**Weight Control**

**About the time you get successful enough to eat anything you want, whenever you want, the doctor puts you on a diet. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Grandma: “It would be easier for me to stay on my diet if you’d go on it too. You probably couldn’t do it, though. You’re too addicted to sweets.” Grandpa: “That’s not true. I’m not addicted to sweets! Sure, they make my life worth living, but I’m not addicted to them.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**58% of Americans say they have been on a diet at some point in their lives, and 35% are on a diet right now. *(Rasmussen, as it appeared in The Week magazine, May 14, 2010)***

**When I asked my husband the definition of a diet, I laughed when he thought a moment and then quipped, “It’s something that takes the starch out of you!” *(Suzan L. Wiener, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**Nearly 28,000 different ways to lose weight have been tried, according to U. S. government data. The oldest is fasting, “the ultimate diet.” *(Isaac Asimov's Book of Facts, p. 94)***

**Waitress: “You’re not having a doughnut today?” Geech: “I’m on a diet.” Waitress: “You’re kidding.” Geech: “I am? In that case, I’ll have two of them.” *(Jerry Bittle, in Geech comic strip)***

**Drink to Drop Pounds: Here’s a surprising way to supercharge any diet – and your health: Chug a glass of low-sodium vegetable juice every day. In a study of 81 overweight adults at risk for heart disease and diabetes, those who drank at least a cup of low-sodium V8 daily lost four pounds over 12 weeks, while those on the same reduced-fat diet who drank no juice lost one pound. “Many of the study participants reported feeling fuller after drinking the vegetable juice, which may be why it helps weight-loss efforts,” says study leader John Foreyt, PhD, of the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. *(J. G., in Reader’s Digest)***

**You don’t need to cut down on calories, evidently. You’ll lose weight if you eat your last meal of the day no later than 3:30 p.m., but don’t go to bed before midnight. Obese patients at Tulane University proved it. They dropped from 5 to 10 pounds a month by staying awake at least 8 ½ hours after each day’s last meal. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The end of dieting? In May, Jenny Craig shut its doors. Two months earlier, WeightWatchers CEO Sima Sistani moved to avoid a similar fate for her 60-year-old company by putting it in the business of providing customers access to Ozempic and the whole class of new medications that have proved highly effective for weight loss. “If we get it right,” Sistani said of the transition, “it could be the end of diet culture.” Ozempic and other GLP-1 agonists will do much good for America’s health, said Laura Reiley in The Washington Post. But they promote weight loss by “crippling” the dopamine pathway in the brain, dulling its pleasure centers. “If this class of drugs rewires our brains and guts to think of food as just sustenance, the world will be so sad.” *(The Week magazine, December 29, 2023/January 5, 2024)***

**During my uncle's physical exam, his doctor mentioned that he was slightly overweight. "Do you get any exercise?" the physician asked. "Well, I used to have an exercise bike in the TV room," my uncle began. "Used to!" the doctor said. "Where is it now? "I had to store it in the basement," my uncle confessed, "because it got in the way of my snack trays." *(Wayne R. Reif, in Reader's Digest)***

**Why diets usually fail: Hormones, not lack of willpower, may explain why four out of five people who lose weight gain it all back within a few years. A new study has found that even a year after dieters lose weight, their bodies are still sending them strong and often irresistible hormonal signals to eat more. Australian researchers put a group of 50 overweight adults on a strict, 10-week diet that caused them to lose an average of 14 percent of their body weight. When they tested the subjects a year later, they found that levels of hormones like leptin, which keeps appetite in check, and ghrelin, a hunger stimulant, had changed dramatically, slowing their metabolism and intensifying feelings of hunger. Their bodies had been programmed to keep weight at a higher “set point,” and were fighting to gain back the lost pounds. As a result, the volunteers gained back an average of half the weight they had lost, despite sticking to careful meal plans designed to keep it off. “What is impressive is that these (hormonal) changes don’t go away,” Rudolph Leibel, an obesity researcher at Columbia University, tells The New York Times. By dieting, he says, “you are putting your body into a circumstance it will resist.” *(The Week magazine, November 18, 2011)***

**There’s a new garlic diet around. You don’t lose weight, but you look thinner from a distance. *(Red Shea, on “The Tommy Hunter Show,” TNN, Nashville)***

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**I was on another one of my eternal diets to lose weight and, as usual, my family and friends suffered silently through the first few days of grouchiness that always seem to accompany my efforts. My son was with me one day as I was telling a friend about the merits of my new diet. When she asked how much I expected to lose on this one, my son quickly replied, “I’d say about two friends a week.” *(Sandra Goad, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Diets that make you grouchy: The popular South Beach and Atkins diets, which both push a regimen very low in carbohydrates, succeed in helping many people lose pounds. But at what cost to their happiness? In a recent study, Australian researchers took 106 overweight and obese dieters, divided them into two groups, and tracked their weight and mood over time. Both groups had the same modest daily calorie limit, but one followed a diet low in carbs and high in fat, while the second group’s regimen were low in fat but consisted of nearly 50 percent carbs – about 10 times the carbohydrate load of the first regimen. After a year, dieters in both groups had lost an average of 30 pounds, but only those on the low-fat, high-carb diet reported an improvement in their moods, with less anxiety and depression. The South Beach/Atkins dieters were gloomier and grouchier. The reason may be biological: A lack of carbohydrates can reduce serotonin in the brain, spurring depression. It may also be that because a low-carb diet consists of foods that are more calorie-dense, you eat a much smaller volume of food than before, which may trigger feelings of deprivation and frustration. A diet that makes you unhappy, study author Grant Brinkworth tells the Los Angeles Times, is one you’re less likely to stick to, leading to “weight gain in the long term.” *(The Week magazine, November 27, 2009)***

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**Hagar: “Dr. Zook put me on his bad news, good news diet. The bad news is, the only thing you can eat is lettuce!” Servant: “What’s the good news?” Hagar: “You can eat as much as you want.” *(Dik Browne, in Hagar the Horrible comic strip)***

**175: Average reduction in calories consumed per person when fast-food restaurants use softer, more relaxed lighting. *(Smithsonian magazine, March, 2013)***

**Love is when your heartbeat’s breaky, and you make an appointment with Dr. DeBakey. *(Shelby Friedman, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**How to make the day longer? Go on a diet. (Jack Rosenbaum)**

**Shattering myths about metabolism*:* Bad news for people who blame their middle-age spread on a waning metabolism: A new study has found that metabolic rates actually remain “rock solid” through most of our adult lives. The research involved more than 6,400 people, ranging in age from eight days to 95 years old, in 29 countries. The participants were given water containing isotopes that could be traced in urine samples. By analyzing these samples, scientists could calculate exactly how much carbon dioxide each person was producing – a precise measure of how many calories they were burning. The researchers found that after peaking around your first birthday, your metabolism declines by about 3 percent a year until you hit 60, when it starts to decline again, but only by about 1 percent a year. The team’s findings also upended other long-held assumptions about metabolism: that it wanes more in women than in men, that it spikes during teenage years and pregnancy, and that it is slowed by menopause. “People will say, ‘Well, when I hit 30 years old, my metabolism fell apart,’” lead author Herman Pontzer, from Duke University tells NBCNews.com. “We don’t see any evidence for that, actually.” Researchers say if weight gain in middle age has nothing to do with metabolism, it is most likely the result of changes to lifestyle factors such as diet, activity levels, and sleep. *(The Week magazine, September 3, 2021)***

**To lose weight and look good, you have to stop ordering the works and start ordering the workouts. *(Gil Stern, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**Only in America: The U.S. Coast Guard has reduced the passenger capacity of U.S. commercial vessels to reflect the growing weight of the average American. A boat’s capacity used to be based on an assumed average of 160 pounds per passenger, but that’s been raised to 185 pounds. Florida pleasure-boat passenger David Kushner said he approved of the change. “Oh, God, yeah,” said Kushner. “I’m 251 with sandals.” (The Week magazine, December 23, 2011)**

**The worst kind of reducing pill is the one who keeps telling you how he did it. *(The C & P Call)***

**It would be far easier to lose weight permanently if replacement parts weren’t so handy in the refrigerator. *(Hugh Allen, in Knoxville News-Sentinel)***

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**As Santa enters the house, the sign next to the milk and cookies says “For Santa.” Santa sees it and responds: “Cookies and milk again. No wonder I’m so fat.” *(The American Legion magazine cartoon)***

***Son*: “A plate of rice cakes and a glass of water? I thought Santa liked cookies and cocoa!” Mom: “He does, but believe me, Santa has really been putting on the poundage since Thanksgiving!” *(Kevin Fagan, in Drabble comic strip)***

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**Tense situations drive dieters to eat more, says a weight-loss specialist. This authority advises dieters to avoid scary movies, high-speed auto rides and evenings with the in-laws – or the stressful equivalent. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie. *(Jim Davis, in I’m in the Mood for Food: In the Kitchen with Garfield)***

**A diet is what helps a person gain weight more slowly. *(Bill Copeland, in Sarasota, Florida, Journal)***

**Well, welcome to the wonderful world of dieting, where all the trouble spots are at the equator. *(Jeff MacNelly, in Shoe comic strip)***

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