



CHEATING ON YOUR DIET?

LET'S LOOK AT WAYS TO STOP!

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I once heard the saying “Willpower is like a muscle, it needs to be challenged to build itself,” this shows that things worth having do not come easy and staying focused is really important in achieving ones goals. When it comes to weight-loss, having the self-determination and drive can be the most challenging of it all, making great choices day in and day out is what counts. Difficulties to stay on track and delicious temptations will always be around, here are a few tips and tricks to help you from “craving” in.

WAYS TO PREVENT CHEATING AND STAY MOTIVATED WHILE ON A DIET?

1) Track your success

Keeping a food journal and doing daily weights have both proven to help people stay invested in their weight-loss journey. A study in the Annals of Behaviour Medicine¹ has showed that people who did daily weights and wrote this down, lost more weight. This helps one place focus on what has been achieved and how far you have come instead of dwelling on what's been done wrong. Doing the following will help boost one's motivation in the long run.

2) Get enough sleep

Aim to sleep 8 hours a night, too little as well as too much sleep has shown to influence hunger related-hormones that control appetite. Sleep deprivation leads to a:

- Increase in Ghrelin levels (this hormone says yes, eat more)
- Decrease in Leptin levels (this hormone says no, you are full)
- Increase in Cortisol (this hormone increases your appetite)²

An altered appetite will lead to significant weight gain, therefore tuck in and stay well-rested.

3) Keep healthy snacks

It's easier to stay in control of one's diet when you have readily available healthy snacks at hand³. Keep your handbag and desk stocked with healthy options such as fruits, nuts and bars (FUTURELIFE® High Protein LITE Smart bar). Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time, if you know it is going to be a busy day at work filled with meetings, have on-the-go options on hand.



4) Brush your teeth

Have you ever tried orange juice after brushing your teeth, not very pleasant at all, this is the case for many foods. Brushing your teeth often will help control your cravings. Most people can stick to their diets well until late afternoon, at this time when you feel like you're on the verge of going out of control have a healthy snack and then brush your teeth, after dinner is also a time to watch out for those sugar cravings, having sugar-free chewing gum, a cup of green tea or brushing your teeth may help keep your diet intact.

5) Face your reflection

"Mirror, mirror on the wall who's the fairest of them all?" When having a so-called "fat" day we would surely want to avoid mirrors. Turns out we should actually be doing the complete opposite. Research posted in the *International Journal of Eating Disorders*⁴ found that mirror-exposure therapy (checking one's body out) can help improve the way we feel about our bodies and in turn help keep us committed to eating healthy. Positive self-talk can also help keep you motivated.

6) Group-focused exercise

Join a group class, many classes are offered at gyms; alternatively find something outside of gym. Many people are enjoying pilates, hot-pod yoga or running groups, these classes help keep you in shape but also have a fun-factor to exercise. Making friends and becoming a regular will help inspire you to attend classes. The guilt factor has always proved to help, in a place where people call you by name they will know when you have missed a workout.

7) Get pumped up with rocking tunes

Research has shown that women who listened to music whilst exercising were more likely to stick to their exercise programme than those without music. Get beats that make you excited about exercising. Don't know where to start looking, thankfully Google has many sites where people post playlists that they enjoy using when exercising.

8) Get a network of support

Dieting is not as easy as 1, 2, 3. Having support is one of the most important factors. Knowing you have people backing you can really help keep you motivated to keep going, you also feel more accountable for your actions. Inform family and friends about your diet and goals, ask them to help you. Having someone do the diet with you or join in on exercise will also help greatly. Remember people can help be the key to success BUT may also create your biggest obstacles, there will always be someone trying to tempt you by bringing delicious treats to work or mocking you about your diet, don't let this get into your head. You are able to do whatever you set your mind to. Prove these people wrong.



CONCLUSION

The human mind is the strongest “muscle,” a strong mind can help you overcome any obstacle. Following the tips above should help keep you on the right track. Always remember that with weight loss and healthy living there is no quick fix, it takes hard work, determination and dedication to lose weight, don’t give up too quickly, great results take time. A healthy lifestyle is about making great choices for yourself every day and when slipping up, rather focus on what’s been achieved instead of what hasn’t. It’s less about now and more about then, healthy living is all about lifestyle changes.

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