

Contact: Bev Hillman
Vancouver Personal & Physical Training
PH: 604-948-0709

Safe, Effective & Permanent Fat Loss

By: Bev Hillman

Vancouver Personal & Physical Training

September is upon us and it is one of the busiest times of the year in the fitness industry - second only to the New Year. After a summer of fun in the sun, holidays and BBQ's many people are anxious to get back to their routines. The kids are back in school and now it's time for you!

The number one request I, as a personal trainer, get from clients is fat loss. It's ironic that while the general public is becoming more health conscious, and low and no-fat products are so readily available that our population continues to get fatter. The average adult weighs 8 pounds more than s/he did a decade ago!

So, why the continued weight gain? Researchers have estimated that we expend 100 - 400 kcal. less per day and consume 100 - 300 kcal more per day compared to a few decades ago. This is due to labor-saving devices, the abundance of food, huge portion sizes and processed foods that fill our cupboards and fridges. Expending less energy and consuming more food in a society where exercisers are a minority results in a population that is getting fatter!

So, what can we do about it? If you were to choose dieting - join the ninety-eight percent who go on diets and gain the weight back. Losing the weight in the first place is not the hard part - people successfully lose weight all the time. It's keeping the weight off that's the hard part. The problem is that when you diet you lose valuable, energy-burning muscle tissue which drops your metabolism, making it easier to put the weight back on. And secondly diets are, by nature, a short-term phenomenon. You often feel deprived during the diet-stage and, thus once you've lost the desired weight, you return to old habits and patterns, and the weight is quickly regained.

Your second choice may be exercise. This is a good choice but, unfortunately, for many people, exercise by itself is a painfully, slow process. A fat loss exercise program may exhibit a two percent change in body fat over a 12 - 18 week period which would translate into three pounds of lost fat. That equates to about a pound lost per month. When people are looking for immediate results, they often don't have the patience to wait!

The best choice is to exercise and eat well. Research has found this method to be the most successful at reducing body fat and keeping it off.

Here's a Fat Loss program that incorporates exercise and healthy eating that will ensure you lose body fat safely, effectively and permanently:

Aerobic exercise: The American College of Sports Medicine recommends aerobic exercise five to seven days per week for 20 - 60 minutes each session to maximize fat loss (walking, running, cycling, swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, rowing etc. These activities expend a lot of energy and will burn up a lot of fat. They should be the focus of your exercise program). If you are just starting with exercise, progress slowly. Perhaps 30 - 40 minutes three to four times per week keep the intensity of your aerobic workouts within the 5 - 8/10 range on the perceived rate of exertion scale. This means you are working up a sweat, breathing deeply but not gasping for air.

Resistance exercise: Aerobic exercise should encompass most of your training time, but regular strength training workouts are also critical to maximize fat loss. Muscle is an energy-burning tissue and therefore, if you have more of it, your metabolism revs at a higher rate making it easier to burn fat both during and after exercise. You don't need to spend a lot of time in the weight room. You will achieve results by performing just one set of 10-15 reps. Pick exercises for all the large, major muscle groups.

Eat less food more often: The best way to satisfy the body is to provide a constant supply of energy to stabilize blood sugar levels, keep metabolism up and avoid losing control and splurging. Try to consume smaller meals or snacks every two to three hours during the day from a variety of foods. Remember to watch the portion sizes. Most people don't realize they're eating three times the recommended serving. .

Drink eight glasses of water every day: If we are dehydrated, our body and its organs and systems don't function at their optimal level. This limits your ability to exercise intensely and, ultimately, will affect your ability to burn body fat.

Focus on what you should be eating instead of what you shouldn't be eating: Ensure you consume five vegetable and three fruit servings every day. Fruits and vegetables are high in nutrients and water content and low in fat and calories. If you fill up on your fruits and veggies, you're going to have less room for the high-fat, nutrient-poor foods.

Practice the 80/20 rule: Don't set yourself up for failure - be realistic. Instead of thinking "all or nothing" decide to eat really healthy five days a week and then two days allow for a few indulgences. Remember, it's not what you do over the next six weeks, but rather what you do for the next 10 years! So make sure it's a nutritional plan that you can follow without feeling deprived.

Limit your alcohol intake: Alcohol is high in calories and lacks nutrient value. Some researchers have also suggested that because alcohol is metabolized in the body first, any food consumed in combination with alcohol will be more easily converted to fat. Alcohol will also reduce your inhibitions and you may be more inclined to indulge or make poor choices. Instead of drinking every night with dinner, limit it to once or twice a week.

Increase your daily activity: Try to be more active during regular daily activities. The calories expended from walking a few extra blocks, taking the stairs, or performing errands in an active way really add up!

Try to limit after dinner munching: Eating late at night often goes hand-in-hand with high-fat snacks and overeating.

Keep an activity and food journal: Record your daily exercise and monitor the quantity, time and moods when you eat. We often over-estimate the amount of time spent exercising and under-estimate the amount of food we eat. Some researchers have found that just the act of recording the foods you eat, result in better choices and a healthier diet.

It's a good idea to set daily goals to keep yourself on track. Make sure the goals are behavioral in nature (i.e. drinking eight glasses of water, exercising for 30 minutes, eating three small meals and two snacks) instead of body focused (i.e. I will lose 10 pounds, 5 inches etc.)

Lastly, be patient. Effective weight loss takes months and sometimes years. You didn't put the weight on over night and you definitely won't lose it in weeks or days! Accept your genetic body shape for what it is. Being fit is more than being thin. Making the choice to be active, healthy and happy at any size or shape is the ultimate goal.

For more information contact Bev Hillman at 604-948-0709, or contact her via e-mail at bev@trainwithbev.com.

-30-

Vancouver Personal & Physical Training

Tel. 604-948-0709

info@trainwithbev.com

TrainWithBev.com