

Why Am I Gaining Weight?

I have unfortunately been dealing with weight gain for quite a few years now. I seemed to have fantastic metabolism until I turned twenty four and all of a sudden, I started putting on weight. Since then, I've been yo'ing through weight loss and then gain. It has never stopped; it's only become more severe after each pregnancy. I lost 30 pounds last summer, only to gain almost all of it back within a year. This made me look at my health history and eating habits; trying to figure out where I went wrong and how I can halt additional weight gain, and reverse my weight loss once and for all.

What happened when I turned twenty four that crushed my metabolism?

I had a lot of stress on me that year. My mom was very ill, and I was in the last stretch of graduate school. I was sad and scared and I turned to sweets. I remember one day I bought a big bag of chocolate from one of those wholesale stores and took it to the library with me and started munching while studying for the boards. Things were never the same after that. It was like that bag triggered a downward spiral in my body. I'm sure my body went into sugar shock and was working over time to digest everything I was throwing at it. The fact that I was going through so much mentally didn't help either. My cortisol levels were surely high which as we know packs on the pounds. I am fortunate to lose weight easily. All I have to do is limit my calories and carbohydrate intake for a while. But as we all know, that is not at all a permanent solution. You may be able to struggle through a very low-carb diet for a few months, but you cannot keep it up forever. So, simply depending on cutting carbohydrates has not provided me with permanent results, and it won't give you permanent results either.

What else can be done?

Looking back at my lifestyle habits for the past decade, another thing that has been a constant has been the presence of "processed foods" as I looked for ways to lose the weight. Foods that come pre-packaged with expiration dates well over a year? They are loaded up with preservatives and artificial colors and flavors.

A meal replacement protein bar that you purchase at a gas station is not a meal! The package may tell you that it's got a very low amount of "net carbs" and is low-fat, and contains added vitamins and minerals to make it more similar to a regular meal you'd make at home. On top of all that, it's convenient. You can have a meal while walking, or running, or driving. You can enjoy its chocolaty flavor while sitting at your desk, drinking your coffee. So, you get work done, and have your lunch, desert, and much needed caffeine at the same time.

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It provides immunity and absorbs nutrients and fats among other functions. Its functions are so vital that it's been designed to completely regenerate within months of injury. If your liver fails, your body quickly starts to fail as well, unless you have a liver transplant.

A healthy liver can easily metabolize fats and rid the body of toxins, resulting in a high-functioning metabolism that burns calories efficiently and provides the body with the energy it needs. Consuming processed foods, full of "toxins" will clog the liver. It won't be able to break down fats and in effect, creates more fat to store the toxins.

This vicious cycle will eventually result in weight gain, low energy, and lethargy. It can also lead to more serious health issues such as gallbladder attacks, and thyroid problems which I already have!

I have been consuming all kinds of "processed food" for years. As a result, my liver has been working overtime to rid my body of all the toxins. One way it does that is by passing the toxins to the gallbladder. The gallbladder stores bile, which helps digest fats in the small intestine. In the presence of large amounts of toxins, the bile becomes thick and can't be properly expelled, which will result in a backup of bile. As a result, the intestines which use the bile for breaking down fats end up storing the fat instead. And your body is stuck in a cycle of storing the fat while it should be metabolizing it. Additionally, we lose out on absorbing the essential fatty acids and nutrients that a healthy, "non-toxic" liver and gallbladder would be able to process. This vicious cycle will eventually result in more severe disease such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease, both prevalent in obese people.

So, eat less processed foods, and more natural foods. Significantly limit the foods containing refined carbohydrates, sugars, hydrogenated oils, or oils damaged by high heat-most vegetable oils used in fast foods as I covered in past articles. Eat Whole, organic foods, eat the good fats, eat more greens, lots of fiber, lean meats.

Study what you put into your body. When it comes to weight loss, a non-fat serving of milk may not be the answer-there are experts who believe that the process that takes the fat out of milk causes inflammation and results in weight gain in the end-but staying away from foods that will turn into sugar in your body-breads,

gluten-rich foods, even sweet fruits and root vegetables- is. Stay away from genetically modified corn and soy. Almost all of the soy products on the market are heavily processed.

Make it easy for your body to digest the food you put into it. Try eating "one ingredient foods." If you're eating blueberries, only eat blueberries. If you're eating almonds or cashews, eat only almonds or cashews. Give your liver a break!

What you'll walk away with at the end will be a healthier body with lots more energy and a weight loss plan with lasting results!

Cheers to that!

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