

Resolve to avoid fads

Written by Brianna Larson

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Start a resolution to invest in a whole and healthy person in 2013, rather than pursuing crash diets in hopes of losing unwanted pounds in a few days.

- Quick weight-loss diets usually overemphasize one particular type of food. They violate the first principle of good nutrition: Eat a balanced diet that includes a variety of foods. If you are able to stay on such a diet for more than a few weeks, you may develop nutritional deficiencies, because no one type of food has all the nutrients you need for good health. There are no "superfoods." That's why you should eat moderate amounts from all food groups, not large amounts of a few special foods.

- These diets also violate a second important principle of good nutrition: Eating should be enjoyable. These diets are so monotonous and boring that it's almost impossible to stay on them for long periods.

Quality diet and lifestyle recommendations emphasize flexibility in food selection and stress the importance of eating more nutrient-rich foods – that have vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but are lower in calories – and fewer nutrient-poor foods.

Unlike an incomplete liquid protein diet or other fad diets, a good diet can be eaten for years to maintain a desirable body weight and good health. Fad diets fail to provide ways to keep weight off.

Fad diets are flawed for two main reasons:

- Many don't encourage physical activity. If a person severely restricts calorie intake, they will not have the energy required to perform exercise. Physical inactivity is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke.

- Most quick weight-loss diets require drastic changes in eating patterns. Fad diets have a short shelf life and a person will fluctuate between severe restriction and shameful bingeing. Following a regimen for a several weeks won't give you the chance to learn about how to permanently change your eating patterns. Thus resulting in the yo-yo effect of weight loss then eventual weight gain.

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So, what is the best way heal your body and mind? A healthy diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat dairy products, along with regular physical activity. The renewal and repair that is gained through adequate sleep is essential for your health and well-being. You must practice self-care and not abuse your body or mind. In 2012 if you have looked in the mirror and judged your appearance, eliminated food, or endlessly desired perfection in weight or health; it's time to give up. Every second you spend in self-judgement is a missed opportunity to gift the world with your intelligence, joy, and love.

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