



Get Ready, Get Set, Get Healthy & Lose Weight!



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Losing weight is something many of us face multiple times each year. We want to lose enough to get into that tiny summer swimsuit or look good at the class reunion. So, we jump right into the latest diet trend that promises “quick and easy weight loss.”

That method of not pre-planning weight loss strategies usually doesn't work - and if it does, it will just last for a little while. There's another method for getting ready for your best and final weight loss journey that will work – and you can expect it to last because it becomes a lifestyle rather than a brief diet plan.

When you decide to get healthy, there are some things you need to know before you spring it on your mind and body. These suggestions will help as you prepare your body for weight loss success.

Begin Your Weight Loss Journey in Good Mental Health

Your mindset is critical, especially in the first few days of your diet. So, before the diet's start day, begin reading about and finding new things that could motivate you to stick with the diet and overcome the challenges you'll face.

It takes little effort, but the payoff is huge. Set your weight loss goals before beginning your diet plan. Be realistic. It's difficult to lose weight and you don't want to make your goals so far out of reach that you can't possibly achieve them.

Trying and failing can bring you down mentally, making you abandon your desire to lose weight and become healthy. Your body image is also a mental barrier that you may need to think about and overcome before you begin to lose weight.

If you think negative thoughts about your body, you may never believe you've lost enough weight to make a difference and lose confidence in yourself and your diet. When you see yourself realistically, you'll be more motivated to begin a healthy weight loss program.

When you have a distorted image of your body, you'll likely set unrealistic goals that will only result in failure and disappointment. If you can, get a full body assessment from your health care provider.

If not, there are several online methods to determine what you should weigh for your height and body makeup. Having a support group or buddy is a good idea to help keep you on the path to weight loss.

You can keep each other motivated when your willpower is slipping away and cheer for each other when you achieve success with the goals you set. Research foods and ways to prepare it for the diet plan you choose.

It's better to plan ahead and get your mindset ready to give it all you've got. Armed with knowledge of exactly what you need to purchase and have on hand should make you feel motivated and excited about achieving your weight loss goals.

Finally, be flexible in your decision to lose weight. You may be all psyched up about the diet for the first few days or weeks, but your excitement and motivation tends to wane after awhile when you're trying something new and you may be tempted to return to your old, bad eating habits.

Things will happen to test your motivation. Only if you have a flexible mindset can you forgive yourself for those times you veer off course and get back on track more motivated than ever.

You may also find that this diet doesn't have everything you need to keep you satisfied. Realize that even the best-laid plans don't always work. You may need to eat out because of travel or business lunches.

If you're not flexible, you spend too much time berating yourself rather than putting your energy into finding some ways to circumvent what doesn't work for you. Rather than giving up, think about what you can do to overcome the obstacles. Use your mind and all the help available to think of alternative ways to achieve your weight loss goals.

How to Prepare Your Body for Weight Loss that Works

Besides preparing your mindset for the weight loss challenges ahead, you should also take steps to prepare your body. In the past you may have gorged on junk and fast food the night before your diet begins – a final goodbye to all the foods you love.

That's the worst thing you can do to your body and your goals of losing weight. Gorging on high-calorie, high-fat food just before you embark on a diet will confuse your body and how it processes your future diet (healthier) foods.

Your metabolism, digestive tract and the signals your brain sends about being full will all be impacted by the sudden change in diet. If you're obese and have many pounds to lose, it's important that you engage in some activities that promote your health and the ability of your body to accept the new changes in eating habits.

One mistake that most dieters make is to wake up one day and eat so few calories that the body goes into a mode that actually makes it retain fat. Your body was made to store fat if it thinks it's going to starve.

It will do everything it can to put more fat on to protect you out of the little amount of food you're consuming. You should also assess your good and bad habits when it comes to eating and exercising.

Eating healthy doesn't mean you have to give up every food you like – but it does mean that you'll need to be more mindful of what you're eating and portion size. Bad food habits are hard to break.

It's too easy to let other things get in the way of making the effort and those foods are sometimes comforting to us. Besides, it's too much trouble to eat healthy. That's what we tell ourselves when we have uncontrollable cravings.

The best way to have success at losing weight is to prepare your body ahead of time by eating healthy foods and getting on a schedule of eating that won't end up blowing your future diet.

Cleansing is also a method that some successful dieters use to get a head start on their new diet. There are cleanses online that you can research – or ask your doctor what he or she recommends as a non-harsh way to cleanse your system and get it ready for the journey ahead.

Fasting is sometimes used along with cleansing to clear your body of toxins and prepare it for the good food on your diet plan. Nutrients and vitamins can be absorbed much faster and more complete when the toxins have been cleared from the body.

One thing you should be aware of that could impact your weight loss plan is that skipping meals is a bad habit that you should do away with before beginning your diet. Skipping meals actually lowers your metabolism and makes you retain weight rather than lose it.

Losing weight requires sacrifice. Try doing without that dessert or buttered popcorn before you begin your healthful eating journey to get used to making at least one sacrifice. It will make the other sacrifices easier.

Get a Diet and Exercise Buddy

You may put a ton of effort into finding the right diet and exercise program and expect it to work just as you planned. But, you're missing one of the key elements in successful weight loss – accountability.

You can make all sorts of excuses to yourself about why you need that dessert or why you have to miss exercise. It's much more difficult when you have a diet and exercise buddy to be accountable to.

He or she can be the one factor that turns you around and makes you get back on track. And, the buddy is accountable to you for their success – or failure. Support is critical for some people to succeed.

Lack of willpower or weak moments that threaten to make you succumb to your old eating and exercise habits can be eradicated – or less of a problem – when you're answering to a buddy.

A buddy should praise you when you succeed and motivate you when you falter. It's also easy to relate to someone who is trying to lose weight and get healthy, just like you.

If you don't already have a friend who would be a good choice, you can always choose someone in an online support group. Through email and texting, you both can keep in touch and provide the support needed to overcome obstacles and reach goals.

Your buddy becomes the partner who shares your goals and together, you lead each other to the success you both desire. Weight loss experts state that having a weight loss buddy can make the difference between failure and success.

Choosing the right buddy for you isn't always as easy as pairing up with a best friend. Even though that friend may have qualities and virtues you appreciate, he or she may not be the one to help you through the obstacles you'll face.

In fact, it might turn out to be just the opposite if you're used to overindulging when you're together. The bottom line in choosing the right diet and exercise partner is as personal as choosing the right diet plan.

Everyone is different in how that diet plan will work for them. Think about what you need in a diet buddy and look for those qualities. There are online diet-matching services if you can't figure out who to choose.

5 Tips to Help You Be Consistent with Your Weight Loss Plan

Being consistent with your weight loss plan is the only way you'll ever reach your weight loss goals. If you approach the plan with a helter-skelter attitude, the setbacks will finally win out and you'll lose all motivation and excitement about losing weight and getting healthy.

There are some ways you can have more assurance that you won't fall off the diet wagon. Remember that the choices you make will ultimately determine the success you'll achieve.

If you're consistent with your choices, your weight loss plan will fall into place. Here are five tips that will encourage you to be consistent in your weight loss plan:

1. Learn how to fight the temptation to snack.

Snacking is a habit that can ruin your plans for weight loss. We snack when we're watching television, reading or working and it's usually done mindlessly. That can mean

big trouble for your weight loss plan. You may want to fight the urge by keeping yourself busy with something else that doesn't include food – or, keeping healthy snacks on hand.

2. Keep a diet diary.

Tracking your diet and weight loss progress is an important step in ensuring your success. The diary helps you see how you overcame past obstacles and also reminds you of the successes you've already had.

3. Practice mindful eating.

We all love to binge on junk food when watching our favorite television shows. To avoid that temptation, make it a point to eat all your meals at the kitchen or dining table. When you pay attention to what you're eating, you'll eat less – but when you eat mindlessly, you will likely increase food portions and calories.

4. Eat slower.

Whether you need to lose weight or not, it's best for your digestive health if you learn to eat slower. One advantage to eating slower is that you'll feel fuller over a period of time and eat less as a result. It's all about the signals your body sends to your mind telling you that's all the food you need before you overeat.

5. Don't be fooled by so-called "healthy" foods.

Some foods are wolves in sheep's packaging. The package hype makes you think it's good for you and will help you lose weight, but if you'll look closer at the label, you may see that it's full of chemicals and toxins – and calories. Avoid processed foods during your diet – and beyond.

Forget the Past – Plan Your Weight Loss with a Clean Slate

Losing weight and putting it back on when the diet plan ends and then choosing another diet is considered yo-yo dieting – and it's very bad for your mind and body. It puts your body in a state of confusion all the time thinking it's starving one minute and bingeing the next.

No wonder it keeps those fat cells – just in case. For this new weight loss venture, you have a clean slate and you can make it what you want. You have a good idea about what works and what doesn't for your lifestyle so you can adjust it accordingly.

One way you can begin this diet plan on a clean slate is to forget about dieting. Dieting is boring and repetitious. You tend to skip meals and yo-yo back and forth from loading up on calories and doing without.

Besides putting on even more weight, this dangerous type of dieting can lead to metabolic disorders, cardiovascular issues, diabetes and hypertension. Rather than purchasing pre-packaged diet meals and snacks, eat like the rest of your family and friends eat, but instead eat good and healthy food, prepared in healthy ways.

By having healthy snacks and meals on hand, you'll be ensuring your family's good health too. Because your body works to maintain weight for survival, your metabolism slows down during a diet, making it more difficult to get rid of fat.

When you lose weight too fast (more than two pounds a week), the resulting weight loss is muscle rather than fat that you need to lose. A diet that fits your lifestyle is best because your body will get used to it over time and your metabolism will work to maintain the weight that's best for you.

Remember, you have a clean slate this time and can formulate your diet plan based on knowledge you gather from research and careful planning to once and for all – win the battle of the bulge.