

Consuming Thoughts

by

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In the heat of summer, shorts, t-shirts and bathing suits are the most popular attire to stay cool. The clothes you wore last summer may not be as loose fitting as you remembered so as a first step you may have already begun or would like to begin, your own dieting program for weight loss.

You might also be looking at various programs that could help you reach your goal. When considering the numerous options available be sure to look at a safe plan to weight loss.

There are several points to think about when designing your own program: Remember that losing weight does not happen overnight. You need to be patient, because it may take several months to actually see the "fruits of your labor." A rule of thumb for safe weight loss is that you should lose no more than one to two pounds per week.

A sound weight-loss program should include exercise as a key component of that program. Exercise not only burns calories, but it helps to tone flabby muscles and increase muscle mass. You will actually look thinner and feel better with regular exercise.

You will also need to make sure that you are eating a variety of foods from each of the food groups. Your body needs more than 50 nutrients each day to maintain itself. There is no "perfect" food available to give us all of those nutrients in one sitting. Each food provides a variety of nutrients, so we need to include different foods for a balanced diet.

Remember that severely limiting your daily intake of calories is not a good idea. Once you lose the weight and begin to "eat nor-

mally" again, you may gain back all of the weight that was lost.

Let's take a look at a few of the more popular dieting programs, their strengths and their weaknesses. This will give you an idea of what to think about when planning your weight loss program:

- **Fasting Diet** They often claim to detoxify the body and lead to quick weight loss and are followed by very low-calorie diets. Fasting diets can lead to ketosis, kidney stones, nausea, fatigue, elevated uric acid levels and can be life threatening. Weight loss will be due to water and muscle loss, followed by fat loss. When eating is resumed, weight gained is primarily fat.

- **Diet Pills Capsules** are taken once or twice a day and follows a diet plan that comes with the capsules. Pills suppress appetite, but weight loss occurs from following the diet plan — not by taking the pills. Most brands have a diet plan enclosed. Many of these are good diets. Weight loss comes from following the diet, not from taking the pills. Diet pills many produce side effects that have not been adequately studied.

Diets that offer nutritional pre-packaged foods with vitamin and mineral supplements often have medical professionals on staff. Reliance on this type of program can be very costly.

There are also numerous group weight-loss programs such as the Penn State New Weigh of Life program. This program stresses nutritional balance, behavior modification, and the importance of exercise to maintain ideal weight.

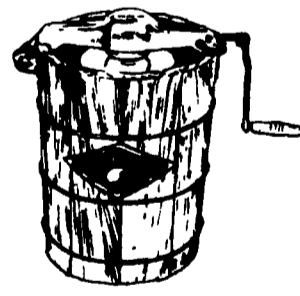
For more information contact your local Cooperative Extension office.



Montgomery County 4-H member Stephanie Freed trims her Pygmy goat's hooves in preparation for the upcoming 4-H Fair to be conducted Aug. 7-9 at the 4-H Center in Creamery. For a 4-H Fair schedule of events and entry information call (610) 489-4315. The event is open to the public and features animal shows, exhibits, food, entertainment, game booths, and educational demonstrations.



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