

SAILING FIT

By: Meka Taulbee
ACE certified Personal Trainer
SAILFIT Inc

Eat Fit! Live Fit!

With so many fad diets and programs out there these days I constantly have people ask me which one they should follow. My answer is always the same. NONE! Never diet, just change your lifestyle. In my personal opinion diets turn our bodies into a human yoyos. Up, down, up, down the cycle never ends. Each person is different and each will achieve the best results in different ways. The key is to be able to decipher through all of the information thrown at us and pull out the pieces that fit us as individuals. Then apply those to our everyday way of living and eating. The South Beach Diet, The Atkins Diet, The Dr. Phil diet, The Zone Diet, High Carb-Low Fat, Low Carb-High fat, it's enough to make your head spin. Here's a brief summary of some of the different diet trends out today.

Let's start with the South Beach Diet since it's all the rage these days. This concept has been introduced by Dr. Agatston, a cardiologist. The idea is to establish the grounds for a lifetime of healthy eating. It's a three-phase program that begins with a 14-day period of eliminating all bread, rice, potatoes, pasta, baked goods. And even fruit. You will also abstain from candy, cake, cookies, ice cream, or sugar for two weeks. You will eat three balanced meals a day with a mid morning and mid-afternoon snack. Lastly, . no beer or alcohol of any kind. You will then gradually introduce these foods back into your diet in the second phase and continue here until you reach your personal goals. In the third phase the idea is that you will have established a healthy eating pattern, with normal portion sizes and you will continue this for life because you have altered your blood chemistry and how your body responds to food.

The Atkins diet is a four-phase plan that is meant to rebalance your nutrition. Phase one is called "Induction". Similar to the South Beach Diet, in this phase you will limit carbohydrate consumption to 20 grams per day. In Phase two, called "OWL" (Ongoing Weight Loss), Carbohydrates are added back into your diet in the form of foods that are rich in fiber. The allowed grams per day are raised in five-gram increments for a week at a time. Once weight loss stops the allotted grams of carbohydrates per day is cut back to the week priors allotted amount. "Pre-Maintenance" is Phase three. Here the grams of carbohydrates allowed are also manipulated. So long as gradual Weight loss continues you are allowed to raise the daily intake by ten grams, Maintaining this level for a week and then adding an additional ten grams the next week. Lastly, Phase four is called "Lifetime Maintenance". Here you still practice limited carbohydrate consumption, but your food selection becomes much broader. Atkins philosophy is to build a foundation for a lifetime of healthiness by restricting high-sugar foods, breads, pasta, cereal and starchy vegetables and adding vitamin and mineral supplementation.

Dr. Phil's "Shape Up" Diet is a relatively newer one. Dr. Phil is a psychologist who has his own TV program and was previously appearing regularly on the Oprah Show as the expert on Human Behavior. The theory behind his weight loss program is to reshape your relationship with food and change or rid those behaviors that negatively affect your nutritional choices. Here you follow "The Seven Keys" leading to weight loss freedom. Very basically they are as follows:

- **Key 1: Right Thinking-** Do away with self-defeating thoughts and negative states of mind.
- **Key 2: Healing Feelings-** Conquer emotional eating habits by learning to resolve emotional stressors rather than dwelling on them
- **Key 3: A No-Fail Environment-** Make your environment conducive to success. Avoid environments that provide temptation to make negative nutritional choices.

- Key 4: Mastery Over Food and Impulse Eating-Learning how to replace bad habits with healthy behaviors.
- Key 5: High-Response Cost, High-Yield Nutrition- learning to choose foods that support positive behavioral control over your eating and following a moderate, balanced, calorie-controlled plan designed to ensure weight loss.
- Key 6: Intentional Exercise- Prioritize exercise so it is part of your everyday activity.
- Key 7: Your circle of support- Surround yourself with supportive people and people who have the same goals as you do.

As you can see this is quite a different approach than the previous two in that it really makes you look at yourself and the reasoning behind your nutritional habits.

Last, but not least on my list is "The Zone Diet" developed by Barry Sears, PhD. The theory behind the diet is not to count calories, but instead views food as a 'drug', which affects your body's production of insulin. Swings in insulin levels affect mood, endurance, mental acuity, and weight gain or loss. Over time, fluctuating levels of insulin will have a negative impact on your overall health. It is designed to control hormones in order to reduce the likelihood of developing chronic diseases. It does not view itself as a diet, but rather as a lifestyle change, using food to improve health and the fat lost in the process is simply a bonus. The Zone Diet follows a 40-30-30 plan. That is, each meal is a ratio of 40% carbohydrates, 30% protein and 30% fat. Also to be in "The Zone" you should eat five times a day. Three meals and two snacks all respectively in the 40-30-30 range will get your body on track for optimal performance.

Which one is the best? Although I feel each makes some positive points along with some less desirable ones, I still stand by my theory- NONE. Instead make healthy lifestyle changes, enjoying everything in moderation and you will never have to "diet". There is no magic pill or formula that can apply to everyone. I can offer some food for thought, so to speak. When reviewing each alternative ask yourself "How long can I eat like this?", "What happens when I stop following the plan?", "Will I be prepared enough to keep the results or will I have to follow the plan forever to keep the results?", "Will there be any long term effects on my body or well-being (Positive & Negative)?". Remember that when you cut out foods you cut out nutrients and vitamins the body needs to function properly and over time that will have some negative long-term effects. Don't be afraid to experiment a little and educate yourself on what's new out there. Most importantly, be happy with yourself. Your positive attitude will lead to positive results in achieving your goals.

For more information on these diets or any other nutritional topics, please feel free to contact me at meka@sailfit.com. You can also go directly to the websites provided.

www.southbeachdiet.com

www.atkins.com

www.drphil.com

www.zonediet.com

And don't forget www.sailfit.com!