



## Dieting and Your Body

The human body is mainly composed of lean body mass and fat. Lean body mass is everything in your body minus the fat. This includes muscle, bone, and your organs. The proportion of lean body mass and fat differs from one body to another. On the average, women have about 20-25% body fat, while men have 12-15%.

When you are dieting you should eat a well-balanced healthy diet that is low in fat and high in fruits and vegetables. Why? This type of diet *combined* with exercise causes you to lose fat and gain more lean body mass. Why is this good? Well, lean body mass burns more calories than fat does, which increases your metabolism. So, the more lean body mass you have, the higher your metabolism will be and the more calories you will burn. On the other hand, excess fat can increase your risk for obesity and cardiovascular disease.



The recommended guideline for weight loss is 1 to 2 pounds per week. **While this may not seem like a lot, it can help prevent you from regaining the weight you worked so hard to lose.**

### Why not just go for those fad diets that promise more weight loss?

Fad diets that market tremendous weight loss in a short period of time tend to be unsuccessful in the long run. Many people are attracted to the quick results, but the weight that they lose is eventually gained back and possibly more too.

And, the weight you lose may not be fat, but mostly muscle and water.

### Why does it matter how the weight is lost?

When you do not eat enough calories, your body thinks you are in a starvation phase and will start to use your muscle as its energy source to keep your body functioning. You end up storing, not burning, your fat. So, when you starve yourself, you end up storing your fat, losing lean body mass, and *slowing down* your metabolism.

### What else do I need to know about fad diets?

Fad diets are also not recommended because they do not promote healthy eating behaviors that will help you keep the weight off. Often, they are lacking important vitamins and minerals that your body needs.

**There is no magic formula to losing weight. Weight loss takes time and patience but the results are promising if done properly.**



### Recipe for Successful Weight Loss:

Get plenty of the following and you'll be on your way!

- ❖ Exercise
- ❖ Whole grain foods
- ❖ Fruits
- ❖ Vegetables
- ❖ Non-fat dairy
- ❖ Lean meats and poultry

