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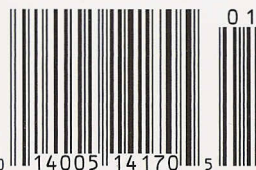
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MIND OVER MATTER

Three easy ways to get your head in the weight-loss game for better results!

→ You probably know losing weight improves self-esteem, but you may not be aware of the vice-versa effect. In a recent study, women who worked to boost their confidence while dieting lost three times more than their less-assured peers. Why? If you value yourself, it's easier to make healthy choices. Helping patients develop self-worth is one of the first goals Michael Kaplan, D.O., chief medical officer at the Center for Medical Weight Loss, sets. His tips:

REFRESH YOUR PERSPECTIVE

→ Silence negativity by imagining how family, friends and coworkers would describe you. "Adjectives such as hardworking, caring, smart, dedicated and friendly—not overweight, ugly or out of shape—are often used by patients," Kaplan says. "Looks become less important when you consider how your loved ones feel. There's much more to you than your appearance." Another reason this helps: Researchers at the University of Michigan found that women who don't self-objectify have an increased ability to focus on tasks.

BUILD SWEAT EQUITY →

While dieting may kick-start your weight loss, don't skimp on fitness. "Exercise releases endorphins that boost mood and enhance your sense of well-being," Kaplan explains. "Women who work out just feel better about themselves." The CDC recommends that adults aim for 30 minutes of aerobic activity most days plus two strength-training sessions a week. For the biggest rush, try intense aerobic activities like cross-country skiing or ice-skating.

WRITE FOR A CHANGE →

Self-esteem is linked to how competent you feel, according to a new study. And starting a food journal can help you believe you're capable of weight loss. "It leads to better decisions," says Kaplan. "And there's even evidence that the more you write, the greater your chance of success." To lose one pound a week, eat 500 calories a day less than your base metabolic rate (the calories you burn at rest daily). For a BMR calculator and other fitness tools, visit familycircle.com/healthtools.

● ● ● TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE TIPS TO **LOSE 10 POUNDS** →

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2. flush

3. flush

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LOSE 10 POUNDS

[SMART SWAP]

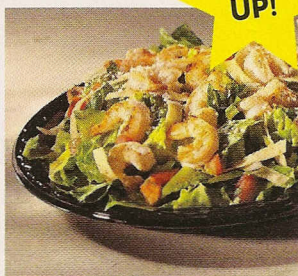
BAJA FRESH

X PUT DOWN



Diablo
Shrimp
Burrito
**1,000
calories,
34 g fat**

**EAT
UP!**



Shrimp Baja
Ensalada
**230
calories,
6 g fat**

**YOU'LL SAVE
770 calories, 28 g fat!**

• FIRM GRIP/

NEXT TIME YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT STRAYING FROM YOUR DIET, CLENCH YOUR FISTS.

Researchers discovered that people who tense their muscles when tempted by fattening fare demonstrate more self-control than those who don't. Try squeezing the handles on the shopping cart while you walk past your favorite snack at the store, or flex your feet when you're holding the dessert menu. But don't start too early—the trick only works at the moment of decision.



HOW I LOST IT

NAME **Meghan Cook**

HOME Rome City, IN

AGE 31

HEIGHT 5'6"

PREVIOUS WEIGHT 220 lbs

CURRENT WEIGHT 133 lbs

POUNDS LOST 87

I dusted off my running shoes.

I love working up a sweat on the treadmill. By slowly increasing my endurance, I have completed two 5Ks with my oldest son. Now my husband is even running—he's my motivator when I don't feel like doing it.

I kissed carbs goodbye.

On the Atkins plan, my diet is made up of lean meats—like salmon and chicken—and hearty vegetables. While I'm avoiding refined carbohydrates, I always keep a fresh salad on hand. On busy days, it's great to have everything chopped and ready to go without cooking.

I do double duty.

I used to spend my boys' basketball and football practice watching from the sidelines. Now I head to the gym to get in my own workout: 30 minutes of cardio and strength training twice a week.

Want to share your weight-loss story? E-mail dietsuccess@familycircle.com. Please include photos. Check out more successes at familycircle.com/howilostit