

NEW YEAR, NEW YOU: A Dietitian's Guide to Sustainable Weight Loss

By Ashley Galloway, MS, RD // January 1, 2016

Extreme weight loss techniques may help you shed pounds immediately, but these results are temporary. *Shifting the way you think about food and making permanent lifestyle changes is the only way to sustain weight loss.*

Let the ideas below guide you in your weight loss endeavors, making this the last time you attempt to lose weight.

Portion Control & Balance

Controlling the amount of food you eat at any time is one of the most important things you can do that will result in permanent weight loss. Furthermore, understanding how to balance your meals will inevitably lead you to controlling your portions. We always hear that a balanced meal is good for our health, but what does that actually mean? It means to include foods from all food groups to ensure a variety of nutrients in your diet.



Don't Drink Your Calories

Drinks with added sugars are common culprits of weight gain; soda, juices, coffee drinks, alcohol, energy drinks, sports drinks and other sugary drinks. Simply cutting your consumption – in half or completely – of these drinks will help you lose weight. What makes this behavior sustainable is learning to live without it or finding a healthy alternative:

Soda: instead, try soda water with lemon, or unsweetened flavored soda water like La Croix. Or enjoy your soda once/week instead of once/day.

Coffee: keep the added sugar to a minimum or don't add any at all. If this is impossible, keep the sugar but be mindful about your sugar intake for the remainder of the day. It's all about balance.

Sports Drinks: Drinks like Gatorade and Powerade are electrolyte and glycogen replacers. Unless you've just done an intense workout over 60 minutes and were sweating profusely, you don't need this stuff. Otherwise, it's just a big bottle of sugar water.

If you're not ready to completely give up your drink habits, slowly eliminate them from your diet. Additionally, if you cannot live life without them, enjoy them in moderation.