



TANTALIZING TIDBITS FOR TEENS

DR. QUACK'S QUICKIE WEIGHT LOSS DIETS

Fad diets can be misleading and hard on your health. Although weight is sometimes lost rapidly at first, this loss is often only temporary. Recognizing the differences between wise diets and fad diets will help individuals to develop a weight reduction plan.

Losing weight successfully depends upon eating fewer calories than those used up as energy. Keeping weight off successfully depends on developing and maintaining good eating habits. Exercise plays an important role in both controlling weight and keeping fit.

Many fad diets promise that a certain diet foodstuff or reducing aid will cause miraculous weight losses. Initially there may be a rapid loss of weight but most of it is actually a loss of water. Weight is often gained back because these diets do not help you develop new food or exercise habits needed to achieve a desired weight. Diet pills can create unpleasant side effects. Only take pills under a doctor's care.

A rapid drop or gain in weight can be hard on your health. Tiredness, listlessness, headaches, ill temper, and susceptibility to other illnesses often result when your diet is not adequate.

Following are common types of fad diets:

- *High Protein Diets: Dr. Stillman's Diet, Grapefruit Diet
- *High Protein, Low Carbohydrate Diets: Dr. Atkins' Diet, Slender Now, Air Force Diet
- *High Roughage Diets: Save Your Life Diet
- *One-Food Diets: Last Chance (Liquid Protein) Diet

Q. *How can I tell what is a fad diet?*

- A. Watch for misleading, but catchy claims: Special "fat fighting" ingredients, hormones, or vitamins; promises of miraculous rapid weight losses; newest "Scientific discoveries" for guaranteed weight loss; special diet foods or pills that are better than regular food. Check to see if the diet will be a balanced diet, providing the nutrients you need.

Q. *Where will I run across fad diets?*

- A. Fad diets are commonly advertised in magazines and newspapers. But you'll also find fad diet aids on sale at drugstores and variety stores. You'll hear about different diets from friends, family, and sometimes even your doctor or druggist.



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- Q. *If a rapid weight loss is often temporary and poor for my health, how much weight should I lose a week?*
- A. Set your goal to lose 1-2 lbs. a week. It is easier on your body and on your ability to stick with the diet. One pound equals 3,500 calories. So either decrease your food intake by 500 calories a day, or increase your activity to use up another 500 calories a day.
- Q. *What kinds of foods should I eat? What foods should I avoid?*
- A. The best kind of diet will provide the protein, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, vitamins and water that are needed for good health and good looks. Your diet should include:
- 4 servings of fruits & vegetables: Include 1 citrus fruit and 1 dark green leafy, orange, or yellow vegetable.
- 4 servings of breads and cereals: bread, hot & cold cereal, rice, pasta products, crackers.
- 4 servings of milk or milk products: milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese, ice cream.
- 2 servings of meat or meat alternates: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, or legumes.
- To cut calories, avoid foods that are typically greasy, oily, sticky, or very sweet such as french fries, snack chips and candy. For snacks choose apples, pears and cheese, carrot and celery sticks.

Activity 1 Fad Diets: Which are for real? (group activity)

In groups of 3-4, find examples of fad weight loss diets such as one-food diets and low carbohydrate diets. (Use quick weight loss diets that group members are familiar with or that can be found in magazines and newspapers). For each example, write down the characteristics: foods allowed; foods not allowed; pills; special vitamins or hormones; frequency of eating; etc. Compare the diet against a nutritionally balanced, wise weight loss diet described in the last question.

Activity 2 Fads in the Ads (group or individual activity)

From an assortment of magazines and newspapers clip out fad diet advertisements. Look for common characteristics of fad diets: claims for a new scientific discovery; use of a reducing aid or pill; special combinations of foods; special vitamins, hormones, or action of body chemistry. Arrange ads into a collage. (This can be made into a display at 4-H or school events).

Activity 3 Fad Talk (group activity)

In groups of 2-4, complete and discuss these unfinished sentences:

1. People usually stick with a fad diet for _____
2. When I haven't had enough food, I feel _____
3. I can live with a diet that _____
4. Dieting and exercising make me _____

References PNW 59 Food Facts vs Fads

A Dozen Diets for Better or Worse (\$2.75)
 California Dietetic Association
 1609 Westwood Blvd. Suite 101
 Los Angeles, CA 90024