

# RAWPOWER

## Stop trying to lose weight

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Shedding the kilos is easy when you avoid these weight loss traps.

As a society, we are obsessed with dieting. We are fed so many conflicting messages on how to stay slim, trim and terrific, we are inundated with images of stunning Hollywood celebrities in all their finery, and the latest health crazes just keep getting crazier!

But the secret to maintaining a healthy body weight does not lie in food deprivation or fly by night fads. In 2007, researchers at the University of California examined 31 weight loss studies and found that dieting doesn't result in permanent weight loss and many dieters regain the kilos they shed. So what is the answer?

Eating healthy, fresh, seasonal foods in moderation, get lots of fresh air, exercise to your body type and get some good nourishing sleep. Make this a way of life – not just a short lived diet strategy and steer clear of the most common weight loss landmines.

### Trap 1: Dieting

Fat free, calorie restriction, zero carb, cabbage diet, water fast – how do all these sound? Pretty tortuous don't they. And for good reason too. Most are based in illogic. These are rigid, hard to maintain – both mentally and physically for long periods of time. This is one of the root causes of yo-yo dieting. Also, yo-yo dieting has been linked to high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and compromised immunity. [1]

Instead, make eating well a lifetime goal, not just something you do for a month or so every year. Learn to read the labels at the grocery store. Additive Alert by Julie Eady is full of vital information. You will also be surprised at how much sugar is hidden in foods to make them more palatable!

Regularly shop at your local farmers market or organic market. When your fridge is full of healthy food, you will want to eat more healthy food.

### Trap 2: Skipping Your Greens

We've all heard it before – eat your vegetables. Current research being conducted (studies not yet released) suggests a minimum of 10 cups of vegetables per day though the current daily Australian guidelines suggest 2 fruit and 5 vegetable serves per day.

Green vegetables are the ones that are the most lacking in our diets. These are key building blocks for successful weight loss, giving strength and energy while helping to shed excess weight. A 2007 study supported by the National Institute of Health discovered that people who eat more water rich foods like vegetables, reduce their 'dietary energy density' and lose a third more weight after six months than those who only decrease their fat intake.

### Trap 3: Skipping Meals

You woke up late and skipped breakfast and missed lunch to finish that deadline. By 3pm, you're ravenous and grab a chocolate bar from the vending machine with a coffee to tide you over before

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stopping for a gluten free vegetarian pizza on the way home. Been there, done that. Whether you're late, lazy or just trying to shave calories from your bottom line, skipping meals is a bad idea. It leaves you more vulnerable to overeating. As for the weekends, this is the time we are prone to binge eating. A study published in the Autumn 2009 journal of Public Policy & Marketing found people consume on average of 37 more calories per meal on weekends and for those who overeat at all six meals, could push that out to 400 extra calories!

People worry that if they eat regularly, they will gain more weight yet that is often incorrect. By scheduling and planning healthy meals and snacks, you will always be filled on the finest nutrition.

## **Trap 4: Diuretics**

The use of diuretics will only result in water and fluid weight loss, not fat loss, the ultimate aim of any weight loss program. Diuretics have the potential to cause severe electrolyte imbalances, low blood pressure and dehydration. Long term diuretic use often results in the body's ability to remove excess water being impaired and the person will end up storing more water instead.

Foods such as cucumber and celery are natural diuretics filled with life giving potassium. Next time you feel a bit bloated, reach for a glass of celery and cucumber juice or nettle tea and feed your cells instead.

## **Trap 5: Not Asking For Help**

Have a support group around you. An accountability partner is fabulous for helping to keep you on track and focussed on your end goal – long term health and vitality. It is hard enough in this life trying to have a successful career and family life without having to be superwoman or superman when it comes to health and nutrition. Find yourself a health coach or join a health membership program. It is worth it for the support and knowledge you will gain

by Michelle Ovens, Naturopath

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