

Fad Diets – ‘I just want a magical weight loss pill!’

By Katherine Collings APD

Today there are many weight loss products advertised on social media, websites and on TV, many are available in shops, the supermarket, or your local chemist that claim to be your answer to quick and easy weight loss. Some weight loss products are available over the internet.



Many of these products advertise that they can give you ‘amazing’ weight loss results, or they talk about ‘detox’ and ‘kilos falling or melting off easily’ and with ‘little or no exercise’.

Firstly, many of these products are expensive, and whilst some of them may actually cause weight loss due to replacing your usual meals or by affecting your appetite, they are not easy to stick to and do not actually teach you a long term solution to the issue of unhealthy eating or over eating. Always discuss with your GP or healthcare professional before commencing on any product.

Weight loss is hard for the majority of people who are attempting to take control and improve their health, as well as their figure.

Many of these commercially available weight loss products have side effects which can be one or more of the following:-

- Constant tiredness
- Irritability
- Concentration problems
- No energy for activity or exercise
- Headaches
- Social exclusion due to not eating what the rest of the family or friends are having
- Dry skin/spots

There are also a number of gastrointestinal symptoms that can develop when taking these products. These include:-

- Wind/flatulence
- Constipation and/or diarrhoea
- Bloating
- Reflux/GORD/Heartburn

The long and the short of it is that weight loss is not a problem that has a 'quick fix' solution. There are some key pointers below which may help if you are trying to lose some weight and improve your health.

Firstly, give yourself a **realistic target**. Saying to yourself 'I must lose 10 kilos in the next 2 weeks', is not only unrealistic, but when you fail you will feel less empowered about continuing and more likely to reach for the biscuits.

Put in place a **healthy meal plan of foods you enjoy**. Do not try and overhaul your day to day eating for nothing but health foods and raw veg. If you don't enjoy these foods after the first week you already will have given in. Try thinking of a healthier version of a food you usually eat and swap it.

Try to have **regular meals** – and by this I mean breakfast, lunch and dinner, with some low energy snacks in between.

Make sure **portion size is considered** - you don't need to pile your plate up like it's your last meal. If you do find you are particularly hungry, fill up on the vegetables, and add an extra high fibre/protein snack in to keep hunger at bay.

A few tips:-

Never skip a meal, particularly breakfast

Never go food shopping on an empty stomach

Allow yourself an 'occasional food', on rare occasions (by this I mean the foods that are high in energy, fat and/or sugar - these can be enjoyed once in a while but not on a regular basis)

Try to drink plenty of water throughout the day



Always have a low energy snack in your bag or desk drawer for those ravenous moments

Try cutting down alcohol to only on the weekend or just special occasions

Cut out soft drinks, or limit to rare occasions

<http://www.medicalobserver.com.au/news/weight-loss-products-too-good-to-be-true-tga-warns>