

## **Diet Myths and Diet Traps that May be Keeping You Fat**

If you walk the streets of Melbourne or Sydney, or any large Western city, you will see an epidemic overload of advertisements for the latest and greatest quick weight loss programs. The problem is, most of them don't work and some of them are just plain dangerous.

Hundreds of new crash and crazy diets hit the market every year. Some of the diets suggest eating one kind of food and omitting all others. Others act by causing a rapid loss of fluid. This causes a rapid drop in weight, but it is only a short-term result caused by the loss of fluid and does not create fat loss or a reduction in risk factors. This often results in causing your body to retaliate with a rebound weight gain that produces even larger fat deposits in the body. These diets are not only unhealthy but they can also end up creating the unwanted result of keeping you fat.

Some of the more popular diet myths use bits and pieces of scientific fact to make them look more legitimate. The problem is that many of these diets do not disclose all of the facts. People follow them to the letter, despite the pain, and lose some weight, only to find that as quickly as the weight disappeared, it suddenly reappears, as if by magic.

One of the more popular diets is the low fat diet. The low fat myth insists that only fat can make you fat, and implies that your body magically transforms if you just eat less fat. But survival is the prime directive of the body and so when less fat becomes available, it responds by storing fat more efficiently. This increase in fat accumulation is not the only problem created by this type of diet. To add insult to injury, the total food intake also increases. A study done at Cornell University identified the fact that people ate as much as 45 percent more food when they thought the food they were eating was low in fat.

This type of dieting tricks a person into believing that eating foods with fat in them is the principal cause of weight gain. As a result they flood their system with highly refined carbohydrate foods that raise their blood sugar and insulin levels, resulting in an even bigger urge to eat when they crash.

Grazing has also been recommended by some as a way to weight loss. Sadly this is diet is also more a fad than a reality. It leads the dieter to believe that if they eat more often they will burn more calories. The explanation given is that the body uses more calories to digest food and the constant consumption of food keeps the furnace burning, while levelling out blood sugar levels to prevent hunger.

As a matter of fact, some people do improve when they graze, but these people have a different metabolic profile. They are often people who are not insulin resistant and do not have a metabolic profile that predisposes them to easy weight gain.

Increasing the frequency of meals by grazing usually fails for the overweight. It does so for several reasons. The initially small meals six times a day often increase in size, becoming larger and larger as the diet progresses. Suddenly the dieter finds that they not only gained weight but also adjusted their eating patterns to more volume as well as greater frequency. To add to that, research has shown that in the overweight population, increasing meal frequency actually increases insulin levels, and this creates greater hunger and easier weight gain.

A third popular diet is the low Glycemic Index, or low GI diet. This diet focuses on how the body responds to different quality carbohydrates. It often results in severely restricting the intake of some very healthy and essential carbohydrates.

Although certain aspects of Glycemic Index have a lot of merit, too many people worry about the specific GI numbers, without any clear understanding of what they mean and how they impact on their diet. The fallacy is that GI is only a number. It does not take Glycemic Load into consideration and it can be decreased artificially by adding fat to the carbohydrate in question. This creates a lower GI but a much less healthy food and, as a result, followers of this regime end up eating food that is not nearly as good or as healthy as they think.

There are only too many gimmick diets and fad diets that have the potential to strip your body of valuable vitamins and minerals and set it into the yo-yo pattern of weight gain and weight loss.

The take home message I would like to leave you with is to make sure you remember the following statement: “What you don’t know about dieting **can** hurt you. It can also keep you from losing weight and preventing you from gaining health and avoiding disease.

For a medically based and effective weight loss, you can visit: [www.bmiweight.com.au](http://www.bmiweight.com.au) where you will be informed, educated and motivated on how to achieve healthy and sustainable weight loss.