



Nutrition and Weight Loss

by Charlotte Meschede

If your New Year Resolution was to lose weight and regain your health then this is the time to mobilise those goals and put all your good intentions into practice. Make 2009 a year to re-vitalise and re-define both your physical and mental goals.

In psychological terms, losing something implies that it must, and inevitably will, be regained. So with that in mind, try and focus NOT on losing weight, but rather on releasing your excess kilograms so that they cannot return. In addition to this, you should look for a regime that boosts your health and deals specifically with any medical conditions you may have.

In order to be successful with regard to long term weight management, there should be a multi-dimensional approach - one that incorporates dietary modification, deals with psychological and emotional issues, promotes exercise and provides appropriate supplementation which can augment your efforts. As far as diet is concerned, I recommend that you consult with a qualified health professional, who has proven experience with regard to weight management. However, when it comes to weight loss there are certain non-negotiable rules:

CUT OUT THE JUNK FOOD

To initiate the process, start throwing out all the 'junk' food and only stock the food that is recommended in the dietary plan. It is important to recognise when you are likely to feel hungry - so make sure that you have appropriate snacks on hand and you won't be tempted by fast food options.

PLAN YOUR MEALS IN ADVANCE

Make sure that you plan your meals in advance so that you are not suddenly faced with situations which lend themselves to overindulgence and eating the 'wrong' foods. Prepare for those days that you know will be bad days and ask your dietician/ health professional to help you compensate for

such occasions.

EXERCISE REGULARLY

Then turn your attention to working out an exercise routine in which you have confidence and the ability to carry out. Be realistic about your abilities and your goals - Rome was not built in a day! Start with a routine you feel you can manage and build it up from there. However, this is an activity you need to diarize - poor planning will sabotage your efforts.

ADDRESS PSYCHOLOGICAL/EMOTIONAL ISSUES

Emotional and psychological issues that involve your eating habits should also be addressed. Usually the health professional who has worked out your diet plan is more than capable of helping you identify these problems. However, if you have more serious emotional and/or psychological problems then it is important that you receive the appropriate support.

BALANCE BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS

Probably one of the most important aspects of any weight management regime is making sure that blood sugar levels are maintained. Fluctuating blood sugar levels and the resultant effect it has on insulin functioning can sabotage weight loss and create a plethora of health issues that cannot be resolved unless this vital aspect is addressed. Dietary modifications must include a range of unrefined, whole grain starches in order to slow down the release of carbohydrates into the blood stream. These foods include potatoes, sweet potatoes, whole grain pasta, whole grain bread, brown rice, polenta and other starches that have not been refined. Simple sugars such as table sugar (sucrose), and refined baked products such as

cakes, sweets, white bread and the like, must be avoided at all costs.

The effect of these foods on the blood sugar can be catastrophic – they are easily broken down in the gut and released into the blood within a very short period of time. Consequently the blood sugar levels rise too quickly and too high and insulin has to be released in order to prevent the high blood sugar reaching the brain. High blood sugar levels in the brain cause serious damage and can be fatal. Low-carbohydrate diets are not the answer either, despite their apparent short-term success. Consequences of low-carbohydrate include depression and lethargy – neither of which is conducive to long term weight management or a healthy lifestyle.

SUPPLEMENT ESSENTIAL FATTY ACID INTAKE

The importance of including essential fatty acids in any dietary program cannot be overemphasized. However, slimming programs often overlook these vital nutrients simply because many people consider all fats to be 'bad' and do not distinguish between the beneficial fats and those that can cause damage. In a similar fashion, fats are often the first nutrients to be avoided in slimming diets as it is a well known fact that fats contribute more calories than do carbohydrates and protein. What many people don't realise is that the body needs good fats in order to mobilise and neutralise the effects of the 'bad' fats. Much of the normal functioning of the entire hormonal system is also dependent on the presence of essential fatty acids. Conditions such as the metabolic syndrome, also known as Syndrome X, as well as diabetes mellitus, hypoglycaemia and other metabolic disorders can be more efficiently managed with the introduction of essential fatty acids into the diet.

INCREASE FIBRE CONTENT OF THE DIET

Fibre is often one of the dietary components that are often forgotten and its importance frequently underestimated, especially when it comes to slimming. The fibre absorbs liquid and consequently enables the bowel to eliminate waste. The result is a softened and better formed stool. It is important to drink enough water to enable the mucilage to work properly. Fibre has also been shown in a variety of clinical trials to reduce cholesterol and help in the maintenance of healthy blood sugar levels. Fibre also creates a feeling of satiety, which is welcomed in any diet plan in which the quantity of food is

restricted.

SUPPLEMENT WITH WHOLE FOODS TO ENSURE LONG-TERM HEALTH

It is vital to make sure that your nutritional needs are met when embarking on any dietary program. Whole food supplements ensure that no imbalances occur as a result of taking too much or too little of any single vitamin or mineral. No nutrient occurs alone in nature – all compounds will work in combination with many factors – iron needs vitamin C in order to be absorbed; vitamin E and iron can antagonize one another; too much bran in the diet will prevent absorption of calcium and so on. Whilst there are many individuals who use single-nutrient supplementation, the benefits of taking whole foods cannot be overestimated.

RECOMMENDED AIM PRODUCTS FOR SLIMMING AND WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

LeafGreens

LeafGreens is one of those 'superfoods' that should be top of the list in any dietary program and even more so in slimming regimes. It has an extremely alkalinizing effect on the body and provides all the essential amino acids that the body needs for optimal functioning. In addition, LeafGreens has one of the highest antioxidant effects of any natural food, thereby boosting the immune system, so the addition of this product to the daily diet cannot even be questioned!

RediBeets

Many slimming diets do not provide sufficient minerals, and in particular, iron, so there is usually a need to supplement this vital nutrient. One cup of raw beetroot contains phosphorous, sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium and iron as well as Vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene), niacin (vitamin B3), folic acid and biotin. When these nutrients are captured in the juicing process, they remain in a form that is much easier to assimilate than synthetic nutrients. The iron in beetroot juice is especially more absorbable than synthetic iron and does not have the accompanying side-effects that occur when taking chemically manufactured iron supplements such as constipation and flatulence.

Just Carrots

It is well established that carrots are a healthy food. They contain many important nutrients – including alpha- and beta-carotene, vitamin C, B vitamins and calcium, iron, potassium



and many anti-oxidants including lutein. The significance of including Just Carrots in a slimming regime stems from the fact that the high concentration of carotenoids, especially alpha- and beta-carotene, boosts the immune system, which is often compromised during slimming programs. In addition, it gives added protection to the skin and research has shown many times over, its positive effect against damage from the ultra-violet rays of the sun.

AlMEga

AlMEga capsules contain an organic seed oil blend providing omega-3, 6 and 9 fatty acids derived from cold-pressed flax, sesame, olive and sunflower oils. The ratio of these omega fatty acids to each other is specifically formulated to provide essential fatty acids in quantities that will enhance their optimal metabolic effect on the human body. There are two essential fatty acids necessary for human metabolism. These are omega-3 fatty acids, Alpha-Linolenic Acid (ALA) and Linoleic Acid (LA), both of which are provided by AlMEga.

GlucoChrom

One nutrient that has shown to have a beneficial effect on blood sugar maintenance is chromium. Most westernized diets are deficient in chromium due to the over-refinement of foods. Chromium is a mineral that is vital for the function of insulin, which is required by most cells for glucose uptake. Chromium is thought to improve the processing of insulin. The glucose tolerance factor (GTF) measures a person's ability to assimilate glucose. Glucose intolerance, which is the inability to take up glucose, is the main symptom of diabetes. Scientists have identified chromium as the active component of GTF. Chromium increases the ability of insulin to bind to cells and leads to increased insulin sensitivity of body tissue. If insulin is not present, or if the cells in the body don't respond to insulin, then the cells that don't require insulin, such as the red blood cells and those in the brain, kidneys and eyes, become overloaded with glucose and become damaged as a result. Chromium also plays a role in the metabolism of lipids and carbohydrates and appears to be related to the structural integrity of DNA and RNA.

GlucoChrom provides leafbrand chromium, which is a specific form of chromium that is easily absorbed and utilised by the body. As stated above, chromium helps with insulin metabolism, which is so crucial in the maintenance of correct blood sugar levels. The latter is vital for weight loss and

maintenance.

Herbal FiberBlend / Fit'n Fibre

AIM Herbal FiberBlend is a mixture of different types of dietary fibre and cleansing herbs. This unique combination provides the perfect way to maintain digestive health and keep the digestive system clean.

CellSparc 360

CellSparc 360 is a combination of Coenzyme Q10, tocotrienols and fish oil. Coenzyme Q10 (CoQ10) is intrinsically involved in the production of ATP (adenosine triphosphate), which is the form that energy is stored in the body. I have used CellSparc 360 extensively in slimming programs for a diverse clientele and always had positive results. All patients reported an increase in energy levels and immunity. CellSparc 360 also contains fish oil. Any dietary regime is enhanced with the addition of omega 3 fatty acids and slimming diets are no exception. Fish oil provides the omega-3 fatty acids, DHA and EPA.

Peak Endurance

Peak Endurance is a product specifically formulated to provide energy in the final stage so that it is available immediately for use by muscles. The main ingredient in Peak Endurance is ATP. ATP is an abbreviation for adenosine 5'-triphosphate, commonly known as the universal storage molecule. ATP exists both inside (intracellular) and outside (extracellular) virtually every cell of the body. The role of intracellular ATP is well established – it is largely responsible for the energetic, functionality and survival of cells. When the phosphate bonds of ATP are broken down, the energy released powers all body functions. Extracellular ATP regulates many physiological responses – such as muscular, vascular and cardiac functions. When intracellular ATP becomes depleted, extracellular ATP can cross into cells via its catabolic components, adenosine and inorganic phosphate. While ATP is manufactured in the body on a continual basis, age, exercise, and other stressors can significantly reduce or deplete its levels. Peak Endurance also contains 50% of the RDA for the B complex vitamins as well as certain minerals necessary for the complete assimilation of ATP.

These are the products I recommend in any slimming regime. The dosages and combinations of these products depend entirely on the individual