



Commercial Diet Claims

Do your research, consult your doctor before choosing one

By Jean Jeffers, Staff Writer

Americans as a group are overweight, even obese. According to an article in *Medical News Today*, obesity rates in Mississippi and Alabama were above 30 percent while in other states the rate was over 25 percent. Another study says the United States ranks last in preventable deaths in industrialized nations. Researchers believe many of these deaths were due to poor nutrition throughout life and a lack of exercise.

What is a healthy diet? *Medical News Today* (MNT) says healthy eating means consuming the right quantities of food from all the food groups in order to lead a healthy life. A good diet, says MNT, is part of a nutritionally sound lifestyle promoting good health and must include a number of food groups because no one food group can do it all.

When we eat matters, too, says MNT. A big breakfast is better than a bigger meal later in the day. A breakfast containing about 700 calories is better for losing weight and lowering the risk of developing heart disease, high cholesterol and diabetes.

Some people turn to commercial diets to help them lose weight. Most of these diets offer what is considered a healthy eating plan by including a balance of all the food groups, namely whole grains, fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy, fat and sugar. Plant-based diets minimize or completely eliminate many people's genetic propensity to developing chronic diseases and conditions such as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and certain cancers. Some examples of commercial diets include:

1. Weight Watchers.

This is one of the most popular diets available. It assigns a point to different foods, but many fruits and vegetables are free of points. Fiber foods have fewer points and higher starchy foods a much higher point value. Weight Watchers offers for sale "power foods" that are touted as adding satiety while also being low fat and low carb. Exercise is encouraged; it earns points, too, which may be used to trade for food items of your choice. The cost is standard for the initial payment plan but with the adding of a coach and 24/7 chats, the cost is about \$55 per month.

2. Jenny Craig.

This diet falls within accepted ranges for fats, proteins and carbs. The food is supplied and restricted in calories. You get a personalized meal and exercise plan. There is also a plan for people with diabetes that helps lower A1C.

3. Ornish Diet.

This diet lays out a plan for strict nutrition, exercise, stress management and emotional support. It can be adjusted to allow for big changes to reverse heart disease and some other chronic diseases in addition to losing weight. The diet definitely has cardiovascular benefits.

4. Mayo Clinic Diet.

This diet earns good marks for healthy eating and may be used as a tool against diabetes.

5. The Mediterranean Diet.

This is a popular diet for people who eat lots of fruits and vegetables, olive oil, fish and other sensible fare. This diet is one of the best.

Other popular diets include the South Beach Diet, DASH Diet, TLC

Diet, the Raw Food Diet, the Atkins Diet, the Zone Diet, the Vegetarian Diet and the Vegan Diet. Thoroughly research the pros and cons of any commercial diet before committing to it. Be sure to consult your doctor before starting any diet or exercise program.

For more information, visit www.medicalnewstoday.com.

About the Author

Jean is a RN with an MSN from the University of Cincinnati and a freelance writer. She is a staff writer for *Living Well 60 Plus* and *Health and Wellness* magazines. Jean is preparing to publish her first book, a novel entitled "The Journey Toward Healing."

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