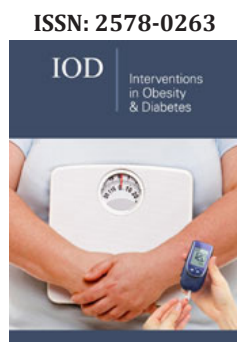


Fad Diets and Weight Loss

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Opinion

With the increasing trend of different weight loss diets and other weight loss products, the problem of overweight and obesity has become a global epidemic. Today we live in a world where overweight and obesity kills more people than any other diseases. This is all due to the lifestyle these days that has given rise to the unhealthy eating trends such as the use of convenience foods and processed foods. As the prevalence of this epidemic is on rise, the urge to diet particularly the self-instructed fad diets or the diets that are available easily on different media platforms by non-professionals has also increased. To fit in the socially acceptable image, people have become more conscious of their fitness and weight management. However, it cannot help reduce the incidence of obesity, the reason of which is poor dietary management. This management is secondary to fad diets and is mostly done without the supervision of any dietitian or health professional. Fad diets have created many misconceptions which are the main reasons why dieters end up with disordered eating and other health issues. This article will address some of the prevalent misconceptions related to weight loss or dieting.

Skipping Meals for Slimming

Of many myths, one of the most common misconceptions is to skip meals for a slim figure. Dieters believe that skipping meals is the best way to get a drastic change to a slender figure. This leads to self-starvation, which is then followed by catabolism, nutrient deficiencies and hence leading to a common eating disorder called anorexia nervosa. A diet that includes small frequent meals consisting of complex carbohydrates, fibers and moderate proteins is the answer to the myth.

Restricting Carbs and Fats

Another misconception is avoiding carbohydrates and fats in the diet. Calorie and carbs restricted diets are very common these days. Carbohydrates are body's primary fuel for energy. Their restriction leads to hypoglycemia, essential fatty acid deficiencies, irritability, dissatisfaction with satiety and bad temper. There are, however, good or bad carbs and you can easily differentiate them by spotting bad carbs in grocery store shelves with high sugar content, dense calories and no nutrients. Good carbohydrates can be chosen among fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals and even whole grain pastas. Similarly, there are good and bad fats too. They contribute a lot in dieting. Good fats are found in different vegetable oils, butter, nuts, flaxseed etc. besides omega-3 fatty acids found in fish are also a good source. These good fats actually help in trimming down the extra kilos. While unhealthy fats are found in full fat dairy products. Processed foods contains trans fats and red meat contains saturated fats that disturb the dietary regime when you opt for weight loss.

Excluding Meat Intake

Fad diets are easy to spot because they often share characteristics such as exclusion or extreme restriction of a specific food group or nutrient. Excluding meat from the diet is just another example. Avoiding meat would mean cutting out the nutrient it contains that is necessary for healthy living. The outcome of these fad diets usually results in protein deficiencies which lead to dehydration, muscle weakness, fatigue, nausea, headaches and constipation.

Magic Supplements for Instant Weight Loss

Quick weight loss within a short time span is never healthy. This claim comes with “magic supplements” that are promoted in market. They actually prove to be really harmful for the body. For healthy weight loss, skipping one food type or taking a magic pill is not correct. It is only possible with balance intake of all food

group with plenty of water as well as moderate physical activity. This can be done under the supervision of dietitian or a nutritionist. While fad diet seems like the quick fix solution; they would not keep you healthy in the long term. Therefore, fancy shortcuts shall be avoided. Instead, bring changes in your lifestyle by eating balanced diet, being active and staying away from stress.

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