



# Beaverdale

## 24/7 X-Press Newsletter

*Fitness*

November 2008

*Pilates*

### Q & A: What is the best way to lose weight?

By far the most common question we get from members is how to lose weight. This is a primary motivation to join a fitness center and start or restart an exercise program. There are a lot of aspects to cover on this subject and we will address these in future issues as well. Weight loss involves a 2-prong approach: dietary changes and increased exercise. To each of these is also a quantity and quality aspect as well.

**Proper Nutrition:** To lose weight and maintain a desirable weight, it is essential that you develop proper eating habits. To do so, it's important to eat the proper amount and right types of food.

Quantity: There is no getting around it, if you eat more calories than you burn off, you will gain weight. If you burn more than you eat, you will lose weight. So the first issue to get under control is appropriate quantity of calories. We are not fans of counting calories, but we do advocate keeping a food diary as this will help make you aware just how much food you are eating, the types of food you are eating, and will help you think twice before eating something you don't want to have to write down. Keeping a food diary is work, but it is very effective. And one other thing, if you are serious about losing weight, it is going to be additional work, so prepare yourself for this challenge.

Quality: The types of food you eat have a big effect on the ability to eat appropriate quantities. It is important to eat high quality food all the time, but especially important as you are cutting calories to lose weight, because you want to ensure you are getting adequate nutrients. Chances are if you want to lose weight, you didn't gain those extra pounds eating too much broccoli or apples! An ideal diet contains lean protein, lots of fruits and vegetables, and whole grains and beans. It is also important to get some healthy oils in your diet, such as fish and fish oil, nuts, olive and canola oils. These contain essential fatty acids and help to make you feel full. Try to eat more of these types of food and less of those containing sugars, saturated and trans fat, and refined flours.

**Exercise:** The other half of the weight loss equation is exercise. Now we'll tell you right up front, while exercise is very important to help lose weight, it is very difficult to lose weight only through exercise. That's because it takes 500 calories of additional energy expenditure per day to lose one pound of fat per week. That means an hour of day of intense exercise, seven days a week. The better, more sustainable alternative is to try to eat 200-300 calories less per day while burning an extra 200-300 calories through exercise.

Quantity: The amount of exercise required to lose weight depends on a lot of factors, such as your size and weight, your weight loss goal (1 vs. 2 pounds of weight loss per week), and how intensely you exercise. Let's say you plan to burn an extra 1700 calories from exercise each week. There are a lot of sources of information which can estimate the number of calories you will burn doing various exercises, but a rough rule of thumb is that an hour of moderate exercise will burn 300-400 calories an hour. Moderate exercise is where you break a sweat but don't breathe really hard. So you can see that you will need to do 4-5 hours of moderate exercise per week to reach your goal. Our treadmills, elliptical machines and bikes estimate the number of calories you are burning.

Quality: The quality of exercise refers to both the type of exercise and intensity with which you exercise. The two main types of exercise are cardio and strength training. Cardio includes any exercise that raises your heart rate, such as walking, running, cycling and the elliptical machines. Strength training includes weight machines as well as free weights. Both burn calories while you do them. Strength training has the

additional benefit that it can build muscle which will help boost your metabolism, thus allowing you to burn more calories 24 hours a day. As you increase the intensity of your workout, you not only will burn more calories during your exercise session, but your metabolism will stay elevated for a few hours after you have finished exercising (bonus calories burned!). Talk to either of us if you would like to know how to determine your appropriate intensity level, and how to incorporate more intensity into your workouts.

It is recommended that you aim to lose 1 to 1.5 pounds of body weight per week maximum when on a weight loss program. More than this and you will lose lean body tissue (muscle) as well as fat. You want to lose weight gradually while developing new eating and exercise behaviors that you will be able to live with after your weight target is reached, so you will avoid regaining weight. We don't believe in 'diets', we believe in permanent lifestyle changes.

Please visit with us if you are interested in learning more about weight loss, exercise and to find out more about our services to help you lose weight and maintain it.

**Quick Fit Tip of the Month:** The shorter your workout, the more intense it should be. Even if you only have 20 minutes, do a quick 5 min warmup, then workout at a quick pace to get your heart rate up and so you are breathing hard. Doing a short but hard workout will increase your metabolism and keep it up for a while even after the workout is over.

This newsletter is issued once a month and you can pick it up at the fitness center or if you would like it delivered to your inbox by email, just send us an email at [dertl@7flags.com](mailto:dertl@7flags.com) and we will add you to our mailing list.

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