

FAD DIET VS LIFELONG LIFESTYLE CHANGE

DIETS VS LIFESTYLE

Have you ever been “on a diet”? If so, you’re like most Americans; and if that “diet” didn’t give you lasting results, you’re still not alone. You may have lost weight when you began the diet, but the restrictive, time-consuming, and/or bland and boring nature didn’t work for you in the long run. Once you were “off” the diet, the weight you initially lost came right back. What you end up learning from the experience is the “diet” you tried didn’t work. This isn’t the case with just one or two diets, but it holds true to most of them. So if diets don’t work, what does?

Lasting results come from changing your lifestyle. Think about it: If you work to create health-promoting habits in your day-to-day life, you set yourself up for success in the long run. There are some clear differences between diets and lifestyle changes, and the table below shows you a few.



DIETS

Short-term (we go “on” and “off” of diets),
Black and white approach (good foods
you can eat vs. bad foods you can’t eat)

Secludes you from others

Overwhelming changes all at once

Feeling hungry, but not eating

Guidelines to follow

Feeling tired or irritable

LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Permanent and maintainable,
Allows all foods in moderation

Provides the ability to still enjoy food with friends
and family

Promotes small, manageable changes over time

Listening to your body’s hunger and satiety cues

Personalized to meet your individual needs and
goals

Feeling energized and positive

If the options on the right side of the table seem more appealing to you than the ones on the left, then it’s time to ditch the diet! Making that decision, as you can see, is beneficial both short and long term (who wants to feel hungry or skip out on dinner with friends?). It’s important to remember, though, that lifestyle changes don’t come with guidelines or rules the way diets do. Because of this, it can be intimidating for someone who is used to dieting to start changing their lifestyle.

WHERE DO YOU START?

As noted in the table above, it's best to start small; lifestyle changes shouldn't be overwhelming, the way diets are. Choose to focus on one or two small changes at a time, and once they become second-nature, choose one or two more to tackle. Begin with habits that seem most problematic in your day-to-day life. For example: Maybe you drink a bottle of soda every day but never any water, and this is something you know you should change. Begin by focusing on substituting water for your soda every other day, then every day, until you naturally reach for the water instead of soda. Once you've accomplished your goal, it's time to move onto the next habit.



Lifestyle changes do take time, but almost all good things do. If you stay focused and dedicated to changing your habits, you will have happy, healthy years ahead of you – with no “diets” in sight.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For support from a registered nurse or registered dietitian or to ask questions, please call a Blues On CallSM health coach at **1-888-BLUE-428**.

Log in to the member website listed on the back of your member ID card.

- Click on the **Wellness** tab.
- Click on **Additional Resources** on the left.
- Click on **Health Topics** under **WebMD health information** to search health topics or use the medical encyclopedia to review health issues you want to know more about.