

Ditch the Diet

JULY 8, 2019

In our weight and image-obsessed culture, it is very easy to feel very overwhelmed about food. This “complicated” relationship can sabotage our very best efforts, leave us feeling down and simply take the fun out of eating. You don’t have to have an eating disorder to have disordered eating, which is what most “diets” today encourage.

For most of us, it starts innocently enough. Whether you use the term “good/bad”, “clean/dirty”, “real/fake”, the real problem arises when you let these characteristics transfer onto you. It’s a “good day” if you eat “good” foods, and you admonish yourself for being “bad” if you eat “bad” ones.

This type of relationship with food can cause you to start living by strict food rules. You then beat yourself up when you can’t follow them. It doesn’t matter whether your rules are about “what”, “when” or “how much” you eat, what matters is that you’re in control. But, when you have strict rules about which foods are off-limits, you find yourself not only breaking the rules but feeling terrible about yourself when you do. And when you start losing control and feeling powerless around food the relationship becomes “complicated”.

What begins as an innocent, well-meaning intention to eat healthfully can get out of hand, leading to shame and guilt when we break our self-imposed rules.

Healthy eating isn’t about “good” vs. “bad” or “success” vs. “failure”. There’s no benefit in eating 100% vegan or paleo or raw or anything else if it feels like torture to you. Setting unrealistic goals is a surefire way to end up feeling defeated. When our diet or nutrition goals are too hard to meet, we can damage our self-confidence and stop trusting ourselves around food.

Trying to cut calories or not eating certain kinds of foods can trigger overeating, and that can make it harder to quit the cycle of dieting. It can lead to a cycle of dieting and bingeing that’s hard to break.

Don’t put those burdens on yourself. A way of eating doesn’t define your self-worth. Get comfortable enough with yourself to know what makes you feel your best and what your body needs and wants to eat to support the best version of yourself.

Instead of focusing on what you feel you shouldn’t eat, focus on what you can eat, which is virtually every food. Think about food as source of nutrition and energy instead of something to relieve stress or to be avoided. It may seem hard at first, but you can change the way you feel as you improve your eating habits.

No need to shame or judge yourself, just pay attention to how you are feeling when you are tempted to stray from your normal healthy behaviors. Chances are, your emotional or physiological state has a lot to do with it. Many of us are more likely to overeat when we are stressed, tired or just really, really hungry.

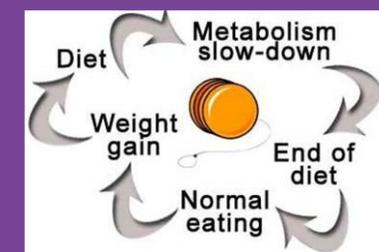
There’s a big difference between eating consciously and holding ourselves to impossibly high standards, and it’s time to start learning the difference. Learn your body’s hunger cues. Know exactly what you’re putting in your body. Understand how your body responds to food so you know what foods to choose.

Relinquish your desire to find a quick fix. There isn’t one. Resist the urge to throw money at “all-natural” supplements, drink mixes, juice cleanses and diet programs. The reality is if you’re relying on a pill, a drink, a miracle vitamin, and diets or similar for weight loss, nutrition or appetite suppression you’re doing it wrong.

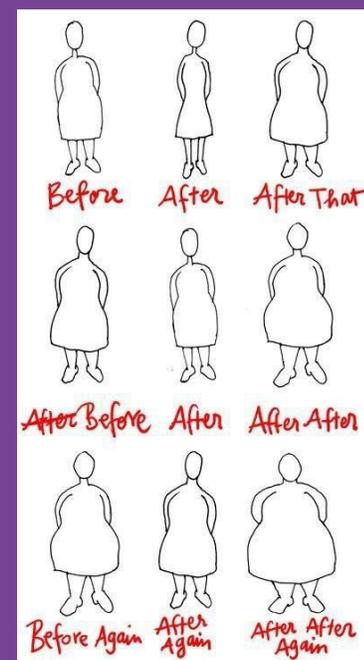
Your relationship with food is a reflection of how you feel about yourself.



Love yourself enough to make the best choices you can and to forgive yourself when you don’t; the rest will fall into place.



Let go of whatever negative thoughts you have about what and how you ate yesterday or even five minutes ago, and just be good to yourself. Always.



Workout of the Week



Mini Band Workout (10-15 reps x 3 sets)

Lunges Row (R&L)

Wanlking Pushup

Bike

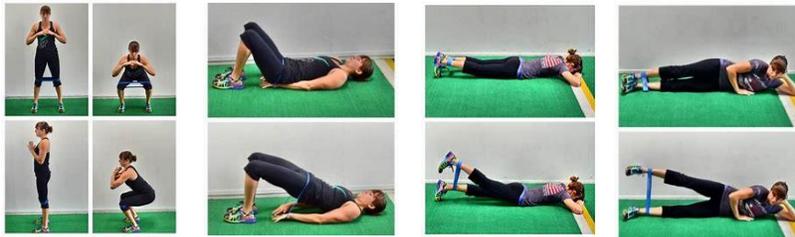
Single Leg Bridge (around knees)

Squat

Bridge (hold at hips)

Prone Glute Squeeze (R&L)

Side Lying Abduction (R&L)



Easy Summer Chickpea Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice (freshly squeezed)
- 1 garlic clove (pressed or finely minced)
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons basil (fresh)
- 2 tablespoons parsley
- 2 tablespoons chives
- 2 teaspoons oregano (fresh)
- 2 cups english cucumber (diced, about 1/2)
- 1 cup feta cheese (crumbled or cubed)
- 18 ounces chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
- to taste kosher salt
- 1 large tomato (diced)



Instructions:

- In a small mixing bowl, whisk together vinegar, olive oil, lemon juice, garlic and pepper. Set aside.
- In a large mixing bowl, combine the rest of the ingredients except for the tomatoes.
- Add the vinaigrette and toss gently to combine.
- Adjust salt and pepper seasonings to taste.
- Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, up to overnight for the flavors to marinate.
- Add tomatoes before serving