

A dietitian's approach towards fast weight-loss programs

When trying to lose weight, it is normal for typical programs to set goals of weight loss between 1 and 2 pounds per week (~ ½ to 1 kg). This may not seem like a lot but this type of weight loss actually helps keep the weight off on a more permanent basis. These types of programs help the body maintain a proper metabolism and retain necessary muscle mass.

This isn't to say that fast acting weight loss programs don't exist, but for people who are not clinically obese, these programs are not healthy and are strongly recommended against. The fact is that if you are just looking to lose 25 pounds or less, then a fast weight loss program is NOT for you.

Do these rapid weight loss programs work?

The fact is there are numerous amounts of fast acting weight loss programs that exist in the market today. Most of these programs try to incorporate healthy balanced diets while still retaining the fast acting result obtained by low calorie consumption. One of these programs is Medifast, which has been used by medical professionals for a long time. This program promotes a 2- 5 pound per week loss.

These diets are all very similar and consist of very low calorie consumption. This is why they fall under the category of a VLCD (very low calorie diet). These diets only allow a consumption of 800 calories or less. Popular diets in this category like the Optifast or the Cambridge Diet, should never be done without the medical supervision of a healthcare professional and are only meant to be short term.

What's there to worry about with rapid weight loss?

Since rapid weight loss diets are mostly all based on low calorie consumption, the potential to have a nutritional deficiency as a result of these diets is very evident. If there is not proper caution taken to balance these types of diets, health problems may develop.

The body was not made to last that long on low calorie consumption and it is normal for people to feel irritable and fatigued. Other side effects may include constipation as a result of inadequate fiber absorption.

Another thing to worry about with these types of diets is your metabolism. The body naturally prepares itself for life threatening situations. During these low calorie diets, the body may actually believe it is in danger and kick into starvation mode where the metabolism slows down to protect the body. Since you are really not starving but merely dieting your body goes into a yo-yo affect once regular food is reintroduced. Also, when rapid weight loss occurs it can often eat at your muscle mass (catabolism), which is something you definitely do not want.

Who are meant for these programs?

These programs were actually designed for the obese, which by definition is someone with a BMI of over 30. If you are someone who just struggles a little with your weight and are slightly above your ideal, these programs are not recommended as they can cause potential problems long term. You'd rather think of other weight loss methods, for example exercises and healthy food.

A few of these VLCD's need a physician's approval, although programs do exist that may be done without it, such as Medifast.

What about fad Diets?

Fad diets like the famous Atkins or South Beach Diet are mostly all based on an introductory phase where weight loss is significant. These diets, however, have many strict restraints on food elements such as carbohydrates and [weight loss](#) with these programs is actually really due to loss of water weight.

About the Author

The article is posted and written by John Scott, the researcher and writer for www.compareop.com (Phentermine OPs Reports and Discussion board).

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