The Importance of Cheating (In Moderation) on Your Diet

Gwen Poillucci

There are very few things in life that I am going to tell you are okay to cheat on. It may be surprising, but your diet is one of them. There is this common misconception that in order to be on a successful diet, you must eat healthy 100% of the time. That’s not entirely correct.. Of course, you must cut unhealthy foods out of your diet a majority of the time. You have to ignore your cravings a majority of the time. However, new research is pointing to allowing yourself one cheat meal per week. The health benefits of this one meal are remarkable. When I say one meal, I mean one meal though. A cheat meal can’t be turning into a cheat day, or a cheat week, or a cheat month. Do you see where I am going with this.

The benefits of cheating are surprising. According to researchers, it can actually help you lose fat when done correctly. If you are trying to lose weight, what do you do? Of course, you limit your carbohydrates, calories, and probably sugar too. This causes an energy deficit which stimulates fat burning. And, this is all fine and good until the body does what it does best: adapt to new conditions. Over time, the body will become accustomed to this energy deficit and start burning fewer calories as you continue to eat just the same. This is a major problem for someone who is looking for sustained weight loss. A cheat meal that includes more carbohydrates and calories than usual can help to temporarily counteract this energy deficit and trick the body into continuing to burn the same amount of calories as before it adapted to the change.

Cheat meals can also help a dieter stay focused and diet longer, leading them to their reach ultimate weight goal. Cutting things that you once loved completely out of your diet is hard. I couldn’t imagine never being able to eat Ben & Jerry’s again. There are the constant cravings, that empty feeling inside of you, and the guilt that surfaces if you fall off the wagon. By indulging in your favorite foods for one meal a week, you won’t feel so terrible having to avoid them the other 95% of the time. So, once a week, eat that piece of bread with dinner, don’t turn down the waiter when he asks if you want to see the dessert menu, and watch as your body reaps the benefits.

Welcome to week 2. This is Gwen Poillucci, producer and host of the health diaries, a 5 part mini series tackling the biggest misconceptions about health in todays society. Last week,

Works Cited

["Lose More Weight With Cheat Days."*Muscle & Fitness*. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 July 2014.](http://www.bibme.org/website)

["The Importance of Having One Cheat Day When Dieting." */ Nutrition / Healthy Eating*. N.p., n.d. Web. 16 July 2014.](http://www.bibme.org/website)