do they put on weight but people with a low thyroid function or hypothyroidism also find it hard to lose the weight.

Some of the causes of hypothyroidism could be iodine deficiency, chemical pollutants or genetic factors. If you feel you have the symptoms of low thyroid function, which are fatigue, increased sensitivity to cold even when others do not feel so cold, dry skin, constipation, lack of sweating despite exercise, swelling in the face, bags under the eyes etc., do consult your doctor and get tested before you embark on any diet or lifestyle change. A diagnosis would help in your weight loss later on.

- **Yeast Overgrowth** – The yeast organism, *Candida albicans*, is quite a player when it comes to weight and health issues. Almost everyone has a bit of the *Candida albicans* in their intestinal tract and it kind of stays there not causing much harm. However, in some people it kind of makes a home in the gut and tends to overgrow. Complaints like candida in the mouth and vaginal yeast infections become common. The causes behind yeast overgrowth range from the intake of antibiotics, stress, diet, contraceptive pills and hormone replacement therapy.

Like blood sugar and low thyroid function, yeast overgrowth has symptoms including fatigue, weight gain, irritable bowel syndrome, mood swings and food cravings.

What should be aimed at is an anti-candida diet—something like a do not list including avoiding:

- Sugar, sweetening agents like molasses, sugar filled foods like cookies, cakes, ice cream, sodas, sugared breakfast cereals and sweetened fruit-juice.
- Bread, pizza, pasta, crackers and other white flour or yeast-raised items.
- Beer and wine, which are yeasty drinks.
- Pickles, soy sauce, vinegar-foods like ketchup and salad dressings.
- Aged cheeses, dried foods and mushrooms as well!

If you haven't assessed your body from within don't blame it for looking the way it does. Be gentle and find a way around these issues. Do not use these internal issues as excuses for your weight gain and your unhappy state. There is nothing that cannot be rectified by a positive attitude, a healthy diet and an active lifestyle.

Break the Habits

Modern living is stressful, fast paced and very demanding. Sadly, we find the wrong ways to relax ourselves. Smoking, alcohol and late nights might be escapes from the regular monotony but they are in no way stress busters. If you are a smoker, assess the damage that it has already done to your body and give it up. A lot of people have the guts to go cold turkey and have never picked up a cigarette after that. It has improved their life and made their bodies stronger.

Similarly, if you have a couple of drinks of wine to relax, you are actually doing your body well—especially if it is red wine in the stemware. Wine is known to release antioxidants into the body. However, if you going overboard with the beer, whisky and the wine—you would be putting on excess weight, especially around the stomach and slowing down your body, because your appetite is being unnecessarily being stimulated. You also aren't doing much for your energy levels because while alcohol might give you a high, too much of it will make you depressed, insecure, less accepting, more hungry and intolerant of others. The quality of your life could be considerably lowered.

Both smoking and drinking slow your body down and lull the body into inaction. The sedentary way of life is another habit-forming lifestyle that must be assessed. You need to move your body and challenge it with different kinds of activities. When you do that, your body responds by giving you back the stamina to pursue your interests. Find out what makes you want to skip the exercise—too much fatigue, lack of strength or laziness?

The Role of Assessment

The need to size up your body is to find the root causes for your weight gain. Is it just bad eating or DNA? Is it because of internal imbalances or habits? Find out

when you actually began to put on weight and why you haven't ever got around to losing it. Assessing the body would also determine the diet and exercise needs. It would also make you understand that there are some things you can directly change like weight and build but there are other things that you must learn to love—like your height, your body type and the shape of your nose!

But most important of all, once you have made a fair assessment of your body physically, you will be ready to challenge yourself mentally.

Chapter 2: Commit to Change!

A total commitment is paramount to reaching the ultimate in performance.

~Tim Flores~

You know what you want to change—now is the time to make a commitment. Know that you need to lose the weight to better your life. How you commit today is what will determine what you achieve tomorrow. You are losing weight to reduce the health risks that come with it, to enjoy and be there for your family and friends and live a more enriched life full of stamina and zest. Make a commitment, be positive about it and work towards your goal.

Shift your Viewpoint

Time for a mental shift—don't think in terms of how daunting it is to lose weight. Don't worry yourself sick counting the pounds you lose. What you must do is change the way you think about weight loss. Instead think of the body and energy you will gain. Try not to think about weight loss being an exercise in deprivation—that is psychologically very negative. It sets you back two paces even before you begin. What you need is a positive mental frame of mind. Here's what you need to do:

- Commit to yourself. The commitment to change has to come from you and should be to you. You are losing weight to make yourself feel good and not for a partner or a family member. Don't expect other people to deny themselves to support you—the healthy meals and exercise is for you to do and not for others to prod you into, though they may support your endeavor.
- Motivate yourself. Be your own champion—track your daily activities and stir yourself to greater heights. Motivation for any endeavor must come from within.
- Promise yourself the best. Envision all the things you want for yourself and go beyond wanting the flat stomach and the thin arms—promise yourself the overall high of being fit and energetic.
- Be Realistic. While you must promise yourself the best—do be realistic in terms of what goals you are setting. No need to set your aims too high and be disappointed if you don't get there.
- Appreciate your efforts. Praise yourself for what you are doing rather than expect it from others. When you expect the appreciation of other people and they fail to give it, you may find yourself disappointed and ready to give up. Get it into your head that your spouse or partner doesn't have to

keep praising you because it's your goal and you need to appreciate your own efforts towards it. (Besides, you are going to get all the praise when you begin to look and feel good!)

- **Monitor Expectations.** It's good to take a day at a time. Don't expect too much too fast. Rome wasn't built in a day so don't take out the measuring tape every second day.

Overall, you need to have a positive mental framework that aims for is a gradual but permanent loss of weight. You do not have to achieve the ideal weight that is listed on the charts. You just need to lose the first few pounds and then take it from there, one step at a time. Do not allow the lack of visible change in the first few weeks to bother you—do not focus on the losing part of the program.

You are aiming towards a change in lifestyle. You are aiming to get out of the sedentary rut, so move your body towards creating more stamina and energy and gaining a great body in the process. Focus on the long-term gain for yourself in terms of an enriched life rather than in terms of the pounds you lose.

Get the Motivation Right

To add punch to your commitment to change, put in liberal doses of motivation. It's amazing how many diet and weight loss efforts are derailed by the lack of motivation. If you are not motivated, you will find excuses to skip the exercise and the healthy food. How often has a warm blanket and a cold morning, made us avoid the morning walk? You just have to have the right attitude and work towards your goal. There are some ways to get motivated and you could begin with:

- **Defining a reachable goal.** Set your sights on what you can achieve. The stress is on what you can easily achieve. Aim for something that will last. It's all very well to aim to fit into a dress for your birthday or look good in time for the board of directors meeting but think of the big picture too—"If I achieve this...I would feel more confident, set an example, have more energy, motivate others, etc."
- **Read and be inspired.** Read the success stories of other people who have lost weight. Learn from their mistakes and get tips on how to stay the course.
- **Give yourself a weekly treat.** It could be anything from having a burger to getting highlights in your hair. You do need to reward yourself for the efforts you are putting in—just don't go overboard and binge on food treats though!

- Rope in family and friends for support. Get support at times when you are flagging—but do not be dependent on them. Use them at times when you seem to be lacking self-motivation.

Motivation has to mainly come from you. Only you know your goal and only your efforts can get you to achieve it. There is nothing to stop a self-motivated person from getting to where he or she wants to get. Motivate and inspire yourself to commit to that body for life.

Get Started – The Right Way

Once you commit to your goal—don't take too long to get started. You have assessed your body, you know what your problem areas are, you know what you have to work towards, and you've made a commitment, so what are you waiting for? Get started! Is there a right way? Yes there is. It's like the run up for a long jump—if you don't get the beginning right, you might sabotage the end result. Here are some of the things you can do to jumpstart your efforts to get that body for life:

- Begin by looking good. Yes, you need to lose some extra pounds to make the quality of your life but who says you still aren't a great looker? So get yourself a new hairstyle, new clothes and believe that you already have the body you want. More than often people promise themselves a makeover only after they get to their target weight loss—but that's not the way. If you start on an optimistic note, you are bound to be able to carry yourself through the whole program.
- Get the equipment you need. Depending on what kind of exercise you plan to do, get all the required things. Buy shoes that are comfortable and give your feet and knee the right amount of cushion. Get the right dumbbells and weights as well as the skipping rope and whatever it is that you need.
- Join a Gym. If you have assessed yourself to be the kind who cannot exercise alone and stick to it, then join a gym. This would help you not only to exercise with other committed and motivated people but also have the luxury of having trainers to turn to for help.
- Plan the diet. Plan out and stock the kind of foods you would enjoy eating and that are easy to cook. Pick from a variety of vegetables, fruits and meats. Try not to eat one kind of soup or one kind of salad—it could get pretty boring, monotonous and easy to dump! Not that you have to plan the actual meals you will eat on Monday, Tuesday...etc, but you can if you want to!

- Avoid the denial discipline. Make a good positive beginning, which means that you do not begin by taking away or denying yourself. If you like to eat out, please do so and just take a smaller portion. If you like to lie on the couch and watch a sitcom, go ahead but incorporate a set of crunches with it.
- Have a rest day to relax, stick to the diet but do gentle stretching exercises.

It's very important that you enjoy the whole process of getting a body for a better lifestyle. The aim is to make the efforts of 12-weeks last a lifetime. There should be no denying and starving your body or your mind of things that you love. Instead you need a fair and rational re-look at yourself and your lifestyle and how you would like to change it. This includes an assessment of your body and your capabilities to change it, a firm commitment to the goal; self-motivation to spur you on and there has to be the right beginning.

Part II: Your Lifetime Journey... A Whole New Beginning

Chapter 3: What's Eating You?

More die in the United States of too much food than of too little.

~John Kenneth
Galbraith~

You are probably saying, “Oh no! Here’s the part about food and diet”! Yes this is a part about food and diet but it is in no way trying to get you to give up food or drastically revamp your diet. It’s an oft repeated line that—you are what you eat. But what’s more important is eat by all means, but eat healthy and burn those calories. The key to all weight loss and life improvement programs is eating right and keep exercising—don’t sit tight!

Tuck it in – Don’t Starve

Tuck in the food and suck in your stomach—yes you heard it right—you have to eat and you have to exercise. Starving will get you nowhere. Your body needs fuel and it gets the fuel from food. If you don’t eat, then you are making your body weaker and unable to not only take any physical strain but mental pressures as well. To lose weight, you have to eat. You have to eat regular meals, as balanced a diet as possible and you have to eat healthy food. If you don’t eat, you won’t have the strength to exercise and if you think that you can lose weight by giving up the food, you’re pretty mistaken. All you are forcing your the body to do is get defensive and save all it can.

Do not deprive your body of food. It will NOT help you lose weight. You might feel for a while that you have lost a pound or two but in the long run, you will only lose that pound or two and instead invite a whole lot of problems like bloating, dizziness, and mental and physical fatigue. Here’s what starving does to your body:

- When you eat a lot less to the point of starving yourself to restrict calories to 1200, 1000, or even 800 per day, your body has no idea it’s a low calorie diet. It automatically begins using muscle tissue for energy and stores the fat for energy.
- You might lose a bit of weight but do understand that the body is not growing stronger not is it healthy anymore because it is using its own muscle—the body is literally on reserve because it’s not getting enough fuel to drive life!
- When you starve yourself to lose the pounds, your metabolism slows down, which means you aren’t burning calories. Your body is in survival mode remember, so it is trying to save whatever it can.

- When you starve your body you are starving it of vital nutrients, vitamins and minerals that are crucial to its functioning and preventing diseases.
- When you starve you are depriving yourself of things that you enjoy so it's only natural that you will crave for whatever you are not getting. Before you know it the starvation diet will boomerang and the weight you lost from depriving your body is back on you again.
- Not only do you regain the weight you had starved to lose, you are going to find it harder to lose next time around.
- To make matters worse—frequent low-calorie dieting and starving the body can lead to high blood pressure and increased triglycerides (body fats), heart disease, gall bladder disease, fatigue and muscle cramps, headaches, hair loss, and weak immune function

All the above is to scare you off starvation. Starving has no place in a sensible body-life improvement program. It is dangerous—period. You need to eat healthy and eat enough. Please do not think that there is any method to denying the body of food. To have a body for life—we need to make sure that you get the food part right and that you realize the danger of starvation.

Analyze the Attitude

What you can do is find out what kind of an eater are you. Are you an emotional eater? Most of us are. We get stressed out or get upset and then try and make ourselves happier with a pack of French fries. If you can find the triggers that make you eat the wrong foodstuffs at the wrong times, you can find a way around it. What do you usually eat when you are upset or tired or just looking to snack? Open your fridge and see what you have. Are there too many ready-to-eat meals? Are there too many fried snacks? Pinpoint what bothers you into bingeing and replace the food that you use to stuff your sorrows with.

Your entire attitude to food and the emotions you associate with it adds to considerable weight gain. If you are the kind of person who lives to eat, you need to make a paradigm shift in the terms of the kind of food you eat and the portions. If you are the kind of person you shows love by cooking and feeding others around you and digging into the exotic dishes yourself, you need to rethink what it's doing to the health of people around you and you own health too. If you are the kind who is stressed out, fatigued and angry and who reaches out for that bar of chocolate or your kid's chocolate powder milk mix or pop tart—find better outlets.

Think of what you can do, other than eat to cater to your emotions. Food is for enjoyment, and for building your body's strength—don't make food a culprit behind your weight gain. Part of working towards a body for a changed lifestyle is

repositioning your emotional attitudes. Rein in the anger, express your love or sorrow in other ways. Find hobbies that you always meant to take up but never got around doing—or take a stroll around the block and meet people. Improving your body shape and your lifestyle needs you to make certain emotional adjustments, especially if they revolve around food.

The Important Food Types

What do you eat? What occupies the shelf space in your pantry and fridge? Are you having a balanced diet? Whether you like it or not you have to get familiar with the important food groups. Just sit back and read on and find out what your body needs from the different food groups. You will learn about proteins, carbohydrates, fat, fiber and how to use all of these groups to get the body you want.

The key, if you remember, is to eat well, get the required amount of calories and then burn more calories than the amount you have consumed. The calories should come from a balanced blend of carbohydrates, proteins, and fats—yes you have read it right—your body needs fats too. All the three are what you can call the macronutrients for your body because:

- Carbohydrates—provide the fuel and energy to your body
- Proteins—maintain the muscles and glands
- Fats—power the hormone production and the nervous system.

Can an only protein diet work? Can a low-carbohydrate diet work? Can a fat-free diet work? May be they can for a temporary weight loss—but they are exactly that—temporary weight loss options that do not enrich and empower your body in the long run. Your diet has to include all the above for a permanent body for a changed lifestyle. You just have to figure out what kinds of the above items you enjoy and how much you should eat.

How much of carbohydrates?

This group of food includes sugars like table sugar or fruit sugar as well as starches like potatoes or bread and fiber. Fiber is the hard to digest bits of fruits and vegetables that actually slow down blood sugar, keep the cholesterol low and helps the digestive system run efficiently. Now since both starches and vegetables are carbohydrates, how much of it you need to eat depends on the type of carbohydrates. If you are eating vegetables (especially spinach and other leafy, colorful stuff) you can have two fistfuls for your meal. If you are having pasta or rice—limit the intake to one fistful. Here's a list of fruits and vegetables that are examples of high and low carbs.

Vegetables		Fruits	
Low Carbohydrates	High Carb	Low Carbohydrates	High Carbohydrates
Sprouts, Leafy Greens,	Artichokes,	Cantaloupe,	Apples, Cherries,

Broccoli, Celery, Swiss Chard, Endive, Radishes, Beets, Brussels, Eggplant, Leeks, Parsley, Pumpkin, Turnips	Cabbage, Cauliflower, Cucumber, Lettuce, Spinach, Watercress, Kale Chives, Kohlrabi, Onions, Peppers, Rutabagas,	Parsnips, Peas, Squash, Carrots, Dried beans, Lima Beans, Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes,	Rhubarb, Berries, Watermelon, Melons, Tomatoes, Apricots, Guava, Grapefruit, Lemons, Limes, Oranges, Papayas, Peaches, Plums, Raspberries, Tangerines, Kiwis	Grapes, Mangoes, Pears, Pineapple, Pomegranates, Bananas, Figs, Prunes, Dried Fruits
---	---	---	---	---

How much of proteins?

Proteins as you know mainly come from meats, fish, legumes, nuts, seeds, and some vegetables. You need the protein to support your muscles and increase bone mass. If you deny yourself proteins, you could be headed for bone diseases like osteoporosis. The amount of protein you eat would also depend on the type of protein you are eating because some proteins are loaded with fat. That doesn't mean you get rid of the protein—just portion the amounts. A good and simple measure is that any animal protein you are eating would need to be a portion equivalent to the size and thickness of your palm—which would be about 2 to 4 ounces of chicken breast, fish or any type of lean meat. If the portion is bigger than your hand—reduce the portion! If you were having legumes, a cup would be sufficient.

The best part about proteins is that they fill you up and help you lose weight. You just need to cook the animal protein the right way, with less oil, as they contain fats of their own and portion the amount of the rest of the proteins listed below:

Basic Protein Items	Properties
Fish and Seafood	Low fat (omega 3 fatty acids) and excellent source of protein
White-Meat Poultry	Lean protein but skin has to be removed
Milk, Cheese Yogurt	High in protein and calcium—prevents bone diseases
Eggs	High in protein
Beans	High in protein as well as fiber
Pork tenderloin	This is also a lean meat—leaner than dark meats
Soy	Includes tofu and soy milk which are excellent sources of protein
Lean beef	A good source of zinc, iron and vitamin B12 and protein if the portions are monitored.

How much fats?

Some amount of fat is needed for your body in the forms of oils in vegetables, nuts, seeds, as well as from animal fat. Did you know that fats are what alert your brain to the fact that your stomach's full? Animal fat isn't all that desirable but the fat from fish—omega 3 fatty acids—is excellent. The fat from nuts, seeds, and vegetables are also desirable sources of fats. You also have to distinguish between good fats and bad fats:

Good Fats	Bad Fats
Non-Saturated Fats	Saturated Fats
Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated oils like extra virgin olive oil, flax oil, canola oil, soy oil, extra virgin olive oil, wheat germ oil, walnut oil, hemp seed oil, oil from mackerel, tuna etc.	Hydrogenated Fats or Transfats that solidifies at room temperature and includes fat in animal meats, chicken skin, lard, butter, hard margarine, cheese, whole milk which are used in cakes, chocolate, biscuits, pies and pastries.

But how much fat is good? Two or three teaspoon of oil from seeds is great or use a spray—don't go overboard with the fat but don't delete it from your diet either.

The Importance of Schedule

Not only is it important to eat the right kind of food—it is important to eat regularly. You must schedule your meal times and make sure there are enough gaps between each meal so as to allow the food to get digested. You need to have at least three short meals a day and three snacks—basically you eat six times:

- **Breakfast:** Don't think of skipping the first meal of the day. You need to power the body right. Usually, breakfast is the easiest meal to skip—you are in a rush, so you grab the coffee and if there is a toast with it that's great or it just doesn't matter. We forget that the body has been asleep all night, it's been woken up and readied into action in a rush and the least we could do is feed the body and allow it to boot its system! Begin with a cereal or a fruit or an egg on toast—but do not skip breakfast because it might tell on the body in the long run.
- **Lunch:** Having lunch matters. It helps the body avoid the mid afternoon slump and gets you ready for the slog for the rest of the day. But this is also a meal when you try to fill up too much, especially if you haven't had breakfast. It's very vital that you get the quality and the portion of the lunch right. Don't overeat and do eat as balanced a meal as possible
- **Supper:** This meal would ensure that you get a good night's rest. Again it shouldn't be too heavy. When you have supper is important. Late night meals don't do much for your body in terms of weight loss. If you are

aiming to lose weight, you need to eat early supper and avoid eating after 8pm. If you eat too late into the night, not only would your sleep be disturbed, your body hasn't been given enough time to digest the food and can't assimilate it properly.

- Snacking: Just three meals might not be enough to power all people—everyone has different systems. In that case you can break up the three meals into six smaller meals and fix the portions accordingly. Alternatively, you can have three healthy snacks in between the meals. The key to the right way of snacking is to:
 - Have the right kind of snacks. Get rid of the chips. Add fruits with the negative calories that fill you up, energize you but don't add to your weight.
 - Eat an apple during the snack after lunch because it actually has properties to fight the fatigue that attacks in the mid afternoon.
 - Fit in the snack only when you are hungry. Don't make it an imperative part of the diet plan. Use it only when you feel hunger pangs coming—ignoring the hunger alert will set you back in the efforts to lose weight.

PLEASE NOTE: At no point should you be hungry. If you are hungry, then you should not ignore the feeling. Your body is letting you know it's needs and if you ignore the alert, you will end up slowing down your metabolism. If you eat the wrong things like a pastry or cake—you will create imbalances in your internal system and force the body to unleash its defense mechanism and start storing the food as fat to be used later.

Food Tips to Aid Weight Loss

Now you know that you have to have a balanced meal and try and incorporate all the food groups to nourish your body with the required macronutrients. You need to eat regularly and not skip meals or starve. You also need to size the portions. Here are a few more tips that would help in your changed diet plans:

- Do you have any significant food allergies? If you do then the best way to plan your diet is to work around them. Also if you have imbalanced blood sugar or yeast overgrowth or a thyroid problem, you need to eliminate the foodstuff that might aggravate your condition. You can talk to your doctor, or go to a nutritionist and request for professionally planned meal schedules and recipes. Indicate what you like to eat and what you don't. You do not want to end up with a diet that is surrounded around all the items that you hate to eat!
- Fresh is best! Try to avoid the ready-made meals. No matter how much you scan the labels, the preservatives, sodium and the hidden fats can add to your weight. Walk down to the fresh produce store and pick up the

vegetables. If you have no time to cut them, then get the cut vegetables from the grocery store. Even the frozen will do as long as you cook it healthy and eat it fresh.

- Cook and innovate. You don't have to follow recipes—just get creative. Make sure that there is a lot of color in the vegetable dishes and salads—greens of spinach, yellow and red peppers, diced tofu and whatever you think will blend according to your taste.
- Enjoy your diet. Do not eat a single type of meal. Cooking a whole batch of soup for an entire week could get monotonous and boring. If you cannot enjoy your diet, you are most likely to not stick to it.
- Treat yourself with dessert. There is no need to skimp on the dessert—just monitor the portions or switch from ice creams to sorbets. As long as you do not binge and eat the whole cake—a slice of cake is a great reward for your efforts—besides you are going to exercise it out.
- Drink water—the power of water is absolutely unrivalled. It keeps you hydrated, helps suppress the hunger pangs and flushes away the toxins from your body.

Overall, you need to assess your eating behavior, rethink your attitude and stop the unhealthy snacking. Eat all that you want to, but eat healthy and never starve because it just does not work. If you are hungry it means the diet isn't working for you—rework the meal plans and make sure your stomach is full with the right kind of food. Aim for gradual weight loss and understand the fact that diet restrictions cannot by itself gain you a body for life. Don't take out your pent up energy getting angry at food and denying yourself. Instead enjoy your meals, portion it right and take it one day at a time.

Chapter 4: Supplements that Support

To lengthen your life, shorten your meals.

~Proverb~

Shorten the meals all right but you could add a supplement or two to help you sustain the your efforts at weight loss. Sometimes you could do with a little help to get that attractive, lean, fat free physique. Supplements would help to buoy your energy levels and help speed up your metabolism. Sometimes you need that extra energy to continue with the diet control and exercise because as you grow older it gets harder to lose the weight and your body needs extra vitamins and vitality that some supplements can give. However can supplements by themselves help you lose weight? Research is inconclusive on that.

All about Dietary Supplements

As defined by the Congress in the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994, “ A dietary supplement is a product taken by mouth that contains a "dietary ingredient" intended to supplement the diet. The "dietary ingredients" in these products may include: vitamins, minerals, herbs or other botanicals, amino acids, and substances such as enzymes, organ tissues, glandulars, and metabolites.”

These dietary supplements can be extracts or concentrates and can be packaged as tablets, capsules, softgels, gelcaps, liquids, or powders. There are some dietary supplements that come in the form of energy bars. Whatever the form, the DSHEA places dietary supplements in a special category under the general umbrella of "foods," not drugs, and requires that every supplement be labeled a dietary supplement.

Basically and very simply put, a dietary supplement as its name suggests must 'supplement' rather than replace food and be a vitamin, a mineral, an herb or other botanical, an amino acid or a combination of all these. It should be also approved by the FDA and sold in the USA legally. Here are some of the most common constituents of dietary supplements

- Ephedra alkaloids and caffeine compounds: These are supplements that aim at boosting energy levels and increasing the metabolism. *Ephedra sinica* (or *ma huang* in Chinese) is a shrub found in China and Mongolia. These are combined with caffeine or botanical sources of caffeine (e.g., guarana, yerba maté) for weight loss. Research says that one can lose around 0.9 kg (2 lb) or more per month on ephedra-containing supplements compared with placebo. But research doesn't have any long-term data.
- Chromium and Ginseng: These supplements aim to modulate carbohydrate metabolism. The lack of chromium is the reason behind Hyperglycemia, Hyperinsulinemia, hypertriglyceridemia, and low levels of high-density lipoprotein cholesterol. Chromium is believed to affect carbohydrate and lipid metabolism and in the process affect the weight. However, it's still pretty inconclusive about the validity of chromium as a weight loss supplement. Ginseng too might improve glucose tolerance but its role as a weight loss agent isn't certain.
- Glucomannan, Psyllium, and Guar Gum: These supplements are supposed to give the person a feeling of increased satiety and thus help in weight loss. Guar gum is derived from the Indian cluster bean, (*Cyamopsis tetragonolobus*), glucomannan and psyllium are derived from the seed husk of *Plantago psyllium* and they do what fibers would do—absorb the water in the gut and make you feel full as a result of which you eat less. Though declared as safe, guar gum, glucomannan

and psylliums do improve glucose and lipid levels but as weight loss agents their role is limited.

- **Hydroxycitric Acid:** Sourced from the Malabar tamarind tropical fruit (*Garcinia cambogia*) found in India, this supplement is believed to increase fat oxidation and reduce fat synthesis. Research doesn't exactly prove that this supplement helps to reduce weight. Conjugated linoleic acid, green tea, Licorice and Vitamin B5 are also supposed to also aid in fat reduction but licorice has been reported to cause hypertension, and hypokalemia. Again its quite debatable is they aid weight loss.
- **Chitosan:** This is a supplement sourced from crustacean shells and it is a positively charged polymer, which is believed to prevent fat absorption. Again, this supplement has been researched and is found to be pretty ineffective for weight loss.
- **Dandelion:** This is supposed to enhance water elimination in the body. It does indeed have a diuretic value and acts as a laxative. However it isn't much of a weight loss supplement and long-term use of it could be pretty detrimental.
- **St John's Wort:** This supplement is used to deal with depression but is found in a lot of weight loss products, to probably buoy the mental disposition.
- **Spirulina:** This is also known as blue-green algae and is supposed to suppress appetite but the FDA reported it as ineffective in weight loss.

Supplements and Health

In case you have certain health issues to deal with like yeast overgrowth or blood sugar imbalances or liver and digestion problems, it is good to take a doctor recommended health supplement. Supplements help to heal the gut lining and aid in the digestion process. They won't make you lose weight but they will assist in metabolism. Supplements especially come in handy when you have finished with a course of antibiotics. Healthy gut bacteria supplements are called probiotics, which put back the bacteria that the antibiotics sometimes take away.

- Supplements that help to deal with the issue of candida or yeast overgrowth are Replant and Acidophilus forte. By the way, oregano, garlic and grapefruit seed extract are great ways to slow down yeast overgrowth.
- Supplements that help with liver function are called liver supporting agents, which consist of certain herbs and nutrients that strengthen the detoxifying action of the liver. Other herbs and nutrients like Milk thistle, Inositol, Choline, Biotin, Methionine, Taurine, Lipase, Alpha Lipoic acid and Green Tea extract are also liver supplements.

- Supplements that balance the blood sugar levels include Chromium polynicotinate, manganese, magnesium, and Vitamins B1, B2 and B3.

Whatever it is, rather than go for an over the counter supplement, you need to verify it with the doctor. Make sure that the nutrients, herbs and minerals used in the supplement, are FDA-approved and safe for long term use. You must understand that some ingredients might harm your system rather than help it.

Meal Replacement Drinks and Energy Bars

There is a lot of replacement drinks in the market with tempting promises that you lose weight in days if you stick to just the drink. How feasible is that? Well you might lose the weight, but at what cost? Also the weight loss might be the kind that you put right back on once you go back to your regular meals—and guess what? That weight which rebounds is really hard to get rid of.

You can use these replacement drinks as supplements to your diet—for example, you can take a drink as part of your six-meal plan or as a snack. Similarly, the energy bars can be used to boost your diet. However, to completely replace meals with diet supplements would not be a healthy option in the long run. Moreover, to only restrict to diet drink and bars would be monotonous and boring. There would be a likely chance that you would get withdrawal symptoms, craving and ultimately binge on the food.

The best bet is a healthy diet plan, spread over six small meals comprising of fresh vegetables, portioned pieces of meat and fish, and a lot of water. The supplements should aid you in the process of changing your lifestyle and losing weight. You must understand that there is no quick-fix supplement that can do it for you all on its own.

Supplements just Support

Vitamins, minerals and herbs can help add vitality, energy and flush your body of toxins but they cannot replace the role of diet and exercise. Another thing is that supplements can be expensive. Do consult a doctor before you use a supplement regularly. It must be a safe and legally approved supplement. Do not fall for the advertisements that promise you a miracle herb that would help you lose weight. They could be dangerous and harm you more than help you. Use vitamins and minerals to strengthen your body rather than use them to get rid of the weight for you.

Chapter 5: Exercising Everyday

Exercise should be fun; otherwise, you won't be consistent.

~Laura Ramirez~

Can Exercise be Fun? Of course it can! You just have to change the mental block you have towards it. We exercise all the time when we move, carry the grocery bags, clean the house, stretch out to dry the clothes, bend down to weed the garden, run up the stairs to answer the phone or run down the stairs to open the door. Activity is part of our life and we all accept it as natural as breathing. But when we take the same stretches, bends, weights, runs etc., and call it exercise—everyone avoids doing it!

Exercise is nothing but targeted and organized activity. In fact the stretching and bending that you do in your normal everyday activity can be quite stressful. When you walk or clean the house or drive to work you only work the gluteal muscles in the thighs while the back muscles and abdominal muscles are not used at all. As they are not being used, these muscles become weak and lose their tone. Not only do they begin to make your body look flabby, they are not strong enough anymore to support actions like lifting, carrying etc.

Exercise can not only be relaxing and soothing but stamina building too. And yes—it is fun—especially if you are doing something you enjoy. Apart from helping you to lose the weight, exercise releases nitric oxide that benefits your cardiovascular system, keeps your joints as well as your arteries flexible, elastic, and helps to build your stamina. It is not just rest that your body needs when you are tired—it also needs exercise. Exercise will make you feel less tired and more energetic. If you feel fatigued and tired at the end of the day, it means that you need to get up in the morning and get some exercise.

But Exercise Everyday?

How do you think you are going to lose that extra weight anyway? By Exercising every day. While diet just reduces the weight, exercise strengthens the muscles. Exercise everyday is ideal, but if you are a beginner, start with three times in a week. Exercising for 30 minutes a day will not only help you lose the weight but will also boost your immunity level and make you healthier.

Begin with moderate exercise—no one is asking you to pump weight like a body builder. Exercise will also help to relieve the stress and mental tension of your day-to-day living and help you to keep a positive attitude. You will feel fresh and that will tell on your face. Exercising everyday will complement the diet changes and get your body into gear to speed up the metabolism.

If you want to take the big decision to exercise everyday, then kudos to you! If you want to begin slowly and take it slow, aim for three times in a week for half

an hour. Your exercise regimen should include some kind of aerobic activity that you enjoy like walking, swimming, or riding a stationary bicycle. Add some specific stretching and strengthening exercises. It could be a few minutes of gentle stretching. You have to motivate yourself and try and begin sensibly. Here is what you can do to begin with:

- Exercise first thing in the morning. Make that extra effort, get up early and exercise. Do a half an hour of stretching or weights. Not only will you set the pace for the day but also you will get a time just for yourself to ready you for the day's work and household activities.
- If you are not the sporty type and have never played or exercised, begin with a 30 minutes walk in the morning. Don't do anything else—just wake up early, leave the house and walk briskly around the neighborhood. The fresh air will do you good and once your body clock gets used to the rhythm of exercise, you can add some more activities.
- If you have a favorite outdoor sport—get back into it. Whether it's basketball or golf, just go and play.
- Incorporate exercises into your daily activities and walk to office or at least park as far as possible and then walk to your office. Run up the stairs or take a lunchtime walk. You can always keep a pair of running shoes in office.
- Do the abdominal crunches as you watch your TV program and don't skip the yard work or the housework! Mow that lawn too with a push lawn mower.
- As much as is possible, breathe and hold in your stomach and rear muscles tight. Always be aware of your breathing and hold your neck high, the back straight and your stomach in. Pay attention to posture—don't slump—you stomach will just stick out. Think thin and carry in your mind the vision of a thinner and healthier you.

Type of Exercises

The main types of exercises that you have to blend into your lifestyle to reduce the weight and gain a stronger physical and mental framework are:

- **Aerobic exercises:** These aim at increasing the intensity of the activity so if you are walking; you will have to walk fast or uphill rather than on a flat plane. When you are swimming you have to aim for really fast lane-bashing swims. If you are skipping, you need to try and skip a hundred within a minute. It's all about increasing the pace and intensity to burn out the extra calories and quicken the body's metabolism.

- **Flexibility exercises:** These exercises as the name suggests aim at stretching the muscles and making the joints more flexible. You can gently get your unused muscles to unwind and extend to their full potential. The bending and stretching would fortify your muscles and protect you from any injuries and most importantly they will tone up your body and help you lose the weight.
- **Isometric exercises:** These exercises include weight training and resistance training exercises which help to make the muscles as well as the body tissues stronger and in the process burns the extra fat. They also reduce cholesterol levels, thus helping people with high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases.

The Exercise Routine:

Choose the exercises that you enjoy and know that you can do without wanting to give up. If it's weight training go for it. It could also be jogging or walking or skipping too. Weight lifting three-times-a-week should also be added to the program. Of course, an added set of exercises targeted at your abs, arms, and legs and back would be needed to tone up the flab, attack the problem areas and strengthen the muscles. What ever it is—you know the drill—you must push the 10's! Do your repetitions of 10 and then push yourself to do two more sets.

Begin with warm ups: You must begin with two or three warm-up sets to shake the laziness out. It could be simple stretching of all muscles. You could also do 10 minutes of cycling.

Set it off in the morning: 20 min of moderate to high intensity cardio beginning with a few repetitions of light weights. Begin slowly and then heat up things. Concentrate on each area and begin with a set of 8 reps and push it to 10.

- Work the abs with crunches and leg lifts.
- Work the legs with lying curls, standing curls and deadlifts.
- Work the calves with leg extensions, leg press standing and leg press lying.

Definitely work out in the morning. It gets you ready for the day and you are less likely to binge as you have worked so hard. One-hour on the treadmill is also an excellent cardio exercise but take it slow and build up the time you exercise.

Round off in the evening: Add a 20-minute exercise session in the evening as well with abs crunches in front of the TV, dumbbell presses and arm curls and overhead extensions. Make sure you push yourself that extra bit to ensure that it's been an intensive workout. Add an evening jog around the block or walk uphill for 20 minutes.

Pull it in in-between: When you are at work or working around the house, be sure to pull in your stomach muscles and keep your neck high and back straight. Mind the posture and breathe in your flab. This is an excellent exercise and can be done anytime and anywhere.

The Dos of Exercise:

- Do set a goal and decide how much weight loss you are aiming it at well as the target areas. Start slowly if you have never exercised and push to the 10's as you progress.
- Do get what you need, in terms of proper shoes if you intend walking or jogging; check that you have properly assembled your exercise machine or that you have the weights you need for resistance training.
- Do the warm ups and any simple stretching exercises before you exercise. This would loosen your muscles and get them ready for the exercise—see that you definitely stretch your calves, upper-thighs, hamstrings, and your lower back.
- Do avoid any caffeine drinks before you exercise as they increase the blood rate.
- Do try and stay motivated by varying the exercises, the routines and tracking your own progress and self-talk.
- Do try and be consistent rather than skip exercise.
- Do drink a lot of water.

The Don'ts of Exercise

- Do not unnecessarily compete with others—everyone has different endurance levels and you need to push against your own.
- Do not exercise after you eat.
- Do not exercise when it is too hot or near traffic,

Remember the Limits

The aim is to push to the 10's but not to the extent of endangering yourself. If you feel too much pressure while exercising—just stop. Too much physical intensity of an activity or workout can raise your blood pressure. The aim is not to exhaust you. The aim is to make you fitter. Remember that you need to stop when you feel:

- Short of breath
- Dizzy, nausea or sick in the stomach
- Fast irregular heartbeats
- Chest pain or tightness in chest

Choose a combination of exercises that suit you as a person. If you do not like jogging, take up walking, combine it with Yoga or Tai Chi and increase your level of activities in your day-to-day life. Wash the car or do some digging in the

garden. Swim a few laps and or join a water aerobic session. Engage in more activities rather than sit and watch your blood pressure rise.

Ideally, when you finish one 12-week program you'll immediately begin another 12-week program and so on until it's not a 12-week program but a way of life!

Part III: The First Four Weeks...Stay on Track

Chapter 6: Take pictures and start a journal... Very important!

Make sure you visualize what you really want, not what someone else wants for you.

~Jerry Gillies~

All right—this is it. It's time to take a stock of things. You know how important it is to have a workable business model to have a successful company and you also know how important it is to get all the ingredients and the salt etc. to cook a great dish. It's the same with a lifestyle improvement program—take stock of the target goals and the roadmap to get there.

Here is a recap so far:

- You have decided to make your life worth living by building a healthier and slimmer you.
- You have mentally prepared yourself and believe that it's all a process of gaining not losing.
- You have absolutely committed to bring about a change, stay focused and motivated to go the distance in 12 weeks.
- You have assessed your body, your problem areas, and your health status and are ready to stick to the 12-week program.
- You have analyzed your food habits, decided to eat healthy and stick to a six-meal plan of smaller portions.
- You are ready not to be dependant on supplements or wait for a miracle remedy.
- You are committed to exercise and push the 10's.

You are ready indeed for the challenging 12-weeks program to get yourself a body to live for and a lifestyle to enjoy.

Begin the Journey...

...With a Journal. Get a really nice journal or notebook or diary that you can use to document what you are about to begin. Make sure that it's a book with the kind of pages that just invite you to write on. Get a great pen or pencil or a quill—as long as you write in it. This would be where you are going to draw up your roadmap. Here's what you can do:

State your goal. Spell out what you want to achieve—you can even mention wanting those gorgeous buns or abs or whatever you want—but remember to go beyond that. Write about the life you want to live, without having to heave and pant and having the energy enough to enjoy life's' pleasures.

Take pictures: Take pictures every week—just to look back and see where you were how your determination has changed your life. You could also put a picture

of yourself as a thinner version of what you are now and use that as motivation. Or you could add in pictures of the dream destination that you are treating yourself to after the 12 weeks.

Make a Promise List: Write down the mental promises you have made to yourself. Write it down in plain words, “I promise to get up 30 minutes earlier and exercise”. Make a list of the promises that you have mentally committed to and list them out. One tip—it’s better to delete the negativity in your list of promises—i.e. begin with “I do promise...” rather than “I promise not to...” or “I will not...”—Keep any self-denying thing out. You do not have to deny yourself anything. On the other hand—promise yourself a treat!

Write Down your Favorite Food: Make a list of the foods you like to eat and enjoy. Weave low calorie recipes around them and incorporate them into your diet plan. Collect recipes and stick them in. List a few healthy snack options you can rotate. This would help you monitor what you eat, have different dishes to choose from and not get bored of the diet plan.

Write down the Exercises: Make a list of the exercises you have committed to and divide the pages to accommodate a 12-week program. As you exercise, you can jot down when it was that you pushed the 10s. It will keep track of what exercises you did, which ones you enjoyed and how often you can push yourself to do a set or two more.

Number the Glasses of Water: Do not underestimate the power of water in achieving your target weight and lifestyle. Keep jotting down the water you drink everyday so that you know that your body is well hydrated. You would feel the added freshness in your skin once you get to the half mark period.

Record the Frustrations: Keep room for the anxiety-ridden, frustrated and angry thoughts. There will be many and instead of keeping them within and demotivating yourself, write them out of your system. This would also help you go back to those frustrating points in a calmer moment and work around them.

Note the Good Feelings: Write about the times you felt really good and why. Recording your achievements would also help during the times when you are really feeling down and out and feel like quitting. You can relive the feelings of elation that you have noted down earlier and inspire yourself.

Collect Quotes and Success Stories: Jot down inspirational quotations and help them to motivate you. Also collect the stories of those who have been successful enough to get that body for life and are already leading a changed lifestyle. There are a lot of people who have succeeded at the challenge of changing their lifestyle and a lot who failed. You can even make a list of the failures and see that you are able to tackle the roadblocks as they come.

Basically use the journal to track your course and measure your progress. Do not keep stepping on the scale and recording your weight. That's not the way to do it. Measure it by how light you feel, how energetic you are and how less fatigued you are. Make sure that there are no entries in your journal stating that you are hungry or tired—that would mean you are not eating well or exercising right—the aim is to relax not strain you.

Begin as soon as you are ready with the manageable, attainable goals. Do a set of 3 repetitions to begin with and graduate to more sets later on. If you are running then, walk and run rather than run the entire course. Be fair to yourself and do not injure yourself in any way. You could begin with a thirty-minute walk and increase the distance every week. Then you can carry small weights or strap weights around your ankles. Schedule the weekday exercise and stick to it.

Also begin with the diet in a committed but easy way. No need to zealously omit the oil and butter or get rid of the sugar in the house. You know that the key to weight loss is to burn more calories than you take in. You also know that you have to eat to get that metabolism working. There is no starving involved so DO NOT eliminate food—just keep it healthy and fresh. The tendency when you start a weight loss program is to starve and avoid food—do not do that as it sets off a craving that has to be fulfilled and knock you off-track.

Motivate Yourself Big Time

Begin with the journal and if you want, you can have an online journal yourself or be part of an online community of weight loss and life improvement enthusiasts. It's a great forum to share experiences, take tips and encourage each other on. However the bottom line is that you have to be your own champion. You have to power your efforts to get that body for life. Motivation is at the center of all lifestyle changes and weight loss goals. Here's a list of pointers to help on the motivation:

- Take it a day at a time till you are at the end of the week.
- Inform family and friends that you are on a plan to improve your life and have them support you or join in but do not allow them to sabotage your program!
- Cook and get creative and vary the diet, decorate and sit at the table rather than in front of the TV.
- Reward yourself with a portioned off treat.
- Reward yourself with some amount of money each day in a box and count it after a week.

- Have your own mantra or inspirational chant while you exercise—it can be as simple as “I can I can I can”!
- Buy smart clothes and get a smart hairstyle. Always look good and don’t wait till the weight loss.

But remember—take it one day at a time and work towards the end of the week.

Chapter 7: Week One... Why do I pee so much?

Water is the only drink for a wise man (or woman)!

~Henry

David

Thoreau~

You know what to do—watch the portions, eat often as six times a day and exercise—keep moving. Begin day one with an achievable goal. If you have never exercised, be gentle. Divide your journal into weeks and each week into seven days where you can list what you eat, the exercises you did and for how long and whether or not you pushed the 10's.

The Routine for the First day and the rest of the First week:

Begin by waking half an hour earlier than you usually do. It would be something like this:

- **5.45 am:** Drink water when you get up and begin the warm up and prepare your body.
- **6.00 am:** Begin the exercise routine—if you are walking then go on at it and see if you can push it that extra bit. If you are doing the round of floor exercises, see if you can do just one extra set.
- **8.00 am:** Tuck in a breakfast but do make sure that the portions are reasonable and that you have herbal tea or just water. Cut back on the caffeine a bit.
- **9.00 am:** You will be probably busy with work, so whatever it is that you do, try and breath and such you muscles in tight. Try to move around a lot, if you have a desk job and walk the stairs.
- **10.30 am:** You might get hungry so get yourself a snack.
- **12.30 pm:** Time for lunch—keep it simple, fresh and add a lot of vegetables. Keep carbs but portion it. Do not go for seconds.
- **2.00 pm:** Get a snack and do not go hungry. The idea is to keep your stomach full and not feel hungry.
- **2.30 pm:** See if you can take a 10 minute break and climb the stairs or go for a brisk 15 minute walk to beat the afternoon slump.
- **4.00 pm:** Definitely get a snack because food is the way to fend off the slump—bite though an apple, which is a very effective 4.00pm snack.

- **5.30 pm:** Depending on when you get back home—have some tea and get back to the exercise. Once again push yourself a bit but do not exert yourself.
- **7.00pm:** You need to have a meal much before your bedtime. Make sure that whenever you have your last meal of the day, you have enough time to digest the food before you sleep. Do not eat and sleep right away. Also avoid late night dinners. Keep 8.00pm as the cut off time.

Get a good night's rest and repeat the routine the next day. Just do make sure that you vary the contents of the menu and not the portions. You must not be hungry and you must not be tired. You must be increasing the number of glasses of water you drink.

Coming to water, yes—you will indeed be making frequent trips to the rest room. That's because you are having at least 8 glasses of water, you are changing your diet, you are also exercising more and your body is trying to flush out the toxins. That's OK. Even though it is a bit embarrassing at first, the first week will be the period when your body is 'breaking in' to the lifestyle changes.

Glug down the Water

Water regulates all our body functions because as you know 70% of our body is made up of water. Did you know that if your body loses more than 20% of its normal water content it results in a very painful death? The more water we drink the healthier we will be. Water gives a sense of fullness, gets rid of the toxins and if you having the right amount of water, you will lose the excess weight. It is fat-free and carb-free and is cheap too! Besides you might live without food, but you can never live without water.

DO NOT let down on the water intake—you will understand why water is important in weight loss programs if you understand the role it plays. If you find the trips to the rest room embarrassing, if you are thinking of cutting back on the number of glasses you drink—please rethink after reading what water does for you:

- Basically water helps in dissolving and transporting nutrients like oxygen and minerals to the body and it also aids digestion, assimilation, and elimination, which are all parts of the process of metabolism. Water activates and energizes your metabolism.
- The water you drink helps to get rid of the toxins from the fat cells. Fat cells live in the fat tissue and are released into the bloodstream but to get into the bloodstream, these fat cells have to be absolutely free of the excess water and toxins. If you don't drink enough water, the excess water in the fat cells stay as is and contributes to the bloating in your body.

- If you are not drinking water enough (both when you are dieting and when you are not) you will be dehydrated and you will appear to be fatter thanks to the swelling and bloating due to the excess water. The more you drink, the more you flush out. So the trips to the bathroom are definitely a good thing when you are dieting.
- You need water as water is part of all the bodily fluids be it digestive juices, blood, urine, lymph and perspiration, digestion, circulation and lubrication and helps to supply essential transport mechanism for several nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and even carbohydrates.
- When you exercise a lot—as you will be doing in these 12 weeks—you will be losing a lot of water through sweating. You need to put back that water you lost so that the body knows it has to flush it out rather than hang on to what is left in the body after sweating.
- Water is also what helps to maintain muscle tone and clear and healthy skin. Muscles are mainly made up of water. It helps you to build muscle mass and ensure muscle contraction. The flabby, bloated feeling is not because of too much water but too less. If you are exercising and having enough water, you would be able to tone your muscles faster.
- Water is also a healer. If you feeling terribly tired in the evening—it's probably because you haven't had enough water. This might be information for you but water helps to ease lower back pain. So the aches that might follow the exercise, would be healed by the water you take in. Water is helpful if you have Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, kidney stones, hangovers, neck pain, muscle pain, joint pain, bloating, constipation, ulcers, headaches, migraines, asthma, allergies, colitis, rheumatoid, arthritis, depression, hypertension, cholesterol, low energy levels, stomach pain, confusion and disorientation—and that is quite a list!
- The right intake of water helps to regulate your body temperature, as well as cushion and lubricate joints, protect tissues, organs and the spinal cord—so when you are pushing the 10s, don't forget the water.

Overall, drinking water is central to weight loss in these 12-weeks—never mind the number of trips you take to the restroom. The best part is it has no calories, fat, or cholesterol and is low in sodium. Drink water before meals so that you can control yourself when it comes to second helpings and feel full with the smaller portions.

Water helps to get rid of the water in fat cells and convert it to energy. The biggest role water plays in weight loss is enable the efficient use of proteins and enzymes and help in weight loss and fitness. You will pee a lot but at least it's

helping you. Also the increased intake of water has long-term health benefits and will go a long way to enrich your life. The only logical thing to do is drink more water than you have had before.

Set the pace of increasing this intake in the first week and stick to it. Have water before meals and whenever you feel or think of food! Help the water to hasten the weight loss and do make those frequent trips to the toilet—imagine you are flushing the fat away and glug the water!

Post a Note: Remember—if you are not drinking enough water you are allowing fat to build.

Chapter 8: Week Two... Will I always be this sore?

Pain is temporary. It may last a minute, or an hour, or a day, or a year, but eventually it will subside and something else will take its place. If I quit, however, it lasts forever.

~Lance Armstrong~

Apart from running to the rest room—the first week will give you a host of other triumphs and trials and pain! First of all though—the first few days and the first week is cause for celebration and no giving up! You did it—you ate properly, you exercised, you drank water and you felt good about it. You are not going to see results right away and it would be better if you didn't weigh yourself constantly. The tendency would be to get upset if the results do not match your expectations. The best thing to do is carry on the torch of endurance to the second week.

The Routine for the Second Week

You can stick to the meal times of Week One. Continue to spread your calories over six balanced meals but vary the menus. Do not make a huge batch of soup—you will get tired of it. Add more vegetables and try and eliminate the sugar. Try and get the sugar your body needs from fruits. Do not reduce portions and do not try and eliminate a meal. The aim is still to feel comfortably full in the stomach rather than feel hungry and crave for something sinful!

However, you must bring some change in the exercise routine:

- Increase the distance if you are walking or running. Hit the inclines and push yourself.
- Add the number of repetitions to your exercises and begin to push the 10s with a bit more rigor than Week One.
- Increase the intensity of the cardio exercises.
- Pursue weight training for 20 minutes three times in a week, replacing another set of exercises and do the cardio exercises for the other three days.

You can also add a multivitamin or Vitamin C to fortify your body but whatever it is, challenge yourself to make more of an effort than Week one. You have to step up and try and do things a little different. May be you could add a jump rope routine as a warm up or add a few new exercises that can tackle your problem areas. Also keep documenting it all and be faithful to the journal. Begin Week Two with enthusiasm and don't let anything dampen your spirits.

Dealing with the 'Ouches'!

No one is saying that if you feel pain then you gain—because that is an old adage. Pain is not necessarily good. The soreness we are talking about is that stiff feeling. For someone who hasn't exercised before, your body is going to complain about the years of misused and unused muscles and joints. You will be most definitely sore. The thing is that the pain should not deter you. Think of it this way—a door hasn't been opened in ages. When it finally is opened, the hinges are bound to creak. What you do is oil the hinges and resume using the door again. It's the same with your body. It hasn't been challenged in ages and aches and sores are ways it copes with all the unusual stretches and physical demands you are putting it through. But challenge your body you must. Without workouts, you cannot expect to have a healthy body. Without exercise, you can't expect to tone up the muscle and loosen the joints. Without intense exercise, you cannot expect to lose the weight and get that body for life.

Just scaling down the diet won't help—the calories have to be burned. If you lower the calorie intake and increase the amount you burn, you lose weight. It's a simple enough equation but it has to be a long-term commitment to see definite results. Which is why the whole process has to be sustained for 12 weeks. Regulate the diet, drink more water, exercise consistently and deal with the sore body.

Here are some ways to do beat the soreness:

- Always, always begin with warm ups. If you stretch all your muscles before you jump on that treadmill or lift weights or begin the aerobic and cardio exercises, you will be less prone to shocking your muscles and joints into action. The warm up stretches would kind of limber your body.
- Wear the right exercise gear and have the right kind of weights. Get shoes that give good support to your feet and heels and cushion you knees. Use the weights that are comfortable to use. Do not start off with heavy weights.
- Learn to use the exercise machines correctly. Do not jerk and struggle with the bench presses etc., or you could get your muscles in an awkward sprain. As much as is possible, learn to use all the equipment properly and do the exercises correctly too. For examples, during stomach crunches, make sure you support your neck rather than strain it.

- Cool down the right way. After the intensive exercises, you need to allow the body to slowly come back to its normal rhythm. Think of some Yoga stretches that could stretch your muscles and massage them in the process—this would help combat the soreness you might feel later.
- Get into a hot tub. Relax in a bubble bath and let the warmth of the water ease the soreness. See this tub time as a reward for yourself and your body—it will in the process give you a good night's sleep.

Don't let the Soreness Stop You

Keep exercising. Don't use your sore body as an excuse to give up. As you exercise more the body will adjust and the soreness will be a thing of the past. Week Two will be a week of much progress. You have stuck to the program and all the credit goes to you. Be assured that your body is getting used to the new routine and is readying itself to heat things up!

Chapter 9: Week Three... Am I really hitting those “10’s”?

Go the extra mile. It's never crowded.

~ A.
Watkins~

Week three—you are here because you are going that extra mile and that’s absolutely commendable! You’ve exercised, you’ve also stuck to the diet and you are drinking a lot more water. You have actually incorporated vitality in your life. Think about it—you have done something you have always wanted to but never did. It’s Week Three now and you need to keep going that extra mile.

Intensity is the Key

You need to work at increasing the intensity of your work out but first of all you need to pause a moment and realize the difference between intensity and strain. You also need to know the difference between soreness and getting hurt. Pain as in soreness will only slowly fade away if you keep exercising. Pain, as in excruciating stabs down your neck, shoulder or ankle, means that you haven’t been exercising the right way. Either you haven’t been careful or you haven’t been exercising with smooth fluid movements.

Intensity and strain are two different things. Intensity in exercise means that you have to focus on pushing the 10s. The moment you do 8 repetitions—push yourself and do those extra two sets. It’s about getting out of that comfort zone and driving yourself a bit more. But NOT to the extent of hurting yourself or feeling tired. You push yourself, egg yourself on to the point you know is your highest when it comes to endurance...and then you stop when you feel good about being able to go that far. You do not stop and feel exhausted or push your body over that high point.

If you stop your exercise and feel that you could have done that extra bit, you aren’t really hitting the 10s. Know that and next time, go for that high point.

How Weight Training Helps

Your goal is to do three days of weight training and three days of cardio and gradually hit the highs and push the 10s! It’s easier to get to high points with weight training. The best thing about weight training is that it doesn’t focus on losing anything—it focuses on gaining muscle tone, building strength and increasing confidence. There is no losing here—it’s all about gain. However—it has to be done right. If you are a novice, it might be a good idea to sign up at a gym and work under guidance.

- Consult a professional and find out what weight and resistance exercises you can do at home without hurting yourself.

- Always warm up and cool down.
- Never hold on to your breath while training with weights.
- Don't add weights on too soon—you might feel a burning in your muscles. Add on the extra weight gradually. If you are feeling any kind of pain in the joints and muscles—it would mean that you are not doing it right.
- Always remember that the last set that you push yourself to do is the one that really makes you build that muscle

Things to know about Weight Training

You might not see a weight loss right away. The fat is going to go but it's going to be replaced by muscle which is heavier than fat. So weight loss might not show up on the scale. It would show up if you took before and after measurements of your neck, arms, waist etc., but again be patient—don't expect dramatic results in just a week!

You will be hungrier. Muscle speeds up your metabolism and you would feel hungry which is why you need to eat more frequently. The three meals a day just doesn't work for people who are weight training. Add healthy snacks and never go hungry—if you decide to go without food, your body would go into defensive mode and start saving whatever fat it can—so go and eat—your muscles will work it out of you.

You need more protein. Don't go overboard and have only protein because protein can come with a lot of fat and also constipate you—just make your protein intake a little more as it helps with the muscle building process.

You will be thirsty too. That's because muscles needs a lot of water and it helps to flush out the fat cells so keep drinking water. Besides water even makes your skin look brighter!

You need supplements to strengthen you. Please note the word 'strengthen'. No one is saying that you need to replace your food with supplements. Just add Vitamin C or chromium or any supplement that your doctor approves of.

How to Hit the Highs

Nothing is more intense that weight training. You already added three routines to your schedule—so why don't you intensify those routines in Week Three. Do intensive weight training three times in a week, and the aerobic exercise also three times per week. You can take one day in a week off—but that doesn't mean you stop exercising on that day. You just don't have to do weights or aerobics, just run or walk but keep your body moving.

Here is how you can aspire to push the 10s in your exercise:

- Go for carefully selected weight training exercises and learn how to do them properly so that you do not strain your muscles and are unable to hit the high points.
- Make sure that you do two exercises that workout the major muscles of the upper and lower body.
- What you could do is start with a weight and do a set of exercises and then pick up a lower weight to repeat some more sets and switch back again to the higher weight.
- Do remember to take one minute rest in between the sets—this is where you might strain yourself—remember the aim is to make things intense not strenuous.
- Add walking and hiking—climbing hills is not only going to motivate you to go further but get that heart rate ticking and make your exercise more intense and effective.
- Add a biking time routine and go out to enjoy the weather. You'll tone your legs, get an excellent cardio exercise and have fun!

It's your body. You will know when it feels good and when it feels pain. Listen to your body and remember that we are not even trying to touch the threshold of pain. We are trying to use the body's potential and drive it to the ultimate goal. If you are hurting, then it's not going to help you get that body you want. If you are hungry you aren't going to get that body for life either. Please note that there is no room for pain and hunger. Enjoy the exercise and challenge yourself. Enjoy your meals and eat often—you need to feed those muscles.

Get Some Diet Support

Since you need to push to the high points, you can get a little help from your diet. Increase the Protein intake—but not too much. For people who want to build their body, proteins are a must. If you get the right amount of protein, you can supply that energy to your muscles and push then to reach the high points. Not that you immediately make your diet protein based—you just increase the amount you are having at the moment and fiber to avoid being constipated by the protein.

Make sure that you are still having six meals and six snacks spread out through the day—but just add a little protein to the diet to support you when you weight train. The protein will also raise your metabolism a bit and help you with the weight loss. Do make sure that you are having the right kind of protein though—not something that is dripping of fat. The thing about animal protein is that it comes with fat. See if you can work around it or look for proteins without fat. You

could explore the option of Whey Protein, low fat cottage cheese, soy protein and any nutritionist recommended protein powder.

Keep it Going in Week Three

Think of ways to stay focused. Exercise in front of the TV, do your crunches and get your kids to count. Make sure you make the entries of when you hit the high points.

Chapter 10: Week Four... Hang in there – Keep pushing!

Never, never, never, never give up.

~Winston Churchill~

You are really doing it well—you've pushed your body to challenge itself and you are already bettering your life! You are giving yourself the foundations of that body you want and the new lifestyle—so hang in there!

Bust out of that Plateau

Are you sensing a slowdown? Are you feeling that you've done enough and that enough is enough? Well—here is one thing you have to know—it's not enough. How come we don't give up when we are earning money and stop earning it when there is enough? How come we stop eating a fantastic cake when we know our stomach's had enough? Why is that it's only with the exercise and eating healthy that we have had enough?

You are doing just great and there is not reason to stop and feel that it's all very well and that you can't go on. Of course you can go on—you are already doing it—so what's the need to give up now? This is the time when you should be thinking—"Wow—I've got this far and if I do this for some more time, I'm going to have the body I want and a changed lifestyle ". Find out what it is that is making you feel this way. Is it the number that shows up on the weighing scale or the fact that you still don't feel the fat just shrinking in? Well—the weighing scale often can't show the internal progress of your body and fat doesn't just shrink away—it is going to take a few more weeks for it to go and it will indeed!

Throw self-doubt out the window and exercise the flagging energy away. Nothing is better than a burst of enthusiastic exercise to combat the feeling of tiredness and giving up. Analyze what it is that is making you feel this way:

- Are you hungry? This would mean that your diet is not right so recheck the diet timings and eat more frequently rather than increase the portion.
- Are you stressed out because you see no weight loss? Stop weighing yourself everyday—just resist that temptation and don't suffer the disappointment. If you seem to weigh more it's because you are building muscle—and muscle weighs more!
- Are you bored of the exercises? Just change the routine, add exciting elements like outdoor cycling, swimming etc.
- Are you just slowing down? Then pick up the pace and make your exercise faster! Add intensity to the workout and challenge yourself.

- Are you feeling low? Get motivational tapes and listen to them and drink a lot of water—it always buoys your spirit.

Make sure that you are eating those six meals in a day and make sure that you have interesting things on your table. You can find great international recipes from the Internet. Find Chinese and Thai salads, healthy wraps and baked stuff without too much cheese of course. There is really no need to eliminate anything from your diet. You can and you must eat everything—just watch the portions. Try innovations in cooking styles and keep drinking water. If you can, please keep a watch on the fruit juices, because of the sugar they contain. Why not switch to fruit instead?

Pick on the Fruit!

Do you know that there is a right time and a wrong time to eat fruit? Well there is and in fact, if you eat fruit at the wrong time you most likely will end up feeling pretty bloated or suffer indigestion. Here are the secrets of taking fruits the right way and picking up the benefits:

- The best times to eat fruit are in the morning. Whenever you eat fruit, make sure that you have an empty enough stomach. Fruits give your body maximum benefits on an empty stomach. If you eat fruit after food, you might get that bloated sensation. But mornings are the best time for fruits.
- You must stick to fresh fruit—the canned and preserved stuff do not qualify. Go to the grocery store and get a fruit that is still a fruit and not a pie, or a shake or frozen or treated.
- If you must eat fruit after lunch—to battle the 4pm slump, make sure that at least two hours have passed since you had your meal.

Fruit is a filling and a healthy option. It will also give you natural sugar that does not have to go through the complexities of the digestive breakdown and can be assimilated easily. Week Four—go fruity!

The Difficulty of Being Consistent

It is Week Four and you might be feeling that the routine is getting a bit demanding. Demanding it is—as any program will be that seeks to turn your body and life around. It demands consistency from you. You need to be consistent with the exercises, the diet, the water intake and the attitude.

You might have slipped on exercise, you might have digressed from the diet—but that's all right—no need to give up all the efforts of the past few days. Don't get obsessed though—just get back on the bandwagon. Just get back on schedule and have a re-look at your planning.

More often than not, the slip-ups occur because of one's mental make up. The whole idea of "planned exercise routine" or "Diet Plan" is diametrical opposite of having fun, doing what you feel like and grabbing a bite without thinking. Mentally we feel straitjacketed and under restrain. That's sad—because we actually workout all the time—walking, climbing stairs, bending, etc., and what our body needs is more of this exercise, but just with a little more focus and target. Similarly we've always been eating what we liked—what's wrong with eating what the body likes?

Don't let the slip-ups trip you and don't let the doubts get the better of you. Focus—do you or do you not what that body? Of course you do, so lets get back in the schedule and review what might have triggered the doubt and the skipping:

- Get to see the exercise as part of life—it is not a grueling schedule to hurt your body. Sure you are tired and would like to sleep a bit more, but if you woke up and got moving, you wouldn't feel tired anymore. On the contrary—it would get the adrenaline running and make you full of the proverbial beans!
- You have to exercise everyday—there is no other way to maintain that consistency but to exercise everyday. Make sure that you do so—look at it this way: consistence breeds consistency and before you know it you will be waking at a certain time automatically, reaching for the weights and exercising, because that's what you did yesterday, and the day before and the day before that.
- You have taken the challenge—why give it up? Do the needful and prove to yourself that you can control your body and life. Push to hit the highs and get your body moving. Before you know it, you'll be begging for new and different kinds of exercises.
- Ditch the attitude of exercise as a regimen—make it as natural as breathing. Run up and down the stairs—research has it that stair climbing is a great way to get an intensive workout. Climb stairs for just 12 minutes everyday and you could lose that extra weight—you are even allowed to take the elevator down!
- If it helps you to join a class—then do so. Whatever it is do not avoid exercise. If you join a class you are more likely to be there. If you want to exercise alone—that's fine too but you better be self-motivated.
- Vary your routine and make sure that you exercise no matter what the weather is. If you can't ride your bike outside, or jog in the course—do it on the stationary bike or the treadmill.

The best thing to do is exercise at the times you like the most. However, the insistence on morning exercises is because, it sets a pace to the day and rids the body of the sluggishness which would make you eat wrong foods, sit the wrong way, have the wrong attitude, etc. Exercise in the morning makes you feel energetic for the rest of the day and also burns more of the unused fat, so make that a must do session. If you really aren't up to it, then just lessen the intensity or the time—but do not skip the session.

Do not underestimate the power of the journal and re-visit your goals, your efforts of the first week, the diet plan and your own experiences. Also take a look at the pictures you took of yourself at the beginning of week one—do you see the difference that the organized exercise and the planned diets made? Don't let yourself down. It's just not fair. So don't skip the exercises—just replace it with a set of exercises that you enjoy and that makes your body feel good.

Keep pushing....

Motivate yourself—envision your goal. Imagine what your life could be and think what would happen to your body should you decide to slow down on this program. There is no way but forward and forward you will go. Week Four is for you to:

- Rev up the workout. Give it your best shot and go for it. Push the 10s and remember to warm up and cool down. The more you feel like you can't do it, intensify the exercises.
- Focus on being there for you. No one else matters—it's about you and it's about getting yourself what you wanted all your life. It's about keeping a promise you made to yourself—if you don't remember, go back and read the journal.
- Keep at the six meals. Make it interesting. Add fruit and drink water. You shouldn't be feeling hungry in between the six meals. Try and have fiber to speed up the digestion and metabolism and add a vitamin C, or multivitamin or calcium or chromium. Sometimes supplements like these would give you the added zing that you need.

Hang in there—think of all the good things that have happened so far. You are eating well now and drinking water. You have got your body into the ready-for-challenges module. Think of how good you feel after a bout of aerobics. There will be days when you will be at your lowest and snack on French fries or skip the exercise. Just make sure it was a small portion of fries and do an honest set of exercises while you watch TV. Don't make excuses for a single lapse and ditch the program. Just forget it and get back on track. Why? **Because you owe it to yourself.** If you aren't faithful to yourself—who will you be faithful to?

C'mon now—hang in there at let's get ready for Week 5!

Part IV: Midway Point Blues...Don't Give Up

Chapter 11: Please...Throw your scale away!

In the Middle Ages, they had guillotines, stretch racks, whips and chains. Nowadays, we have a much more effective torture device called the bathroom scale.

~Stephen
Phillips~

Who said that weight loss in pounds is the main thing? Yes, yes, indeed the goal of this program is to get your weight down but your weight in numbers isn't really a great indicator of *actual* weight loss. If at all it plays a role—the bathroom scale plays the role of depressing you, de-motivating you and knocking you off your track. But first things first—you're almost at the halfway mark!

Approaching Mid-point

The halfway point is a landmark and you need a big pat on the back for getting here. Your motivation should rocket up on the fact that you have balanced your diet, pushed that body and maintained your focus. What you must do now is sustain that effort and keep it going by:

- **Continuing to spread out the mealtime:** Make sure that you are eating enough and at least six times a day. You can stick to the meal times you had in Week One and hopefully by now, if you ate at fixed times and in regular intervals, there will be less likely chances of you feeling hungry or craving for the wrong things.
- **Continuing to portion the amount:** Stick to the portions and don't increase the amount. If you feel like increasing the amount add another healthy snack like an orange, hard-boiled egg, small broiled chicken breast or fresh vegetables like carrots and celery sticks.
- **Continuing with the exercise:** Keep on working out and continue to push till the high points. Keep moving when you aren't exercising like using the stairs or even some spot running while the casserole is in the oven! The idea behind this is that your body is energized by short bursts of activity.
- **Continuing to journal:** It's a must to continue with the journaling and the documentation of what you have eaten, how you have exercised, your high points and your low moments—it's all very important. Also keep taking pictures of yourself to document the body change.
- **Continuing to stick to timings:** Commit to the timings of both mealtime and exercise. Don't bring in new unfamiliar times, as it would again take

time for your body to adjust. Besides, a timetable would make you more focused on the goal.

How is 'Real' Weight Loss Assessed?

Now we come back to the mean old bathroom scale—far from being like the evil queen's mirror in Snow White, the scale just brings you bad news. Basically, give your scales away and keep at the program. The problem is that the accepted way of recording weight loss is with the help of this weighing scale (kind of like can't live with you or without you!).

You have to understand that when you weigh yourself on the bathroom scale, it only measures the physical weight of your body. It cannot weigh your fitness level. It cannot assess your stamina and energy. It certainly can't gauge how you feel. You might be stepping on your scale and finding yourself 2 pounds less or 10 pounds less and that makes you feel great for a moment, but that number is only part of the real weight loss. Karen Carpenter went on a water diet and sure enough lost a lot of weight and must have been delighted with what the bathroom scale recorded—but was she healthy enough to enjoy that wonderful life—we know the answer to that.

Sometimes when you train with weights, you can notice the scales record a weight gain—that should never be reason to despair because your body is bulking up and your fat is getting replaced by muscle mass. More muscle is a good thing because you are obviously a proud owner of a toned body. Weight gain is not a sign of failure and you must NEVER let the bathroom scale dominate your idea of weight loss.

What you are aiming to do through this program is to get rid of excess fat and tone the muscle—and your scale can't give you information of either of these things. The scale won't show what you have gained in the past four weeks—it might show you a big different at the end of Week 12 but not right now. Also sometimes you might be at your ideal weight and all you do need is to energize, tone and give shape to the body—so what need is there to step on the scale at all? It does not make sense to take your weight everyday and prep yourself up for disappointment.

Come to think of it, it all begins with conditioning—if we are 110 pounds then we are fit and slim. The insistence on linking weight to fitness and wellness is so incorrect. It's actually the reason why so many young kids out there, eat the wrong things or don't eat at all to be the weight that society demands of them. What you need is the weight at which you can function the best, without being burdened by excess fat, or tiredness or joint pains etc., that slow you down.

Apart from using the scale, measure real weight loss by:

- How you feel—Do you feel good, better than before and lighter on your feet?
- Energy Levels—Are you tired at the end of the day or do you feel ready for a tumble with your kids or time with your partner?
- Measurement—When you use a tape measure around your neck, upper arms, chest, waist, hips, thighs and calves, does it record a difference?
- Mental Strength—Are you ready to tackle the stress of work and home and face it with more calm?
- Emotional Balance—Can you feel that you are getting better in your relationship with people?

Real weight loss makes you feel better and healthier and the health is reflected in all aspects of your life. You are not only looking and feeling better, you are more in control of your life and self. It is pointless standing on the scale and feeling depressed because the needle points to the same old weight or the digital display has recorded just half a pound loss. So many people give up at the halfway mark because of what the scale says—don't let it be you.

Change the Way You See Weight Loss

The best thing to do is change the way you track your weight loss. Don't keep hopping on to the scale every day. If you have that tendency, then get rid of it. To get the body to live a changed lifestyle—there is no room for the obsession with weight. This program does not track short-term loss in pounds. It aims for long term gain in life. So redefine the way you see weight loss—especially because you are halfway through and you need encouraging indications that would spur you on.

Do find out your healthy weight—it depends upon your age, height, and body type. All people who are the same age and the same height will not need to have the same ideal weight. Some might be the wiry type, others a bit filled in. So your ideal weight would necessarily be what is right for *you*. Do indeed strive for a weight loss in pounds, but don't let it become an obsession and a sole measurement of your progress because it might become an obstacle to your motivation.

Take pictures and assess your progress. You will be able to see a difference in your body, even though your weight might be the same. Your stomach will look flatter, your back and legs will look toned than before. Take measurements of your arms, waist and hips and do remember that once again—don't get obsessed! Take measurements after realistic enough gaps.

Let your Feelings Guide You

A major indicator is how you feel. Use your journal to record how you feel. With four weeks of exercise and balanced eating—you must be feeling good. That's

the best way of encouraging yourself to go the distance. Ultimately, what is important and what will last is the feeling. How you look matters but how you feel matters even more. Give the program and yourself the chance to enjoy the long-term benefit of being healthier, happier and optimistic. When you work hard at something, there is this satisfaction that nothing can match. Don't let the bathroom scale rob that from you. Don't give into the mid-point blues and face Week Five with confidence.

Chapter 12: Week Five... Trick your body!

The only exercise some people get is jumping to conclusions, running down their friends, sidestepping responsibility, and pushing their luck!

~Author Unknown~

Now what's mentioned in the quote above is not the exercise that will ever help you lose weight or lead a better life! It's Week Five and your body is getting pretty used to the exercises you are doing, so keep at it. It's getting easier for it to push the highs and do the extra repetitions. There is one way in which you can get the body to work like it did in Week Two and Three—trick it!

Week Five – Time for Changes

Not changes in a big way—you will be sticking to the same six meals and the timings for both eating and exercise. What you will be changing is the kind of exercise. You need to challenge the body a bit more and trick it into working harder. It's like this—the first time you climb a flight of stairs, it's hard and your body has to work really hard to get up it. However, as the days pass and you climb everyday up those stairs, your body gets used to it. What was a push is now a comfortable climb. Your body has scaled up to meet the challenge of that flight of stairs—the way you would have to get it to work harder is look for a bigger flight of stairs.

That's why you are going to try and trick your body in Week Five with more challenging exercises. What's more challenging than cardio and weights? Yes, you are doing it already and your body has got used to getting up in the morning and hitting that treadmill for half an hour. But why not incorporate both cardio and weights into your day with a little more creativity?

Cardio Can Do it for You

All that Cardiovascular exercise aims to raise your heart rate to a certain level. The way to measure that level is that you can still talk while you are working out—if you can't talk—then stop! Cardio helps to burn calories, make your heart strong, expand your lungs and bring down the risks of heart attack, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and diabetes. In the process, you lose weight, reduce your stress and you feel good.

Some of the cardio exercises include running, cycling, hiking or walking, stationary bikes, elliptical trainers, treadmills, rowing machines, Stairmasters and any activity or exercise machine that gets your heart rate up. All you have to do is work at the exercise and get your heart to beat faster—which is also why you need to choose the cardio exercise that you enjoy and do it at least three times a week.

You have already been alternating Cardio and weight training three times a week. Now is the time to do shorter workouts, but more often. No need to do the same cardio exercise either. The aim is to include shorter bursts of exercise and various different times of the day along with your regular workout sessions of the day. The best way to bust out of your plateau is to include the following exercise bursts:

- Dance hard enough to work out a sweat to your favorite music. Get your kids to join in and have a blast of a cardio dance.
- In office, find a flight of stairs and run up it for 7 minutes—you can take the elevator down if you like but run up at least twice.
- Ditch the car as far as you can and speed walk to the office or the grocery store or wherever you are going—or bicycle around the block.

The aim is to try and do short but intense cardio workouts. Usually when you are working for 30 to 40 minutes, you have to rest in between and try not to wear yourself out. That's why the exercise can't be as intensive because you would get tired and not last the 30 odd minutes. However with mini-5 minute and 10-minute workouts, you can achieve a whole lot of intensity and the best thing it can be done anywhere and not take much of your time. All you have to do however is make sure that you can talk as you do your cardio burst and relax after it's over.

Add Tricks to the Diet too!

You already are eating six meals spread out throughout the day and you are making sure that the diet is balanced. Week Five you are slipping in a few more tricks to your diet:

- Try and taper off the meals—eat the bigger portions in the morning and make the meals smaller as the day goes by. Not too small that you are hungry—just a slightly smaller amount.
- Eat more often—as in add a few more snacks. Your breakfast will be the heaviest, the lunch would be smaller and the dinner would be the lightest. Make sure the meals have more of protein, green leafy vegetables and carbohydrates such as vegetables and whole grains.
- Switch to high protein snacks—like chicken and cottage cheese or a protein shake.
- Drink more water than you have been drinking till now to fill and filter the body.
- Sleep earlier and sleep well—after all you've added more exercise!

The idea behind the tricks is that you are challenging your body with cardio bursts along with the exercises sessions to build muscle. You are also eating the same amounts but making it lighter as the day passes and adding protein to feed the muscles you are building through cardio. You are also reducing your stress, and making sure that your body gets the rest that it deserves.

Chapter 13: Week Six... Double-check your portions!

We are indeed much more than what we eat, but what we eat can nevertheless help us to be much more than what we are.

~Adelle
Davis~

Food glorious food! It nourishes us, strengthens us and without it we can't survive—who doesn't know that? In fact our whole life is geared around 'earning the bread', 'put food on the table' and avoid starvation at any cost. But then there's the fine line that we cross and it's a whole different story—we eat to enjoy and then we enjoy it a bit too much. The result is overeating, excess fat and health problems. After all too much of anything is bad—who doesn't know that?

What's on Your Plate?

Food can indeed help us to be more than what we are—but how? By watching what we eat and by watching how much we eat. Week Six is the time to review what you eat and double-check the portions. Lets see what the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends as the nutritional requirements of most Americans:

- 0-3 servings (use sparingly) fats, oils, sweets
- 2-3 servings (6 - 9 ounces) meat/protein
- 2-3 servings dairy
- 2-4 servings fruit
- 3-5 servings vegetables
- 6-11 servings bread/starch

You get all the calories from the above to meet the energy that your body needs. While the average woman needs around 2000 calories the average man needs 2500 to meet the body's need. However the calorie requirement would vary from person to person, according to their age, sex, their activity levels etc.

What usually happens is that we get busy taking in as many calories as we feel like, whenever we like and the corresponding usage of these calories is not proportionate to the amount we take in—it's much less. So while we are putting in the fuel or food into our body—we are not using it. The unused amount just adds up to our weight. To lose weight, you would need to take in fewer amounts of calories and burn more calories than you take in! Seems simple enough—but how do you take in fewer calories—by watching the portions. How do you use more calories than you usually do—by increasing your activity level through exercise!

The Deal about Portions

Most people, who want to speed up the weight loss process, when the weight is not just going down with exercise, is to reduce the servings. What exactly is a serving? A serving determines how much of the food you need to eat to meet your body's need and everybody would have a different servings requirement. The USDA and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services got so concerned about the weight and fitness of the average American that they have come up with the new food guide pyramid called My Pyramid. (You can actually go to the website www.mypyramid.gov and get a quick estimate of what and how much you need to eat by entering your age, sex, and activity level in the My Pyramid Plan box—remember your needs would vary according to many factors)

The My Pyramid plan suggests portions according to actual weights and amounts of specific foods. Portions should be made according to age, gender, and activity level. Assess your activity level, your age, and how much you want to lose and then portion your food requirement accordingly.

Have a look at the following table to see what one serving is:

Type of Food	One Serving	Recommendations
Breads, Cereals, Rice, & Pasta	1 slice of bread, pasta, or cereal; 1 ounce of cold cereal.	Whole-wheat bread, brown rice, and oatmeal
Vegetables	1/2 cup of raw or cooked; 1 cup of leafy raw vegetables;	Go for the dark green, orange vegetables and beans and peas
Fruits	1 piece of fruit or a melon wedge; 3/4 cup of juice; 1/2 cup of canned fruit; 1/4 cup of dried fruit;	Eat fruit in the morning when your stomach is relatively empty. Use then as a snack.
Milk, Yogurt, & Cheese	1 cup of milk or yogurt; 1.5 to 2 ounces of cheese; 1 serving size of cheese = 1 ping-pong ball	Go for low-fat options like low-fat calcium fortified foods
Meat, Poultry, Fish	1.5 to 3 ounces of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish; 1 serving of cooked meat	Choose lean sources of protein like fish, turkey, or chicken rather than red meats.
Dry Beans, Eggs, & Nuts	1 to 1.5 cups of cooked beans; 2 eggs;	Choose from lentils and go for the egg whites
Fats, Oils, & Sugar:	4 tablespoons of peanut butter;	Try and limit to 3 to 5 teaspoons of oil in a day
Alcoholic beverages	1 serving of white wine = 1/2 small wine glass	Drink enough to enjoy and reap the benefits

Making the Portions Smaller

All the above is what is just one serving of food—you would need to pick and choose what suits your body and your weight loss program without making you feel hungry. The problem is that the portions that are given in restaurants are way too big and we have got used to that. Our body can get used to big portions and when you lower it right away, you might feel hungry—hence the reason behind the six meals spread out through the day in smaller portions. Whatever it is, you must be careful enough to make the portion smaller but not deny the body of what it needs. Read for some tips on how to ration the food:

Go by the size of a small fist: Your stomach is a pretty small organ and ideally it can't take in more than the size of a small fist. When we do tuck in that massive pound of spaghetti, it expands with a lot of groaning and moaning and pressurizes the body into processing the food. If we add exercises—the body uses up the extra energy from the spaghetti, if the body lies on the couch—the body stores it up as excess calorie i.e. as fat.

Use imagery: It's a good idea to imagine the portion in terms of things that relate to daily life. Think of one serving in terms of cups and fists and tennis balls and don't go beyond that amount!

Fruit intake	= a tennis ball
Pasta	= small fist
Cooked rice	= a tennis ball
1 slice of bread	= plastic CD case
Vegetables e.g. 1 serving size of broccoli	= a light bulb
Cooked meat, poultry or fish	= a deck of cards
1 serving of meatball	= a ping-pong ball;
Burger	= a hockey puck
Tortilla	= size of a small salad plate
Bagel	= a hockey puck
Muffin	= size of a large egg
Baked potato	= a computer mouse
Cheese, at least 1.5 ounces	= to six dice
Teaspoon of margarine or butter	= a thumb tip 2 tbsp.
Peanut butter	= a ping-pong ball;

Don't increase the portions: You already know what one serving is and you know also that it's the minimum you can eat. Increase the servings according to your activity level and do not inflate the portions unnecessarily. Use smaller plates and don't go for seconds. Also beware when you buy bagels and muffins—their sizes don't cease to increase—what you can do is eat half and keep the rest for another snack. Don't go for the entire thing at time—split the big sized foods and have it over the day.

Try a snack before the last meal of the day: In week five you've been tapering your meals so that your dinner is the lightest. You don't want to go to bed hungry though and succumb to midnight cravings. So have a snack before your last meal. That way your stomach is sufficiently sated before your last meal.

Don't fall for bargains: Forget the super size menus and think only about the size of your stomach. Just because the super size pack comes free is not a reason to go for it and spoil your diet. Go for the smaller portion and be gentle on your stomach—it's really a very small organ. Even when you have to go out for a meal, mind the portions. It might look silly but doggy bag half the meal and bring it home.

Make Yourself a Platter: There really is no need to bring all that you have cooked to the dinner table—you will invariably reach out for seconds. The best things to do are to get a smaller plate, portion out the contents of your meal and take the plate to the table. Eat slowly and chew every bite.

Add More Water: Drinking water before the meal would automatically get you used to the smaller portions. You would be too full to notice that you have eaten a smaller portion for lunch or dinner.

Pay attention while you eat: Eating in front of the TV dinners is one of the quickest ways to put on extra weight. There you are watching the action movie and the excitement of the moment involves you too much to notice what you are eating and when your brain does not concentrate on what you are eating, it cannot coordinate with the stomach and signal that you are full. Look at the plate, concentrate on what you are eating and savor the taste and smells. If you focus on something else while eating like the ball game, or the computer, you will tend to overeat. If you must eat in front of the TV then make sure that your portion is small and that there will be no second helps.

Eat more from the free use category: Be clever when it comes to snacks and eat items like lettuce leaves, celery, radishes, carrots and other fresh items that fill you up but don't add to the weight of your body. These items can be added freely to your meal as long as you are eating proper balanced diets for the major six meals.

Go slow on the dressings: Avoid the salad dressings—even if they are low fat, the inherent ingredients can add to your weight. Keep the salad fresh with a squeeze of lemon. Make an interesting salad where in you can toss up the sprouts with cucumber, fresh cilantro, and lettuce and add a dash of lemon. The cilantro and the lemon are very underestimated components but can add a lot of zing to the food minus the fat.

Week Six is for checking on the portions, streamlining your diet even more and continuing with the exercise. Drink more water and while you are at it, take Week Six to cut back on the:

- Caffeine, which actually stops the absorption of healthy nutrients in your body and reduces the blood sugar, which in turn makes you crave for the sweet stuff to eat.
 - Refined carbohydrates and sugar like white bread and rice, pasta and sugar, which is converted into fat by your body. Opt for brown bread and rice—just a cooked fistful.
 - Soda and carbonated drinks because they just ‘sweetly’ increase sugar in your body and increase your risk of osteoporosis, diabetes and a number of other diseases.
 - Fried food and margarine, which are purely bad fats and must be shunned in Week Six because you are way too ahead to sabotage your diet now!
-

Chapter 14: Week Seven... Chug, you need that water H₂O!

Water is life's mater and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life without water.

~Albert Szent-Gyorgyi~

There is no lifestyle change without water as well! But before we go further—congratulations! You are at the halfway mark already and you look great! Forget about the tangibles of weight in pounds and losses in inches—how do you feel? At the halfway mark you have more or less changed your lifestyle—think about it—if have mentally made up your mind about the program, committed to your chosen goals, incorporated balance in both diet and exercise and that's what a lifestyle plan is all about.

Week Seven's Target

However there is one thing—you might also feel that you've done half of what you set out to achieve and that's good enough. Is it good enough? **It is good indeed but it is not enough.** Any lifestyle change has to be sustained and it can only be done if you have made a sustained and long enough effort. The changes you have made have to be hard-coded into your system. The body should be so used to the balanced diet and the exercises that it urges you to be active rather than go back to the couch.

The target of Week Seven is to inspire you to go on to Week 12. The target is to keep to the diet portions set in Week Six and go on. Eat properly, exercise properly and continue to add the short bursts of exercises at unscheduled times to get your body to work harder. Also, even though you've heard it before, drink more water.

Why More Water?

Because your body needs it. All our body fluids whether it is blood or saliva or digestive juices, is made of water. As you are in Week Seven your body must have got energized enough to make the internal functions like blood circulation and the absorption of nutrients much more efficient. You need to chug in more water to help the body be more efficient. You might think of water as the colorless liquid that forces you to the rest room 15 times in a day but actually water contains both organic as well as inorganic minerals that help to balance all the ingredient in your body and maximize the energy supply.

You need to drink more water in Week Seven because:

- **You are pushing the 10s:** Like it or not, if you are exercising, be it cardio or weight training and you are pushing to the high points as often as you can—it means you will be sweating a lot. If you don't replace that water

back in your body, the body will try and save the water in the fat cells instead of releasing it into the bloodstream. Sweating does mean that you have increased the intensity of the exercise but it also means that you are losing salts from your body.

- **You are building muscles:** Since it's week seven, it not only means that you are working towards building more muscles, it also means you already have built muscles. You definitely have more muscles in Week Seven than you had in Week One. So since you already have them, you need more water because your muscles need water! Muscles are in fact primarily made up of water—so chug the water and support the muscles.
- **You need to flush out the toxins:** We all know what a polluted world we live in and it's not exactly fresh air that we breathe. Pollutants are also ingested through food and even created by our own tensions i.e., gastric acid and panic attacks. Water helps to get rid of the toxins and is one of the greatest healers and can be considered a pacifier for the body.
- **You need to sate your self:** You have smaller portions than what you began with which is why you need more water. Water helps to fill the gaps and create a sense of fullness. It also helps the body to absorb the nutrients of the food you eat and aid digestion.
- **You need to boost your metabolism:** You already know how important water it is to the digestion process. It helps to process all the concentrated food that your body takes in. Have you ever thought about why you feel like drinking water after a meal? That's actually a signal from the brain alerting your body to the fact that it needs water to dilute the concentrated food, so that the digestive process can begin!
- **You need to relax:** Water relieves stress. Ever heard the advice that goes something like this: when you are angry first calm down with a glass of water? Water does indeed calm you down. It takes away the tired feeling that creeps in and refreshes you. Drink more water and inspire yourself on to the finish line.

Week Seven needs some more added water supply to your body to get all the efforts of balanced dieting and intensive exercising translated into a body-lifestyle change. But why the insistence on water? What's wrong with the intake of other kind of beverages?

Drinks and Beverages

You might argue that tea, coffee, juices, sodas, and wines—all have water content so why can't they be added to the diet. They do indeed have water but they are not pure forms of water. They have additives and chemical substances

like food coloring etc. that do more harm to the diet. Water is calorie free but rich in terms of the value it brings in to the body. Other beverages add substances that inhibit the internal functions of the body. You might say that milk brings calcium to the body and it does indeed but it is harder to absorb than water. The insistence on water is because it aids the process of dieting without adding any fat or any other complex ingredient that has to be broken down by the digestive process.

Routine for Week Seven

Begin the day with water—When you get up in the morning, get a standard bottle of water and slowly drink up the whole bottle. Don't just down it at one go. Pour the water into a glass, walk around the house and sip it till it is over. If you cannot finish the whole bottle on the first day—take your time and increase it the next day. This would give you a great start to the day because your stomach is full and you won't feel any hunger pangs.

Follow it up with exercise—But do wait a while before you begin intensive exercise because you might just throw out the water if you exercise right way. Get ready and have your usual breakfast. Do not try and skip breakfast because you feel full. You need to have the breakfast to stop the cravings that might come from the lack of it. Before every meal or snack have a glass of water. Actually, you could make it a point to have a glass of water every hour—that would do wonders to your system—however do remember to keep it to just one glass. Except for the morning, do not try and finish of a bottle of water every time you want a drink.

Intensify the cardio—Make sure that you stick to the exercise and enjoy it as well. It needs to show in your mental attitude. You must be already at the point where you cannot skip exercise because it makes you feel good. Continue to push the 10s and attack your problem areas.

Be faithful to the weight training—Practice with both the small and the heavier weights so that you can continue through the 30-minute session without feeling strained. The moment you feel the tension, switch to the lighter weights. Carry a couple of dumbbells to your office and do some curls while you are talking on the phone. Every bit of activity counts to the lifestyle change program so go for it.

Pump Up the Attitude

Ultimately, Week Seven is for consolidating all the good things that you have done so far and carrying them into Week Eight. Even more important than the exercise and the diet, Week Seven has to see you energize yourself and be at your optimistic best. Get the inspiration right and talk about how the body-lifestyle change has made you feel. Recount the hard work you have put into it and promise yourself that you would not let it go waste.

At the end of Week Seven you should be renewing your commitments to your self and motivating others around you to take the challenge. Feel happy with your efforts and know that the spirit needs to be right all the way to the end. If anything is bothering you, fix it now and don't let any superficial numbers on the scale disappoint you or feel that the effort hasn't been worth it. In fact, no measurements, no weighing scales this week. The Sunday of Week Seven is yours to walk or hike, dance or swim or do anything that buoys your mental makeup.

Chapter 15: Week Eight... 2/3 of the way, Great Job!

If one can stick to the training throughout the many long years, then will power is no longer a problem. It's raining? That doesn't matter. I am tired? That's beside the point. It's simply that I just have to.

~Emil
Zatopek~

You are doing great and the pace you are maintaining is nice and even. Week eight is going to be a cakewalk for you. You've been eating well and exercising too. What's more important is that you are enjoying the exercise. This combination of six meals in a day and a blend of intense exercises like aerobics and weight training cannot but be a success. Keep to the diet and don't increase the portions. Also stick to eating lighter as the day goes by but do eat healthy snacks. Make sure that you do not go hungry. No starving in a body-lifestyle improvement program. Food is the fuel that will help you exercise and build muscle. If you don't feed the body, where will it get the energy from to build muscle?

Building Muscle

It's a strange but true fact that once we cross the 25-year mark, we begin to gain pounds but lose the muscle. And when we lose muscle, our metabolism decreases too! That's why there is a need to tone our bodies. As we grow older, we have to work harder to prevent muscle loss and toning exercises not only helps in the fat loss but it actually helps to restore muscle.

Any kind of exercise helps but the difference between aerobic exercises and weight training is that the aerobic exercises helps to burn the fat when you exercise, but weight training continues to burn the fat when you are not exercising! If you are intensively training with weights, you can take it for granted that your fat is being burned, even as you sleep. Weight training helps to increase the metabolism and restore muscle tissue. Once the muscle tissue is back, it begins to use up the water and excess energy in the body. So the more muscles you add to the body, the more weight you can lose.

Here is the math: One pound of muscle burns around 30-50 calories per day. One pound of fat however burns about just three calories per day. That's why in Week Eight lets pay attention to weight training and how you can use it to get that body for life.

The Magic of Weights

Lifting weights not only raises the metabolism but also strengthens the bones—especially in women. You not only feel stronger, you begin to look stronger, increase your self-confidence as well as your physical and mental balance and

begin to live a healthier life. Once you see noticeable improvements in your body, you automatically begin to eat right, exercise right and have a better attitude. And it is always weight-training sessions that can bring those noticeable improvements.

That's why this week—add 15 more minutes to the weight training session. Here are some tips to get maximum benefits from lifting weights:

- Begin with warm ups. Not only will it loosen up your body, it would prevent injury. You could also add a few light limbering cardio exercises and then begin the weight lifting.
- Ensure smooth and slow movements. Try not to lift up the weights in sudden jerks or sudden drops. Aim for slow and easy movements. Count to 10 slowly while raising and lowering weights. If you are heaving to swing up the weights, it could be that your weights you are using are way too heavy.
- Always get the weights right. Make sure that you are using the weights that are right for the body. Maybe you should get professional help to ascertain the weights. It won't work to use heavier weights—it's not a short cut to weight loss—it's a short cut to hurting yourself. The ideal way of going about weight training is to begin with lighter weights and progress to heavier weights.
- Take a muscle at a time. Make sure that you concentrate on the muscles you are exercising and pay attention to only that group and then move to another. If you don't focus, you'll end up using other muscles to help you out rather than making the target muscles workout. This would kind of spread out and dilute the effect, so concentrate.
- Push the 10s: Concentrate on the training exercises that you can do till 10-12 repetitions and then add two more! Make sure that you do at least three to five sets of each exercise and remember the last set is the most effective one—so push the 10s! The intensity you put in will go a long way to increase and build muscle tone.
- Time the rests. Since you are in Week Eight, you have already built some muscles—so make the rests between the sets a bit longer. To build bulk and muscles, keep the rest longer but to increase the muscle endurance and sculpt muscles, keep the rests shorter.
- Breathe evenly. Often we try and hold our breath and heave up the weights. Please make sure that you are breathing easy and not straining yourself.

- Never Rush it. Always take your time to complete the weight training exercises. You only reap the benefits by slow, sustained and concentrated weight workouts. That's the way muscles are built.
- Maintain the posture. You have to stand tall and straight while lifting weights. No wobbling and slouching—you have to be in control and paying attention to your posture. If you stand straight and maintain the posture—you give maximum exercise to your muscles. Learn and maintain the proper stance.
- Record what you do. It's very important to log in the amount of exercises you did and how often you hit the highs. The detailed accounts would help you focus and improve your efforts. It would also track how you are scaling upwards i.e. extending the time for the session or adding sets or new exercises.

You might have begun with a very short sessions and that's good—it's much better to build the routine bit by bit, rather than rush with the weights. What counts is that you are actually training with weights and building your strength. But Week Eight is for extending the session a bit as well as the intensity. Ladies have no fear—you will not come out looking bulky—you will be toned, firm and gorgeous.

The secret to pushing the 10s and adding the maximum intensity to the workout is to listen for that voice that is trying to tell you that you can't do it—prove it wrong and do a set more! Week Eight onward, make sure that you will hit the highs and that you will be exercising all the possible muscles. If you are not working all your muscle groups you may end up with a muscular imbalance and that would make you more prone to getting hurt—because some muscles would be weaker than the others.

The following table gives you at a glance look at what muscles need to be exercised and what exercises are needed for that muscle group:

Muscle Group	Corresponding Exercises
Chest	Bench press, chest press machine, pushups, pec deck machine
Back	Seated row machine, back extensions, lateral pulldowns
Shoulders	Overhead press, lateral raise, front raise
Biceps	Bicep curls, hammer curls, concentration curls
Triceps	Triceps extensions, dips, kickbacks
Quadriceps	Squats, lunges, leg extension and leg press machines
Hamstrings	Dead lifts, lunges, leg curl machine
Calves	Calf raises
Abdominals	Crunches, reverse crunches, oblique twists, pelvic tilts

Weight Training can work wonders, so don't go slow on it now—don't get complacent in Week Eight—it's the week to set the pace for the last lap. Intensify the workout and be sure to exercise all the muscles. Enjoy yourself and add short impromptu bouts of exercise that can be fun! Cycle around a track or jog in the evening—dance after office or do the crunches in front of the TV. Hide all the remotes so that you have and get up and switch channels and change CDs.

As usual make sure that you are not hungry at any point of time—and if you are then grab a healthy snack! Never starve—because that is the quickest way to add fat to the body. Remember that if you go hungry, your brain will begin sending out signals to your body to store all the fat that it can! Keep remembering the rules of exercise, food and water and motivate yourself. The fact that you are in Week eight is motivation enough so keep at it and you'll soon be there.

Part V: There's the Finish Line...Keep Pushing Forward!

Chapter 16: Prepare for the “BIG” finish!

If you can imagine it, you can achieve it; if you can dream it, you can become it.

~William Arthur

Ward~

You have imagined it and that's why you have achieved so far. You have dreamed it and that's why you are soon going to become what you wanted to be. No, it's not too early to say that you are there because you are there. There is this thing about Zen Buddhism that talks about living in the moment. You need to live in the moment and feel that you are where you are because you wanted it this way. It's just four more weeks of your target and you will be there because you want to be there. So let's see how we can get set for the big finish.

Gearing up for the Challenge

You have to make a lifelong commitment to healthy habits and exercise—remember that it just doesn't end here—so your plans right now must be geared to the long-term goals. Plan out what your favorite exercises are and what you really enjoy doing. Plan out the recipes you really enjoyed making and eating. Challenge yourself to go that extra bit in this last four weeks so that your body gets the maximum benefits of the last four-week-intensity. Prep yourself up this week onwards to do your very best:

- **Put up an Achievement Chart:** Why not? Plan out a chart and incorporate a column for every single day of the last four-week. Get a bunch of star stickers and reward yourself—all that you need to know you learned already in kindergarten—so why not get the stars back!
- **Update your journal:** Get everything in order—arrange the photos you took week-wise and just enjoy the progress you have made. Track your progress and give yourself a pat on your back.
- **Revisit your Goals:** Now, go through the short term and long term goals you have written down for yourself. Reaffirm the fact that you want a healthier life and a healthier body. How much weight you have lost doesn't count—what does count is what you have gained.

What you need to know about the last weeks

You need to keep the momentum. The best thing is that you will continue to gain positive benefits and that's all the more reason to keep the sustained effort on.

The best way to prepare for the ensuing weeks is to exercise, eat smarter, and you make small but intense changes that will move your body into the top gear. However, you have to be aware of the fact that just in like the first weeks, the last weeks' weight loss won't show up on the scale.

You will eventually get to your goal but it would require a little more of a concentrated effort and slight adjustments. There are the stubborn bits of flab and extra weight that you have to get rid of, so you have to be as stubborn. Persistence pays indeed—especially in lifestyle change programs. Here are some of the things you would have to get around to doing with commitment and planning:

- **Determine your Diet:** Go through what you eat and see what you can replace with a better weight loss substitute. Give up the dessert totally and move to fruit if you have a sweet tooth. Replace the milk with skimmed milk and get rid of all the low fat dressings etc. Have a plain salad and crunch through the lettuce. Also add fiber to your diet—that would help at this stage to get rid of extra weight.
- **Calculate the Cardio workout:** You must keep the cardio exercises but try and make the sessions longer. Or alternatively, add different things like an uphill climb on the treadmill, skip with your jump rope—but whatever you do, make sure that you push the 10s. Exercise has to be more intense than ever.
- **Weigh Up the Weights:** Get with the weight lifting program and add some heavier weights. This is the best time to change your routine rather than reach a phase where you are stagnating with the same weights. Besides, weight training helps to add intensity more quickly. Use heavier weights and begin with lesser number of repetitions, to which you can keep adding to with every week that goes by. So change the weights and even some of the equipment—from barbells to dumbbells, or choose a new machine to work with. .

In your day-to-day life, try and bring in more balance. Wake up early. Avoid late nights. Have light dinners and drink a lot of water. Give up the juice and the coffee. Go for the soothing herbal teas and try and relax with yoga exercises that massage your body and increase your flexibility. You need to relax and be able to sleep well. Sleep will help your body gather the strength for each day's workout as well as maintain your positive balance.

Re-motivate yourself and reaffirm the goals. Do not skip the exercise and diet at this point because it would bring your efforts down. If you do at all skip—then make it up by getting back to the program. Do not starve and think that you could compensate for what you didn't do. Just do an extra set with the weights. You've come a long way and you cannot be complacent thinking that the last few weeks will be a cakewalk, but nor should you think it's uphill from here.

The weeks ahead are for you to incorporate small changes to enable the big finish and help your body to the end of the 12-week mark. Take a day at a time and keep recording what you do. Be sincere and believe in yourself—the finish line is almost coming up.

Chapter 17: Week Nine... Cut back on Carbs!

Inside some of us is a thin person struggling to get out, but they can usually be sedated with a few pieces of chocolate cake.

~Author
Unknown~

Yes indeed—whether it's bread, or pasta or chocolate cake—we sure allow them to sedate us! These are all items that fall into the category of Carbohydrates—a very very misunderstood group of food. One of the biggest controversies of weight loss programs revolves around carbohydrates—some prescribe a low-carb diet, some say a no-carb diet and so on. No one is telling you to give up carbohydrates but sometimes in a weight loss program it is effective to cut back on them and in Week Nine—this might help a lot. Let's find out how.

All about the Carb Content

Carbohydrates are not the villains here—in fact they are the fuel providers. Your body needs carbohydrates to create energy. Your body uses the carbs to create glucose to power itself. You can get carbs from very varied food items like bread, fruit, vegetables, rice, beans, milk, popcorn, potatoes, cookies, spaghetti, and corn. You can also get carbs from pies and desserts. What you need to know is that there are good carbs and bad carbs but the basic foundation of all carbohydrates is sugar molecules. When you take in carbohydrates your body first breaks them down into single sugar molecules—as small as is possible to be absorbed into the bloodstream.

So is any kind of sugar to be avoided? No—sugar is not bad when it is naturally found in food like fruits and vegetables. It's the added or free sugar that is used to enhance the taste, which is bad. If you are eating the carbs with the right kind of sugar, you will have no problem with weight gain or health problems. Today if you walk the grocery aisle, you can see every item with added sugar—from ketchup, applesauce, soups, cereals, baby food, salad dressing or whole-wheat bread. Even weight loss bars and drinks have added sugar.

What you need to do in Week Nine is cut back on the carbs that are not as close to natural as possible. Eat the healthy carbs but cut back in the general sense of the term. Avoid the desserts and go for the fruits. But don't cut back on the carbs totally—you might become too weak.

- **Never totally eliminate Carbs**

If you totally rid your body of carbs, not only do you lose your fuel, you are losing out on the glucose supply. You end up with basically no glucose in muscle and lean tissue. So, what your body does to gather as much glucose as it can is use up the lean muscle tissue and dietary protein or fat. Automatically, your

metabolism drops, because you don't have muscles working to burn up the calories because the body has used them up. To make it worse, your body gets defensive on the assumption that it's starving and saves the fat!

- **So here's the key to the right carbohydrates:**

The carbohydrates that you need to eat should be as close as possible to the form that it naturally occurs in. Go for the sugar that you find in fruits and vegetables and other carbs. Try as much as possible to go for the following items listed on your table:

Carbohydrate Source	Additional nutrients
Fruit:	Fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, folate, potassium and often vitamin E.
Vegetables:	Fiber, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, often vitamin E, potassium and a wider variety of minerals than fruit.
Whole grains and grain foods:	Fiber, protein, and some B vitamins and are very rich in minerals.
Legumes:	Protein, fiber folate, potassium, iron and several minerals.
Dairy foods:	Protein, vitamin D, calcium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B12.

Basically go for the whole grains rather than the multi-grain bread. Go for the fresh fruit rather than the preserved variety in tins and packs. Opt for legumes that will give you protein as well as carbs. Have a lot of vegetables and take care not to overcook or drown them in creamy sauces. Keep the carbs you eat as fresh and as natural as possible. Cut back on the carbohydrates that don't do much for your body or your health.

- **The carbs you need to avoid**

A lot of carbohydrates come loaded with sugar. You might think they are healthy and help you lose the extra weight but instead they are loading up your body with a lot of sugar. You might say that the drink is a diet one, but it still has the sugar. You might think that the chips are baked, but it still has processed sugars in it.

Sugar has assumed many names on the label that you see on the food you buy. You will see the list will have at least one of these types of sugars—sucrose, high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, confectioner's sugar, corn sweeteners, dextrose, glucose, fructose, maltose, molasses, honey, brown sugar, fruit and juice concentrate, invert sugar, cane sugar, raw sugar, galactose, lactose, levulose and maple sugar.

Not only would you need to cut back on the items that display any of the above sugars, you also need to avoid the following:

- Any added sugar: Week Nine is when you begin to get rid of the sugar bowl. Avoid adding it in coffee, tea and lemonade.
- White bread: Go for the brown bread and make sure that it is really whole wheat rather than multigrain bread—be sure of the ingredients that you eat.
- Chocolate and candy: These are nice treats but you are in Week Nine and you need that extra edge so avoid the sugary stuff. Eat a fruit instead.
- Cakes and muffins: It's not only flour but also sugar and cream and all kinds of added sugar—Week Nine you have to shun all these.
- Diet Sodas: No sodas from Week Nine—you have come this far and cutting out the diet drinks is all for a worthy cause. Go for the bottled water and drink as much as you can.
- Items that say fat-free: Often they are a misnomer and will carry some amount of sugar. Ditch the fat-free strawberry yogurt and get yourself a cup of skimmed milk and fresh strawberries.
- Items that say sugar-free: They might not have added sugar but they will be still pretty high on calories and Week Nine onwards—you don't need it.

Week Nine—the Plan

Basically, in Week Nine you need to cut back on the carbohydrates that are calorie intensive. These types of carbohydrates have dense calories and simply not enough of fiber or protein. They neither sate your hunger nor give you health benefits. The moment you've eaten that bag of fat-free baked chips, you are hungry again and scavenging for more. Instead, what you need to do is add a lot of natural items for snacks like carrot and celery sticks, lettuce, fresh fruits but not sugar rich ones like mangos. Go for the watermelon and drink a lot of water.

Please do not eliminate carbs from your diet—just reduce the amount and have the healthy carbohydrates—like leafy green vegetables, squash, beans, pumpkin, legumes, brown rice and egg whites. Just go slow on the bread, the pasta and the rice. Eliminate the sweet stuff and the sodas and any kind of drinks that could possibly have added sugar. Keep the protein intake level, minimize the oil and fat intake and do not forget that you need to drink a lot of water. Water is even more necessary because you are cutting back on the carbs this week.

Continue with the spread out meals and snacks and push the 10s. It's Week Nine—no skipping exercise sessions and no slacking down. You have to aim at making every day of week nine better than the day before it. Yes you can do it—because you are doing it already. You have it all worked out and this little trick to your diet is going to help your body gain more muscle and get rid of some extra fat.

Chapter 18: Week Ten... Drink more water than ever!

Water, air, and cleanness are the chief articles in my pharmacy.

~Napoleon~

All right, no need to jump up and say, “ More water! How much can I drink?” You do know that it’s very important to drink a lot of water when you are trying to lose weight. You already know that it flushes out the fat cells and that it feeds the muscles but there is a reason behind the request that you increase your water intake in Week Ten than ever before. Just listen it out:

The Need for Water Now

Week Nine is when you have kind of adjusted your carbohydrate intake. You are eating few carbohydrates and the ones you are eating are more of the natural and less calorie dense ones. You are obviously eating a lot of salads and green vegetables so that you balance out the proteins. This is the reason you need to drink more water in Week Ten. When you are on a low-carb diet it is imperative that you drink more water to feel full and help the protein get digested. If you don’t take a lot of water, you are going to end up feeling bloated and pretty depressed.

Drinking more water at this stage is even more important because you have not only adjusted the diet you are adding more time to your weight training and cardio sessions. So as you are pushing those 10s, you are losing a lot of water in the form of sweat. If you don’t drink enough water, you could end up dehydrated and deprived of fluid—not only that, you will feel terribly bloated. Always remember that water removes that bloated feeling and flushes out the toxins.

As Week Ten spurs you into intensifying your exercise and lowering the carbs in your body, inadequate water intake could affect the luster on your skin and your mental balance as well. Believe it or not but water does indeed calm you down and help the insides of your body to relax. Water will also deal with the sensation of hunger that you might feel, thanks to the increased exercise and the lowered carb intake. Your cravings will be suppressed and the overheating of the body will be avoided.

Whether you like it or not, all your bodily functions depend upon water to set in process all the internal chemical mechanisms and power your mechanism. Especially at a time when you are trying to boost the efforts at building more muscle, losing the fat and changing your lifestyle, water would help the body both internally and externally to adjust to the changed diets, the intense exercise and other lifestyle changes you have made like giving up smoking etc. The increased intake of water in Week Ten will stimulate the kidneys and reduce the water

retention that can be caused by diet changes. In the process the metabolism would be boosted and you will burn more calories.

How Much More Water?

Much more. You need to drink more water than ever. That extra water will go a long way to make you full during these low carb days and will flush out the toxins that might be created in your body. The amount you should usually drink is said to be 1 ounce for every 2 pounds of body weight, if you don't have any health concerns like an impaired kidney or something else that could affect your water intake. But in Week Ten you need to drink more water than you usually do. Try to get to a gallon of water in a day—it's not a must but it's a good target. However do not strain yourself and end up in the bathroom all day! Here's what you can do:

- Begin the day with water—at least a whole bottle. Drink it slowly but leave a time gap enough between the water intake and the exercise.
- Replace all your tea and coffee with water. If it's herbal tea it still qualifies as water—but no milk and sugar. Coffee has to be replaced. No sodas from Week Nine onwards so get those bottles of water ready.
- Drink water 15 minutes before every meal—even the snack. This would help you get full and it would help your body digest what you eat quicker.
- Avoid drinking water if you are not thirsty. It won't work to force yourself to drink water. But at the same time you do need to make sure that you drink enough without straining your system.
- You can add slices of lemon to spike up the water if you do not like to drink plain water too often. It would be a nice change but don't go overboard with the lemon.
- If you can't keep up with having a lot of water, take a break and have fruit like watermelon that has a very high water content. You get the water and you get the natural sugar.
- Don't drink too much of water in the evening—you need to sleep well and with a full bladder it could get difficult!

Water is needed more now because you are exercising more. Not only are you doing an increased cardio workout, you are intensifying the weight training. You are lifting heavier weights and you are doing longer sessions. The increased water intake would help you recover the energy loss quicker. It would also help your muscles to heal and rest and be ready again for the next session of weight

training. Muscles need water as they are primarily made up of water. Water would help in the entire process of building and toning the muscles.

The adjustments in the diet also demand the increase of water intake. You are cutting on carbs to give the last minute impetus to your muscle building and body toning efforts. To make this diet a success, rather than have it boomerang on you—drink water before and after the meals and as often as you can during the day. It will prevent you from feeling hungry and help with the digestion.

Think about it—these are the last few weeks of the 12-week program and you have to give it your best shot. If you can help yourself a bit by just adding more water, isn't that an easy thing to do. You are already working so hard in the exercise arena. You have adjusted your diet to boost your exercise efforts. Now all that is being asked of you is to drink just a little more than you have done so far—how hard can that be?

Here are some water facts that you need to keep in mind when you are disconcerted about having to take more water:

- Water controls your appetite—if taken before meals, it helps you regulate how much to eat and prevents overeating. It also helps you to chew the food properly and swallow it better.
- Water replenishes muscles. It helps to tone the muscles and keep them in shape. It also helps to get rid of the extra water in the fat cells that cause bloating.
- Water increases your metabolism by helping you burn calories 3 percent faster. Muscles are primarily made up of water and more muscles means more calories being consumed—even when you are sleeping.
- Water makes you feel fresh and more energetic. In the process it relaxes and calms down your frayed nerves after a hard day at work.
- Water helps to ease your headaches—in fact the lack of water intake can lead to a dizziness and the feeling of fainting—all signs of dehydration.
- Water helps to improve and reduce blood pressure as well as high cholesterol.
- Water also helps to lubricate your joints and relieve the pain in the joints that occurs from the loss of water from the body.
- Water keeps your kidneys in great shape and reduces the chance of developing kidney stones and other ailments of the kidney.

- Water helps in the digestion process and helps to rid the body on toxic waste products—it also keeps away any bladder and urinary infections.
- Water actually makes the skin glow. If someone marketed it as a cosmetic, water would probably be the most popular one! It keeps your skin supple and moisturized. It rids you of dryness and dullness of the skin.

In the last weeks of the 12-week program you do need more water. If you don't drink enough water, the body might misread the lack of water as a sign of hunger and before you know it you are reaching out for something to eat! Wouldn't you rather go for the calorie-free, inexpensive and health benefiting water?

Chapter 19: Week Eleven...Double the Cardio!

A man's (or woman's) health can be judged by which he takes two at a time—pills or stairs.

~Joan
Welsh~

It's Week Eleven and you need to take those stairs! Get off the couch and double the cardio exercises. You have increased the cardio sessions and had added short bursts of cardio activity in between—but you are on the last lap now and you need to go for it! You need to double the repetitions and stretch your sessions to 40-60 minutes.

How to Tackle the Cardio

Cardio helps you burn calories really fast and helps to get that blood circulation up. You know already that cardio exercises is all about getting your heart rate up and burning the calories so what is needed is a sustained program with the right amount of cardio exercise. However this week, you need more than your usual time of cardio. You need to push it to double the time. You have to understand that in these last few weeks and days, you have also intensified the weight training. That's one of the reasons that you need to step up the cardio because cardio exercises give the muscles much-needed oxygen, which helps recovery and growth.

Begin early and begin with cardio. You've done all that you can and waking up in the morning, isn't going to be much of a stretch for you—but it will be a great boost for your body. This is because your body has been at rest all night, which is why the level of glucose in your body will be pretty low. So when you get up early and incorporate an intensive cardio session—your body would be forced to use the stored fat to give you the energy to complete the exercise because your body is low on glucose. You would not only burn more calories, you would be able to lose the stubborn fat that till now has resisted all your efforts.

What you need is to step up the cardio in a planned and sustained way so that you do not tire out. You will aim for over 45 minutes so you need to add exercises that you enjoy and that do not tire you out. You can begin with the walk or continue with all the exercises that you do and add in a few fun exercises that give you maximum cardio benefits.

The Cardio Plan for Week Eleven

It's the penultimate week—so you got to get things into order. Here are some tips for the Week Eleven:

- Try and get an hour of cardio every day in the morning. Follow it up with weight training later on in the day.

- Arrange your day in such a way that there is an easy and complementary spread of meals and exercises—yes, you will still need to eat right and the exercises that you are doing need the fuel!
- Always begin with warm-ups for two or more minutes. Try and make all your warm-ups light cardio sessions. You can do step touches and move your arms vigorously.
- Increase your repetitions and go up to 20 per set—make sure that you push the 10s but are not breathless or at a near collapse kind of feeling.
- Make sure that you incorporate the hanging leg raises, crunches and decline crunches—which are great cardio exercises for all body types. Other exercises you can incorporate in your cardio workout are:
 - Jogs: Spot jog in one place and keep pushing your arms over your head. When you are jogging try and kick as high as possible to reach your buttocks. Alternatively, jog so that your knees come up to your waist like a kind of high jog. You don't have to jog on the spot—you can jog around the house with the high kicks and have fun!
 - Speed Skaters: This is fun and intensive—jump from side to side kind of like you are skating and land on one leg. You have to swing your arms while you jump and keep your body low to the ground
 - Side Lunge with Windmill Arms: All you have to do is stand with legs wide apart and bend the right knee into a side lunge as you bring the left arm down towards the foot. Go on windmilling and bending your knees as fast as you can—this can be pretty challenging to do!
 - Jumping jacks: Just keep at the jumping jacks like crazy and build up a sweat.

There are a whole lot of cardio exercises that you can add and most of them are fun to do. You can pick and choose but extend your cardio session you must. If you are tired, just march and jog in one place—that will give you a good workout too. You can also reduce the incline on the treadmill and walk more.

If you are bored of being in the gym and or do not like being cooped up inside the house, then hit the road. You can bicycle or jog outside. Just increase the time you do so and go the distance. Juggle what you want to do but do make sure that all the days of Week Eleven, you manage to fit in the cardio blast everyday in the morning.

And remember this doubling of the cardio is doubling the chance to lose the last few stubborn pounds and the fat that is always in the wrong places. Make sure that you are not too breathless though, that you give yourself enough rest

between exercises and that you are having the right kind of food and a lot of water. All the best and keep up the cardio!

Chapter 20: Week Twelve... PUSH to the FINISH!

Where the willingness is great, the difficulties cannot be great.

~Niccoló
Machiavelli~

Wow—you are at Week Twelve—nothing can stop you now! You have willingly made all the lifestyle changes, you are eating healthy and you are exercising your body like never before—what difficulties can come your way? You are on the road to achieving and nothing is going to stand in your way.

To Do List for Week Twelve

Push to the finish! That's the first point on your to-do list! Keep at what you are doing and intensify the cardio, the weight training and move that body. Try and burn as many calories as possible during the day and rest in the night. Stick to the diet and eat frequent but healthy foods. No calorie dense and sugar filled carbs—stick to the natural carbohydrates and eliminate the add-on sugar that comes in cake, cookies, chips and other kinds of complex carbs. Also watch the protein—animal protein could come loaded with fat so stick to the lean mean but better still, eat fish.

Week Twelve is indeed all about sustaining the momentum you have set since Week Nine, when you made the diet and the exercise adjustments. But it's more about intensity rather than duration. There is no need for overdoing things—you have already doubled the cardio in Week Eleven. You do not want to strain yourself and cause your body any injury or tire yourself out.

However, you have to make sure that you do not totally slowdown things and leave your body in a lurch in this last week of the program. Stick to the Cardio in the morning and burn the fat—do it for 30 minutes but make sure you make it intense. Stick to the weight training and build the muscle—again your aim is to maintain the intensity. Stick to the diet—have natural carbs and healthy snacks—no sodas, no meal cheating. Make this week enjoyable and worth it, rather than tiring and something that you want to get over with.

Here are some more things you can do to push to the finish in Week Twelve:

- Make sure that the diet you have supports your muscle in both building, toning and maintaining the lean tissue. You are already on a moderate carb diet and if you reduce your sodium intake make sure that you are drinking water.
- Have a good supplement with the essential vitamins and minerals to support your body—it could be calcium, multivitamins, potassium supplements, basically whatever suits you.

- Do not take any drastic steps to ditch the last few pounds—that is not allowed—especially starving and going on liquid diets. Make minimal changes and keep to comfortable routines rather than drastic uncomfortable changes.
- While weight training, avoid the very heavy weights and instead try and do more repetitions. You will not only enjoy yourself, you will be intensifying the training and getting the maximum benefits from the last few reps!
- You must do the same with cardio—rather than go for the one-hour—do half an hour of concentrated focused cardio workouts.
- However, always do cardio in the morning because that would help you burn off more fat.
- In your diet you can shed the dairy products and go for the fresh veggies, legumes and ban the sugar foods. Have fish, which is an excellent source of protein.
- Try and eat less, later in the day. Your body would get a good rest and be able to digest and absorb the nutrients of the food better. Rule out the after dinner snacks totally. Keep spreading out the meals and taper of the amount when you get to the evening meal.
- Make sure that you increase your water intake. It should be double the amount that you are taking in. Water is your greatest sustenance this week.

The last week of this program is when you have to be focused and make concentrated efforts to set the stage for a life-long lifestyle change. The exercises that you do should be the ones you like. The food you eat should be the kind that you enjoy or you will just grin and bear and then binge on the wrong things at the end of the twelfth week. There should be no starving and no sacrifices on the dietary front. You have to make sure that you do avoid sodas and empty calories though. Stick to the water and be hydrated. It is one of the ways to keep your body balanced and your skin looking good.

Monday through Saturday—make sure that Week Twelve is a week that you enjoy and will remember. It should be enjoyable and something that you can keep up. If you enjoy it, you will indeed keep it up. What you could do is go in for a massage in the middle of the week and make your body feel good. Get a new hairstyle and new clothes too, because you need to take pictures of the final you, after the end of the 12-week program. However, when you actually take the picture take it in what you wore for the first day at the beginning of the first week. You'll see the difference and you will want to keep it that way forever.

All you need to do is keep that spirit up and have a very positive attitude and commitment to the new lifestyle. You must know that this last week is what you will try and stick to for the rest of your life—so put all that you have in it and push to the finish. A fantastic, healthy living is out there for you!

Part VI: Body For Life...You Did It!!

Chapter 21: Congratulations!

It is time for us all to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever—the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it.

~Vince
Lombardi~

You DID it! You actually did it! You have got through to the end of the twelfth week and you have finished the challenge. Not only did you finish the challenge, you have kept your commitment to yourself—what could be better than that. You might be running to weigh your body and measure your arms, thighs, chest and waist, but your real victory is not in the inches and pounds that you have lost. Your victory is in the attitude you carried, the determination you bore and the efforts you made in these 12-weeks. You not only are in possession of a body and a changed lifestyle but you are an achiever in every sense of the term. Congratulations!

Committing to Change

What you have achieved is a lot. You have shed your complacency with regard to your weight, your health and your mental well being. Think about it—you struggled over the aversion to exercise and you not only did simple exercises to strengthen your body, you took up intensive cardio and weight training. Research says that by adding 15 to 30 of physical activity to your lifestyle for just three times a day, considerably improves your health, puts you at less risk to illnesses and makes you live longer. Just look at the amount of physical exercise you have added and just imagine the benefits you are going to get out of it!

You have also taken the great step of rethinking your diet. No one really likes to give up what they eat, how much they eat and when they eat. It's very personal and it's a pretty common phenomenon to associate food habits with a sense of comfort. We all have our quirks—"Today is pasta night", "Friday evening—Lets get French fries after school", "We always have dessert on Sunday—it's a tradition." To break out of the mold and have the courage and determination to change is one of the most admirable things to do.

You have done that—you have sorted out the good from the bad, and what's even more important, the pleasant from the good. You have been ready to give up the sodas, the dressings, the bread and the white rice and even the cakes, cookies and chips. You have learned that no food group is bad—carbohydrates, proteins and fats are all important food groups. It's just what kind of carbs, proteins and fats that you eat and more importantly HOW MUCH that you eat that matters. You have understood the magic of portions and you have understood the importance of exercise in burning out the excess fat in your body.

Rethinking your diet is now allowing you to rethink your wardrobe! Go and get the clothes that you always wanted to wear.

Along the way you also realized the importance of water. Who would have thought that such a commonplace, colorless drink could change your life so much! But it has. All the water that you drank in the course of these twelve weeks—and that's a lot of water—has cleansed your system of the toxins, rejuvenated your internal functioning and made your skin glow. The reason you look good after you have lost weight the healthy way is because your internal organs are being massaged into action by the better circulation, lubricated by the increased water intake and given the correct fuel by the better diet you have adopted.

So you see, any weight loss and lifestyle-changing program is not about the inches and pounds you lose but what you gain in terms of physical and mental health. Almost automatically, when you choose to eat properly and exercise more, it takes your mind out of its confined outlook. It opens you up to different ways of dealing with the stress and grief that is a natural part of human life. You are open to learning about yourself and other people. Relationships get better and your confidence grows.

You have come this far and here's what you need to make sure that all your efforts don't go waste. Many people have been known to regain the weight because they slipped back into their dreary habits. Respect your commitment to weight loss and make sure that you:

- ✓ Eat the right kind of food and spread your meals throughout the day into six small meals instead of three large meals. Never starve—it will never help you lose weight and will boomerang back at you forcing you to go on a binge.
- ✓ Watch the portions that you eat. Select the right kind of carbs, the right proteins and don't go overboard with the oil—but always ration the portion on your plate. If you watch the portions then you won't overeat. If you don't overeat, your body won't have to store the extra fat
- ✓ Exercise at least for 30 minutes and make sure that the cardio or the weight training you do is as intense as it gets. Physical activity is the main key to weight management.
- ✓ Drink a lot of water. Water helps to control the amount you eat, maintain and tone your muscles, help with the internal functioning and improve your looks!

- ✓ Have a positive attitude. Believe in yourself. If the 12-weeks has done anything at all, it has shown the amount of inner strength you have and what you can do.

All you have to do from now on is maintain the new rhythm of your life. You have adopted a whole new lifestyle and you will be able to enjoy life a lot better from now onwards. Just don't allow things to slip away—you've worked hard after all. And if you want to make it even better—why not challenge yourself to another 12-week? Are you game for it?

Conclusion – Reap the Benefits

Would you believe it—Twelve weeks, a changed body and a changed lifestyle? Who would have thought it was possible but it is. If you think that you've gained the body that you wanted and that's it. Well you are quite mistaken. There are a lot more benefits that go with the hard work you have put in the past twelve weeks. In fact, you don't realize it now but you will be reaping a lot more benefits than just the pounds and inches you lost.

Renewed Sense of Energy

One of the benefits is the renewed sense of enthusiasm and liveliness that you feel. It comes from all the exercise that gets your heart racing, your blood circulating and your joints flexible. A good diet and proper workouts actually exercise the tiredness and fatigue out of you. If you engage in a concentrated and focused workout session, you will have given the body enough exercise to get a good night's rest. Then when you wake up in the morning, you will feel energetic.

The right kind of diet will make you feel less sluggish and tired too—it will supply you the right kind of energy to work well and deal with the stresses of both office and home. Since you are spreading out the meals and eating healthy snacks, you won't feel any afternoon slumps. Since you are drinking water a lot, you feel a sense of fullness that is associated with comfort and control. You won't be jittery, snappy or mean—you will be calm, ready to address problems with an enviable mental balance.

Immunity from Illness

This exercise and diet program has helped to build up your immunity. You are eating well and are not starving or overeating. You are not avoiding any particular group of food. In fact, you are eating all that is natural, fresh and full of nutrients than can be easily absorbed into your bloodstream, thus giving your body the ingredients to create antibodies against any kind of illness. The diet also helps to control cholesterol, your sugar level and also yeast overgrowth. The exercises help to circulate blood, open up the arteries and control the blood pressure.

You are also much more flexible than before. Your joints are going through a natural resuscitation, thanks to the different kind of exercises that you are doing. You can withstand any physical pressure and fight any infections thanks to the stamina and immunity that you have built in these twelve weeks.

Muscle Gain

Thanks to the muscle building exercises, you have now enough of lean muscle tissue that does most of the calorie burning. Muscles consume a lot of energy

and now with increased muscle tissue, you will burn calories, even when you are sleeping! All people who have more muscles are less likely to put on weight than people with less muscle. So not only have you gained a muscled body, you're not going to be alone in your fight with fat—your muscles will be on your side too!

Mental Balance

You are feeling good, you are looking good and as a result, you are confident, positive and ready for all challenges. You have found avenues to deal with your stress—in fact exercise is the best one! You have better relationships with your loved ones—you enjoy the company of friends and you have patience with your kids. It's all because you feel good about yourself. That is one of the main keys to living a life you can enjoy—unless you feel good about yourself, you will never be able to live the life you have imagined. Once you can look in the mirror and love what you see—you can love others, try to see various point of views and turn even the biggest disappointments as occasions of learning.

One of the major benefits of this 12-week program, apart from losing the flab, the pounds and the inches, was to find the real you. The biggest benefit is to realize that you are at the center of your life—you can change it and make it what you want, only if you are determined enough, have belief in yourself and make the right efforts toward the goal.

Continuing the Benefits...

You can do so by continuing to put yourself at the center of the universe. Pay attention to yourself the way you want to be—not how your partner wants it or your parents or your friends. Do it for yourself. Continue with the healthy diet—the six-meal plan spread out through out the day, and do the cardio and the weight training through out the week. Take up Yoga and learn how to correct your breathing and enable yourself to breathe deep and more rhythmically. Yoga not only gives you health benefits, it reduces the strain and stress and allows you relax. The breathing also helps you to concentrate, be positive and be steadier mentally.

Yoga postures improves the posture so that you sit and stand straighter putting less pressure on your heart and lungs and strengthens your back and stomach muscles and help you to lose weight in the abdominal area. You will be able to stretch your body and relax from the intensity of weight training. Alternatively, you can choose the ancient Chinese art of Tai Chi which also like Yoga involves slow, relaxing movements that have a very beneficial effect on your body.

Take up activities that help to preserve these long-term benefits of these twelve weeks. Take up a hobby that you enjoy, or go hiking. Stay as active as possible and move your body rather than live in a couch. Do all that you can to maintain

the diet, continue the exercise and see that you stay happy and confident—that would be reaping the benefits.

Bonus I

Workout - Even When You Can't!

Aerobic exercise, cardio, and weight training...what if you can't keep to a routine all the time? Is there any other way out to keep the body trim and the flab firm? Yes there is! All you have to do is keep the body moving. You don't have to go to the gym, you don't have to have a personal trainer—you just have to get that body moving. There are hundreds of ways to stay active. In fact you are doing it all the time—bending to pick kids toys, running to be in time for the meeting and racing up the stairs. Yes, you can workout—even when you can't!

Get the Adrenaline Flowing

You begin by committing to being more active. All you have to do is concentrate on increasing your physical activity levels. Understand the importance of activity—if you cannot set aside time for a structured exercise regimen (which is the best thing that you could do) any form of common physical activity that is moderately intense counts towards making a difference to your body, your health and your life. You have to get off the couch, hide the remote and move your body around. Try to make all the physical chores that you do forms of exercise. It's a fact now that short bursts of 10 minutes intense activity does wonders to help you lose weight and give you health benefits.

Here's a list of the few things that can give you a workout, without being like workout regimens:

- **Morning warm-ups:** First thing to do when you wake up is to stretch like a cat and hold. Do it several times and lie back again with your lower back flat on the ground and bend one knee while keeping the other straight. Now lift the straightened leg high and bring it down and repeat with the other leg. You can also cycle in bed, by moving your legs.
- **Brush your teeth and squat:** Why not begin with the very first things you do and do simple squats while brushing your teeth. Put your feet apart, and lower yourself down as you would to sit on a chair. Make sure that your knees are bent and your back is straight. Hold for a few seconds and come up again. You can do this for three minutes as you brush your teeth both in the morning and the evening. Your teeth will be clean and your thighs and hips get toned.
- **Run up and down the stairs:** Begin by running down to make the tea or coffee and run up again and down again till it is ready! This is an amazing cardio workout. Research has it that 12 minutes of stair climbing is a vigorous exercise. Take a stair-run-break at work and dash up a couple of

flights of stairs. Try and run up the stairs once to six times a day and raise your heartbeat and get the blood circulation going.

- Towel stretch: You have to shower now—and not only can you breathe in and give your abdominal muscles an exercise; you can also use your towel as you dry yourself. Grab the two ends with each hand and hold the towel above your head. Now pull on the ends and bend to one side and then the other. Feel that stretch in the side and remember to keep your back straight.
- Mowing the lawn with a push mower: Forget about a easy to use lawn mower—use one that will use your strength and really give you a workout. It would be a blend of resistance exercise along with a cardio boost.
- Scrubbing or polishing the floor: Physical activities around the house would help burn around 2-3 calories per minute and use up all that fat. The scrubbing and polishing would not only give you a clean floor, but nice and firm arms too!
- Milk cans weights: Use the milk bottles or juice bottles as dumbbells and do those curls. Roll up socks and use them as squeeze balls.
- Cleaning the house: Chores like dusting, folding clothes, sorting out shelves, chopping vegetables etc. might seem small things to do but any kind of activity adds to your metabolism and helps burn the extra calories. So try and do as much as you possibly can around the house and keep stretching the muscles and bending the joints.
- Weeding the lawn: Pulling out weeds can give you a fantastic exercise. The aim is to pull out the weed, so you can do squats, or bend from the waist and get the workout you need.
- Hoeing the flowerbeds: This gives your upper body a good workout and it would get your flowerbeds in order. Make sure that you are breathing correctly and expanding and contracting your abdominal other muscles will get worked out and you will build up a sweat—that's a great session of exercise!
- Activities with the dog: Your dog is the best companion with whom you can work out—provided he or she is an energetic breed! Run with your dog around the yard, try to catch him or her or play a game of fetch or just walk as briskly as you possibly can.
- Raking the leaves: Get yourself a rake and rake up the leaves! You will get plenty of oxygen from the fresh air, your arms, legs and muscles and the other muscles according to each physical movement.

- **Crunch before the TV:** Do indeed watch the TV but not lying in the couch! Lie down on the carpet and do those crunches. Fold and put your hands behind the neck and keep crunching. TV time is the ideal time to get a stomach workout.
- **Car Wash:** Wash and polish your car. Make sure that you incorporate vigorous rubs and stretch as you clean the roof of the car. Make sure you are breathing correctly and hold in your muscles as you make the stretches and the bends.
- **Dance your fat out:** Go dancing or just dance everyday after you come back home or when you are getting the meal ready or when your kids are off to school. Just put on the music and dance yourself into a sweat. It's a great cardio exercise.
- **Tub-routine:** If you are used to soaking in a tub after a long day, take the time to get some leg exercise. Raise a leg, one at a time and hold for a few seconds.

All the above may indeed be very unusual exercises and you might not associate them with weight loss—but they do count. They are intense enough to make a difference. If you aren't the sporty kind, you can take up more physical activities and increase the intensity. The main idea is to break away from the sedentary pattern and take up activities that are part of your day-to-day routine that will get you to move that body, exercise the joints and tone the muscles. Make a list of what you planned to do and get around to doing them.

Get into Sports

Go and shoot some hoops or kick a soccer ball into the goal. Get back into sports—they give you the best aerobic-cardio-muscle toning workout. And you will have fun. Take up a physical game that is fun and won't feel like a planned exercise regimen. Skate in winter, swim in summer—play golf and tennis and whichever sport that you enjoy. You will lose weight, your health will improve, you will build stamina and muscle and you will feel good.

Aim to burn more Calories

The way to work out even when you can't is to remember to do whatever it is that you can to burn the calories—whether it is running up stairs or polishing the floor. Add structured exercise sessions of 30 minutes thrice in a day to target problem areas and build muscle. Once you build muscles, the muscle tissue will burn up the calories even when you are sleeping. Meanwhile include energetic activities

to boost the metabolism. Park your car far and sprint to the office. Use the stairs not the elevator. Pull out weeds and run with the pet.

Balanced diets and structured exercises are the best way to lose weight but the key to weight loss is to burn more calories than you take in. So the bottom line is that you have to burn more calories—in whatever way you can. So work out when you can't by making sure that your physical activity levels are high enough to burn out and use the energy that is supplied to you body by a sensible and balanced diet.

Bonus II

Tips to Speed up the Weight Loss

Who doesn't want a bit of extra help when it comes to weight loss? You know that you have to eat right and you have to exercise. You know that you just have to have that determination to make all the efforts necessary to get rid of the extra weight. You know it all but you could still do with a list of tips to get the fat off fast. So read on and find what else can help you to get to your ideal weight and rid yourself of the extra flab:

- ✓ Smaller meals: Definitely pay attention to the portions and make them smaller—larger meals are more likely going to be stored as fat because your body doesn't need so many calories to get up, get ready, go to work and come back and sleep. Whatever calories you don't use will add up as fat.
- ✓ Eat more often: Yes—you heard it—eat often and watch the amount you eat. When you eat smaller portions frequently, your sugar level is balanced, your thyroid levels are normal and your body knows you are not starving it so it's relaxed.
- ✓ Never starve: The moment you start starving yourself, your body panics and begins to start storing whatever fat it can as a buffer it can fall back on. So there you are—with more fat when all you thought you were doing by not eating was losing weight!
- ✓ Lower the calories gradually: Don't decrease your food intake all at one go—do it slowly and gradually, so that your body gets used to the tapering off of food.
- ✓ Chug the Water: Water is the only thing that you can have in limitless amounts. Drink as much water as you can because it flushes your system, controls the hunger pangs and boosts your metabolism. You just cannot have enough of water—keep drinking.
- ✓ Get rid of Sodas: Replace the carbonated beverages with water. Replace the coffee with water. Go for herbals teas but no diet drinks.
- ✓ Drink water before each meal: Always have a glass of water before a meal. This would make you feel less hungry for food and sated enough not to make you overeat.
- ✓ Go high on fiber: Make sure you eat a lot of fiber, as that would fill you up and make you feel content. It will also last longer and you can beat the snacking feeling that comes up to plague you.

- ✓ Watch the Dairy: Stick to fat free milk and try and portion off the cheese you have as well as milkshakes etc.
- ✓ Cook Smart: Steam, bake and grill and avoid creamy sauces and dressing. Let your salads go nude but for a dash of lemon and pepper. Reduce the sodium intake and go low on the butter and oil.
- ✓ Avoid added sugars: Don't eat anything to which you have added sugar. Go natural and get your sugar supply from fruits and vegetables and other carbohydrates that are as natural and fresh as it gets. Also avoid items from the grocery that have added sugar like ketchup etc.
- ✓ Eat out smart: Begin the meal with salad or steamed vegetables. Do not go to buffets, do not pick economy meals and always pack off half the food—portions are oversize in all restaurants—so there is no need to clean up your plate.
- ✓ Always eat breakfast: While breakfast is easy to skip—it is the only meal that can make you feel good and prevent you from overeating later on.
- ✓ Go for smart snacks: If you feel like munching on something, make sure that you don't ignore it—instead grab snacks like fruits whether its an apple or water melon or may be sticks of celery and carrot.
- ✓ Don't deprive yourself: If you like cookies—then go ahead and have one. If you want to have a piece of chocolate cake then do have it—just don't eat the whole cake, but do not deprive yourself either. If you do then you will go on a binge.
- ✓ Eat slowly: Always eat slowly and chew the food well. Do not eat in front of the TV. Always pay attention to each spoonful you eat and relish it by eating it slowly. This way you know what you are eating, your brain knows what you are eating and tells your body that its got what it needs. If you are distracted while eating, neither you nor your brain know when to stop!
- ✓ Avoid alcohol: Occasional drinks are fine but if it's an everyday drink be warned that they are full of calories and they make you eat more by stimulating your appetite.
- ✓ Brush your teeth after eating: This is always a good thing to brush your teeth after every meal as it makes you feel full and your mouth clean. It suppresses any hunger that you might feel full and you won't feel the need for dessert.

- ✓ Time the grocery shopping: Go to the grocery store on a full stomach. If you shop on an empty stomach, you will be hungry for all that you see and end up buying all the wrong kinds of food item.
- ✓ Add spice: Yes, you are using less oil and your vegetables are steamed and the fish or chicken are grilled, but there is no need to keep things bland—just add the right kind of spices like paprika on boiled potatoes or go Cajun.
- ✓ Never crash diet: It will boomerang on you and you will end up with more weight that is going to be much harder to lose than before.
- ✓ Replace the white: Go for brown rice, whole-wheat pasta and brown or whole-wheat bread. Try to avoid the white starchy stuff in the evening.
- ✓ Keep moving: Make sure that you break free from your sedentary life. Be active. Even if you cannot aim for a 40-minute session of weight lifting, you can boost your metabolism and make sure that you are indeed burning the calories rather than sitting on a couch and allowing your body to store the fat.
- ✓ Get exercise: There are no short cuts—exercise you will have to because this is the only way to build more muscle which can then burn more calories—at least go out for a walk around the block or run up the stairs in office. You can even consider an evening walk after dinner.
- ✓ Breathe your stomach in: Breathe in and hold your abdominal muscles in when you are walking around, or sitting at your desk or cooking. Breathe in and breathe out all the while exercising the stomach muscles and helping to get rid of that paunch.
- ✓ Avoid fad diets: There is no miracle diet—do not eliminate any one kind of food. You need all groups—just choose the right kind of food items from each group. The carbohydrate you eat should be as natural as possible and not with add-on sugars, the animal protein should be lean and not dripping of fat. Fat can be used but sparingly.
- ✓ Cardio in the morning: The best time to exercise is the morning because the body will be forced to use the glucose and energy that it has kept in reserve rather. So you are burning the fat that you wanted to.
- ✓ Avoid late nights: Eat before 8.00pm and sleep well. If you wait till late to eat—you will eat more, your body wouldn't be able to digest as well and you wouldn't be able to sleep fitfully. And you need to sleep so that you can wake up fresh and free from fatigue.

- ✓ Surprise your body: Change the exercise routine after a while because your body gets used to a particular pace. You need to jumpstart it with a new routine or by making the exercise session longer. Opt for different physical activities and challenge your body.

Eat healthy, exercise well, drink water and follow the tips. Be more active, have realistic expectations, be patient and burn those calories.

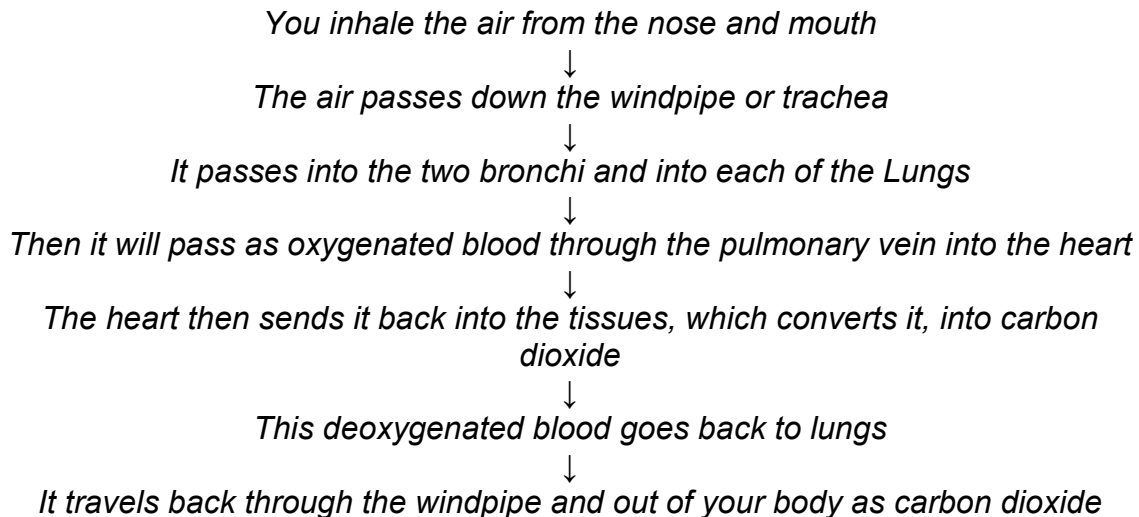
Bonus III

Breathe Strong and Lose Weight

Can a simple thing like breathing help you lose weight? Yes it can—and before you assume that breathing is a natural, inadvertent, everyday function of the body, you better be warned—do not underestimate the power of breathing!

The Importance of Breath

Lets get to the breathing basics. Breathing is all about breathing in Oxygen and breathing out carbon dioxide. Have you ever wondered why we need to breathe in only *Oxygen*? If the oxygen doesn't reach your heart, it stops. If it doesn't reach your lungs, they will collapse. If you are tired and fatigued—it's again a case of lack of adequate oxygen. But what is the link between breathing and losing weight? Oxygen is needed to process the food you take in and burn the calories. If you didn't get oxygen, you wouldn't be able to convert the food into energy. In fact—one of the ideas behind exercise is to enable you to take in more oxygen and burn more calories. Without oxygen you are zilch—nada. You just cannot exist.



All the above happens in just one breathe that you take. That's why people say, "Go and take a breath of fresh air—it will do wonders for your life". The breathing not only supplies oxygen to your vital organs but also is essential to the process of metabolism. If you are not breathing right, chances are that you would be burning less calories and piling on extra weight. This is your chance to breathe in a breath of fresh air and get your body to lose that extra weight. Read on to find how.

Do you know how to breathe?

You probably think you know how to breathe. You might even think it's a daft question to ask—because breathing is not something you have to learn to do—it's something you do automatically from the day you are born. That's where you are wrong. None of us really breathe the right way and we all end up using under 50% of our lungs actual capacity. Some of us just use 20% and just the upper part of the lungs while the rest of it is left unused! Apart from the lungs, our body's muscles are used in the breathing process—particularly the chest muscles and the abdominal muscles. Once again, some of us use more of the chest muscles while others use the stomach muscles.

To find out what kind of breather you are, place your left hand in the middle of your chest and your right hand over your stomach. Breathe naturally and look at your hands. If the left hand is moving more than the right hand as you breathe, then you are a chest breather. If your right hand is moving more—you are a belly breather.

- ❖ If you are a chest breather, then you will be taking in shallow and short breaths and this kind of breathing is not considered as efficient breathing.
- ❖ If you are a belly breather, you will be breathing in more air and your breaths will be longer and thus helps you take in more oxygen—a much more efficient breathing.

What you have to do is learn how to breathe naturally and as effectively as possible to take in more oxygen and boost your metabolism. Your breathing should be effective enough to get rid of the toxins from your main organs and focus the supply of oxygen to the right places. To lose weight you need to breathe right.

Breathing out the Excess Weight

Learn to be a belly breather. Not only are you taking in more oxygen and longer breaths of air, you are working your abdominal muscles and contracting them as you breathe. That is a great exercise if you learn to do it with every breath that you take! Here's how you have to do it:

- Breathe in through your nose and as you do so, push out your stomach.
- Concentrate on taking a long breath and fill in your lungs with air.
- Now breathe it out slowly through your nose and pull your stomach in.

That's all you have to do to make every breath of yours as effective as possible! Do this for ten times everyday and then gradually make this your natural way to breathe. When you breathe from your stomach you will feel more relaxed, fresh and clear headed and your body is getting that extra oxygen to burn the calories.

Breathing Exercise # 1: Lie down flat on the bed or the floor—whatever is comfortable. Now take in a deep breath through your nose and breathe in such a way that you push your belly up. Your chin should be pulled in to your chest and you should be able to see your stomach go up. Once you've filled your lungs,

hold your breath for a count of 10 to 20 seconds—as much as you are comfortable with. Then breathe out slowly. Do 10 more times and build up the number of repetitions.

Breathing Exercise # 2: Now sit up straight and once again breathe in long and deep through your nose as you push out your stomach. You should be able to see your belly jut out and inflate with air. Be careful not to lapse back into using your chest—if your belly is not inflated that means you are using your chest muscles. Hold up to a count of 10 to 20 seconds and breathe out slowly.

Breathing Exercise # 3: Sit and settle yourself comfortably in a chair but make sure that your back is straight. When you practice, always remember to be relaxed and pay attention to your breathing. The best way to know if you are using your stomach or chest muscles is to place each hand over the chest and stomach and observe the movements of the hands as you breath. Breathe in through your nose. Hear the sounds of the deep breaths that you take, hold for a comfortable count and exhale through the mouth. Make sure that your mouth and jaws are relaxed. Repeat 10 times and build up the count. You can do this anywhere—at home or at work

Breathing Exercise # 4: You can either sit or stand with your back straight. Breathe in through your nose but inhale slowly. Don't fill up your lungs right away. First fill the lower part of your lungs then the middle part and finally the upper part. Hold on to the breath for 3 seconds and exhale. Once again you must exhale slowly and allow your stomach and chest to relax. Repeat and try to hold the breath to a count of 5 seconds

Breathing Exercise # 5: Sit with your legs criss-crossed or in what is know as the Lotus pose in Yoga. You have to be sitting comfortably and don't wear any tight fitting underwear or belts or ties. Make sure that your spine straight, your hands are on your knees. Now begin by taking a few deep breaths. Place your second; third and fourth fingers of your right hand on the left wrist on the pulse. Begin counting to the beat of the pulse beat—count 1-2-3-4 as the pulse beats and continue to keep that count mentally until you have no need to hold the pulse. Now put your hands back on your knees and take a deep breath, all the while keeping the count of 1-2-3-4. Hold your breath on the count of 1-2 and exhale while counting 1-2-3-4. This rhythmic kind of breathing helps a lot to control the breathing, balances you mentally and increases the amount of oxygen into the body.

Breathing exercises have to be continued with for at three times in a day and each exercise must be repeated at least ten times. This can not only ensure you health benefits but also boost your metabolism and get those calories burning. You can do these exercises at any time and anywhere. You just have to watch your breaths and make sure that you use your stomach and fill your lungs. Breathing exercises also go a long way to deal with tension and releases the

toxins from your body. You will feel rejuvenated and eat better. As you are taking in more oxygen thanks to your focused breathing, you will also feel less fatigue and strain.

Sages in India practiced the art of breathing called *Pranayama*—and mastered control over their bodies by focusing on the breathing. When you breathe properly you breathe from the diaphragm and that enables you to use your stomach muscles. Breathing properly is like an internal workout for your body and you are bound to lose weight. Keep 15 minutes of your time, thrice in a day for breathing. Just watch your body change with the controlled breathing and you will be amazed to see that not only does your stomach reduce but that also you have a changed attitude to the food you eat, the exercise you take and even better control of yourself.

Happy Breathing—it's the simplest way to enrich your life

Bonus IV

Diet Right – Fight Food Allergies

Food glorious food—but not so glorious when you have food allergies. The worst thing is that it's not the exotic foods that cause the allergies—it's the common everyday items that trigger allergic reaction and make your diet a challenge. The common food items that cause allergies are milk, eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, and fish. The fact is that you have to be on the watch out for any of the items that might come in various forms in different types of other foods that you think you are not allergic to.

Food Allergy and Weight Gain

Basically a food allergy is a hypersensitive reaction to what is generally a safe food item for everybody else. Your body reacts differently to the food and it is this different reaction that is considered as a major factor in weight gain. The recommended high fiber and low fat diet often trigger reactions and add to the weight in people with food allergies. That's because the body doesn't break up and assimilate the food items as it should and before you know it—you land up with:

- Fluid retention that puffs you up even around the fingers and ankles.
- Decreased metabolism that means you are burning fewer calories and accumulating fat.
- Inefficient Thyroid function that will cause imbalances in hormones that regulate the metabolism process.

An allergy is caused when your immune system just reacts adversely to a food that you eat, every time you eat it. It could be acquired or it could be for hereditary reasons. Allergies that develop quite spontaneously are called "atopic." Those who inherit allergies would land up with hay fever (allergic rhinitis), asthma, or rashes (atopic dermatitis) and soon develop allergies to certain foods. When your body reacts to an allergen, it releases what is called Immunoglobulin E (IgE) that causes inflammation, severe swelling, or other hypersensitive reactions like sneezing etc. The symptoms that are usually indicative of food and digestive tract allergies can be local or spread over the body and include:

On the Skin:	In air passages:	In the Throat	In the Nose	In the Eyes	In the digestive system
Flushing	Wheezing	Tongue swelling	Itching	Tearing	Abdominal pain or cramps

Hives	Chest tightness	Difficulty of speech	Nasal Congestion	Itching	Nausea and/or vomiting
Itching	Shortness of breath	Vocal cord swelling	Runny nose		Diarrhea
Skin rash of any kind	Dizziness	Itching/tingling of the lips, palate, tongue, or throat	Sneezing		Stomach irritations

In the worst case of food allergies, you could even get suffocated and the reaction could constrict the air passages. All these above reactions interfere with the normal digestive process and hamper the absorption of the right nutrients and minerals. Metabolism is strained and can slow down as a result of which the energy you have taken in is not being used and instead being stored as fat.

Identify the Allergy

If you are afraid that you are allergic to certain foods, the immediate thing to do is get some tests done to identify what you are allergic to. Schedule an appointment with the doctor and have it checked out. Even if you are sure in your mind about what you are allergic to, get it medically confirmed. You will have to go through the:

- Skin test: This would involve liquid extracts of different foods being put in your forearm or back by pricking the skin a tiny bit so the food being tested enters the body. The doctors will look out for reddish spot, which would indicate an allergy.
- Elimination diet: This would involve removing the suspected foods from your regular diet for a while and watch the reaction as they are introduced slowly.
- RAST test: This would involve a sample of blood being drawn and sent for testing to identify the suspected allergen and the IgE antibodies.

Dealing with the Allergy

Basically you avoid the food that causes the allergy. You avoid the food in all possible ways. For example, if you are allergic to peanuts you have to be sure that you do not take peanuts and avoid even things that have a bit of the ingredient in it and even things that have been cooked in peanut oil as well as items that have "hydrolyzed vegetable protein" or "ground nuts," on the labels because they may contain peanuts. It's the same with shrimp—if you are allergic to shrimp, then you have to even avoid vegetable curries that might be flavored with shrimp paste. If you are allergic to eggs then you have to avoid all things like

cakes and cookies that might have eggs as one of the major ingredients. Read the labels on the food that you buy and ask the ingredients of the meal you are about to have and carefully isolate the items that you are allergic to.

Now that you know what you have to avoid, you have to find alternatives to each item that you are allergic. You can go to a nutritionist or the allergy expert and draw up a good diet plan if you are trying to lose weight and find out what you can eat in place of the wheat items you are allergic to or the nuts that you are allergic to etc.

Do not fall for fad diets or totally eliminate food groups. There are lots of food items in this world and you can find the right and healthy substitutes for each item that you are allergic. However it's always a good idea to sit down with an expert, find out what oil you can use as a cooking medium, the kinds of herbs and condiments you can use as well as the foods that you can substitute.

Meanwhile here are lists of foods that can be substitutes for the mentioned allergens:

Allergen	Substitute
Wheat based bread	100% Rye bread, Rye crackers, Rye pumpernickel bread, rice cakes, oatcakes
Wheat based breakfast cereals	Oat Muesli, oatmeal porridge, cornflakes, puffed rice, multigrain cereals that are non-wheat based like amaranth, millet and rice
Pasta (durum wheat)	Vegetable, rice and corn based pasta
Egg Noodles	Rice noodles
Wheat, oats, rye and barley—all gluten containing food items	Rice cakes, multigrain cereals that are non-wheat based like amaranth, millet and rice, rice noodles, potato and polenta
Cow's Milk	Sheep's milk, goat's milk, soya milk, rice milk
Cow's cheese	Goat's or sheep's cheese like feta cheese
Cow's yogurt	Soya yogurt or sheep's yogurt

However if you are allergic to things like shrimp or peanuts or eggs, you would have to probably totally eliminate the food from your diet for life. These allergies are not the type you can grow out of. Make sure you are aware of how seriously allergic you are to a particular food and always carry anti-histamines or the necessary antidote.

You may have to avoid the food items that cause you allergies but the good news is that food sensitivities can be improved by improving your digestion and the lining of the gut. You can improve your digestion by reducing the acidity levels in your stomach by:

- Chewing your food well;
- Avoiding very large meals;
- Not taking in too much fluid be it water or wine—during the meal;
- Combining different food groups rather than eating just one—i.e. vegetables and fish, rice and vegetables etc.

You can improve the lining of the gut by:

- Making sure that you do not have tendencies to yeast overgrowth so you avoid not only the food that you are allergic to but also the foods that can lead to yeast overgrowth;
- Asking a doctor for enzymes and supplements that reduce the acidity levels and deal with the food sensitivity.

The way to deal with the food allergies is through diet. Plan it well and bring in nutritious and low fat food substitutes if you are aiming to lose weight. Drink a lot of water get the right kind of exercises and improve your digestion. This will all go a long way to reduce the sensitivities you have to some food items.

How to Boost Your Metabolism 2

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	5
<u>Towards Understanding Metabolism</u>	6
<u>Low Fat Labels</u>	7
<u>What's Inside...</u>	9
<u>Part 1: What is Metabolism?</u>	10
<u>The Medical Mumbo Jumbo</u>	10
<u>Anabolism and Catabolism</u>	13
<u>Metabolism and Weight Loss</u>	14
<u>Calories</u>	15
<u>A Final Word About Fat</u>	18
<u>Recap</u>	19
<u>Part 2: Tips, Techniques, and Strategies for Boosting your Metabolism</u>	21
<u>Exercise</u>	24
<u>Build Muscle</u>	25
<u>Interval Training</u>	27
<u>Variety</u>	30
<u>Lifestyle</u>	35
<u>Get on the Wagon</u>	36
<u>Zzzzzzzzz.....Zzzzzzzzz</u>	37
<u>Relax</u>	39
<u>There's Something GOOD About This Time of the Month!?</u>	41

<u>Diet</u>	42
<u>Don't Hate Calories</u>	42
<u>Eat More?</u>	46
<u>Eat Early</u>	47
<u>Befriend Protein and Good Carbs</u>	49
<u>Conclusion</u>	53
<u>A Final Word: Common Metabolism-Boosting Myths</u>	55
<u>Myth #1: Diet Pills</u>	55
<u>Myth #2: Drop Caloric Intake</u>	57
<u>Myth #3: Low Intensity Workouts</u>	58
<u>Myth #4: Too Much Focus</u>	60

Introduction

Metabolism. There isn't perhaps a more frequently used word in the weight loss (and weight gain) vocabulary than this.

Indeed, it's not uncommon to overhear people talking about their struggles – or triumphs – over the holiday bulge or *love handles* in terms of whether their metabolism is working, or not.

Doctors, too, often refer to metabolism when they try and explain why starvation and water-loss diets aren't scientifically or medically responsible; since, alas, they do not influence or take into account metabolism (there's that word again!).

So, for all of the usage that this rather daunting and biologically-charged word enjoys in our world, you'd comfortably assume that people understand it, right?

Or, at least, they have some fundamental information when it comes to how to speed *up* their metabolism, right?

Wrong!

Towards Understanding Metabolism

Regrettably, many people simply *don't* understand the concept of metabolism and metabolic change. This, equally as regrettably, is hardly their fault.

There is so much information floating around out there, much of it over the 'net or through a "friend of a friend who has a personal trainer", that there's bound to be some confusion and conflicting messages.

Furthermore, many people (quite understandably) mistake their own weight gain and loss episodes as a matter of metabolic change. Sometimes this is true, and sometimes it isn't.

For example, as we will discuss in this book, there are scientific ways to increase the rate of metabolic change, and thus enable the body to burn more calories.

Eating *certain foods* more frequently is one way to do this (again, we look closer at these in this book). Yet another way to visibly lose weight – at least on a perceived, temporary level – is to sit in a steam room for a few hours.

Whereas the former method (eating the right foods) is a real, *proven* weight loss method through increased metabolic change, the latter method (the steam room) is just temporary because the lost

weight is merely water, and will return as swiftly as it “melted away”. The point to remember here is that some people mistake their own weight loss attempts as being related to metabolic change; and, as you can see with the steam room example, that isn’t always the case.

Low Fat Labels

Another big reason that people don’t have clear, consistent information on this topic is because, unfortunately, there are a lot of food and supplement companies on the market who don’t *want* you to know fact from fiction.

They want you to believe that constantly buying “low fat” foods is going to somehow speed up your metabolism. While, yes, *some* low fat foods can play a role in an overall eating program that is designed to speed up metabolism, merely eating foods that come from packaging that screams “LOW FAT!” won’t do anything. In fact, believe it or not, but many people actually *gain* weight when they eat too many “low fat” products. Many of these products are laden with calories from carbohydrates or proteins

(which are *still* calories and *still* must be burned off or they turn into body fat).

As you can see, and probably *feel* from years of trying to unravel this whole metabolic mystery, this is a confusing, stressful, and indeed, potentially depressing situation.

Each year, tens of millions of people attempt to retake control over their health and the shape of their body; and each year, tens of millions of people feel that they've "failed" because, try as they might, they just can't speed up their metabolism.

This book is the antidote to that way of thinking and feeling because the perceived failure is *not* a failure in any of these hard working dieters and exercisers (of which you may be one). The failure is with the medical and nutritional sector as a whole, which has simply not provided people with the information that they *need to know* in order to speed up their metabolism. And given the size of the nutritional field and the fact that so much of it is influenced by money-making enterprises (not all of the field, of course, but enough of it to make a difference), there's really no sense in playing a "wait and see" game for when clear, consistent, and helpful information starts to flow out to people like us.

What's Inside...

And that's why this book exists. It's been created for the millions of everyday people like us who simply want to know how to speed up metabolism, and how to lose weight the right, healthy, and responsible way. We want to know:

- **What the heck a metabolism is, and what role it really plays on weight loss and gain**
- **The proven, scientific ways to speed up metabolism – not myths and fitness club “speculation”; but the *real deal*.**
- **Specific diet and food items and promote a faster metabolism, so that once unwanted weight has been lost, it can be *kept off* through a responsible eating plan.**

And in the pages ahead, that's precisely what we cover!

Part 1: What is Metabolism?

Some people think that the metabolism is a kind of organ, or a body part, that influences digestion. Actually, the metabolism isn't any particular body part. It's the *process* by which the body converts food into energy. Hence, you've likely heard of the phrase *metabolic process* used synonymously with the term *metabolism*, because they both mean the same thing.

The Medical Mumbo Jumbo

This isn't a complicated medical text (which should be great news to most of you!), and so we don't need to spend an unnecessary amount of time and space focusing on the layered complexity of the human body and its extraordinary intelligence.

Yet without drilling deeply into medical details -- which are not relevant for our general understanding purposes -- it's helpful to briefly look at the biological mechanisms behind metabolism.

Metabolism, as mentioned above, is the process of transforming food (e.g. nutrients) into fuel (e.g. energy). The body uses this energy to conduct a vast array of essential functions. In fact, your ability to read this page – literally – is driven by your metabolism.

If you had *no* metabolism – that is, if you had no metabolic process that was converting food into energy – then you wouldn't be able to move.

In fact, long before you realized that you couldn't move a finger or lift your foot, your internal processes would have stopped; because the basic building blocks of life – circulating blood, transforming oxygen into carbon dioxide, expelling potentially lethal wastes through the kidneys and so on – *all of these* depend on metabolism.

Keep this in mind the next time you hear someone say that they have a *slow metabolism*.

While they may struggle with unwanted weight gain due to metabolic factors, they certainly have a *functioning metabolism*.

If they didn't, they wouldn't even be able to speak (because that, too, requires energy that comes from, you guessed it: metabolism!). It's also interesting to note that, while we conveniently refer to the *metabolic process* as if it were a single function, it's really a catch- all term for countless functions that are taking place inside the body.

Every second of every minute of every day of your life – even, of course, when you sleep – numerous chemical conversions are taking place through metabolism, or metabolic functioning. In a certain light, the metabolism has been referred to as a harmonizing process that manages to achieve two critical bodily functions that, in a sense, seem to be at odds with each other.

Anabolism and Catabolism

The first function is creating tissue and cells. Each moment, our bodies are creating more cells to replace dead or dysfunctional cells. For example, if you cut your finger, your body (if it's functioning properly) will begin – without even wasting a moment or asking your permission – the process of creating skin cells to clot the blood and start the healing process. This creation process is indeed a metabolic response, and is called *anabolism*.

On the other hand, there is the exact *opposite* activity taking place in other parts of the body. Instead of building cells and tissue through metabolism, the body is breaking down energy so that the body can do what it's supposed to do.

For example, as you aerobically exercise, your body temperature rises as your heart beat increases and remains with a certain range. As this happens, your body requires more oxygen; and as such, your breathing increases as you intake more H^2O . All of this, as you can imagine, requires additional energy.

After all, if your body couldn't adjust to this enhanced requirement for oxygen (both taking it in and getting rid of it in the form of carbon dioxide), you would collapse!

Presuming, of course, that you *aren't* overdoing it, your body will instead begin converting food (e.g. calories) into energy. And this process, as you know, is a metabolic process, and is called *catabolism*.

So as you can see, the metabolism is a *constant* process that takes care of two seemingly opposite function: anabolism that uses energy to *create* cells, and catabolism that *breaks down* cells to create energy.

Indeed, it's in this way that the metabolism earns its reputation as a harmonizer. It brings together these apparently conflicting functions, and does so in an optimal way that enables the body to create cells as needed, and break them down, again as needed.

Metabolism and Weight Loss

By now, you already have a sense of how metabolism relates to weight loss (catabolic metabolism, or breaking cells down and transforming them into energy).

To understand this process even more clearly, we can introduce a very important player in the weight loss game: the *calorie*.

Calories

Calories are simply units of measure. They aren't actually *things* in and of themselves; they are labels for other things, just like how an inch really isn't anything, but it measures the distance between two points.

So what do calories measure?

Easy: they measure *energy*.

Yup, the evil calorie – the bane of the dieter's existence – is really just a 3-syllable label for energy.

And it's important to highlight this, because the body itself, despite its vast intelligence (much of which medical science cannot yet understand, only appreciate in awe) does not really do a very intelligent job of distinguishing good energy from bad.

Actually, to be blunt, the body doesn't *care* about where the energy comes from. Let's explore this a little more, because it's very important to the overall understanding of how to boost your metabolism, particularly when we look at food choices.

In our choice-laden grocery stores, with dozens of varieties of foods – hundreds, perhaps – there seems to be a fairly clear awareness of what's *good* food, and what's *bad* or *junk* food.

For example, we don't need a book to remind us that, all else being equal, a plum is a *good* food, whereas a tub of thick and creamy double-fudge ice cream is a *bad* food.

Not bad tasting, of course; but, really, you won't find many fit people eating a vat of ice cream a day, for obvious reasons. So what does this have to do with calories and energy? It's this: while *you and I* can evaluate our food choices and say that something (like a plum) is a healthy source of energy, and something else (like a tub of ice cream) is an unhealthy source of energy, the body doesn't evaluate. Really. It sounds strange and amazing, but the body really doesn't care. To the body, *energy is energy*. It takes whatever it gets, and doesn't really *know* that some foods are healthier than others. It's kind of like a garbage disposal: it takes what you put down it, whether it *should* go down or not.

So let's apply this to the body, and to weight gain. When the body receives a calorie – which, as we know, is merely a label for *energy* – it must do something with that energy.

In other words, putting all other nutrients and minerals aside, if a plum delivers 100 calories to the body, it *has* to accept those 100 calories. The same goes for 500 calories from a (small) tub of ice cream: those 500 calories *have* to be dealt with.

Now, the body does two things to that energy: it either metabolizes it via anabolism, or it metabolizes it via catabolism. That is, it will either convert the energy (calories) into cells/tissue, or it will use that energy (calories) to break down cells. Now the link between calories/energy, metabolism, and weight loss becomes rather clear and direct.

When there is an excess of energy, and the body can't use this energy to deal with any needs at the time, **it will be forced to create cells with that extra energy.** It has to.

It doesn't necessarily *want* to, but after figuring out that the energy can't be used to do anything (such as help you exercise or digest some food), it *has* to turn it into cells through anabolism. And those extra cells? Yup, you guessed it: added weight! In a nutshell (and nuts have lots of calories by the way, so watch out and eat them in small portions...), the whole calorie/metabolism/weight gain thing is really just about excess energy.

When there are too many calories in the body – that is, when there's *too much energy* from food – then the body transforms those calories into *stuff*.

And that *stuff*, most of the time, is fat. Sometimes, of course, those extra calories are transformed into muscle; and this is usually a good thing for those watching their weight or trying to maintain an optimal body fat ratio.

In fact, because muscles require calories to maintain, people with strong muscle tone *burn calories* without actually doing anything; their metabolism burns it for them. This is the primary reason why exercising and building lean muscle is part of an overall program to boost your metabolism; because the more lean muscle you have, the more *places* excess calories can go *before* they're turned into fat.

A Final Word About Fat

There's a nasty rumor floating around out there that fat cells are *permanent*. And the nastiest thing about this rumor is that it's true. Yes, most experts conceded that fat cells – once created – are there for life. Yet this doesn't spell doom and gloom to those of us who could stand to *drop a few pounds*. Because even though experts

believe that fat cells are permanent, they also agree that fat cells can be *shrunk*. So even if the absolute number of fat cells in your body remains the same, their size – and hence their appearance and percentage of your overall weight – can be reduced.

Recap

So while we haven't gone into any medical detail – because we don't need to or want to – we have covered some key basics about metabolism. In fact, you probably know as much about metabolism now as many so-called experts.

The bottom line is simply that metabolism represents a process – countless processes, in fact – that convert food into energy. When this process creates cells, it's called anabolism. When this process breaks cells down, it's called catabolism.

For people trying to lose weight, it's important to experience *catabolism*. That is, it's important convert food into energy that is used to break cells down. Catabolism is also important because it prevents excess energy (calories) from being stored by the body. Remember: when the body has too many calories – regardless of what food source those calories came from – it can only do two

things. It can desperately try and see if you have any energy needs (like maybe you're running a marathon at the time). Or, more often, it will *have* to store those calories. It has no choice. And unless you have lean muscle that is gobbling up those excess calories, you'll be adding fat.

The remainder of this book, however, is going to point you in the *opposite* direction. You'll learn various techniques, tips, and strategies to boost your metabolism.

And then, in the latter part of this book, you'll be introduced to some metabolism-boosting foods that you'll surely want to add to your regular eating regimen.

Part 2: Tips, Techniques, and Strategies for Boosting Your Metabolism

If you're reading this book, chances are that you've tried – at least *once* in your life – to boost your metabolism.

Perhaps (like most of us) you weren't quite certain what a metabolism *was*, and perhaps (again, like most of us) you probably didn't quite know all that you needed to know in order to accomplish your goals. Maybe you started a rigorous exercise program of jogging and muscle toning. Or maybe you started eating several small portions a day, rather than three large traditional *meal-sized* portions. Or maybe you started taking all kinds of supplements that promised to boost your metabolism.

The thing is, is that *all* of these methods can indeed work. Really: exercise, eating strategically, and ensuring that your body has catabolism-friendly supplements are but three of many generally good ideas.

So what's the problem?

The problem is that many of us have no real scientific understanding of *what, how, or why* these methods boost metabolism.

Some of us, in fact, don't really even know if they work; we just think that they do. For example, a person may start a vigorous exercise program that includes significant aerobic cardiovascular movement, such as jogging or cycling.

And indeed, after a week, that person may notice a drop in weight. Yet is this due to a boosted metabolism? Maybe; maybe not. Could it be due to water loss through perspiration that hasn't been adequately replenished? Maybe or maybe not.

The point here is that many people – at risk to their health and wellness – don't quite understand the tips, strategies, and techniques of boosting their metabolism. And that's what we're going to rectify in this chapter.

In this book, you won't come across any casual information that a *friend of a friend heard on TV*. Nor will you be subjected to off-the-cuff information of how to boost your metabolism.

Rather, we're going to look at the popular, easy, fun (yes, believe it or not), and *successful* ways to boost your metabolism.

The popular and widely respected Internet publication *i-Village*ⁱ highlights 11 key ways to speed up metabolism. To most easily introduce and discuss them here, we've taken these 11 key ideas and broken them down into 3 broad categories:

- 1. Exercise**
- 2. Lifestyle**
- 3. Diet**

As you go through each of the 11 key points, you'll certainly note that there is some overlap between them. For example, it's hard to imagine that introducing exercise into your life isn't, in many ways, a *lifestyle* choice.

Similarly, integrating all kinds of metabolism-boosting foods into your diet is surely going to influence how you spend your time (probably less time in fast food line-ups, for one!). So with this being said, *please* don't get bogged down in the categories; they are merely provided here to help organize these points, and to help you easily refer to them in the future. The important thing for you to do is understand each of the 14 points, and evaluate how you can responsibly integrate them into your life.

Exercise

It's going to be *old news* for you to be reminded that exercising is a bit part of boosting your metabolism and burning up calories.

Unless you're born with one of those *unusually active metabolisms* which allows you to, almost freakishly, eat thousands of calories a day without weight-gain consequences, you're like the vast majority of us who need to give your metabolisms a bit of a kick through exercising.

Now, you might think that cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise is an important part of boosting your metabolism; and you'd be right! Provided that, of course, your qualified doctor confirms that you're able to start a program of cardiovascular exercise, this is indeed the place to start. Increasing heart rate, blood circulation, body temperature, and oxygen intake/carbon dioxide exchange all send messages to the system to initiate catabolism (breaking down cells and using them for energy).

Yet if cardiovascular exercising is the place to start, does that mean that it's the place to end? *No!*

Many people, who aren't as educated as you'll be when you've finished this book, responsibly start a dedicated program of cardiovascular health, but they *don't go any further*. Not because

they're lazy; but because, frankly, they don't know that there is significantly *more* that they can do in their home gym, or at the fitness club, that will boost their metabolism even more potently.

We focus upon these added activities now, below.

Build Muscle

Many people – particularly some women – are very leery about undertaking any exercise regimen that can lead to muscle building. The old perception was that muscle building leads to *muscle bulking*, and before long, gorging forearm veins and other unwanted results.

This is, frankly, not the case. Provided that women aren't supporting their workouts with specific muscle-building supplements, there is no need to be concerned; because building lean muscle won't make them *bulk up*.

Still, however, the question remains: why would women (and, of course, men) who want to boost their metabolism focus on muscle building? Isn't cardiovascular exercising the *only* thing that matters?

Again, the answer is: No! In *addition* to a healthy and responsible cardiovascular program, muscle building is an exceptionally powerful way to boost metabolism.

How? Because a pound of muscle burns more calories than a pound of fat. And what does this mean? It means (and get ready to stare in awe) that if you have more muscle on your body – *anywhere on your body* – you will simply burn more calories as a result. You don't even have to *do* anything. You'll simply burn more calories, because muscle simply requires more of an energy investment.

Of course, as you can infer, if you build muscle and then leave it alone, over time, the muscle fibers will weaken and you'll lose that wonderful calorie-burning factory. But that's no problem, because all you need to do is build and maintain healthy muscle. It may sound daunting; especially if at the moment you perceive yourself to have much more fat than muscle.

Yet the important thing for you to remember is that once you start building muscle – through any kind of strength training – your body will *itself* start burning more calories.

It has to; even while you sleep, or go to a movie, or read a book. It's like putting your calorie-burning (catabolism) program on auto-pilot.

So don't let a little (or even a lot) of extra flab, at the moment, deter you from believing that muscle building is important. Yes, you should enjoy cardiovascular exercise too, because that's ultimately how your body is going to burn existing fat. But muscle building plays a profoundly supportive role in that pursuit.

And it's an exponential one, too: the more fat you transform into muscle, the more calories you'll burn simply to maintain that new muscle (and the wonderful cycle goes on and on!).

Interval Training

The basic weight loss *nuts and bolts* behind cardiovascular exercise (or any kind of exercise, really) is, as you know, a matter of catabolism.

Essentially, if you can engineer your body to require more energy, your body will comply by breaking cells down to deliver it; and that process (metabolism) burns calories. Simple, right?

So based on that logic, something called *interval training* neatly fits in with the overall plan. Interval training is simply adding high-energy burning component to your exercise plan on an infrequent, or *interval*, basis.

For example, you may be at a stage where you can jog for 20 minutes every other day, and thus put your heart into a cardiovascular zone during this time.

This, obviously, is going to help you boost your metabolism and thus burn calories/energy. Yet you can actually burn *disproportionately more* calories if, during that 20 minute jog, you add a 30 second or 1 minute sprint.

Why? Because during this 30 seconds or 1 minute, you give your body a bit of a jolt. *Not* an unhealthy jolt; remember, we're talking about quick bursts here, not suddenly racing around the track or through the park! By giving your body an *interval* jolt, it automatically – and somewhat unexpectedly – has to turn things up a notch.

And to compensate for your extra energy requirements, the body will burn more calories. It's essential for you to always keep in mind that interval training *only works when it's at intervals*. This may seem like a strange thing to say (and even difficult to understand), but it's actually very straightforward.

The metabolism-boosting benefits that you enjoy as a result of interval training are primarily due to the fact that your body, suddenly, needs to find more energy.

While it was chugging along and supplying your energy needs during your cardiovascular exercising, it all of a sudden needs to go grab some more for 30 seconds or a minute; and in *that* period, it will boost your metabolism as if it were given a nice, healthy jolt.

As you can see, if you suddenly decided to extend your 30 second or 1 minute sprint into a *20 minute sprint*, you simply wouldn't experience all of the benefits. Yes, your body would use more energy if you extend yourself to the higher range of your aerobic training zone. But your body won't necessarily get that *jolt* that only comes from interval training.

So remember: your goal with interval training is to give your body a *healthy jolt* where it suddenly says to itself:

"Whoa! We need more energy here FAST, this person has increased their heart rate from 180 beats per minute to 190 beats per minute! Let's go to any available cell, like those fat cells down at the waist, and break them down via catabolism so that this person can get the energy that they need!"

Remember (sorry to be repetitive, but this is very important): the whole point of interval training in this way is to give your body a sudden, limited, healthy jolt where it needs more energy – quick!

If you simply increase your speed and stay there, while your body may, overall burn some more calories, it won't get that jolt. Also bear in mind that interval training can indeed last longer than 30 seconds or a minute.

Some experts suggest that you can use interval training for 30-40 *minutes*, depending on your state of health and what your overall exercise regimen looks like.

The reason we're focusing on 30 seconds to 1 minute is simply to give you a clear understanding that interval training is a kind of mini *training within a training* program.

And, as always, *don't* overdo it with your interval training. Your goal here is to become healthier and stronger, and lose weight in that process.

You gain nothing if you run so fast or bike so hard during interval training that you hurt yourself. You will actually undermine your own health, and possibly have to stop exercising while torn muscles or other ailments heal.

Variety

They say that variety is the spice of life, and this is indeed quite true. But despite this awareness, many people don't *spice up* their

exercise program; which is surprising, since doing so often leads to valuable metabolism-boosting benefits.

There are a few easy ways to add variety to your exercise program. We've already talked about interval training, and that is indeed one way to shift your body's *metabolic engine* into higher gear. Other effective ways are to break up a longer routine into smaller parts.

For example, instead of committing to 1x1 hour workout a day, it can be metabolism-boosting to split this up into 2x30 minute workouts; or even, on some occasions, 3x20 minute workouts. Furthermore, you can add variety into your daily exercise routine without formally *exercising*.

For example, you can take the stairs instead of the elevator. Or you can start your day with a brisk walk instead of a coffee and the newspaper.

Or, instead of parking close to the grocery store entrance, you can walk the distance between a far away parking spot and the entrance. All of these tips provide two metabolism-boosting benefits.

Firstly, as you can easily see, they can make exercising more *fun*. While, indeed, it's important to have an exercise routine, you don't want to have a *boring* exercise routine (because then your chances of stopping are that much greater!).

So adding these new elements to your overall exercise commitment simply helps encourage you to stick with the program. And since exercising is a core part of boosting your metabolism, any technique or tip that helps you continue exercising over the long term is a wise piece of advice.

The second important benefit of variety in your exercise program leads us back to the interval training concept, discussed above. When you add variety to your workout, your body cannot get into a *groove*. Remember: the body is a remarkable piece of work, and will always strive to do things efficiently.

Naturally, the overall state of your health (which can be influenced by genetics and other factors outside of your control) will play a role in *how* efficiently your body runs. But regardless of how your body is put together, who what genetic influences you have to deal with, your body really likes you, and wants to do things *as efficiently as it possibly can*.

Therefore, when you start exercising, your body can start to develop a kind of expectation of energy output. It's not doing this to be lazy; it's doing this because, quite sincerely, it wants to help! If your body starts to *predict* that you need a certain amount of energy to complete a certain task (such as jog for 20 minutes), then it will start to achieve that energy output more efficiently.

For example, when you first start jogging for, say, 2 minutes a time followed by 5 minutes of walking, your body may require a great deal of energy to help you achieve this. And as a result, you may find yourself very out of breath or tired as your body strives to meet this increased demand. Naturally, of course, *catabolism* will be involved, and your body metabolism will increase.

But over time, say a month or so, your body will simply become more efficient. It will have become stronger, and will be able to supply your energy needs much more efficiently; you may not even break a sweat!

What's happened here is that your health has improved; your body has to *work less hard* to provide you with your energy needs. Ironically, this can actually obscure your metabolism-boosting efforts; because, as you know, you want to tell your body to start the catabolism process. But if your body is efficiently working, it

won't really dig into its reserves (e.g. fat cells) in order to provide you with the energy that you need.

So the trick is to keep *variety* in your workouts. Many people choose to cross-train for this very reason. It not only targets different muscle groups, but it keeps your body from finding a *groove* whereby it tried to help you by slowing down metabolism.

Remember: your body doesn't read books like this; it doesn't need to, and it doesn't *care*. It has no *clue* that a speedier metabolism is "*good*" or "*bad*". Now, as far as you and I are concerned, we know that a speedy metabolism is a *good thing* in our weight loss efforts.

But your body doesn't make this evaluation. And so it won't turn on its metabolism jets because you want it to. You can't (unfortunately) send a memo to your body and ask it to *please speed up metabolism*. If you *could*, then that would be amazing! But that's not reality at all.

What we have to do is *force* the body to say to itself: *hey, I need to speed up metabolism because this person needs more energy!* And one of the best ways for you to *force* the body to have this kind of thinking is to add variety to your workouts.

Lifestyle

When we come across the term *lifestyle*, we tend to think of the basic day-to-day habits that we rely on; sometimes without giving them much of a second thought. And this is indeed the case when we talk about how lifestyle influences the speed of your metabolism.

Now, quite honestly, most of us live busy lives in one form or another, and therefore it's challenging to really keep an eye on *all* of our habits.

Balancing work, family, hobbies, and other commitments often means that our lifestyle isn't so much of a *choice*, as it is a necessity.

Yet with respect to the fact that many of us face sincere limitations in our *lifestyle choices*, there are many things that we can do – little things, but important things – that can help speed up our metabolism.

So if you're a bit put-off by the term *lifestyle*, please don't skim over this section. The little things that you change in your regular, day-to-day lifestyle can indeed have the most profound influence on the speed of your metabolism, and the achievement of your short and long-term weight loss goals.

Get on the Wagon

Do you know people who carefully choose low-fat, low-calorie meal choices, are very disciplined when it comes to *not* ordering the Chef's Special pecan pie for desert, yet order a glass or two of wine with their meal?

Well, unfortunately, these people are *really* undermining their efforts to boost metabolism. Studies show that drinking alcohol with meals actually encourages *over eating*; which means more calories that need to be burned away (or transformed into fat!).

Furthermore, many people are simply unaware that many alcoholic drinks are laden with calories; almost as much as sugary-rich soft drinks. A bottle of beer can deliver a few hundred calories, and most cocktails are in the same range. Wine is generally considered to deliver the *least* amount of calories; but even this is a bit of a slippery slope. Three glasses of wine can be worth 300 calories that the body simply has to *deal* with in one form or another.

The tip here isn't to stop drinking alcohol altogether (despite the title of this section). If you enjoy alcohol then there's no particular reason why you have to quit cold turkey, but you will save a bit of money and not consume as many calories.

Simply, the call here is that you become *aware* that it influences your metabolism. If you consume excess alcohol (even without becoming inebriated), you force your system to deal with more calories. And unless you're compensating for these added calories through exercise or muscle building, catabolism cannot occur. Instead, anabolism will inevitably occur, and new cells will be created from those calories (mostly fat cells).

Zzzzzzzzz.....Zzzzzzzzzzz

This is a toughy. Most of us don't have as much control over the amount that we sleep as we *should*. Work, family, education, housekeeping, and so many other tasks can literally prevent us from getting the amount of sleep that we need.

However, as the experts tell us, getting enough sleep actually improves metabolism. On the other hand, people who are constantly sleep deprived typically find that they have less energy to do regular, daily activities; including *digestion*.

As a result, sleep-starved people often lower their own metabolism. They simply don't have the strength to break down food efficiently, particularly carbohydrates.

This is a very difficult issue, because many people can only find time to exercise by *borrowing from* their rest time.

For example, after a long day of work and dealing with family and home commitments, a person may find that the only time they have to exercise (and thus boost their metabolism) is late at night; say around 9:00 pm, or even later. So what should one do?

Ultimately, it's a question of balance. Naturally, if you're willing to exercise, and your doctor agrees that it's healthy for you to do that, then you're *not* going to get fit by sleeping instead of exercising.

Yet with that being said, if you steal time away from your sleep/rest in order to exercise, over time, you can actually do more harm than good; because the following day, you won't have enough energy to digest what you eat. The answer to this catch-22 lies in *balance*.

You don't have to work out every night. Or perhaps you can integrate a workout into your life during the day; maybe at lunchtime or right after work.

Most fitness clubs are open very early (some are even open 24 hours), and if you choose to workout at home, you can do so in a generally affordable way (while some machines can cost thousands, basic machines that get the job done only cost a few hundred, even cheaper if they're used).

If you find that you have trouble sleeping, then this can also negatively affect the speed of your metabolism (because you won't have enough energy the following day). Insomnia and other sleep disorders are *very common problems*, and there exists a variety of support systems in place to help people get the rest that they require. Some non-medical tips to help you fall asleep include:

- o Don't eat late at night
- o Try drinking warm milk before bedtime
- o Don't turn on the TV at night
- o Try yoga or other stress-relieving practices
- o Try having a warm bath before bedtime
- o Don't exercise close to bedtime; your body can become so energized that it doesn't want to sleep!

Relax

We briefly noted *yoga* in the list of *Things to Do* above, and that brings us to another key influence of your metabolism: stress.

Believe it or not, but experts are now telling us that stress can send unwanted signals to our body; signals that lead to slower metabolism. Essentially, what happens is that when the body is under constant stress, it releases *stress hormones* that flood the system.

These stress-related hormones actually tell the body to create larger fat cells in the abdomen. The result can be both increased weight (through increased fat cells), and a slower metabolism. Obviously, these are *two very negative factors* in the quest to boost metabolism and lose weight. The last thing that we want is more and *bigger* fat cells in our abdomen, coupled with a diminished metabolism!

Yet this is, tragically, what happens to many people who experience constant, continuous stress. And, alas, this is *many people*; especially those of us who have to balance so many competing objectives, such as work, family, and other vital tasks.

So the advice here is indeed to “relax and chill out”, and there are some simple techniques that can, and should, be added to your life. These include walking more, listening to relaxing music, meditation, yoga, eating non-stimulating foods (e.g. no caffeine, no

sugar, and so on), and building a daily regimen that includes periodic *time outs* where you can re-center yourself and de-stress.

Remember: while relaxing is good advice for anyone, it's important for you to note that stress *negatively influences metabolism*. So there is a link between how much stress you experience and your ability to break down cells and lose weight.

So if you don't want to *relax* because you don't have the time, then you should realize that your stressed-out life is probably playing a role in your weight gain/your inability to lose weight.

There's Something GOOD About This Time of the Month!?

Now here's a strange one that is *for the ladies*, only.

Studies have demonstrated that the 2-week period prior to the onset of PMS is one in which fat burning capacity is at a premium.

This is ironic indeed; because that's usually the period in which women *don't* want to workout; because their body and its emotional computer are preparing for PMS. However, studies in Australia have shown that women were able to burn off as much as 30% more fat in the 2 weeks preceding PMS.

The reason for this, researchers argue, is because this is when the female body's production of estrogen and progesterone are at their highest.

Since these hormones tell the body to use fat as a source of energy, exercising during this time can really pay off. The body will be inclined to target fat cells for catabolism.

Diet

Ah yes, diet. For most of us, our information concerning metabolism has related in one way or another to eating. Most of us have been told of metabolism-friendly foods, or metabolism *unfriendly* foods. But really, while we may be basically aware that, all else being equal, a stalk of celery is better for your metabolism than fries with gravy, our understanding of diet and metabolism is pretty low.

To fix this, the following section looks at some powerful and scientific diet-related tips that will boost your metabolism. Indeed, as you'll soon learn, it's not merely what you eat that matters; it's when, and how, too.

Don't Hate Calories

The word calorie has a bad rap. We constantly come across *calorie reduced* or *low calorie* foods. And it's not uncommon to overhear

someone gasp about the immense *calorie content* of certain foods, such as a rich and creamy desert, or a giant fast food burger. All of this anti-calorie rhetoric therefore has made a lot of us pretty calorie-*phobic*; as soon as we see something that has lots of them, we run away. But is this wise?

Yes and no. Yes, it's wise in the sense that avoiding that double-layer chocolate fudge cake for desert is probably a good idea (actually, scratch that; it *is* a good idea). The calories that come from the cake are really going to be the so-called *empty calorie* kind; which means that there's no real nutritional value that your body can squeeze out and make use of.

But in the bigger picture, it's *unwise* for your metabolism to become calorie-avoidant. Why? Because your body is a marvelous machine that tries, at all times, to do what it can to make your life easier. Indeed, while it may not always function at optimal levels (for a variety of reasons, including genetics), it still tries to do its very best.

The body, for all of its limitations and so forth, is *not* a lazy thing! With this in mind, the body is always trying to keep is alive and functioning in the manner that it deems to be healthiest.

And that's why if you suddenly decrease the amount of calories that you need, your body won't try to *do more with less*. In other words, your body won't respond in the way that you want it to: it won't necessarily provoke catabolism and thus reduce weight and fat cells.

Instead, your smart and wise body will try to *keep you alive* by slowing down its metabolism. It will simply believe that something is wrong – maybe you're trapped somewhere without food – and it will just begin to become very stingy with energy.

So what's the end result? If your body needs 2000 calories a day to survive, and you suddenly give it only 1000, it *won't* begin to burn off 1000 calories worth of cells that you have lying around on your love handles.

Instead, your body will *slow down its metabolism*. It will really try and get as much energy out of those 1000 calories, because it doesn't want to waste anything. Physically, you'll naturally feel more tired because your body is being very miserly with energy, and will devote its 1000-calorie ration to essential systems, like blood and oxygen supply (and others).

Metabolically, you won't be burning off extra calories. In fact, you can actually *gain weight* by dramatically reducing your calorie intake! The flipside of this, of course, is that you should consume a daily caloric intake that is proportionate to your body size, type, and weight loss goals.

And then, once you determine the amount of calories that you need (probably with the aid of a qualified nutritionist or fitness expert); you can provide that to your body via healthy, efficient calories.

For example, if your body needs 1500 calories per day, and one slice of double-fudge chocolate cake delivers a whopping 500 of those, then you can see that eating just one of these slices will take up a full $\frac{1}{3}^{\text{rd}}$ of your daily caloric needs; and that's not good!

On the other hand, you can see that drinking a tasty fruit smoothy made with yogurt and nuts can deliver half as many calories, but provide you with essential nutrients, vitamins, and other elements that your body needs to healthily do its work.

Eat More?

Fresh on the heels of the discussion on calories, it's also helpful to note that eating frequently throughout the day can be very good for boosting metabolism. There are a couple of reasons for this.

The first reason is that people who tend to eat throughout the day do considerably less *snacking*. As a result, they tend to avoid the potato chips or candy bars that they might otherwise consume if they suddenly felt *hungry*.

People who eat throughout the day don't tend to experience severe *hunger pangs*, because they don't reach that stage.

The second reason, and the one that you can probably guess based on your understanding of metabolism, is that by eating throughout the day, you are constantly keeping your metabolism in motion.

It's kind of like having a generator run all the time; it will simply use more electricity than if you powered it on 3 times a day.

Now, it goes without saying (but we should say it anyway just in case!) that just because it's *good* for metabolism-boosting to eat frequently, this *doesn't* mean that you can eat *junk* all day long!

Rather, if you choose to eat more frequently, then you'll certainly need to be very aware of *what* you eat; because you can easily exceed your required amount of daily calories if you don't keep an eye on this.

That's why, if your plan is to follow the eat-more-to-burn-more approach, then you should keep a food journal that notes what you eat (and drink of course) throughout the day.

You should not merely know the calorie levels of what you eat, but you should know the overall nutritional values, too.

For example, if you're on target to eat 50 grams of protein per day, then you want to make sure you reach this target and not exceed it (or come in below it).

In other words, merely focusing on calories is only half of the job. You will need to ensure that you're eating enough protein, carbohydrates, fats (the good unsaturated kind!), and the other vitamins and minerals that your body needs in order to function at optimal levels.

Eat Early

We've all heard that *breakfast is the most important meal of the day*.

And in terms of boosting your metabolism, this is indeed the case!

There are a couple of reasons why eating a hearty and healthy breakfast can boost metabolism and lead to weight loss goals.

The first reason is that people who eat breakfast are much less inclined to snack throughout the morning. For example, if you had a good breakfast of fruit and low-sugar cereal in the morning, your

chances of visiting the vending machine at work around 10:30am diminish significantly.

Of course, as you recall from our previous discussion on eating more frequently, this doesn't mean that you shouldn't eat something between breakfast and lunch.

It simply means that, since you won't be extremely hungry at 10:30am (because you skipped breakfast), you'll be less inclined to eat *anything* that you get your hands on; such as a nice donut that your co-worker was kind enough to offer you.

In other words, by starting your day in a nutritious way, you'll have more control over *what* you eat throughout the day.

The second reason is more aligned with metabolism-boosting.

Studies have shown that metabolism slows during sleep, and doesn't typically get going again until you eat. Therefore, starting the day with breakfast is like kickstarting your metabolism. You'll actually burn more calories throughout the day, simply by eating breakfast (hey, who knew?!).

Remember: as you eat your breakfast, control both the portion and the contents. You don't want to eat to the point of complete fullness; because, remember, you want to eat throughout the day and you won't be able to do that if you're *stuffed*.

At the same time, beware of high-fat breakfasts. Studies have shown that high-fat breakfasts, such as those that include bacon and sausage, not only deliver *lots of calories* (there are 9 calories for every gram of fat, as compared to 4 for every gram of carbohydrates and proteins, respectively).

But they also can make you very hungry again, very soon! So in addition to having ingested a lot of fat (and hence a lot of calories), you'll typically find yourself rather ravenous again in a few hours. Alternatively, breakfasts that are high in fiber take longer to digest, and thus, the body won't be hungry again for a while.

This is something to bear in mind; and it may explain why many people who eat breakfast find themselves *painfully hungry* by lunchtime; it's not their "overactive metabolism" at work; it's the high fat content, which has been swiftly digested.

Befriend Protein and Good Carbs

There is a *dizzying* array of things that you can eat these days. Truly, a trip to the grocery store can be an adventure. Everywhere you turn, there's yet another food promising you *healthy this* or *weight loss that*.

Added to this confusion is that there are some foods that are beneficial for metabolic boosting, and some that *aren't*; and the differences aren't always well-known. Fortunately, we're going to tackle this problem right now and describe the three basic food groups/types that are indeed good for a speedy metabolism.

In terms of protein, studies have shown that having enough protein in your system can actually increase the speed of your metabolism. This is because protein is difficult to break down. Or rather, it *requires more energy* to break down. It's like feeding the body a knot; it needs a bit of time to unravel it.

And, as you know, when your body spends time on something, it *spends energy* (calories). And so the more time it can spend breaking down protein, the more calories that it uses. Different people will require different amounts of protein on a daily basis. Those who exercise and build muscle will typically need more than the average amount, too.

The USFDA Food Guide suggests around 50 grams of protein a day for a *reasonably active adult*.

Keep in mind (not that you don't already have *enough* to remember, but...) that there are different sources of protein: some lean, and some high in fat. Fast food burgers may deliver up to 20 grams of protein (sometimes more), but they also deliver a great deal of *fat*; which makes them almost nutritionally worthless.

The benefits you enjoy from the protein are far outweighed by the immense fat intake; which, for some fast food burgers, can exceed 40 grams! And that's *not* including the fries (we won't even go there!). So the thing to do is ensure that your source of protein derives from *lean* protein. Typically, protein from *some* fish and chicken is lean; though not all of it.

If you're a vegetarian, or simply looking for non-meat lean protein alternatives, low-fat cheese, legumes (lentils), and yogurt are all good sources. Simply check the food labels to determine if the source of protein is lean (doesn't deliver high fat content), or fatty.

In terms of carbohydrates, there probably isn't a more battered around micronutrient than this. It's gone from being the greatest thing in weight loss history, to one of the most reviled.

And really, it's not the fault of the innocent carbohydrate! It's really just a matter of information and knowledge, instead of speculation. The thing to remember is that when carbohydrates are refined, such as white bread and potatoes, they are what the diabetic world refers to as *high glycemic index (GI) foods*, because they require spikes in insulin in order to be digested.

As you may know, when insulin is released into the system, it promotes the storage of fat; and some experts believe that it also pushes down metabolic speed (which makes sense).

Therefore, the *good* kinds of carbohydrate to consume are those that are high in fiber, and those from fruit and vegetable sources.

Why? Because these sources of carbohydrates don't score high on the glycemic index. In other words, they don't cause a spike in insulin levels, and therefore, they don't promote fat storage.

Conclusion

We've come a long way! We now actually know more about the metabolism, and how to increase metabolic speed, than most people; and we're therefore in a position to put that information to *good use*.

We've learned that the metabolism is a process and not an actual body part. It harmonizes two essential bodily functions: converting food into cells/tissues, and breaking cells down to provide energy. We learned that the former process is known as *anabolism*, and the latter is *catabolism*.

Indeed, it's this latter process that influences our ability to lose weight, and to keep it from coming back!

Yet going beyond the biological basics, we also learned of 3 integrated aspects of speeding up metabolism and losing weight. These aspects were categorized in terms of: *exercise, lifestyle, and diet*. And within each of these 3 categories were a total of 11 important, practical, and quite easy ways to boost metabolism.

Now, indeed, it's the time for *action*; for as they say, wisdom is the result of experience, not study! Obviously, of course, it was

essential for us to understand this subject and how it relates to boosting metabolism. So in that light, study is invaluable. But now you're equipped with the knowledge that you need.

The next step – boosting your metabolism – is all up to you. Good luck, have fun, and enjoy your better, *leaner* healthier life!

A Final Word: Common Metabolism-Boosting Myths

The SparkDiet resource centerⁱⁱ has consulted fitness experts to find the 4 most prevalent myths concerning metabolism and metabolism-boosting.

Since this book has been about reality and *not* myths, we didn't cover any of them in the actual book. Yet, considering how common these myths are, it can indeed be useful for you to know them; and to *know* that they're myths.

That way, if you come across them in a magazine, at a fitness club, or just from the well-intentioned but misguided advice of a friend, you can confidently say (or at least just *think*): sorry, but that's a myth; I'm not going to fall for that one!

Myth #1: Diet Pills

The general consensus on diet pills are contained in two powerful words: BUYER BEWARE.

The problem here is that many makers of diet pills offer claims that simply aren't realistic; and if you read the fine-print of most of these advertisements, you'll see that they're really too good to be true. Little notes like *the claims made in this advertisement are not typical* should be enough of a wake-up call to realize that there's more to the story.

In some cases, diet pills can help *boost* metabolism temporarily. This, however, can be risky and generally shouldn't be done without a doctor's say-so. Unfortunately, people can become somewhat addicted to diet pills, and this can lead to disaster.

And before we go onto myth #2, remember that some diet pills are *water loss pills*. That is, they are diuretics that promote water loss, usually through excess urination. The jury on water-loss diet pills is somewhat less open-minded than diet pills in general: THEY DON'T WORK!

Seriously: water loss diet pills are built on the premise that you'll lose weight through water. And, yes, that's true: if you urinate 15 times a day, you're physically going to weigh less. But this is *not* actual weight loss! This is merely unhealthy temporary weight loss, and it will come roaring back the minute that water stores are replenished through diet.

Or, even harder to comprehend, if a person taking these water pills fails to restore their body's fluid needs, they can actually suffer dehydration; which can, and has, led to coma and death.

56

Myth #2: Drop Caloric Intake

As we discussed earlier in this book (but it's so important that it deserves an encore here at the end), trying to lose weight by drastically cutting down calories *doesn't work*; in fact, it's unhealthy. The thing to remember is that the body's ability to lose weight is not controlled by calories. Calories are the input. The real control mechanism is that famous concept that you've become very familiar with: *metabolism*.

Calories are merely units of energy. It's how your body *deals* with that energy that determines whether weight is gained or lost.

So with that being said, cutting down your caloric intake to, say, 1000 calories a day isn't necessarily going to help you lose weight; because *it doesn't necessarily change your metabolism*.

Indeed, as you know, if you slow down your caloric intake, your body – which is always trying to help you in the best way that it knows how – *will slow down its metabolism*.

Really, it makes sense: the body says that something has gone wrong; instead of the 2000 calories that it needs, it's only getting 1000. The body doesn't know *why* this is happening; it doesn't know that you want to lose weight.

It just senses that something is wrong; perhaps you're trapped in a cave or something, or stuck in a snowstorm. So the body, trying to help you, will slow down its metabolism; it will do its best to slow down the conversion rate, so that you have as much energy *on hand* as possible.

Now, if your body was able to read this book and you could say: look, please just do what you normally do, but do it with 1000 fewer calories a day for a while, then we might actually get somewhere. But the body doesn't work that way. It *won't* help you lose weight if you dramatically cut down on calories.

It will slow down metabolism, and (here's the worst part), if and when you ever increase calories again, your body will have to deal with that *via a slower metabolic engine*. So you can actually *gain weight* if, after cutting down your calories for a period of time, you find that you consume extra calories (say while on vacation or something).

Myth #3: Low Intensity Workouts

It's fair to say that *any* exercise is better than *no* exercise. So if you lead a sedentary lifestyle, then even walking around your block for 10 minutes a day is going to something positive for your body and its metabolism.

True, that difference may be imperceptible to the naked eye (or it may not?), the bottom line is that exercise is good.

Yet with this being said, some people believe that they should perform low-intensity workouts *even when* they could be performing more high-intensity workouts.

That is, instead of jogging for 20 minutes with their heart at the top end of their aerobic zone, they opt for low-intensity jogs that barely break a sweat. Low intensity workouts simply don't lead to a faster metabolism; they *can't*. Remember, as we discussed very early in this book, metabolism is a *process*. And that process is really one of two types: taking energy and making cells (*anabolism*), or breaking cells down to make energy (*catabolism*).

If you don't achieve a high-intensity workout, your body can't tap achieve catabolism; it won't need to. And the only way your body is going to go and break down existing cells is if it *needs to*.

So keep this in mind as you exercise, either at home or at a gym. Low intensity workouts are better than *nothing at all*; and they may be necessary if you're recovering from injury, or just starting out on the exercise journey.

But once you reach a level of basic fitness, only high intensity (aerobic) workouts will make a difference in terms of your metabolism. High intensity workouts force your body to find energy to help you maintain that level of exercise; and it does so through catabolism.

Myth #4: Too Much Focus

Speeding up your metabolism and achieving your weight loss goals involved a certain degree of focus; after all, there's a lot of things competing for your attention (including that delicious Chef's Special pecan pie!), and you certainly need to be able to keep your eye on the goal in order to maintain your program.

Yet sometimes too much focus can be a bad thing; and some dieters understand this all too well.

Remember: speeding up your metabolism is a *holistic* effort that includes exercise, lifestyle, and diet changes.

Focusing on only one of these at the expense of the others (either one or both) can be detrimental. In fact, in some cases, it can be counter-productive.

So the myth here is that you *shouldn't* go all out and focus on becoming an exercise guru, and then move onto lifestyle, and then to diet.

You have to integrate *all* 3 aspects into your life *at the same time*. True, based on your unique situation, you will likely emphasize one more than the others. That's fine and normal. But it's a myth – and a mistake – to ignore any one of these.

It takes all three to speed up your metabolism, and to get you to your weight loss goals for the long-term.

SOURCES USED IN THIS BOOK

i

Lavine, Hallie. "14 Ways to Boost your Metabolism".

iVillage.com.http://magazines.ivillage.com/redbook/dh/diet/articles/0,,284479_577038,00.html

ii

SparkDiet. http://sparkpeople.com/resource/nutrition_articles.asp?id=476

Fitting Fitness into a Busy Schedule!

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	242
Section 1: Assessing Physical Damage and Accepting the Importance of Exercise	245
Lifespan and Physical Appearance	245
Assessing How Fit You Are	247
Turning You into a Fitness Buff!	248
Slowly but Surely... ..	248
Benefits of Exercise.....	249
MORE Benefits of Exercise!	250

Section 2: No Matter How Busy You Are, there are Ways You CAN Include Exercise.....	252
A Simple Exercise Program	254
Frequency and Intensity	255
Variety is the Spice of Life.....	256
Walk before you Run... ..	256
Time Management.....	257
Cubicle Fitness	258
Family Exercises	259
Chores Burn Calories!	259
Walk, don't Drive!	259
Section 3: Busy Traveler? You Can Fit Exercise into your Trips!	261
Common Obstacles	261
Walk when on the Road	262
Fitness while Flying	263
A note about DVT	263
Important "to do" things when traveling	264

Working out with Friends	266
When there's no Gym!.....	266
Yoga	268
Section 4: Exercise Equipment "To Go"	270
More Portable Exercise Tools!	271
IMPORTANT NOTE: Buyer Beware!.....	272
Using a Pedometer.....	273
Always Carry.....	274
Keep a Record!	274
Eating Fit!	275

Section 5: Information/Resources for the Hurried and Harried	276
Fitness-Friendly Hotels.....	277
Fitness-Friendly Airports.....	277
Websites of Interest.....	278
Conclusion	279

INTRODUCTION

Fit exercise into your busy schedule? That's as absurd as saying that there are eight days in a week!

First, you've never exercised before or engaged regularly in a sport; second, you've never been into the fitness crowd and have had meager time for such pursuits, and third, you're far too busy to even think of exercise.

In other words, **YOU'RE JUST NOT INTO IT.**

Of course your friends talk about it and rave about the latest fitness craze, but you've seen it too often: some of them are on the "on-again-off-again" treadmill / stair master mania, and you wonder why they haven't shred the fat that they're desperately still trying to hide.

Seeing what your friends go through and not seeing any results, you cling to the notion that your total lack of interest is justified.

You're not the least bit inclined to engage in these circus-like contortions or do those mindless freestyle strokes in the water. That would only encroach into your already busy schedule of juggling family, home and career. These three combined – husband/children/work are your exercise.

Yup, we've got a problem.

That mindset is like a seething volcano that's about to erupt. If you stubbornly cling to the notion that the "fat to trim" concept is merely a myth and a figment of the imagination of a handful of oddballs, your health could be going into "eruption mode" soon, like a restless volcano.

Have you looked at your body lately? Have you taken stock of your overall physical well-being?

Before tackling the idea of fitting exercise into your busy schedule, it might be better if we start with the concepts of self-assessment and then familiarize ourselves with the disease-prevention aspect of exercise.

Once you've accepted the fact that your body needs overhauling, and that exercise is good for your health – then we can talk about some of the ways that you can include exercise into your roller-coaster existence.

This ebook in your hands right now (or on your screen!) is your KEY to fitting exercise into your life. And rest assured, this ebook already assumes that you're a busy person with a life to lead; and that's why the tips in here are **specifically designed to fit in with your busy lifestyle!**

To keep things organized and simple, this ebook is broken down into five easy sections:

Section 1: Assessing Physical Damage

And Accepting the Importance of Exercise

Section 2: No Matter How Busy you Are, there are Ways you can Exercise

Section 3: Busy Traveler? You can Fit Exercise into your Trips

Section 4: Exercise Aids To Go

Section 5: Information / Resources for the Hurried and Harried

Read them in order, or if you wish, focus on the section that is most relevant to you right now. Regardless of how you choose to read this ebook, you can be confident of one thing: once you apply the advice within these pages, your busy life will include something new and important: exercise!

Section 1: Assessing Physical Damage and Accepting the Importance of Exercise

Do you think of your body the way you think of your car? When a few lucky individuals acquire a sports car that boasts of the best automotive engineering available today, watch them read the maintenance manuals religiously.

They take their car for inspection even if it purrs like a kitten and take it for repairs as soon as something does not feel right. And they're very concerned.

That car is their most prized possession, a symbol of all the long and hard hours they put on the job so they could finally acquire it. It cost an arm and a leg, so taking care of it is logically, their # 1 priority.

But how important is the *person* that drives that car? Shouldn't that person – shouldn't **you** – be the #1 priority?

Lifespan and Physical Appearance

The average life span of men and women is 80 years, give or take a few years. The painful truth is, a significant number of men and women look and feel 80 before they even make it to the first half of their life! You spot the tell-tale signs from their physical appearance:

- ✗ sagging dry skin
- ✗ unsightly posture
- ✗ uneven and unsteady walk (they need to drag around those heavy pounds)
- ✗ aching joints
- ✗ sporting the “I’m not happy because I look terrible” look

Now, if their appearance is *this* bad, imagine what the inside machinery is like! Most likely, it’s even worse:

- ✗ clogged vessels
- ✗ inefficient heart
- ✗ *mounds* of sugar and fat parked in or around vital organs
- ✗ Conditions such as diabetes, nervous tension, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease that are **silently brewing**.

If fitness authorities had it their way, they’d create legislation to make exercise mandatory as soon as a baby leaves the cradle, not during the teenage years when obesity is likely to strike.

But fitness shouldn’t be associated with any age limit. You can start at 10 or at 30 – even at 50 and 60 – the idea being that fitness should not be seen as the cure for a condition that’s already come about. As the saying goes, don’t wait for illness to strike.

Assessing How Fit You Are

Brad King and Dr. Michael Schmidt in “*Bio Age, Ten Steps to a Younger You*” (Macmillan, Canada, 2001) have devised a questionnaire for assessing physical damage to a body as a result of no exercise. We will borrow some of their guidelines, which we will summarize here:

Start with the question, “**How do I look?**” Do any of these answers apply to you?

- Am I overweight, looking like an apple or pear?
- Do I have a spare tire around my waist?
- Has my skin become excessively dry, almost paper-thin?

Next, ask: “**How do I feel?**”

- Do my joints hurt before or after any physical exertion?
- Am I constantly worried and anxious?
- Do I feel tired and sluggish most of the time?
- Do I suffer from mood swings?

Last question, “**How am I doing?**”

Are simple walking and climbing stairs difficult?

- Do I have problems concentrating?
- Is running impossible for me now?

- Am I unable to sit straight, preferring to slouch or stoop my shoulders?¹

You've completed your basic assessment. Note, however, that other exercise or fitness gurus will have their own parameters or indices for assessing your body's overall state and one isn't better than the other.

As long as they include all dimensions of the self – physical, psychological and mental – they are as valid as the next person's assessment charts.

Turning You into a Fitness Buff!

After going through the assessment phase, you're probably experiencing what some people fondly call a "rude awakening".

If you're not mentally prepared to accept exercise, please *don't* force yourself. Just be familiar with its benefits and when you're wholeheartedly disposed towards giving it a crack in the can, proceed slowly. "Slowly but surely" is the exercise cult's favorite slogan.

Slowly but Surely...

¹ Brad J. King & Dr. Michael A. Schmidt. Bio Age – Ten Steps to a Younger You. Macmillan, Canada. 2001.

In fact “slowly but surely” was probably what motivated Denise Austin to come up with her popular one-minute exercises (more on this in a later section).² She had two types of people in mind when she designed the one-minute movements:

1. Uninitiated
2. People on the go.

It's a *quickie* society we live in; we want everything quick – **especially exercise!** – and many converts would be willing to include it in their routine for the sake of health, if there were a quick way to get in, and certainly a quick to get out.

Benefits of Exercise

If you make exercise part of your day, Denise Austin believes you'll already experience some noticeable benefits. These include:

- ✓ Waking up in the morning feeling refreshed
- ✓ Walking with a sprightly gait
- ✓ Having energy left at the end of the day
- ✓ Feeling more optimistic about recreation
- ✓ Sleeping more soundly at night

² Denise Austin (with Jerome Agel as producer). *Denise Austin's 1-Minute Exercises*. Vintage Books/Random House. New York. 1987.

MORE Benefits of Exercise!

The benefits above are general. Let's examine the more specific benefits of exercise on specific parts of the human anatomy, as described by Goldberg and Elliot:

✓ **Exercise prevents heart disease!**

The average ratio of total cholesterol to HDL cholesterol (good cholesterol) is about 4.5. If this ratio doubles or reaches 7, you double your chances of developing coronary heart disease. You reduce that risk by as much as 50% if your ratio is 3 or lower.

The lowdown on cholesterol: not all cholesterol is bad. You have the good one (HDL-1 and HDL-2), the not so bad one (VLDL) and the harmful one (LDL). To get your ratios, divide the total amount of your cholesterol by your amount of HDL. The lower the ratio you have, the better.³

✓ **Exercise prevents osteoporosis!**

Ponder the statistics: 28 million Americans have osteoporosis and of this number, 80% are women. Only ¼ of this 80% know they have the condition and only half are being treated. The annual osteoporosis bill to the United States is \$14 billion.

³ Dr. Lynn Goldberg and Dr. Diane Elliot. The Healing Power of Exercise. John Wiley & Sons. New York. 2000.

Studies have shown that sufficient amounts of calcium and regular exercise build strong bones. While genetics play a major role in developing the risks of osteoporosis, individuals can control some factors that will help prevent the problem.

Peak bone mass is attained in your 20's. Starting an exercise program while still young, even if you live in the fast lane, will help you avoid this bone disease.

✓ **Exercise prevents diabetes!**

People are still debating how much exercise an individual needs, but for people with type 2 diabetes, exercising three or more times a week improves fitness and blood sugar levels. If you have type 2 diabetes and are overweight, exercise done with the following parameters would be of tremendous benefit: intensity of 60%-70% maximal heart rate, with duration of 30 or more minutes, 4-7 days each week.⁴

The above benefits are only a *few* of the many advantages that an exercise/fitness regimen will provide.

There have been hundreds of documented reports that reveal how people's lives have significantly improved and the remarkable transformation that their bodies experience after they made the decision to take ownership of their weight and fat problems.

⁴ Goldberg and Elliot.

In fact, Diane Rinehart (former Toronto magazine editor and writer) wrote in the Montreal Gazette on December 12, 2005:

“What we’re hearing about...is waiting times in emergency and operating rooms for ailments such as hip replacements, heart surgery and amputations. That’s a shame because the fact is, if we dealt with obesity, we wouldn’t be facing the epidemics of heart disease, stroke, arthritis and diabetes that clog our hospital waiting rooms and OR’s.”⁵

Section 2: No Matter How Busy You Are, there are Ways You CAN Include Exercise

Feeling overwhelmed by the amount of time your friends and colleagues spend in the gym? Turned off by the idea of a tennis game that entails not only the hour-long match but also getting to the tennis club, changing into a tennis outfit and then showering afterwards?

⁵ Newspaper article. “The Cutting-the-Fat Issue that Politicians Ignore.” Montreal Gazette. Dec. 12, 2005.

You think, “That’s almost 3 hours – three hours I could devote to nurturing my clients and expanding my sales territory!” The bad news is, being penny wise and pound foolish does not work in ANY circumstance, especially where fitness and health are concerned.

Are those three hours worth skipping during a given week when you know that **years** of optimum health can be yours if you had a positive attitude accompanied by reasonable doses of discipline?

A Simple Exercise Program

Instead of *ignoring* exercise altogether, here's a suggestion for integrating it into your busy schedule. Think of exercise like you think of a major task in the office. Break it up into tinier components.

Instead of spending two hours in the gym or in the tennis court like your friends do, ask your trainer to divide your workout program.

Suggestion A

30 minutes four times a week, i.e.: 20 minutes cardio, 10 minutes weights (1 muscle group, e.g. legs)

Suggestion B

30 minutes three times a week

Mon: 20 minutes cardio + 10 minutes stretching;

Tues: 20 minutes weights (2 muscle groups, e.g. back and abdominals) + 10 minutes of cardio.

Wed: 20 minutes cardio + 10 minutes of

Weights (two muscle groups, e.g. triceps or chest, biceps or shoulders)

Suggestion C

20 minutes 5 days a week.

Week 1: all cardio

Week 2: weights

Week 3: Cardio on Mon/Wed/Fri

Week 4: Weights on Tues/Thurs

Repeat the entire cycle when you get to month 2.

Frequency and Intensity

Ideally, one should gradually increase the frequency or intensity, or both. But if you're busy, and definitely can't spare more than 30 minutes a day, then increase your intensity. This means if your cardio involves the treadmill, take the notch up 1 level (if you started with level 3, go on to level 4 on month 2).

For your weight training, if you started with 5-pound weights, graduate into 7.5 pounds in month 2. And then on those days when your day is not filled with meetings, try to stay an extra 5-10 minutes.

Be realistic with your goals, especially when you're just starting. Increasing frequency and intensity too soon can overwhelm you, making you want to give up.

Variety is the Spice of Life

Another way to integrate exercise into a busy schedule is to vary the fitness routine. Variety promotes interest in maintaining your workout schedule. Without variety, boredom sets in, causing you to drop out.

Variety also enables you to accommodate as many different types of exercises from the wide repertory available from personal trainers, books and manuals – and the Internet – and that way you're able to adopt certain movements that you're most comfortable with.

Walk before you Run...

If you're an absolute beginner, a full blown workout which incorporates cardio, weights, and flexibility may scare or discourage you. The idea is to start with small steps.

Do one exercise segment at a time (refer to our suggestions, item 2 above). Besides, very few people can accomplish a two-hour workout more than once or twice a week.

Another way of doing it would be to integrate your favorite sport (swimming, cycling or walking) during the week and say, a particular activity like yoga which doesn't necessitate jumping into the car and making a dash for the washrooms before cardio classes start.

With yoga for example, all you need is a mat and a quiet room in your house for about 20 minutes.

Time Management

If your schedule gets you up and running beginning at 9 in the morning until six in the evening, this day represents 9 hours. There are 24 hours a day and we're not recommending you get up at 2 in the morning to do your exercise.

But have you ever thought that if you get up at 7 to be ready for 9, maybe you can set your alarm clock 45 minutes earlier, using these 45 minutes to engage in a physical activity? If you do this three times a week, that means you get 135 minutes that you can allocate for exercise.

One easy way to do this is to do yoga in the morning (it requires only a mat and comfortable, loose clothing), or turn on the Jane Fonda CD/DVD, or buy a treadmill (the foldable ones) that you can jump into as soon as you wake up.

Another time management tip: not only do busy managers have back-to-back meetings, they also have luncheon and dinner meetings to meet with clients. Assess each client. Do all of them really need to be wined and dined? Is an hour long meeting absolutely necessary? Can't a deal be negotiated on the phone?

See how many meetings you can cancel or shorten. Then fit your fitness program into those slots that have been freed up.

How about this suggestion: instead of going to lunch with clients every day of the week, why don't you schedule lunch meetings for say Monday and Tuesday? This way you can incorporate a fitness routine for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 12:00 to 1:00 pm.

A brisk walk inside or outside the office building, a quick swim in the neighborhood hotel, a Pilates course in the recreational centre, lifting dumb bells while on the phone?

Any of these exercises is better than no exercise. Your guiding principle should be to move, move, move as frequently as you can manage it.

Cubicle Fitness

Just as ergonomic experts are recommending to office workers to take their eyes off their computer screen every hour or so, fitness experts are advocating getting up from your chair and taking a walk and jaunting up and down the stairs.

When you feel the need to take a break, offer to pick up supplies for your colleagues, take the mail downstairs instead of waiting for the trolley, or think of something you could put in your car instead of

waiting until 5 pm. That way, you force yourself to get up from your seat and walk for a few minutes.

If you look into the private offices of some people, you'll see dumbbells, mats and elastic bands – these are clues that they are doing some exercise while on the job – a good and healthy practice to adopt by busy individuals with hectic schedules.

Family Exercises

On the weekends when you join the family in their activities, try to integrate exercise into these activities: if the children are into cycling, join them for bike rides. Are they off to their swimming lessons or skating lessons? See if you can sign up in the adults section, or take a walk outside the recreational center while waiting for them.

Chores Burn Calories!

Who says you can't burn calories while doing housework or gardening? Take a breather from your hectic schedule and devote some down time to tending to your lawn, trimming your rose bushes, scrubbing the kitchen and bathroom floors, etc.

Walk, don't Drive!

And here's another tip that is popular: park your car far away so you can walk to the front gates of the office, to the entrance of the mall, to the doctor's office and to the post office.

Section 3: Busy Traveler? You Can Fit Exercise into your Trips!

Hopping in and out of planes is exercise enough, you say. But that's not the kind of exercise that will condition your heart, make your reflexes and joints more fluid, keep the sugar levels or keep you from swinging from one mood to another!

Nor is it the kind of exercise that will make you euphoric after a good cardiovascular session. You need to counteract the effects of jet lag, artificial air in pressurized aircraft cabins and sky fatigue. Suzanne Schlosberg says,

“Sometimes your travels help you recognize how humdrum your workout routine has become. At home, it's easy to fall into a rut – to use the same weight machines in the same order, week after week, month after month, simply out of habit. But a trip may take the routine out of your routine. You may have no choice but to try new strength exercises or jog in the pool instead of swim laps. And you might find these new pursuits so enjoyable that you add them to your fitness repertoire at home.”⁶

Common Obstacles

⁶ Suzanne Schlosberg. The Ultimate Workout Guide for the Road. Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston, USA. 2002.

What are some of the reasons why travelers do not incorporate exercise while they're on the road?

- ⇒ They're stressed or too tired
- ⇒ They don't feel comfortable about working out in unfamiliar surroundings
- ⇒ They don't have access to a hotel gym

But if they made just a tiny effort to change this thinking, they'd be on the road to fitness sooner.

Engaging in exercise allows you to get out of that bubble of meetings, seminars and tours.

Walk when on the Road

When traveling, have a pair of good walking shoes (trainers preferably) so that you won't feel so daunted about getting from one side of the airport to another.

Having the right pair of walking shoes will encourage you to walk up the stairs instead of take the escalator, to walk instead of taking the conveyor belt, and to transfer from one concourse to another on foot instead of taking the shuttle service.

You may not know it, but walking these long distances with your luggage in tow serves as a combination/weight lifting exercise!

Fitness while Flying

Once settled comfortably on the plane, make sure you time your stretching and walking periods. If it's just an hour's flight, walk around the plane once and do your stretching at the back of the plane; if it's a three hour to five hour flight (east to west in the North American continent), try to get up from your seat and walk around at least once every hour, doing leg extensions and trunk/neck movements.

If you're crossing the Pacific or Atlantic oceans, those killer flights need not kill you. Increase the frequency of your stretches and walking.

Airlines such as Japan Air Lines show videos of how travelers can incorporate flexibility movements while seated or standing. Take full advantage of these videos. The exercises may help you ward off fatigue and jet lag.

A note about DVT

In the last five years, there have been reports about flight passengers, especially in economy class, suffering from DVT – deep vein thrombosis.

The link between confining airplane seats and deaths from DVT (formation of deadly blood clots) has been established by the United Nations World Health Organization. It has nothing to do with gender, risk factors or genetics. Everyone is at risk in economy class!⁷ This should constitute compelling reason to integrate exercise while high in the sky.

To make exercise possible while traveling, schedule your flights so that when you get to your destination, you don't rush through dinner and then go to sleep.

Try to arrive during the late afternoon/early evening, to give you time to shake off the fatigue from the trip, and have at least an hour to do exercises either in your hotel room or in the hotel gym.

Important “to do” things when traveling

- ✓ Be fully rested before a trip – have the usual “to pack” items ready well in advance so you're not scampering for them at the last minute, depleting your energy levels.
- ✓ Time your sleep correctly – as soon as you board, get the local time of your destination and set your watch accordingly. If it's already night time in your destination, wear blindfolds and ask for a pillow and try to catch a few winks.

⁷ www.brightlife.com

- ✓ Drink plenty of water – wine and cocktails will only dehydrate you further; note that humidity levels inside aircraft is below 10%, so water is your best bet.

If your job requires you to travel at least four times a month, ask your company's travel department to book you in hotels with gyms or a swimming pool.

Make time out of your travel schedule to insert a workout into your grinding schedule.

Here's a friendly suggestion: get up earlier in the morning and before or after breakfast, head over to the gym and do a brisk walk on the treadmill for 10 minutes, or do the rowing machine (great for the core muscles, back problem reliever) for 10 minutes.

This session is just to wake you up from your travel stupor. See if you can walk to your business appointment instead of taking a cab (that's another 10 minutes).

At night before going to bed, go to the hotel gym again and lift weights for 10 minutes, to complete your workout for the day. This way you did your cardio and resistance training, two essential components of a fitness program.

Now, tell us, doesn't a 10-20 minute session sound less intimidating than clocking 1.5 hours in the gym?

Working out with Friends

Another friendly suggestion: if you're traveling in a group, ask a colleague if he or she would do a game of squash or tennis with you. The concierge can give you local addresses of sports or recreational centers in the vicinity.

When there's no Gym!

If the hotel gym is crowded or "temporarily closed for maintenance," you can still exercise – in the comfort of your room.

Here are some exercises that you can perform:

- ✓ Turn on the TV or sound system and jog in place; or look up the TV guide and see if some old Jane Fonda or Denise Austin shows are on. Get on with the beat
- ✓ Jog in place or jump rope (great cardiovascular workout)
- ✓ Conduct floor exercises (described below)

- **Floor exercise 1:** the Cobra (or back extension). Lying on your stomach as though getting ready for push-ups, keep your hands on your side with palms facing down and fingers pointed forward. With your hands, push to lift your torso off the floor (ensure you're lifting head, shoulders and chest only).

Keep pelvis on the floor and your head looking ahead. Hold and then release. Repeat 3 times. You should feel your spine lengthen. Joe Decker recommends not just pressing back with your hands, but also pushing your upper body up and forward.

Do not tilt your head back to look at the ceiling (many people make this mistake). This puts a strain on your neck.⁸

⁸ Joe Decker. The World's Fittest You. Penguin Group. USA. 2004.

- **Floor exercise 2:** Crunch (for lower abdominals). The lower abdominals are the weakest muscles in your torso because they are rarely worked, and they're the first to sag after childbirth and after menopause.

This exercise will help:

Lying flat on your back with your knees bent, cross your arms over your chest. Squeeze your buttocks, tighten your abdomen and push your lower back into the floor. Hold for 10-20 seconds, breathing normally. Relax, and then release. Repeat as often as you can, without overworking yourself.⁹

- **Floor exercise 3:** Hurdler's Stretch. Bend the knee towards the front, and then tuck your lower leg in toward the opposite thigh. Stretch gently toward the straight leg. Do not bounce. This movement is like the ballet movement when an arm goes above the head gracefully, which stretches the sides of the trunk to increase flexibility.¹⁰

If you pick up any exercise book, there will be a rich inventory of exercises you can perform while on the go. Pack this in your bag so you can refer to it for correct form and posture.

Yoga

⁹ Alisa Bauman, Sari Harrar and the editors of Prevention Health Books. Fat to Trim at any Age. Rodale Press. USA. 1998.

¹⁰ Denise Austin.

Yoga on the train? Yes! A news report was published in the Montreal Gazette recently saying how many overstressed Germans still hide behind their papers rather than exercise. We're sure Americans and Canadians are no less guilty.

So these commuters are being taught yoga and relaxation techniques on their way to and from work. Instructors are now in what the German government calls "wellness trains" in southern Germany. This was an initiative taken by Deutsche Bahn – Germany's state-owned railway. The organization decided to offer relaxation and yoga techniques to calm an anxious work force.

Section 4 : Exercise Equipment “To Go”

If you're busy but want to integrate exercise into your daily routine, carrying the treadmill around would give you a serious back injury. We're referring to portable tools that you can take with you to the office, keep in the trunk of your car, or pack into your suitcase:

- ✓ elastic bands
- ✓ light dumb bells
- ✓ jump rope
- ✓ inflatable Swiss balls (the small ones)
- ✓ an exercise video or DVD that you can play in between meetings
- ✓ Yoga mat.
- ✓ Meditation or relaxation music tapes handy.
- ✓ Exercise tubes with handles (to increase muscle strength) and bow tie exerciser (increases upper body strength).

More Portable Exercise Tools!

The choices in other portable exercise tools are impressive:

- ✓ **The Ankle Tough Rehab System** is a set of straps made of heavy-duty elastic, and are cut and stitched to make 2 straps that fit over shoes or bare feet. Set comes with 4 different resistance straps for light, medium, strong and tough resistance levels. Comes also with exercise manual.¹¹
- ✓ **Flex Bars** - a portable exercise gadget that is lightweight. The bars improve grip strength and upper body strength, and allow oscillation movements for neuromuscular and balance training.¹²
- ✓ **Weighted Vest** – a gadget to help you add resistance to your workout. Vest is weight-adjustable with each weight packet weighing approximately 0.75 lbs, and its one size fits all feature makes it deal for both men and women. Steel shot packets conform to the body, and weight adjustments range from 0.75 lbs. to 20 lbs.¹³

¹¹ www.pmtionline.com

¹² www.pmtionline.com

¹³ www.target.com

IMPORTANT NOTE: Buyer Beware!

There are some exercise aids that have been specifically marketed to walkers – things like weighted shoes to add resistance while jogging or brisk-walking. Before you dole out your cash to buy exercise accessories, speak to a fitness trainer or orthopedist first. Some products can be just commercial hype. This article on www.walking.about.com can shed some light on the subject.

If you're going cross-country driving and the trip will take about 12-15 hours, schedule hourly stops so you can perform some stretching exercises, or go for a 15-minute walk in the neighborhood. Exercising will energize you, diminishing your need for frequent cups of coffee and relieve eye strain.

Hotels

Back to the hotel scene: some nice hotels have spa facilities that you can enjoy while on a business trip. Reward yourself with a facial or a massage **AFTER** a session on the treadmill or 10 laps in the pool. This is a great way to unwind for the evening, and an added bonus for the individual on the go.

The old saying, "You have to enjoy your exercise, otherwise you'll give up in no time" has never been truer.

Here's a tip. If you can't incorporate a tennis game or a trip to the gym, how about signing up for dance classes (e.g. ballet, jazz, tap, belly dancing). If you've always loved dancing as a child, wouldn't this be a great way to fit exercise into a busy schedule?

If you don't particularly look forward to being with the gym crowd, a dance class will help you stick to the program.

A good motivator – or exercise aid – is to invest in good dance music tapes. Or listen to selected dance tunes on your iPod while traveling, so when you get to your hotel room, you're pumped up and ready to shake that booty!

Using a Pedometer

This is a beeper-sized device that you clip to your waistband. It measures walking and running distance in steps and miles. Some models are more sophisticated and equipped with measuring features for pace, total exercise time and calories burned.

A pedometer could motivate you to walk during airport or train layovers because you'll know how much ground you've covered and will encourage you to aim for a longer distance on your next trip. Joe Decker says he tested 6 models for accuracy and 4 out of the 6 were accurate. He recommends two specifically: Bodytronics Q25

Electronic Pedometer and the Part Ultrak 275 Electronic Calorie Pedometer.¹⁴

Always Carry...

Always have the following items with you as you travel:

- comfortable shoes
- padlock
- foldable, light gym bag
- quick dry clothing

Keep these in your suitcase at all times so you don't waste time looking for them and re-packing them. A busy individual like you need not be unencumbered by exercise paraphernalia that you're hunting for just before taking a flight!

Keep a Record!

A workout log would be nice – just to monitor your progress. When you become pleased with yourself, liking yourself for the small efforts you've invested into improving your physical self, you may want to get into a full-fledged workout program with a trainer.

Show him/her your workout log so he knows exactly how fit you are.

¹⁴ Joe Decker.

Eating Fit!

Let's not forget your fuel! Don't run low on gas; otherwise your body cannot achieve optimum fitness performance.

Nuts, sesame snacks, protein bars, low-fat muffins, a generous helping of dried and fresh fruit, baby carrots, cereal flakes, oatmeal bars should keep you on the go while exercising.

If you're pressed for time to sit down for a proper meal, these portable foods will tide you over, in a healthy and nutritious way.

Section 5: Information/Resources for the Hurried and Harried

The One-Minute Exercises Book of Denise Austin contains quick exercises. While quick food is junk food, quick exercise is not junk exercise and therefore must be scoffed at. If you can afford to squeeze in only five minutes at certain times of the day, this book is a boon.

Not only does it contain one-minute exercises, it takes into account that you'd want to increase your workout duration eventually, so it includes 5-minute and 10-minute exercises.

The book was published more than 10 years ago, but you still see Denise Austin featured on www.msn.com, so she must tap into some of her older exercise programs. Workout programs never get outmoded or go stale.

They're effective today as they were a decade ago. The book is published by Vintage Books (Random House) and the ISBN number is 0-394-74633-3.

Researcher and fitness expert Suzanne Schlosberg, who wrote a fitness manual for individuals on the go, did a survey of hotels and airports where the busy traveler can do an abbreviated or full blown workout while they're traveling and waiting for their connecting flights.

Here is some information from her work (her book is highly recommended!).

Fitness-Friendly Hotels

Suzanne Schlosberg performed some helpful due diligence to help the busy traveler by providing the names of major hotels with gym facilities (US only). An extract from that list:

- ✓ Four Seasons – 95% of their hotels have pools. All of their fitness centers have cardio and weight machines;
- ✓ Ritz Carlton – 80% of their hotels have pools
- ✓ Sheraton Hotels and Resorts – pool facility in 95% of their hotels
- ✓ Westin Hotels and Resorts – all of their hotels have pools.¹⁵

Fitness-Friendly Airports

Schlossberg does not stop with hotel lists!

¹⁵ Suzanne Schlosberg

She also provides a list of airports with massage facilities – you must have seen those massage chairs in strategic locations of large, international airports: Here’s a sampling:

- ✓ Chicago: O’Hare International Airport – *A Massage Inc.*, level 6, main terminal west (near post office); open 7:30 am to 9:30 pm
- ✓ Boston: Logan International Airport – *A Relaxed Attitude* – terminal B, American Airlines Side, upper level (hours vary);
- ✓ Seattle: Seattle-Tacoma International Airport – *Massage Bar Inc.* – Concourse C, beyond security checkpoint, Gates N-16 and N-1

As for fitness centers in airports and near airports, pages 36-38 of Schlosberg’s book, *The Ultimate Workout Guide for the Road* (ISBN number 0-618-11592-7) contains a detailed listing of these fitness centers – to help you do your workout on your next airport layover.¹⁶

Plus workout programs that Schlosberg labels “The Time to Kill Workout”, “The Timesaver Workout”, “The Bare-Minimum Workout” all designed for the busybody!

Websites of Interest

¹⁶ Suzanne Schlosberg.

Visit the American Council on Exercise web site – www.acefitness.com or call their toll free number, 1-800-825-3636. They provide resources for fitness products and services and a list of certified trainers.

Also visit: <http://doe.ors.od.nih.gov/fitness/>. They serve the NIH community (National Institutes of Health) and offer classes on yoga, yoga and aerobics.

Lastly, drop by the Mayo Clinic web site: www.mayoclinic.com. Scroll down the page and under the sub-heading “Live Well”, click on “fitness.”

Conclusion

When you started reading this ebook, chances are you felt that you could *never* incorporate a fitness program into your busy lifestyle. Now, however, the chances are quite good that you’re confident, enthusiastic, and ready to start becoming fit!

Remember, please, some of the cardinal rules that we’ve covered here. Though we won’t recap them all – because you can re-read any section of the book that you wish! – Let’s just highlight a few of the most important principles that you should bear in mind as you move forward:

- ☑ don't do too much at once; start slow, and build a foundation of fitness
- ☑ Exercise for *more* than cosmetic appeal; your inner-body needs to be fit, too (especially as you age!)
- ☑ plan ahead and stay in hotels that offer you fitness equipment
- ☑ carry essential fitness tools with you as you travel
- ☑ Eat healthy and properly so that you don't "hit the wall" as you become fit!
- ☑ Keep a record of your successes (through a journal or log)
- ☑ Exercise with friends or other people who share a common fitness interest with you (and make NEW friends in the process!)
- ☑ Manage your time effectively so that you can incorporate a fitness program – large or small – into your daily routine.

Now that you've obtained the information you need, the next step is up to you. Consult the resources recommended in this ebook, including the websites, and build an exercise program into your life.

What will your rewards be for your efforts? Statistically, you'll:

- look better
- feel better
- have a higher quality of life

And, in case it matters to you..

- You'll be the ENVY of all of your busy friends and relatives who want to know how someone as busy as YOU has become so FIT!

GOOD LUCK AND GET MOVING!!!