

FACTS ABOUT



How to Spot a Fad Diet

Every week there's a new "miracle" diet and every year you can't help but wonder: Is THIS the weight loss diet that will really work, once and for all? There are weight loss programs that work, but there many more "fads" out there that will temporarily drop your weight (or perhaps make you sick), only to have the pounds return in a few weeks. Fad diets are tempting, but like eating a rich dessert when you already have a full stomach: resist, resist, resist! In the long run, you will be healthier, thinner and less frustrated.

Fad diets can be deceiving. They are usually described in detail by a book that has been written by an expert with a PhD, or a doctor who is an MD. There may be a list of scientific references that seem to back up the claims (that no one ever checks carefully to make sure they are true). And, tons of people (including all of your friends and family) seem to be following the diet and having great results.

Does this sound familiar? Here are some obvious clues that a diet is a "fad" rather than a recommended approach for permanent weight-loss:

1. It sounds too good or easy to be true.
2. Promises rapid weight loss (5-10 pounds in a week) or "miracle cures."
3. Allows only certain foods or food groups (cutting out others).
4. Promotes a product, special herb, vitamin or other compound.
5. Can only be "followed" temporarily but is not supervised by a doctor.
6. It's hard to imagine or difficult to follow the diet forever.
7. It doesn't recommend a form of exercise or says that it's unnecessary.
8. Warns that one food or food group will make you seriously ill or worse.
9. Makes recommendations based on published science that are not endorsed by credible organizations or peer reviewed by other scientists.
10. Cites research that is preliminary, based on animals or has very few subjects.

For more information about fad diets, try these sources:

US News and World Report Ranking of Best Overall Diets: <http://health.usnews.com/best-diet/best-overall-diets>
Worst Fad or Weight Loss Diets: <http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/worst-diets-ever-diets-that-dont-work>
Staying Away From Fad Diets: <http://www.eatright.org/public/content.aspx?id=6851#.UHGq00JiZ20>
Weight Loss: Choosing a Diet That's Right For You: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/weight-loss/NU00616>

