

A noted physician offers a diet which doesn't require skipping your favorite foods—just your favorite conversation topic

Eat and Stay Slim—the **SECRET** Way



SHIRLEY BROWN is not her real name, but I can assure you she's a very real person with a very common problem—weight.

"I just can't stick to a diet, doctor," she told me sadly while plumped rather overstuffedly in the office chair. "I guess I have no will power."

She had picked out a "no-something" diet that promised to slim her down in a week or so. At a party, though, one glance at that villainous but delectable "something" started her sighing about "the agony of being on a diet."

Like a conspirator, the hostess whispered into her ear. "This is a party. Breaking your diet doesn't count. After all, you've got to have fun."

Shirley got her fun—and eventually the three pounds she had lost in previous days. Now she was disconsolate, suffering the depression of a sincere dieter who had cheated herself.

To many doctors, this depression seems completely unnecessary. There's an easy, healthy way to diet, one which takes away poundage without taking away fun. Call it a "scrimp diet," "secret diet," or "reduce-and-have-fun diet"—the name isn't important. The results are, though.

Shirley Brown went on such a diet. She eliminated more than 1,000 calories per day and in four months had lost 30 pounds, bringing her to normal weight. There were two phases in her campaign.

FIRST, she kept her mouth shut about it. Remember, while a diet may be fascinating to the dieter, it's a bore to others. Possibly to avenge this boredom, well-meaning friends and relatives seem dedicated to sidetracking the dieter. "Just take a bite of this"... "Oh, two spoonfuls won't hurt."

Even a strong-willed person, battling his own appetite, weakens under the entreaties of people he likes and respects. And once a diet is broken, it's rarely pieced together.

Shirley went to parties and luncheons, but she didn't inflict her dieting on friends. Consequently, they left her free to eat what she wanted.

Didn't people notice she was cutting out some foods? No, because Shirley did not cut out any foods. She merely cut down.

This is the second and key phase of the diet. You eat normally but less of everything. Thus, you enjoy both food and social life—and let others enjoy them, too. An individual's modified diet, of course, will depend on what he normally eats, but here's how Shirley Brown adjusted her calories and, in turn, her figure:

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Breakfast was one poached or boiled egg instead of two fried ones, saving 125 calories. She ate dry cereal with milk (two ounces, 40 calories) instead of heavy cream (two ounces, 200 calories), saving 160 calories. There was no bread for breakfast on the days she ate cereal.

At lunch she ate a salad with vinegar dressing made with a touch of sugar. Eliminating two tablespoons of the usual mayonnaise saved 200 calories. When she felt like having a sandwich, she used two slices of thin bread (100 calories) and buttered them with one teaspoon of butter (50 calories, instead of a tablespoon of butter at 150 calories). She drank a glass of skim milk (80 calories less than whole milk) once a day and ate unsweetened applesauce, or a peach, pear, or melon. They substituted for the two doughnuts she used to eat and cut down 300 calories.

At dinner she ate soup, meat (without gravy) and vegetables, and a small portion of rice or noodles or potatoes, too. For dessert, she enjoyed a small piece of plain cake or a portion of plain ice cream or a half-portion of pie; or one ounce of cheese with three or four crackers. That brought caloric intake down from 400 to 200. Total savings for the day: more than 1,000 calories.

Shirley Brown increased her portions slightly when she reached her normal weight. But she never went completely off the diet. Like many obese persons, she often asked, "Will I have to diet forever?" The answer for all is "probably yes."

But dieting isn't a lifetime of grapefruit juice and raw carrots or yogurt and steaks. It's a normal amount of proteins and minerals without any forbidden foods—just forbidden large portions.

Any good diet must be nutritionally adequate, of course. Each of us, at every age, needs the basic seven foods every day—1) green and yellow vegetables; 2) oranges and other citrus fruits, cabbage, and salad greens; 3) potatoes, fruit, and vegetables;

4) milk and its products; 5) meat, fish, and fresh eggs; 6) bread, other cereals; 7) butter, margarine, other fats, oils, and carbohydrates.

This means that if you eat meat, fish, or cheese each day, the fat requirement will be met by the natural fat in those foods, which are primarily protein but contain some fat. Butter, other shortenings, gravies, and oil or mayonnaise should be taken in light quantities. Starches, too, can be reduced but not eliminated.

SO-CALLED "crash diets" are not harmful in themselves; although vitamin-deficient, they could even be valuable as "starters" or "pump-primers" for a few days. But when a "crash diet" ends, the dieter starts eating again. The excess weight returns and with it the dieter's depression. Besides, alternately "crashing" and "gorging" can be harmful.

If you must adopt a crash diet, look upon it only as the beginning of your long-range secret diet with its modified but well-balanced caloric intake. And get used to the idea that you can never eat as much as in the old days. In time, you will find you have developed new eating habits that will be as unconscious a part of your daily living as any other habit.

Modified dieting is based on the simple fact that Americans don't need as much food as they eat. We have a tradition of hearty eating, and we are blessed with a full larder. Consequently, most of us overeat. Huge meals were fine for our ancestors who labored heavily, but we have become a sedentary people who no longer work off what we consume.

There's another American tradition which is making us a nation of fannies—overwhelming hospitality. Ever since the Pilgrims, hosts have been stuffing guests with rich foods and feeling insulted if the plate isn't wiped clean.

An American who wants to adjust his eating to his living habits hasn't got a chance unless he remains secretive about it. It's sad but true: for most of us, even talk is fattening!

COVER:

The spirited girls in Ozzie Sweet's cover photo make skiing look as easy as building a snowman. Actually, it takes great skill—just as this dramatic action shot on the slopes near Waitsfield, Vt., required all the camera know-how at Sweet's command.

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