

In today's society nearly everyone follows some kind of dietary guidelines. Whether it is in the goal of losing weight, gaining weight or just simply to maintain it, people are jumping onto the dietary band-wagon. A diet is basically to take food according to rule, a mode of living in reference to nourishment. There are various types of diets that one can follow; a high or low calorie diet, low fat diets, diets modified in protein, minerals, water, and carbohydrates, and so the list goes on. Many business enterprises base their entire corporations into the field of weight loss. Many of these diet programs are merely fads that lure desperate people in with their guarantees to lose so many pounds or inches in an "x" amount of time. There are also many pills that one can take, but they are not always safe and can be very damaging in the long run. It is not all people that are on weight loss programs though. Many athletes are on strict programs to gain weight. However this kind of desired weight is not measured in fat but in muscle mass. Many muscle and fitness magazines will feature advertisements and articles for such gains in body mass.

Advertisements for diets can sometimes be very dangerous though. Pretty well all the people used in these particular ads are slim and beautiful and it can therefore be very misinterpreting to someone who is overweight. The pressure of being fit can lead to very damaging disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. These two very serious conditions affect a very large amount of women and men in North America these days and can be quite lethal if not cured. So it is important to be careful not to do any physical or psychological harm to one self when trying to lose weight.

When embarking into any kind of diet it is extremely important that one gets the sufficient amount of nutrients from their food and/or supplements. A proper diet must consist of more than simply a glass of water and a piece of fruit per meal. One must have a certain daily intake of specific vitamins and minerals to stay in good health. If one were to follow the RDA's (recommended daily allowance) guidelines, one has to be sure that the food that is consumed contains the proper amount of nutrients that is so suggested. A lot of the foods that we consume today do not contain the amount of vitamins and minerals that the U.S. RDA have claimed. The reason being our obsession with colour, taste, and texture in the food we eat and our lack of concern about it actually being nutritious or not. Thousands of damaging pesticides, preservatives, chemicals and colouring are raping our food of its nutritional value these days. Therefore someone who is planning on going on a restricted calorie diet must be careful in how they plan their daily food intake. With the help of a nutritional guide that contains a table of food composition one can keep an accurate record of their daily intake of protein, carbohydrates, fibres, fats, minerals, and vitamins (see page ). This will enable a person on a restricted weight loss program to be assured that he or she is getting all the necessary nutrients for a well balanced diet.

Along with a proper diet one must also have some kind of exercise program in order to lose the undesired weight and keep it off. If a person restricts themselves to dieting alone without any type of physical exercise the human body will eventually adjust its metabolism to the reduced calorie intake. Thus when the person returns to their regular calorie consumption they will gain the weight right back. Medical professionals agree that 30 minutes of moderately vigorous exercise performed three times a week will elevate one's metabolism, and a higher metabolism burns more calories. In order to lose one pound of fat, one has to burn off an extra 3500 calories on top of the calories that they consumed in their meals. So in most cases the phrase "No pain, no gain", still holds true.

However, many people elect to take the easier route in trying to lose those extra pounds. Billions of dollars are spent each year on diet pills, fad diets, and other weight loss promises. These enterprises thrive on the ever growing amount of obese people and their need for a quick and easy solution. One can't turn on the

television or flip through the pages of a magazine without seeing some kind of diet remedy, that according to the manufacturer works wonders. "Guaranteed to lose weight or your money back" is a catch phrase that has lured many into wasting their money in order to look good. These kinds of advertisements are especially popular around the holidays, Christmas being the main one. The weight loss companies pump out the ads during this time of the year because they know that the average North American puts on a sweltering seven pounds of undesired baggage over this short period of time.

Companies such as Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig have been successful because they supervise and keep track of their customers. These kinds of weight loss clinics also encourage their customers to keep a record of their progress and maintain their diet schedule. Many other diet plans are merely fads that make too many promises and have diets designed to bring about quick weight loss that are usually unbalanced nutritionally and are sometimes dangerous. Diet pills are another poor form of treatment choices for obesity. These pills depress the appetite temporarily; often, physician-prescribed amphetamines (speed). It is generally agreed that these drugs are of little value for weight loss and that their use can cause a dangerous dependency. Another form of diet pills that can often be seen used by bodybuilders is water pills. These are diuretics that promote the excretion of water from the body. The water loss results in some weight loss, but this loss can be dangerous because the overweight subject has a small percentage of water than a person of normal weight. Bodybuilders sometimes use these water pills to look more "cut" because they give an appearance that the skin is tightly pressed against the muscle. Dehydration can result from the use of these pills and are therefor can sometimes be considered to be hazardous to one's health. To date there has yet to be a safe effective and quick way to lose weight and keep it off, however with the extensive research being made in this area it might not be long.

As we all know it is not difficult to put on weight, but to put on the proper kind of weight can be just as hard as losing it. This proper kind of weight that is spoken of is muscle mass. Muscle mass is the building of the muscle fibres in the body and the only way to increase this mass is by hard physical activity. A low fat, high carb diet is also necessary to be able to keep a high energy level for the physical load that is required for building up the muscles. For the muscle fibres to be stimulated to grow a certain amount of resistance has to be applied to them. This is done by working out with weights in a gym or elsewhere. In the recuperation phase, the muscles needs protein to repair itself and grow. When trying to gain desired weight by firming up the body one must also have a healthy and strict diet. This includes proper amounts of vitamins, minerals and protein along with a low fat, low sugar, and low sodium intake.

Many people cannot cope with the pressure of society's view of a healthy human body. With all the slim supermodels and big muscular guys in every single ad, people are desperately trying to obtain this hard to obtain feat. A major concern of many teenagers, especially of girls, is dieting to maintain a slim and beautiful figure. To accomplish this, many go on fad diets that are neither safe nor effective. Two special eating disorders related to dieting often arise: anorexia and bulimia. Anorexia nervosa is an extreme preoccupation with weight loss that seriously endangers the health and even the life of the dieter. It arises only in developed countries where food is abundant, suggestion that it is a societal problem. Although no two persons with anorexia nervosa are alike, certain features are considered typical of the condition. The anorexic is almost always female and in her mid-teens. She is usually from an educated, middle-class, success-oriented, weight-conscious family that is proud of her and is surprised to see her develop a problem. The major problem with these young teenagers is that even after they are well below the average weight they still don't stop. Weight loss has by now become an obsession. If the victim does not get treatment she may soon experience permanent brain damage and chronic invalidism or death. Another serious eating disorder is bulimia, periodic binge eating ("pigging out")

alternating with intervals of dieting or self-starvation. Bulimia may accompany anorexia or may occur separately. The binge would end when it would hurt to eat any more or when the person goes to sleep, induces vomiting, or is interrupted. Anorexia and bulimia often arise in young people, but the problems don't always resolve in adolescence. People with anorexia and bulimia may retain abnormal eating behaviours and fearful attitudes toward food throughout their entire adult lives.

With so many different diet programs out on the market that promise to make you lose weight fast it is hard not to be tempted. One must be careful however, because many of the diets that promise it all are actually quite dangerous, so one must not get suckered in without knowing what is involved.

In order to reduce body weight, all doctors agree, one must reduce their calorie intake and/or increase their energy expenditure. Whether you consume them or burn them - and whether it's protein, fat or carbs - every calorie counts, so you might as well learn to count them. One can start by a book that lists foods and their nutritional value, then bring it to the dinner table and look up the foods their eating. Gradually, one will learn to compromise their calories and make better food choices. Once that is done, weight loss will be obtained. Others desire to gain weight which can also be very difficult, if he or she trying to gain muscle mass that is. A proper diet and a hard physical workout program is required and of course lots of dedication. The most important thing about dieting is that one has to remember to do it for themselves and not for the sake of others, and to also be careful in doing so.

#### Dietary Guidelines for North Americans and Suggestions for Food Choices

1. Eat a variety of foods daily. Include these foods every day: fruits and vegetables; whole-grain and enriched breads and cereals; milk and milk products; meats; fish; poultry and eggs; dried beans and peas.
2. Maintain ideal weight. Increase physical activity; reduce calories by eating fewer fatty foods and sweets and less sugar and by avoiding too much alcohol; lose weight gradually.
3. Avoid too much fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol. Choose low-fat protein sources, such as lean meats, fish, poultry, and dried beans and peas; use eggs and organ meats in moderation; limit intake of fats on and in foods; trim fats from meats; broil, bake, or boil, don't fry; read food labels for fat contents.

4. Eat foods with adequate starch and fibre. Substitute starches for fats and sugars; select whole-grain breads and cereal, fruits and vegetables, dried beans and peas, and nuts to increase fibre and starch intake.

5. Avoid too much sugar. Use less sugar, syrup, and honey; reduce concentrated sweets, such as candy, soft drinks, cookies, and the like; select fresh fruit or fruits canned in light syrup or in their own juices; read food labels - sucrose, glucose, dextrose, maltose, lactose, fructose, syrups, and honey are all sugars; eat sugar less often to reduce dental caries.

7. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. Individuals who drink should limit all alcoholic beverages (including wine, beer, liquors, and so on) to one or two drinks per day. Note that the use of alcoholic beverages during pregnancy can result in the development of birth defects and mental retardation called Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.

Table of Food Composition

Gpr	Ref	Food description		Measure	Wt	H O	Ener
Prot	Carb	(kcal)	(g)	(g)			(
Beverages							
Alcoholic:							
Beer:							
1	1	Regular	(12 fl oz)		1 c		356
92	146	1	13				
1	2	Light	(12 fl oz)		1 c		354
95	100	1	5				
Gin, rum, vodka, whisky:							
1	3	80 proof			1 fl oz		42
67	97	0	<.1				
1	4	86 proof			1 fl oz		42
64	105	0	<.1				
1	5	90 proof			1 fl oz		42
62	110	0	<.1				
Liqueur:							
1	1359	Coffee Liqueur, 53 proof			1 fl oz	52	31
174	0	24					
1	1360	Coffee & Cream liqueur, 34 proof		1 fl oz	47	47	154
1		10					
1	1361	Creme de menthe, 72 proof		1 fl oz	50	28	186
0		21					
Wine:							
1	6	Dessert	(4 fl oz)		c		118
72	181	<1	14				
1	7	Red			3 fl oz		
103	88	74	<1	2			
1	8	Rose			3 fl oz		103
89	73	<1	2				
1	9	White medium			3 fl oz	103	90
70	<1	1					

Carbonated:							
1	10	Club soda	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	355	
100	0	0	0				
1	11	Cola beverage	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	370	89
151	0	39					
1	12	Diet cola	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	355	
100	2	0	<1				
1	13	Diet soda	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	355	
100	2	0	<1				
1	14	Ginger ale	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	366	
91	124	0	32				
1	15	Grape soda	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	372	89
161	0	42					
1	16	Lemon-lime	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	368	90
149	0	38					
1	17	Orange	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	372	
88	177	0	46				
1	18	Pepper-type soda	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	368	89
151	0	38					
1	19	Root beer	(12 fl oz)		1 fl oz	370	
89	152	<1	39				

Coffee:							
1	20	Brewed			1 c	240	
99	2	<1	1				
1	21	Prepared from instant			1 c	240	99
2	<1	1					

Fruit drinks, noncarbonated							
1	22	Fruit punch drink, canned			1 c	253	88
118	<1	30					
1	1358	Gatorade			1 c	230	
99	39	0	11				
1	23	Grape drink, canned			1 c	250	88
112	0	35					
1	1304	Koolade, sweetened w/ sugar		1 c	240	100	
110	0	25					
1	1356	Koolade, sweetened w/ nutraswt.		1 c	240	100	
4	0	0					

Lemonade, frozen:							
1	26	Concentrate	(6-oz can)		1 c	219	52
397	1	103					
1	27	Lemonade prepared from			1 c	248	89
100	<1	26					
frozen concentrate							

Dietary	Fat	Fat Breakdown (g)			Chol	Calc	Iron	Magn
Fiber	(g)	Sat	Mono	Poly	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	
Phos	(mg)	(mg)						

1 0 0 0 0 0 0 18

.11	23	44					
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	18
.14	18	43					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
.02	0	2					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
.02	0	2					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
.02	0	2					
0	<1	.1	t	.1	0	0	1
.03	1	3					
0	7	4.5	2.1	.3	-	0	7
.06	1	23					
0	<1	t	t	.1	0	0	0
.04	0	0					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
.24	11	11					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
.44	13	14					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
.39	10	15					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
.33	11	14					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
.15	4	0					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
.12	3	46					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
.11	4	30					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
.14	3	38					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
.66	3	1					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
.31	4	0					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
.25	2	1					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
.23	4	4					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
.14	1	41					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
.19	4	2					
<1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
.96	14	3					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
.12	9	8					
0	<1	t	t	t	0	0	19
.52	5	3					
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
-	-	0					
<1	<1	t	t	t	0	0	3
.41	5	3					

0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	<1	.1	t	.1	0	15	
1.58	11	19	t	t	0	4	
<1	<1	t	t	t	0		
.41	3	5					

Pota Fola (mg) ( g)	Sodi VT - C (mg) (mg)	Zinc (mg)	VT- A (RE)	Thia (mg)	Ribo (mg)	Niac (mg)	V - B6 (mg)
89	19	.07	0		.02	.09	1.61
.18	21	0					
64	10	.11	0		.03	.11	1.39
.12	15	0					
1	<1	.02	0		<.01	<.01	<.01
t	0	0					
1	<1	.02	0		<.01	<.01	<.01
0	0	0					
1	<1	.02	0		<.01	<.01	<.01
0	0	0					
15	4	.01	0		<.01	.01	.08
-	0	0					
15	43	.08	-		0	0	.04
-	0	0					
0	3	-	0		0	0	<.01
0	0	-					
109	11	.08	0		.02	.02	.25
0	<1	0					
115	6	.01	0		<.01	.03	.08
.04	2	0					
102	5	.06	0		<.01	.02	.08
.03	1	0					
82	5	.07	0		<.01	<.01	.07
.01	<1	0					
6	75	.36	0		0	0	0
0	0	0					
4	15	.05	0		0	0	0
0	0	0					
0	21	.28	0		.02	.08	0
0	0	0					

7	21	.10	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	25	.18	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	57	.26	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	41	.18	0	0	0	.06
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9	46	.38	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	38	.15	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3	49	.26	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
130	5	.08	0	0	.02	.53
0	<1	0	0	0	<.01	.69
87	8	.07	0	0	<.01	.69
0	0	0	0	0	<.01	.69
64	56	.31	4	.06	.06	.05
0	3	75	0	-	-	-
23	123	-	0	-	-	-
-	-	-	0	-	-	-
13	16	.28	<1	.08	.02	.07
.02	1	85	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	6	0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0
0	0	6	0	0	0	0
19	8	.17	21	.06	.21	.16
.06	22	39	0	0	0	0
5	8	.05	5	.02	.05	.04
.02	6	10	0	0	0	0

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Recommended Nutrient Intakes for Canadians

Vitamins		Fat-Soluble			
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	Sex	Weight (kg)	Protein (g/day)	Vitamin A (RE/day)	Vitamin B ( g/day)
Vitamin E					
Age					
(mg/day)					
Months					
0-2	Both	4.5		11	400

10	3				
3-5		Both	7.0	14	400
10	3				
6-8		Both	8.5	17	400
10	3				
9-11		Both	9.5	18	400
10	3				
Years					
1		Both	11	19	400
10	3				
2-3		Both	14	22	400
5	4				
4-6		Both	18	26	500
5	5				
7-9		M	25	30	700
2.5	7				
		F	25	30	700
2.5	6				
10-12		M	34	38	800
2.5	8				
		F	36	40	800
2.5	7				
13-15		M	50	50	900
2.5	9				
		F	48	42	800
2.5	7				
16-18		M	62	55	1000
2.5	10				
		F	53	43	800
2.5	7				
19-24		M	71	58	1000
2.5	10				
		F	58	43	800
2.5	7				
25-49		M	74	61	1000
2.5	9				
		F	59	44	800
2.5	6				
50-74		M	73	60	1000
2.5	7				
		F	63	47	
800		2.5	6		
75+		M	69	57	1000
2.5	6				
		F	64	47	
800		2.5	5		

