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# FUNCTION FIRST FITNESS

*a personal training studio*



## Why Diets Don't Work

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SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO:  
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## Q & A Corner

**Q:**  
 What are “processed foods”?

**A:**  
 In a nutshell, a processed food is any food that nature didn't/can't make. This includes cereals, breads, chips, mayo or cream-based dips, sweets, pasta, luncheon meats, sausage and hotdogs. If it comes in a box or a package, it's processed. All processed foods should be highly restricted in a healthy diet.

### IF DIETS WORKED WE WOULD ALL BE THIN!

Every time I hear of a new "diet", I cringe. Some diets aren't too bad (on the surface). They cut calories, and recommend you eat more protein & veggies while reducing processed carbs. They may even encourage you to exercise. This is all sound, logical thinking in a perfect world — if we are in otherwise perfect health, the diet increases our health, and we make it the way we eat regularly for, say, the rest of our lives. So, why can't people continue these behaviors for their entire lives?

Let's explore the backbone of a "diet" to get to the answer.

In order to lose weight, we must reduce calories (most of the time) and/or burn more calories through

exercise. Herein lies the first problem: how many diet programs truly assess what each individual is eating on a daily basis? Maybe they're not eating too many calories, but rather, the wrong foods. Maybe over time, the person has developed sensitivity to a food, resulting in a weight gain. For example, it is estimated that 50% of people in this country are pre-diabetic or diabetic. Any time these people eat a refined carbohydrate, it is highly likely to be stored as fat. The calorie content might be fine, but the type of calories they eat is anything but fine. Unfortunately, this is becoming the norm.

There seems to be a new fad diet out nearly every year, and some

*I'm not Dieting  
 I'm changing my  
 Lifestyle*



even come full circle and reappear after several years. Some diets make you eat "their" food, usually highly processed and containing unhealthy, unpronounceable ingredients. But, since they're portion-controlled, people lose weight. Too bad they don't enjoy the food they're eating! Also, just because there's weight loss doesn't mean the person is getting healthier.

Other diets cut out major food groups. Those diets will make you lose weight, too, because you probably just cut out 500 calories per day. Some diets recommend you skip meals while others are so strict that there is only failure (and hunger) at the end. These diets might cause you to lose weight in the short term, but they can't be continued for any length of time. This in turn is when you gain more weight than you lost. And so the yo-yo dieting begins. Your metabolism takes a dive.

Here are several things that go wrong with diets:

1. The diet industry has conditioned us to believe that the more weight we lose, the better the diet. However, what happens in the long term? Usually the weight returns — plus several pounds. There is nothing healthy or good about this. In addition, as previously stated, this yo-yo dieting will make your metabolism plummet.

Whoever said that we need to lose x pounds per week? Isn't making long-term lifestyle changes a healthier approach? If you make the changes, the weight will come off and you'll be a healthier person. Not to mention you'll look much better than what any diet can do for you. Think of it this way: if you lost one pound per week, that's 52 pounds per year. Because it took so long to lose it, the chances of you keeping it off are much greater. So, take your time and develop lifestyle changes.

2. What people lose (fat or muscle) is of no importance to most diet programs. If you don't eat a well-rounded diet filled with natural, whole foods and protein, and you don't incorporate resistance training into your life, then you have a good chance of losing muscle. This is counter-productive, as muscle burns a lot of calories. This is the main reason why men lose weight faster than women; they have more muscle. So, ladies, don't be afraid of muscles!

3. Diets can be so restrictive that we feel deprived. When deprivation sets in, we start craving "forbidden" foods. This can cause us to binge eat, feel guilty about what we just ate, and then eat some more. Before we know it, we're packing on the weight we just lost.

4. Most diets don't educate as to what's really important, for example: inflammation. Processed foods (anything in a box, pouch, etc.) promote chronic inflammation. Read more about inflammation here: [http://www.functionfirstfitness.com/newsletters/2009\\_11\\_inflammation.pdf](http://www.functionfirstfitness.com/newsletters/2009_11_inflammation.pdf)

5. Also, there's a lack of education as to the reasons why we eat what we do. Does your diet change when you're stressed? When you're with certain people? Do you know what your "trigger" foods are? Do you feel that exercise justifies an extra treat? How about the rate at which you're eating: Are you a fast eater? Slow? These are a few of the things that need to be addressed when you embark on your healthy-living, weight loss journey. And during the journey, too. Pay attention to what you're feeling, what your body is trying to tell you, the types of food you eat and the speed at which you eat.

## Monthly Chuckle



## Monthly Tip

### Aspartame alert:

Be careful whom you listen to: studies that are funded by the manufacturer or "the industry" are likely to have discrepancies when compared to studies funded independently. Case in point: 100% of studies funded by the artificial sweetener industry supported aspartame's safety whereas, 92% of independent studies identified at least 1 potential health concern with aspartame (1996).

## Words to Live By

*If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep on walking.*

- **Buddhist Saying**

6. Most diets don't encourage exercise and/or resistance training. This is a shame, because it makes all the changes happen faster. Not only will you be getting stronger, but you'll also be increasing your ability to burn more calories at a greater rate. In other words, you'll increase your metabolism! The other plus: you'll look toned, firm and great!

7. If a person tries to change one thing, he/she has an 85% success rate. With two changes, it drops to 35%. Diets make you change several things at once. Our brains don't work like that. We need to focus on one change at a time for it to become a habit. For example, we should all be drinking about 64 oz. of water per day, taking a multivitamin (especially when reducing calories), eating slowly, eating vegetables, etc. Each of these behaviors should be broken down into a time frame: one to two weeks for each behavior until it becomes a habit. If you're having trouble with a behavior, work on it exclusively for longer. Begin with the easiest thing first, to build momentum and confidence along the way.

8. Pay attention to something other than the number on the scale. That number does NOT define who you are or how successful you are. How about getting out that pair of pants that you haven't been able to wear because they're too tight? This will give you the feedback you need, besides the scale, to see if any other changes are necessary.

Diets have brainwashed our society into thinking that we have to shed the weight quickly. How long did it take you to put on the weight? Why do you think it should take a shorter amount of time to take it off? Even when you change eating behaviors the *correct* way, slowly and steadily, you'll lose the weight faster than when you put it on. The best changes, the ones that become habit, take time. We need to be patient. We need to be self-forgiving and allow ourselves to have a treat once in awhile. Remember, it's not about deprivation. It's about making lasting changes that will, in turn, help you lose weight and become a healthier, stronger and fit person for the rest of your life.

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**Delicious meal or as a side dish!**

**Karin Yehling  
FFF Trainer**

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### BLACK BEAN SALAD WITH AVOCADO-LIME DRESSING

#### INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ripe avocado, mashed
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 (15-ounce) cans no-salt-added black beans, rinsed and drained
- 4 cups shredded romaine lettuce
- 1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cup corn kernels, fresh or thawed if frozen
- 1 small red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup toasted pumpkin seeds

#### DIRECTIONS:

In a large bowl, whisk together avocado, cilantro and lime juice until blended. Add beans, lettuce, tomatoes, corn, pepper, pumpkin seeds and toss until evenly coated.

#### Nutritional Info:

PER SERVING: 360 calories (100 from fat), 11g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 0mg cholesterol, 35mg sodium, 52g carbohydrate (18g dietary fiber, 6g sugar), 16g protein



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**Coming Next Month!**  
More "Changing Your Nutrition,  
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more tips, and recipes!