

# THINK LIGHT!

Weight Management/Healthy Eating Program



**A proven approach  
enjoyed by millions  
since 1988!**

*The “slow-carb,” healthy-fat program that trains  
your body to release and burn stored fat!*

**Caution:**

Before starting any physical fitness and/or weight management program you should consult with your doctor.

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# Introduction

If you're not happy with the shape you're in, take a good hard look at your lifestyle habits. Chances are your routine is working against you.

It's a fundamental principle common among all living things. What we do most consistently, over and over again, day in and day out, stimulates our bodies to adapt.

Darwin acknowledged it with his "survival of the fittest" theory. Living creatures have the inherent ability to physiologically adapt in response to conditions that threaten their survival. Translation: camels retain water to survive long stretches in the desert, dogs grow winter coats to stay warm in the winter, bugs turn colors to hide from predators, and humans store excess body fat to carry them over in the event the hunting is lousy.

The irony is that now that we've evolved to a supersized, reality TV culture, the same physiological processes that once kept us alive are now working overtime "surviving" us to death.

## Fat Storage

Take, for example, the process of **fat storage**. Our daily patterns of what we eat and when we eat it can make all the difference in the world as to whether we're efficient fat storers or not. How? Well, first a little physiology lesson...

Fat is a very concentrated, potent fuel source. A single gram of fat provides over twice the amount of energy compared to a gram of either carbohydrate or protein. It's this simple fact, coupled with fat's tremendous insulating and protective qualities, that explains why the average person has 25 - 75 billion fat cells. We're built to store fat.

Under a powerful microscope a single fat cell looks like a tiny, spherical sac containing a droplet of oil. When we gain body fat, our fat cells fill up with more oil, thereby increasing in size. This process is called fat storage.

Fat storage is controlled by a miniature "doorman" who's only job is to keep an eye out for fat passing by in the bloodstream. When it sees fat cruising by, the doorman jumps up from its seat, reaches into the blood, grabs the passing fat and gently shoves it inside the fat cell.

Now, back to Darwin. What scientists have learned is that these little doormen are extremely adaptive. If our lifestyle habits keep them busy jumping and shoving all day long, then over time they actually get better at their job. In fact, put a little fat in the bloodstream, and the "adapted" doorman turns into a barrel-chested, biceps-bulging, bald-headed, crazed maniac grabbing every bit of fat that passes by. Compare that to the less adapted, mild-mannered, easy-going doorman more likely to be snoozing rather than storing.

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## Fat Release

There's another adaptable doorman character hanging around in this fat cell story. This doorman's job is to reach **inside the fat cell**, (instead of the bloodstream), grab some stored fat and send it floating away in the bloodstream. This process of **fat release** is also heavily influenced by our daily lifestyle patterns and routines. For some of us, that means having fat cells that are incredibly efficient at releasing fat, while others have cells that tend to stubbornly hold onto their fat.

## Fat Metabolism

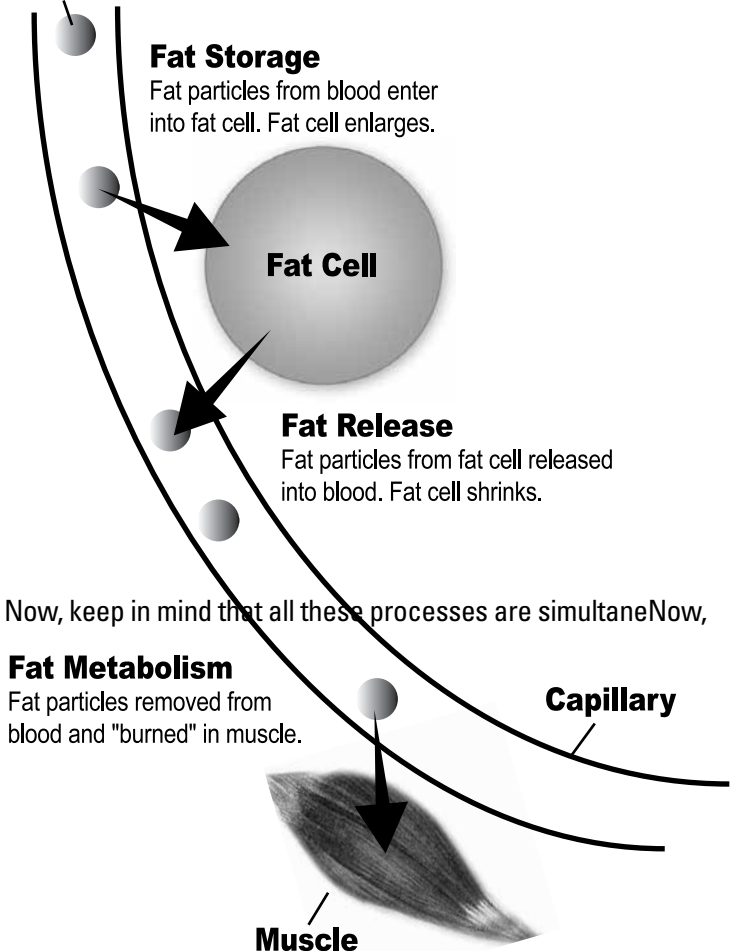
You're probably ready about now to hear what it's going to take to get your fat cells trained to be better fat releasers and less active fat storsers. Hold on to that thought for a moment because there's still another physiological piece to this weight management puzzle...

While your fat cells are busy going about their business storing and releasing fat, **fat metabolism** is occurring downstream in the various muscles of your body. Fat metabolism is a multi-staged process that involves (a) transporting the fat from the bloodstream into the muscle cell and (b) metabolizing or "burning" the fat as a fuel source within the muscle. Not surprisingly, both of these processes are also adaptable and can be modified by the patterns and routines in your life. Some people have bodies that metabolize fat with great zeal, while others are not so inclined.

## The Big Picture

So, for all you visual learners, here's what it looks like...

### Fat Particle



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Now, keep in mind that all of these processes are simultaneously occurring, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (hence the term “24-7” in case you weren’t hip with the lingo) all throughout the body. They’re also taking place at various rates. Ultimately, it is the **net balance** of fat storage, fat release and fat metabolism that determines whether your fat cells are growing, shrinking or maintaining their size.

Here’s another way to visualize what’s going on. Think of a boat (fat cell) floating in a shallow lake filled with oil (fat in the bloodstream). The boat has a small leak and oil is slowly seeping in (fat storage). You’re sitting in the boat scooping the oil out (fat release). As long as you’re scooping it out as fast as it’s coming in, the boat doesn’t fill up. If, however, you gradually tire of scooping and the oil keeps coming, it’s only a matter of time before the boat fills up (i.e. your fat cell gets larger).

And therein lies the problem for the majority of us. Our bodies have adapted to our lifestyle patterns by becoming entirely too efficient at storing, rather than releasing and burning, excess fat. Over time, our fat cells gradually and steadily increase in size and, consequently, each year our clothes get a little tighter and our weight on the scale a little higher.

## **Sending Out an S.O.S.**

The good news is that there is a way to right the ship (boat?) so you become more effective at releasing and burning fat, rather than storing it. And it’s probably no surprise that solution

involves adopting lifelong habits that work for you, rather than against you. Eating habits. Shopping habits. Cooking habits. Exercise habits. Even thinking habits. The trick is to practice and enjoy healthy patterns and routines, day in and day out. Consistency is what matters most. Not perfection. Consistency. It takes a consistent, repetitive message to stimulate the physiological adaptation. Rest assured, if the message is strong enough, your body will begin to change.



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# The THINK LIGHT! Habits

**The path to change has only two rules -  
Begin, and then Continue...**

~ Anonymous

The THINK LIGHT! Weight Management/Healthy Eating Program will help get you started on the path of change. The program has helped millions of people gradually adopt healthier lifestyle habits and reprogram their bodies in the process. The cornerstones of the program are the THINK LIGHT! Habits; five simple habits that, when learned and practiced on a regular basis, will profoundly affect your fat storing, releasing and metabolizing systems.

- (1) If you want less fat on you, put less fat in you!
- (2) Think “slow-carbs” not low-carbs...
- (3) Eat less more often.
- (4) Make exercise a habit you enjoy.
- (5) Always remember; there’s no such thing as cheating. There’s only wandering. Wandering is not wrong or bad. It’s a normal way to eat.

In the next few pages you'll learn more about each of the THINK LIGHT! Habits. You'll find that adopting these habits isn't complicated, nor does it require extensive planning, preparation or willpower. All it takes is a willingness to try something new.

The THINK LIGHT! Eating Plan on this CD is designed to help you put the THINK LIGHT! Habits into practice. Use the menu plan as a guide until you get the hang of it. Remember, changing lifestyle habits is a process meant for you to experience and enjoy. The easiest way to go about it is to take one step at a time. If you try to hurry change, chances are you'll never get there. Change moves at its own pace. Once you understand and accept this fact, you can help, rather than hinder, the process. It helps to remember that once you've adopted these lifestyle habits, they are yours forever.

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# 1. If You Want Less Fat on You, Put Less Fat in You!

**Because fat is so prevalent in the foods available to us, the only way to lower our fat intake is to raise our fat consciousness.**

For over two decades medical researchers have performed study after study evaluating the effects of high fat diets on everything from heart disease to cancer to obesity to global warming. The resulting enormous volumes of data and evidence have been compelling enough to influence virtually every major health organization – including the American Heart Association, American Dietetic Association, American Medical Association, National Cancer Society and the National Institute of Health – to publicly promote the position that eating a high fat diet is unhealthy.

Too much dietary fat not only clogs our arteries, strains our vital organs and bogs down our digestive processes – it stimulates our fat cells to become more efficient at storing fat! Following a fatty meal, the levels of fat in the blood increase substantially. When fat cells see lots of fat floating around in the blood, the fat doormen go crazy, reaching and grabbing for every molecule of fat they can get their hands on. A lifetime pattern of high-fat eating makes them better at their job.

Because a high fat diet increases fat storage, the most effective way to reduce body fat is to concentrate on reducing your daily fat intake. Even if you don't consciously lower your total caloric intake, making the switch to a healthy fat diet will often result in fat loss. In a study conducted at the University of Minnesota, patients maintained their usual caloric intake while reducing fat intake from 39 to 22 percent over the course of three months. They lost an average of six pounds in the process.

### **The 30% Solution**

According to large scale dietary surveys, 37 to 42 percent of the calories consumed by the average American are from fat. Most health professionals suggest that no more than 30 percent of your total calories come from fat. It's no coincidence that heart disease, cancer and obesity rank among our nation's most serious health concerns. All three are linked to consumption of a high fat diet.

Eating less fat is easier said than done. Although people don't usually crave fat like they do sugar, studies do indicate that most people have a strong taste preference for fat. Americans are used to eating fat. We've been raised with it. Fat is responsible for the flavor and texture of our favorite foods: meats, cheeses, eggs, nuts, oils, mayonnaise, sour cream, butter, sauces, creams, gravies, salad dressings, fried foods, pastries, and desserts.

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Most people aren't aware of the amount of fat they eat. Unless you've had your diet analyzed, it's difficult to estimate what your dietary fat percentage is. It's safe to say, though, if you don't consciously think about your fat intake, you're probably eating too much.

The way to lower the fat in your diet is to become a fat-conscious eater. That means learning to **THINK LIGHT!** every day. Your goal is to balance out the foods you're eating so that you average roughly 30 percent fat each day. Learning to read and understand food labels will help you do this. Besides listing ingredients, labels give you the information you need to determine how much fat is in the foods you eat.

To determine the fat content of a particular food, you need to look for two important numbers: **Calories per serving** and the total **grams of fat per serving**. Since you want to know what percentage of the total calories are fat calories, you must first convert the grams of fat into calories. At the bottom of each label is a helpful reminder that there are nine calories per gram of fat.

To calculate the fat percentage of the food do the following calculation:

(1) Multiply the number of grams of fat by 9 (9 calories per gram of fat).

- (2) Divide this number by the total calories per serving.
- (3) The result is the percentage of fat calories.

Let's look at a familiar label to see how this calculation works.

### **Microwave Popcorn**

Nutrition Information Per Serving

SERVING SIZE 1 pouch  
SERVINGS PER CONTAINER 4  
CALORIES 200  
PROTEIN (g) 2  
CARBOHYDRATE (g) 21  
FAT (g) 12

- (1)  $12 \text{ grams fat} \times 9 \text{ calories} = 108 \text{ fat calories}$
- (2)  $108 \text{ fat calories} \div 200 \text{ calories per serving} = .54$
- (3) A single serving of microwave popcorn is 54% fat.

**Explanation:** There are 12 grams of fat in each serving. Multiply this by 9 since there are 9 calories in every gram of fat; this equals 108 fat calories. To figure fat percentage, divide 108 by the total calories per serving (200). The result is .54 or 54%. A single serving of this microwave popcorn is 54% fat, 24% higher than the recommended 30%. An alternative to this high fat popcorn is "light" microwave popcorn or hot-air popped popcorn which is virtually fat-free.

If the fat calories are more than 30% of the total calories, you

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know this is not a low-fat food. Does that mean you shouldn't eat it? Not necessarily. If there is a lower fat alternative, you might consider it. Or, you may want to balance this high fat selection with low-fat foods for the rest of the day. Remember, your goal is to keep your total daily fat calories around 30% of your **total** calories.

## **Facts About Fats**

When it comes to fat storage, not all fats are created equal. There is new evidence that saturated fats (found in animal fat) may be more 'fattening' than plant and fish fats. Diets high in saturated fat and hydrogenated vegetable fat (typically found in packaged baked goods, some cereals and candy) tend to increase fat storage in the visceral (abdomina) area. Visceral fat is linked to hypertension and high blood fat. In contrast, a diet high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat, including omega 3 fats, (found in olives, nuts, legumes, seeds, vegetable oils, fish, avocados) tends to create less visceral fat.

Saturated fats also increase blood levels of LDL (low-density lipoproteins), a cholesterol carrier. High levels of LDL have been linked to coronary heart disease. But not all saturated fats are the same. Stearic acid, for example, does not seem to affect cholesterol levels. However, foods such as beef and chocolate that contain stearic acid also contain other saturated fats that raise cholesterol.

Another type of fat to shown to raise LDL and lower HDL levels

(high-density lipoprotein - the “good cholesterol”) are trans fats. Trans fats are found in stick margarine, shortening, baked goods made with margarine and shortening, deep fried foods, chips, most fast foods, most crackers and most processed convenience foods.

Recent studies have shown that monounsaturated fats decrease LDL levels and raise HDL levels. Monounsaturated fats actually appear to have some health value, provided the total amount of dietary fat remains at or below 30 percent. Canola, olive and peanut oils are sources of monounsaturated fat.

Diets rich in polyunsaturated fats tend to lower total cholesterol levels, including HDLs, and are less likely to be stored as visceral fat. The two main poly fats are omega-3s (found in cold water fish, flaxseed, canola oil and walnuts) and omega-6s (found in corn, safflower, sesame, soy and sunflower oils).

## **Tips for Eating Healthier Fats**

- Use butter rather than margarine
- Limit fried foods.
- Bake, roast, broil and grill instead of frying.
- Use non-stick or stainless steel cookware.
- Buy lean cuts of meat.
- Eat more fish and poultry rather than red meat.
- Remove the skin from chicken before you eat it.
- Trim all visible fat from meat before cooking and eating.



- Apply salad dressing to your salad with a fork.
- Buy tuna packed in water, not oil. Rinse the tuna under cold running water for roughly 1 minute and drain (rinsing substantially reduces salt content).

## **Lowering the Fat in Recipes**

- Substitute 2 egg whites for 1 whole egg.
- Use 1/3 to 1/2 the amount of oil called for in most recipes. For texture, replace with apple juice, milk or yogurt.
- Saute foods in broth, dry cooking sherry or wine instead of oil.
- When preparing water for pasta, rice or vegetables, avoid adding oil or salt.

## 2. Think “Slow Carbs” Not Low Carbs...

Read the headlines, watch a talk show or two or take a stroll through a grocery store and you may be convinced that carbohydrates are the source of all evil in the universe. The bestselling low-carb advocates have successfully made their mark on the public psyche assisted by an enthusiastic media and an ever-increasing number of food manufacturers, marketers and restaurateurs all intent on riding the raging low-carb wave for all its worth. Lots of folks are giving it a try and, in fact, many are experiencing weight loss as a result.

The premise behind the low-carb concept is that in an attempt to heed the advice of health professionals calling for a low-fat lifestyle, we’ve unwittingly increased our consumption of low-fat foods loaded with refined, processed carbohydrates (a.k.a. sugar). The low-carb proponents suggest that too much of these processed and simple carbohydrates result in spikes in insulin, a hormone that stimulates hunger and fat storage. Their solution is to dramatically restrict carbohydrate intake which ultimately sends the body into fat-burning overdrive in a metabolic process known as **ketosis**.

Many health professionals suggest that the weight loss experienced on a low-carb diet has more to do with a reduction in to-

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tal calories, rather than a reduction in carbohydrates. Much of the initial loss is, in fact, water as the body burns up its limited stores of carbohydrate which are generally “packed in water.”

The truth is that carbohydrates are not the enemy. On the contrary, our bodies need carbohydrates. Carbs are the preferred fuel for our brains and central nervous systems. They’re also a critical energy source for our muscles during exercise. Athletes and other consistent exercisers are likely to experience muscle fatigue on a low-carb diet. For some, low-carb diets may also lead to feelings of fatigue and depression.

What we should be focusing on is the **quality** of carbohydrates we consumer rather than limiting the quantity.

### **Slow Carbs**

Carbohydrates are typically classified as simple or complex. Most health professionals recommend that the majority of carbohydrates consumed be of the complex, not simple, variety.

Simple carbohydrates – the type we’re probably all guilty of eating too much of – include refined flour, processed cereals, sugars, sweets and some fruits. In their original form, these foods are already chemically similar to a simple molecule of glucose. Therefore, once consumed they rapidly turn into glucose and quickly enter the blood stream.

Since the body considers glucose such a valuable commodity, the various cells of the body make every effort to get hold of it. When blood glucose levels rise, the body responds by squirting into the blood increased amounts of the hormone insulin. Insulin travels through the bloodstream acting as a glucose escort. Without an insulin escort, the glucose molecule is too big and bulky to get into the various cells of the body.

The problem with eating large amounts of simple carbohydrates is that the resulting rapid increase in blood glucose typically leads to an overproduction of insulin. The blood gets so full of busy escorts racing around everywhere opening cell doors, that in a short time blood glucose levels begin to drop. In other words, the blood glucose “high” is quickly followed by a blood sugar “crash.” This drop in blood sugar may explain why people often experience energy lulls and/or sugar cravings shortly after eating a concentrated sweet such as a candy bar.

Another drawback of elevated blood glucose and insulin levels is the effect on our fat cells. When insulin and blood glucose levels are elevated, fat storage increases and fat release decreases. Chronically elevated insulin may induce the cells to adapt by becoming more stubborn at holding on to their fat stores.

Complex carbohydrates are found in vegetables, dried beans, whole grain cereals, breads, oats, barley, brown rice and nuts. Because these foods are chemically more complex than simple

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carbohydrates, they take longer to digest. Think of them as **slow-carbs**. The digestion and subsequent increase in blood glucose with complex carbohydrates is a much more gradual process. Slow-carbs are less likely to produce the erratic changes in insulin and blood glucose levels that occur following consumption of simple carbohydrates.

Unless they were enriched during processing, most simple carbohydrates contain a minimal amount of vitamins, minerals and fiber. For this reason, candy, cake, pastries, soda, jelly and cookies are often labeled “empty calories,” that is, calories with little or no nutritional value. Slow-carbs, on the other hand, are an important source of essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and protein. Ideally, over 40% of your daily calories should come from foods high in slow-carbs and less than 10% of your calories from simple sugars.

### **Fiber Up**

Americans eat an average of 10 to 20 grams of fiber per day which is well below the National Cancer Institute (NCI) recommendation of 25 to 35 grams per day. The basis for this recommendation comes from research suggesting a number of beneficial effects of dietary fiber.

Recent studies suggest that foods high in fiber may protect against some cancers, particularly cancer of the colon. There is also some evidence that a high-fiber diet lowers blood cholesterol, and thereby reduces the risk of coronary heart

disease. Physicians now also recommend a high-fiber diet for their diabetic patients.

In terms of weight management, a high-fiber diet makes good sense. High fiber foods are not only low in calories and fat, they are often very filling. It would be pretty difficult to eat a thousand calories of broccoli.

Making the switch to a high-carbohydrate, low-fat diet will usually increase your daily fiber intake since most complex carbohydrates are high in fiber. However, to meet the NCI recommendations of 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day, it is important you make a conscious effort to include high-fiber foods in just about every meal or snack you eat.

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## 3. Eat less more often.

**“Eat regularly, for an empty stomach  
is not a good political advisor.”**

Albert Einstein

Most of us have been raised with the notion that we should eat three “square” meals a day. Our typical pattern is to progressively increase the size of our meals as the day goes on. We usually eat a light breakfast (if we eat one at all), a medium-sized lunch (frequently in restaurants), and a large dinner. If for some reason we miss a meal, our usual pattern is to make up for it by eating more at the next one. We have also been conditioned to believe that snacking between meals is a “no-no”. “You’ll spoil your supper,” our mothers told us.

Unfortunately, we couldn’t be more wrong about eating. Research has determined that several of the most prevalent diseases of our time - obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes - may be related not only to what and how much we eat, but to when and how often we eat.

Meal frequency, the number of times we eat per day, is believed to have an effect on how much fat we have on our bodies. Researchers have discovered that those individuals who typically eat 4-6 small meals per day have less body fat than those eating 2-3 meals per day, despite the fact both groups eat roughly the same total number of calories. The more frequent

eaters tend to spread their calories out in smaller portions throughout the day.

One particularly interesting study examined 226 children between the ages of 6-16 years, enrolled in three boarding schools where the same daily ration of calories was divided into three, five, or seven portions respectively. In the course of one year the students in the 3-meal-a-day school were found to have gained more body fat than the students in either of the other two schools.

## **Large Meals Increase Fat Storage**

Although the exact reason why eating large, infrequent meals results in increases in body fat is not known, it is likely the explanation involves the changes in blood chemistry that are known to occur in response to a large meal. Following a sizable meal the circulating levels of blood fats and sugars rise considerably. The body's response is to then go to work "clearing" the blood, delivering these compounds primarily to the liver, muscles, and fat tissue to either be stored or metabolized.

Eating a large meal presumably increases the opportunity for the fat cells to extract the fat from the blood, and therefore grow bigger. It is believed that the individual fat cells may actually adapt to a pattern of large, infrequent meals by becoming more efficient at storing fat.



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## Avoiding the Starvation Syndrome

In addition to predisposing us towards fat gain, a meal pattern in which only a few meals are eaten per day may also hamper fat release. Eating once or twice a day sets up a situation where the body is faced with long stretches of time without food.

This type of pattern has been found to “trick” the body into believing it is in a starvation state, initiating physiological changes commonly referred to as the “starvation syndrome.” The most pronounced change associated with the starvation syndrome is a reduction in the body’s resting metabolic rate, the number of calories burned while at rest. This phenomenon is essentially a survival mechanism, enabling the body to conserve energy in the face of a reduced calorie intake. The reduction in metabolic rate ultimately has the effect of also slowing fat loss. The starvation response may explain why people so often have a difficult time losing fat even when eating very little food. Although they are not starving, their bodies respond as though they are.

The THINK LIGHT! approach is to eat small meals or snacks at least 4-6 times a day. By eating more frequently, the body’s metabolic systems will keep on churning away, making fat loss and/or maintenance an easier and less frustrating process. Of course, the idea is to make sure that the meals are light, nutritious, and low in fats and simple sugars.

The number of meals consumed during the day may also have an effect on blood cholesterol and triglyceride levels (two circulating blood fats that are related to the development of coronary heart disease). Numerous studies have demonstrated that an eating pattern of three or more low-fat meals a day results in cholesterol and triglyceride values that are lower than those associated with one or two meal-a-day pattern.

## **Plan Your Day**

In addition to eating smaller meals more frequently, try to plan meals so that the largest meal of the day is not eaten late at night. The body's rate of metabolism has a natural cycle of highs and lows, peaking late in the day and dropping to its lowest level during sleep. It makes sense to avoid putting a large meal into your system after 8 or 9:00 at night when your metabolic rate is beginning its downswing. Food eaten earlier in the day has a greater chance of being used for energy rather than being stored as fat.

Perhaps the most important meal of the day is breakfast. A report from U.C.L.A. suggests that breakfast-eaters live longer. After studying more than 7,000 people, it was concluded that eating breakfast is one of a number of lifestyle habits linked to longevity. Children who skip breakfast may not perform as well in school as classmates who start the day with a healthy meal. Breakfast eaters may also fare better in controlling their weight. One study looked at weight loss when people were given all their daily calories in the morning compared to when

they consumed all their calories at night. Despite eating the same amount of food, the morning eaters lost more weight than the evening eaters.

If you're used to eating only two or three times a day, making the switch to a more frequent small meal pattern will take some getting used to. Most important is to plan your day in advance, packing food with you so you're certain to have a light nutritious snack available to you in the mid-morning and mid-afternoon hours. Advanced planning is the most effective way to avoid skipping meals or succumbing to high fat-high-sugar temptations because you're too hungry to do otherwise. It may take a while to adjust to this new pattern of eating, but once you do the change will definitely be for the better.

# 4. Make Exercise a Habit You Enjoy.

## **Aerobic Exercise: the Fat Burning Choice**

By making exercise a part of your daily routine, you can teach your body to become an efficient fat burner rather than a fat-storer. Cardiovascular exercises that use the body's major muscles in a continuous rhythmic manner for extended periods of time (known as aerobic), have been shown to stimulate fat metabolism. Research shows that people who aerobically exercise on a consistent basis adapt by becoming more efficient at burning fat at rest, during exercise and for some time after exercise.

Examples of aerobic exercise include dance exercise, stepping, climbing, walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, cross-country skiing and rowing. If performed on a consistent basis, each of these activities will effectively promote fat utilization. Consistency is the key word, since aerobic activities provide optimum fat-burning benefit when they're done three to five days a week, for 20 to 60 minutes per session.

## **The Advantages of Resistance Training**

Recent research suggests that the health-enhancing effects of aerobic exercise may be increased by including resistance

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training. Examples of resistance exercises include leg lifts and sit-ups, resistance equipment such as Nautilus or Cybex, and resistance tools such as rubber bands or free weights. A day of rest is always recommended between strength workouts to allow the muscles to rest and repair themselves.

Compared to all other types of exercise, resistance training is the most effective method for preserving, as well as increasing, lean body tissue. The combination of aerobic exercise and resistance training helps develop muscles that are particularly effective at metabolizing fat both during and after exercise.

There are many other benefits of resistance training as well. It increases muscle strength and tone. Stronger muscles tend to be less prone to injury. And this increased strength makes all of your normal daily activities easier. Whether you're lifting children or sitting at a computer all day, strong muscles help you get through your day with less fatigue and soreness.

As with any exercise, you'll get the safest and most effective resistance training workout when you use proper technique and the right equipment. Check with your local health club, wellness facility, exercise equipment store, certified fitness instructor or personal trainer to help you get started on the right foot.

## Adopting the Exercise Habit

Because the majority of Americans struggle with exercise, the American College of Sports Medicine has eased up its exercise standards to make an active lifestyle more achievable for the average person. Now, every adult is encouraged to accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity over the course of most days of the week. So if you vacuum for 10 minutes in the morning, take a 10 minute walk in the afternoon and dance for 10 minutes at night, you've already done enough to see improvements in your health.

## The Choice is Yours

Which exercise is best? Whichever one(s) you enjoy the most. If exercise is boring or painful for you, you won't stick with it for very long. Try a variety of activities and then choose whatever is the most fun.

Here are a few important considerations to keep in mind when selecting your exercise program:

**If you are not already exercising on a regular basis, check with your physician before starting a fitness program.** Most of the time, your physician will be able to give you an okay over the phone with the recommendation that you start slowly. As you become more accustomed to physical activity you can gradually increase to longer and more frequent workouts. With certain health conditions (e.g. family history of heart disease,

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high blood pressure, cigarette smoking, etc.), however, your physician may want to run some more extensive tests to provide you with more specific exercise guidelines.

**Choose an aerobic activity that's consistent with your personality.** Are you an outdoor person, or do you prefer being inside? Do you like the idea of working out on exercise equipment? Do you prefer to exercise alone, with another person or with a group of people? Do you enjoy exercising to music? Thinking about these questions in advance will help you hone in on the aerobic activity that you'll most likely enjoy.

**Make exercise convenient.** Nothing's worse than having to fight crowds, traffic and parking just to get a workout. If exercise is inconvenient, you won't look forward to it. When deciding which program will work best for you, consider how easy it will be for you to include it in your daily life.

**Schedule exercise into your day at a time when you're most likely to do it.** Try to reserve a convenient time for your workouts. If you know in advance that every Monday, Wednesday and Friday you take an aerobics class at 5:15 p.m., you'll be less likely to commit to other obligations at that time. And be realistic. Do you really think you'll stick with a program if you have to wake up at 4:00 a.m. every day to do it? Do you really believe that just because you commit to a certain workout time that you'll be able to stick to it without fail?

**Always include a proper warm-up and cool-down in your workouts.** Begin your workout with a gentle warm-up to gradu-

ally and safely prepare your heart and muscles for exercise. A proper warm-up combines slow, gentle rhythmic movements such as walking, light jogging or dancing in place with static (no bouncing) stretches. Ideally, you should move slowly the muscles you're going to move faster later on in the workout. A proper warm-up lasts about 5 to 10 minutes.

During the final ten minutes of your aerobic workout, remember to gradually taper down your exercise intensity. Rather than coming to an abrupt stop, cool down gently and slowly. This allows your heart rate to gradually return to pre-workout levels and helps your muscles effectively recover from the workout.

**Exercise at the proper intensity.** Fat metabolism shuts down at high exercise intensities. To maximize fat burning, aerobic exercise should be performed at a low to moderate intensity. When your aerobic workout becomes so challenging that it's difficult to catch your breath, you're burning carbohydrates, not fat. And you're probably not having much fun either. Besides labored breathing, a burning sensation in your muscles is another indication that you're not burning fat.

## **THINK LIGHT! and Be Active**

Regardless of what your exercise habits are, living a healthy life means being an active person. Learn to fidget. Try to take a walk after large meals. Make a conscious decision to stand instead of sit, walk instead of drive, climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator. Make excuses to move, and do it every day of your life.



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## **5. Always remember, there's no such thing as cheating. There's only wandering. Wandering is not wrong or bad. It's a normal way to eat.**

It's a familiar scenario. The first of the year rolls around and you make a firm commitment to yourself to get back on the program: you'll exercise Monday, Wednesday and Friday and stick to a 1,000-calorie diet. "This is it," you say. "I'm going to lose those 10 pounds once and for all!" With good intentions you lay down the law, muster up all the self-discipline you can and proceed according to plan. By your calculations, you should be done with this diet by the middle of next month. No problem. You can handle it.

Of course, problems do arise. Like the week you can't make it to the gym because your youngest is home with the flu. Or the three-day business trip that includes lunch meetings at fancy

French restaurants. What about the special project at work that requires overtime for the next month? What happens to your plan then?

If you're like most people, your reaction when problems or temptations manage to sidetrack you from your structured program is one of guilt. You feel like all your hard work has been for naught. "I blew it," you say. "And I was doing so well, too. I've ruined everything. Well, it's over now. I didn't make it. There's no going back now. I just don't have the motivation to start back over again." Feeling defeated, you slide off your plan, returning to your old routine. Maybe this spring will be a better time to start...

## **The All-Or-Nothing Attitude**

This all-or-nothing attitude is the reason why people have so little success with their attempts to change their eating and activity behaviors. We choose structured programs because they relieve us of the responsibility of making choices for ourselves. We believe we need structure to keep us moving toward our goals. A properly designed plan makes good sense. What doesn't make sense, though, is to expect to unwaveringly stick to a structured eating and exercise plan for an extended period of time.

If you begin to change your habits with the assumption that any deviations from your plan will ruin it, you may as well not even begin. No matter how hard you try to stay within the confines of structure, things rarely go according to plan. You can count

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on it. Life is full of unplanned interruptions, distractions and temptations. The only thing you can predict with certainty is that the unpredictable **will** occur. Your best approach is to prepare for it, keep an open mind and maintain an attitude of acceptance.

## **Following the Path**

THINK LIGHT! provides a flexible road map for you to follow to change your eating and activity habits. There are any number of routes you can take to reach your destination. Start your journey with an understanding that there will be days when you will be drawn from your path. Events will happen in your life which will make it impossible for you to keep going on the same path. Just as there will be great days when you can put yourself on cruise control, there will also be days that leave you wondering who is behind the wheel. Before you begin, tell yourself that no matter what happens along the way, rather than stopping your journey or heading back, you'll get back on the path as soon as possible and keep moving forward.

Once you start your journey, expect to be drawn off your path by sights and experiences in the distance. These sights may take any form - from homemade birthday cakes to lazy vacations in the tropics. Whatever the attraction, keep in mind that it's not wrong or bad to wander off the path. To the contrary, if you suddenly find yourself wandering, enjoy the diversion. Occasional wandering isn't a problem as long as you don't let the diversion keep you from getting back on the path. After

you're wandered away, just wander back. If you keep moving forward, and don't let obstructions and diversions stop you in your tracks, you'll end up with improved eating, exercise and thinking habits.

The advantage of this perspective is that it makes the concept of "cheating" obsolete. We cheat on weight control programs as a way of rebelling against structure and feelings of deprivation. The word "cheating" brings to mind sneaky midnight forays to the refrigerator or solitary side trips to the ice-cream parlor. Whatever the image, we're conditioned to think of cheating as wrong. It's a bad thing to do. If you cheat, you deserve to be punished. When we catch ourselves cheating, we often do our own punishing. We make ourselves feel guilty, frustrated or disappointed. Sometimes, we subject ourselves to an even more severe form of punishment; we stop doing things that are in our best interests.

Replacing "cheating" with the concept of "wandering" takes away the all-or-nothing emphasis on right and wrong. Wandering is a normal phenomenon, whereas cheating implies wrongdoing. If you treat every deviation from your plan as a sign of failure, you won't get too far. When you learn not to pass judgment on yourself for wandering, your journey will be easier and more enjoyable.

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# Getting Started...

The THINK LIGHT! program contains a variety of tools to help you develop positive lifestyle habits that will work for you, rather than against you.

## Eating Plan

There are 8 weeks of Menus, Recipes and Grocery Lists. You'll find this eating plan especially helpful whether you're interested in learning about portion sizes, how to eat frequent small meals throughout the day, or if you just want some ideas for healthy meals and snacks.

Follow the menus word for word **OR** use them as a guide to learn what a day of healthy eating is like. If you begin to feel guilty because you're "straying" from the menus, it's time to set the menus aside. Keep using the other components on this CD while you try to figure out why you're feeling guilty. Then you can decide whether to incorporate the menus back into your program.

At some point you may decide "I've got it!" and no longer choose to follow the eating plan. That's great! Following 8 weeks of menus perfectly is not the objective – learning and adopting healthier eating and exercise habits is.

## The Companion Guide

The Companion Guide is an "electronic workbook" that in-

cludes informative articles and a variety of thought-provoking exercises and activities to help you better understand your behavior around food, exercise and your body. Answers and responses that you type in can be reviewed and/or edited at any point.

## **Tips for Success**

Remember - there is no such thing as cheating. "Wandering," on the other hand, is a normal part of eating. Practice being flexible and forgiving with your food choices.

Get into the habit of carrying a snack bag so you've always got access to food when you're hungry.

Drink 4-8 glasses of water every day.

Save time by taking advantage of healthy "prepared" foods available in grocery stores: salad bars, frozen stir-fry, chopped vegetables, etc.

Try to incorporate more movement into each day. If you're sitting for long periods of time, stop and stretch at regular intervals. If you see a gorgeous sunset outside, take a walk and enjoy it close-up.

## **Contact Info**

For additional recipes, support or more information, please visit our Website at [www.thinklight.com](http://www.thinklight.com).