

A LIFETIME DIET that makes sense!

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STARVATION—the way to reduce? It may seem so if you listen to bridge or luncheon table conversations: "No thanks, my dear. Do you realize how many calories that has?" or "Oh, I couldn't—too fattening, you know." And you'll find the equivalent in many all-male groups.

The "battle of the bulge" has become one of the major preoccupations of Americans whether overweight or not. And we are not alone. This past spring in Nairobi, East Africa, we read an excellent article giving helpful advice and information on how to take off unwanted pounds. Even in underdeveloped areas, where getting enough to eat has been more of a problem than having too much, the value of figure control, as well as the dangers of obesity, is beginning to be recognized.

Why, then, are there so many people who lose the battle? It seems clear that their strategy is wrong. For one thing, there seems to be a fixed idea that the road to a slim silhouette must be costly to be effective. True, if we shop for pills and special gimmicks touted to do the work for us. Trips to reducing salons, special-formula liquid concoctions, trick "diet" plans, fancy machines are expensive, unnecessary, and discouraging.

Since we are willing to spend so much money on panaceas, let's consider the economics of over-eating. How much do you suppose it cost to put on those unwanted pounds? A single pound of fat on you represents an excessive intake of about 3,500 calories and can cost anywhere from about \$2.50 to \$8. So an extra 15 pounds could easily represent \$37.50 to \$120 in hard cash.

So you look at yourself and get inspired to do something. You spend three or four weeks eating hay and sawdust,

that lets you eat everything



take off 10 pounds or so, get bored, and in a couple of months the 10 pounds are back in place—another \$50 down the gullet.

The moral in this is obvious. *Don't get fat in the first place.* That way, you save both your money and your health.

Actually, cutting down on calories should save money, if you do it sensibly. An orange or an apple costs less than a hot-fudge sundae. A four-ounce portion of steak is certainly less expensive than an eight- or ten-ounce serving.

Suppose you cut down 500 calories a day. This could be a saving of anywhere from 20 cents to \$1. If we are ultraconservative and say 40 cents as an average, this would mean you've not only cut down on your waistline by a pound a week but also on your food bill by about \$3.

If you really go all out and not only reduce the calories you consume but also increase your activity, remember this: walking shoes are a lot less expensive than dues to a private gymnasium or handball club.

The idea we are trying to convey is that anyone who wants to can take off weight by either reducing calories or increasing exercises—preferably by both! And there is a right way to do it as well as several wrong ways. The right way needn't cost you money, and there is no reason to disrupt patterns, or cook separate meals for the would-be sylphs in the family.

How to do it? We haven't any magic formulas or "open sesame" words. All we can do is appeal to you to use the common sense you put in use in planning other activities.

First and foremost, you must want—really and truly—to lose or control your weight. Then the battle is half won. Your doctor or dietitian can't do this for you. You have to supply the motivation, and you have to do the work.

The second step is to check to see if you are planning meals well. Do they insure the proper distribution and intake of

essential nutrients? By this, we mean that a selection of a variety of foods from the "Basic Four" is a must for anyone—fat or thin. A chart with this article shows what the Basic Four include.

As an example, here are two menus. How would you rate them? They have essentially the same foods and the same calorie value.

MENU I

Breakfast:

Stewed prunes
Sweet roll and butter
or margarine
Coffee

Noon:

Baked macaroni and cheese
Apple pie
Carbonated drink

Supper:

Fried perch with lemon
Mashed potatoes
Escalloped corn
Rice pudding and cookies
Beverage

MENU II

Breakfast:

Orange slices
Cereal with milk
(or scrambled egg)
Toast and butter or
margarine
Coffee

Noon:

Baked macaroni and cheese
Fruit salad on lettuce
Roll and butter
Milk

Supper:

Fried perch with lemon
Mashed potatoes
Buttered spinach
Shredded lettuce with
French dressing
Rice pudding and cookies
Beverage

Menu II is an example of good menu planning. Sorry, Menu I sounds pretty good and lots of people eat this way, but it isn't good planning. Look at breakfast—no source of good protein, nothing to stay with you until noon. A breakfast like this often can be responsible for extra calories at 10 a.m.

Menu I lacks variety, too. The food items are not the same, but macaroni, potatoes, corn, and rice are "starchy" foods and have pretty much the same consistency. Variety means not only a wide choice of foods but also variety in tex-

ture, in consistency, and in color, too.

Also, in checking with the Basic Four, we see that Group III is sadly neglected. Fruits and vegetables—a variety of them—some raw, some cooked, some green, some yellow—are valuable sources of vitamins and minerals as well as being, as a group, fairly low in calories.

After establishing good menu-planning habits, learn something about the relative calorie value of foods. There is no point in memorizing pages of figures. All one needs is a good working knowledge of what kinds of foods are considered to be high, medium, or low in calories. There are some of each in all four food groups.

A nutritionist friend of ours was seated at a luncheon beside a real Mrs. Five-by-Five. This lady remarked that her doctor told her that if she didn't eat bread and potatoes she would lose weight. Her complaint was that she hadn't eaten any for a year—and had lost no weight. A look at her plate told why. Among other things, she had a fine big helping of escalloped noodles, two corn muffins with butter and jam, and pecan pie with ice cream for dessert. True, though, she had no bread and potatoes!

Usually by eating one modest serving of everything on a well-planned menu, weight can be controlled, perhaps even lowered slowly but surely. Sometimes it is helpful to substitute a food lower in calories for a high one, depending on how fast you wish to lose.

Menu II, for example, furnishes about 2,200 calories. Broil the fish in a little milk instead of frying it; have a moderate serving of plain fruited gelatin and one cookie for dessert; use some lemon juice or wine vinegar to dress your salad. Right there you have saved 350 calories. This many calories saved every day is 2,400 a week, which should represent a weight loss of about 3/4 pound.

In any weight-control program, the between-meal snacks require some attention. All propaganda to the contrary, "snacking" is of value if done
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