

EAT

SLEEP

PLAY

An easy formula for weight loss

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Diets and weight loss plans can be cumbersome and complicated. In order to lose one pound you need to burn 3,500 calories more than you take in. That means you could lose one pound by reducing calories by 500 per day for a week. However, the best way to accomplish this reduction is a combination of fewer calories, more exercise, and yes, adequate sleep.

Here are three easy rules to live by for taking weight off and maintaining your ideal weight.

EAT:

Research indicates that portion control plays a major role in weight loss. This is even more significant considering how portion sizes have grown in restaurants and the fast food industry. For example, in the 1950s a hamburger patty weighed 1.6 ounces. Today, the same patty can weigh up to 8.0 ounces. If you have fries with that burger, what was once a 2.4-ounce serving is now a whopping 7 ounces. Research also shows that people tend to finish whatever size portion they are served. So give yourself smaller portions to start with. When going out to eat, share an entrée with a friend and make sure each of you gets a side salad of mixed greens. Another important key to portion control is drinking plenty of pure filtered water. Often when we think we are hungry we are actually thirsty. When you feel hungry, try 8-12 ounces of water first and then recheck to see if you need a snack.

SLEEP:

Inadequate sleep has been linked with obesity. One of the reasons for this is that there are two important hormones that effect appetite and these hormones are brought into proper balance during REM sleep. The two hormones are ghrelin and leptin. The hormone ghrelin stimulates appetite while leptin is the body's natural appetite suppressant. Research has found that people who get inadequate amounts of sleep over-stimulate their ghrelin production, which increases the desire for food. At the same time, lack of sleep reduces the production of leptin, causing a

double jeopardy situation where appetite is over-stimulated and the body's natural ability to control appetite is suppressed.

PLAY:

Exercise is an essential component for weight loss and for maintaining your ideal weight. But if treadmills and jogging are not your thing, don't worry. Play, the exercise of children, can also be a valuable program for adults. Exercise helps in two ways, you burn calories as you exercise and exercise increases your basal metabolic rate (BMR) so you continue to burn extra calories even after your exercise session is over. Fun ways to exercise can include bike riding, in-line skating, trail running, and swimming. If you have access to a pool or lake you can get an extra boost with a kick board, waist deep lunges and simply treading water. The Department of Health and Human Services recommends at least two hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity along with strength training exercises at least twice a week.

Sources:

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