

Common sense vs. the crash diet

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you're at it, add an 8oz. glass of vegetable juice to top it all off. If the calorie count totals between 300 and 600 (depending on activity level and current height & weight), then you've just prepared yourself a simple, healthy and balanced meal. Remember, breakfast is the defining meal of the day. The size and quality of your breakfast will determine your energy level and mental acuity for hours to come. Now would be an appropriate time to insert an important note: No eating plan should consist of less than 1500 calories per day.

Third, pay closer attention to your portion sizes. This often becomes a problem with dinners. It's important to remember that this will likely not be your "last supper", so

take your time and enjoy. And while the type of food and style of preparation will likely differ from breakfast and lunch, the same principals of food quality and food group representation still apply. Ideally, something you would eat at dinner should also be something you would consider eating at lunch. So why is it that we tend to overindulge at dinner time (when our bodies require less food/energy before bed) rather than at lunch time (when our bodies require more food/energy for daytime activity)? American culture tends to embrace dinner as "the big reward" for a hard days work. A fine tradition. But imagine if we expected equal fulfillment from the quality and flavor of our meals rather than just the entitlement to a "big dinner". We could easily reduce portion sizes while still

maintaining the same "rewarding" experience of a great dinner. Here's a portion control tip for dining out: Most, not all, restaurants serve portion sizes well beyond what the patron needs. But let's say you are a card carrying member of the clean-plate-club. Simply ask your server to box half, or a quarter of your meal in a to-go container before it even hits the table. Or, once you've reached your food quota for the evening, stack your silverware on the plate and have the remainder of your meal taken away immediately. Yes, I know it's bad table etiquette, but get over it.

And last, but certainly not least, EXERCISE. 3-5 times per week is ideal with a dual focus on cardio vascular work and strength training. Try to find an hour on these days, with at least 30 min-

utes devoted to cardio and 20-30 minutes devoted to strength training. It's okay if you have to split the time up throughout the day. A Personal Trainer may be your best option if you are an appointment person, or have trouble motivating yourself.

If you are self-motivated, find a class at your local health club or simply workout from home using your own equipment and imagination. Because there are so many ways of getting exercise, it makes excuses for not exercising that less valid.

For better or worse, we've all got habits. Human beings are creatures of habit. The goal is to make common sense eating and exercise habitual. The great thing about these habits are, however, that you'll never need to break them. In the end, we're trying to avoid crash diets all

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together. And by the way, remember my friend who lost fifteen pounds in two weeks on a crash diet? I he gained it all back within a month.

The author, along with his wife Joli D'Elia, own and op-

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