DIET AND EXERCISE MYTHS

GET THE REAL FACTS:

Every year, millions of Americans resolve to lose weight and every year many get frustrated and give up before they reach their goals. Contributing to this problem is a host of bad information about diet and exercise that circulates through gyms, workplaces, and over the Internet. Julie Bender, a professional dietitian, and Phil Tyne, director of the Baylor University Health and Wellness Center “weigh in” on many of the most common diet and exercise myths.

Top 10 Myths:

1. **Crunches will get rid of your belly fat.** You can’t pick and choose areas where you’d like to burn fat. In order to decrease overall body fat content you should create a workout that includes both cardiovascular and strength training elements.

2. **Stretching before exercise is crucial.** Lengthening destabilizes the muscle fibers and can make them less prepared for the strain of exercise and more susceptible to injury. Before a run is fine but if you are lifting wait until after the workout to stretch your muscles.

3. **You should never eat before a workout.** Food provides “fuel” and energy your muscles need to work efficiently. Even if you workout early in the morning, consider a snack like fruit, yogurt, or whole wheat toast 1 to 3 hours prior to exercise.

4. **Lifting weights will make women bulky.** Most women’s bodies do not produce nearly enough testosterone to become ‘bulky’ like body builders. However, if you do find yourself getting bigger than you would like, simply use less weight and more repetitions.

5. **Fat is bad for you, no matter what kind.** Contrary to popular belief, there are plenty of “good fats” out there that are excellent for your health and aid in disease prevention like avocados, nuts, and fish. Including small amounts of these foods at meal times can help you to feel full longer and therefore eat less.

6. **Restricting calories is the best way to lose weight.** It’s a combination of both cutting calories and exercising more. People often take drastic measures to lose weight only eating 1200 calories per day, but these diets do not usually last and do not provide adequate fuel for the body and may actually slow metabolism instead.

7. **As long as you eat healthy foods, you can eat as much as you want.** A calorie is a calorie. You must limit your calorie intake in order to lose weight and healthy or otherwise, you must always be aware of portion sizes.

8. **Exercise turns fat into muscle.** Fat and muscle tissue are composed of two entirely different types of cells. “While you can lose one and replace it with another, the two never “convert” into different forms,” Tyne says. “So fat will never turn into muscle.”

9. **Eating late at night will make you gain weight.** Late-night eating is associated with weight gain because we usually consume more calories at night. This is because we usually deprive our bodies of enough calories during the day. You can have a small snack at night but to avoid over-indulging start the day out with breakfast and eat every 3-4 hours.

10. **You have to sweat to have a good workout.** Sweating is not necessarily an indicator of exertion—sweating is your body’s way of cooling itself. It is possible to burn a significant number of calories without breaking a sweat like taking a walk, doing some light weight training, or working out in a swimming pool.

(Answers 1—10: False) http://seniorliving.about.com/od/exercisefitnes1/a/diet_exercise.htm

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