



The Pilates Connection Weight Loss Challenge

NEWSLETTER

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THIS WEEK'S TOPIC...

12 WAYS TO SPOT A FAD DIET

Identifying Weight Loss Scams

-by Becky Hand, SparkPeople.com

The next time you watch an infomercial, read an advertisement, or spot a new supplement reporting miraculous weight loss results, we wouldn't blame you for cocking a wary eyebrow. When evaluating claims for weight loss products, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends a healthy portion of skepticism; most don't come close to fulfilling their claims. And in the rare cases where a product might result in some temporary weight loss, it is almost never a permanent solution and is usually unsafe.

Before you spend money on products that promise fast and easy results, weigh the claims carefully. You might even consider contacting the FTC directly for more information or if you have concerns.

These 12 tips will help you critique and evaluate weight loss claims and spot a scam before it's too late:

- 1. "It's so easy to lose weight without dieting or exercising!"** Face it—permanent weight loss takes work, effort and time. Pass on any products that promise miraculous results without the effort. Buy one and the only things you'll lose are money and confidence.
- 2. "Eat whatever you want and still lose weight!"** Losing weight requires sensible food choices, not overloading on high-fat, high calorie foods
- 3. "Lose weight forever...you'll never need to diet again!"** For weight loss to be permanent, it requires lifestyle changes. On-going maintenance is always a must.
- 4. "Block the digestion and absorption of fat, carbs, or calories!"** There is no magic potion that will allow you to block the digestion and absorption of fat, carbs, or calories. A little pill to curb cravings and suppress appetite just doesn't exist.

5. "Rapid weight loss: Lose 20 pounds in 2 weeks!" Looking to lose weight rapidly for your high school reunion or wedding? Products that safely produce lightning-fast weight loss just don't exist. A weight loss of 1-2 pounds per week is the safest and most effective way to take off weight and keep it off.

6. "Finally, a weight loss formula for everyone!" A diet that claims to be perfect for all is erroneous. One-size-fits-all just doesn't work. Your lifestyle habits and health concerns are unique. That's why SparkPeople helps you design your own personalized nutrition and exercise programs to suit your particular lifestyle needs.

7. "Lose weight with this miracle diet patch, cream or gel!" You've heard it all before—"Apply and watch the fat melt away!" But truthfully, all that melts away is your hard earned money.

8. "Scientifically Proven! Doctor Endorsed!" Where is the proof and how was the research conducted? Were people studied, or rodents? Were there 3 subjects in the study or 3,000? Has the research been published in a medical journal and reviewed by peers? A doctor of what profession? Or is the "professional" as purely fictitious as your weight loss will be? Be sure to check the details.

9. "Money-back guarantee!" It may make you feel safer to give the product a try, but realize that many companies do not follow through with this promise. You're left holding an empty promise and an empty pocketbook.

10. "100% safe!" Just another attempt, trying to get you hooked with a meaningless phrase. Think of it this way – if there were no reason to doubt, why would they need to make this claim at all? Many products have been removed from the market due to safety issues, but not until too many lives were already destroyed or lost. Does ephedra ring a bell?

11. Those convincing testimonials: We can all look 10 pounds slimmer by: standing up straight, shoulders back, and stomach in; having a good hair day; applying the right make-up; and hiring a professional photographer. Remember, just because you recognize the actor or actress doesn't make the product any more reliable. They are now just a little richer and you a little poorer.

12. "A miraculous breakthrough!" Turn and run the other direction when extravagant claims make the product sound too good to be true.

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit www.ftc.gov or call toll-free,

GIRL'S NIGHT OUT – THE SMART WAY

It's easy to live it up with your pals and keep your meal around 400 calories--the amount needed to help you lose weight and stay satisfied.

Out for Mexican

Order regular-size nachos for the table (about one-quarter of the plate is 205 calories) and a small frozen margarita for yourself (190 calories in 6 ounces)--the added ice helps dilute the drink and stretch the calories. If the bar uses real fruit, ask for a strawberry margarita instead of plain (for an extra dose of vitamins).

Total calories: 395

In Your Living Room

Serve soft cheese, which has fewer calories than hard (1 thumb-size ounce of goat cheese is 75 calories); 2 rye crisp breads (75 calories); apple slices (half a small apple has 40 calories); and dark chocolate (2 blocks of Hershey's Special Dark are 75 calories). Enjoy with a 5-ounce glass of red wine (125 calories).

Total calories: 390

Happy Hour

Snack on some tiny twist pretzels first (1/2 ounce, or about half a Wiffle ball's worth, is 50 calories)--they'll help absorb the alcohol. Then enjoy a 3-ounce martini (170 calories) and a 5-ounce glass of white wine (120 calories) while noshing on two chicken satay skewers (60 calories).

Total calories: 400

Pizza Night

Order a thin-crust slice (to cut down on carb calories), but top it with **peppers**, broccoli, and mushrooms to make it more filling (260 calories). or split a personal-size veggie pie with a friend (half is about 275 calories). Pair either one with a bottle of beer for 150 calories.

Total calories: 410 to 425

Weight Loss Challenge Winner of the Week:

Last week's winner was Laurie Tenery. She lost .84%! Way to go Laurie...enjoy your two free classes!

RECIPES

TILAPIA VERACRUZ STYLE

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped garlic
- 1 can (15 oz) Muir Glen® organic diced tomatoes
- 1 medium green bell pepper, cut into julienne strips
- 2 jalapeño chiles (from 7-oz can), drained
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 dried bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
- 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup large pimiento-stuffed olives, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup capers, drained
- 1 tablespoon margarine or butter
- 1 lb tilapia or red snapper fillets
- 3 or 4 jalapeño chiles (from 7-oz can), drained, seeded and cut into wedges, if desired
- 2 cups hot cooked white or brown rice

1. In 12-inch nonstick skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; cook, stirring constantly, until tender. Stir in tomatoes. Heat to boiling. Stir in bell pepper and 2 jalapeño chiles. Cook uncovered 2 minutes, stirring constantly, until vegetables are crisp-tender. Stir in salt, pepper, bay leaves, oregano and cilantro. Cover; cook 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in olives and capers. Cover; cook 5 minutes longer, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender.
2. Heat oven to 350°F. Spray 13x9-inch (3-quart) glass baking dish with cooking spray. In 12-inch skillet, heat margarine over medium-high heat. To seal in juices, cook fish in butter just until golden brown on each side. Place fish in baking dish. Spoon tomato mixture over fish.
3. Bake 17 to 22 minutes or until fish flakes easily with fork. Garnish with 3 or 4 jalapeño chiles.

Servings 4. 300 Calories, 1 Vegetable, 2.5 oz. Protein

HEALTHIFIED TERIYAKI PORK AND MUSHROOM LO MEIN

- 12 ounces boneless pork loin, trimmed of fat
- 10 ounces dried multigrain spaghetti or angel hair pasta or soba (buckwheat noodles)
- 1/4 cup bottled oyster sauce
- 1/4 cup reduced-sodium teriyaki sauce
- 1/4 cup dry sherry, Chinese rice wine, sake, or chicken broth
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh ginger
- 1 medium red onion, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced (1 cup)

8 ounces fresh mushrooms, sliced

12 ounces Green Giant® frozen sugar snap peas, thawed and halved

1. Freeze pork about 45 minutes or until partially frozen. Thinly slice pork across the grain into bite-size strips. Set aside.
2. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain well. Rinse with cold water. Drain well. Set aside.
3. For sauce: In a small bowl, combine oyster sauce, teriyaki sauce, and dry sherry. Set aside.
4. In a wok or large nonstick skillet, combine canola oil and sesame oil; heat over medium-high heat. Stir-fry ginger in hot oil for 15 seconds. Add red onion; stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add mushrooms; stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add sugar snap peas; stir-fry for 1 minute more. Remove vegetables from wok. Keep warm.
5. Add pork to wok; stir-fry about 3 minutes or until juices run clear. Add cooked pasta, vegetables, and sauce. Using two spatulas or wooden spoons, lightly toss the mixture for 3 to 4 minutes or until heated through. Transfer to a serving platter. Serve immediately.

Servings 6. 340 Calories, 2.5 Starches, 2 Vegetables, 2 oz. Protein

Recipes from eatbetteramerica.com.

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