Make the healthy diet choice the easy choice

By Nancy Hellmich, USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Dieters can boost their weight loss if they clean up their act at home and get a partner to lose weight with them, a new study shows.

If you want to trim down, you should set up your home to make the healthy choice the easy choice, says Amy Gorin, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Connecticut.

**DIET DRUGS:** 3 new prescriptions for obese in FDA pipeline

She presented her research Wednesday at the annual meeting of the Obesity Society, a group of weight-loss researchers and professionals.

Gorin and colleagues recruited 201 overweight and obese people and divided them into two groups.

Participants in one group got a six-month behavioral weight-loss program that emphasized a low-fat, low-calorie diet and moderate intensity physical activity. They met weekly with weight-loss experts and learned how to keep food journals and work through tempting eating situations.

The other group got the same weekly weight-loss program with professional help. They also:

- Enlist help from family members who eat with them. This was either a spouse or another adult who lived in the home.
- Use a bathroom scale to weigh yourself on a regular basis.

The two groups did the same weight-loss program for six months.

At the end of six months, dieters with a partner and extra equipment at home lost an average of 20 pounds; their partners also lost a substantial amount of weight. Dieters in the weight-loss-only group lost an average of 11 pounds.

**DIETING ON A DIME**

Three inexpensive ideas that might boost weight loss:

- Enlist help from family members who eat with you on a regular basis.
- Use a bathroom scale to weigh yourself regularly.
- Eat from smaller plates.

**Recommended reading**

- How to "portion control" your diet choice - USATODAY.com
- Speed up weight loss if they clean up their act at home - USA TODAY
loss advice group lost about 15 pounds. “Making concrete and real changes to the home make it much easier to stick with a healthful eating and exercise program,” Gorin says.

Guidelines: You share in the USA TODAY community, so please keep your comments smart and civil. Don’t attack other readers personally, and keep your language decent. Use the “Report Abuse” button to make a difference. Read more.

You must be logged in to leave a comment. Log in | Register

Post this comment to Facebook?

Comments: (5) Showing: Newest first | New: Most recommended

Abdel Hameed M.S (7 friends, send message) wrote: 6d 2h ago
Diet strategies are individualistic plans that can outline health(We are what we eat). We shouldn't take greater risks by depending on junk food, fast food meals. The best diet is the one that solely accounts on organic style.

Thai Gu (74 friends, send message) wrote: 6d 7h ago
"Calories" are a unit of measurement that tell us how good food tastes. Until that changes, you can make healthy choices as easy as you want to - most of us are going to opt for tasty choices!

The Mick (32 friends, send message) wrote: 6d 16h ago
I suspect that the ‘partner’ was someone the researchers recruited to rat on the dieters if they cheated, and the ‘partner’ had to watch the dieter like a hawk to catch them at it if they tried to cheat to be effective. Otherwise they would have had my experience with obese people. They have more tricks than Houdini at procuring vast quantities of junk food and getting it down their gullets while you aren’t watching, like that two minutes you went to the restroom in the afternoon during which they ate two double quarter pounders, a large order of fries, a large chocolate milk shake, two chocolate chip cookies, and an apple pie and washed it all down with a large cola drink. You know, their typical light afternoon snack.

And they will claim that they have done more exercise than a triathlete marathoner when no one was around to observe them do it. But won’t hardly get up off the couch when anyone is actually watching them.

Then at the end of the day, when they are weighed and have gained several more pounds, they will claim that they haven’t had a bite to eat all day and jogged around the block a million times, so it must just be their slow metabolism.

Thalid478 (13 friends, send message) wrote: 6d 16h ago
 pelos
Another way to make the healthy choice easy is to make several batches of time-consuming dishes and freeze all but the one you're preparing to eat. This is sometimes called OAMC (Once A Month Cooking) and you can search recipezaar.com and other sites for OAMC recipes that range from traditional English cauliflower with cheese (a healthier alternative to mac and cheese) to sweet salsa chicken (chicken pieces marinated in a sweetened veggie salsa, then frozen for later thaw-and-bake use where the sauce can be served over something easy to prepare like cooked rice).

And I agree with Twirl - a good walk is great exercise.