

10 Mistakes Dieters Make

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“Eat healthy foods and exercise.”

You’ve already heard the many variations on this advice. As a dieter, you know what you’re supposed to do to succeed. But what about the [things you’re not supposed to do](#)?

Did you know, for example, that drinking diet soda can make you fat? And so can eating low-carb protein bars and eliminating fruit! Here, for a refreshing change of pace, are the **top 10** things you shouldn’t do if you want to **lose weight and keep it** off long term:



- 1. Eat too little or infrequently.** Keep moods and energy up, hunger satisfied, and metabolism in high gear by eating three meals and two to three snacks a day. [Don’t skip breakfast!](#)
- 2. Eliminate all fruits.** Extremely low-carb diets that forbid fruit are punishing and invite cheating. Stay on track with moderate portions of fiber- and nutrient-rich strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, kiwi, grapefruit, or peaches.
- 3. Eliminate fats.** Several studies at Harvard and elsewhere prove that low-fat diets result in weight gain. To lose weight, you need to increase your consumption of good fats (monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats).
- 4. Get snacks out of your kitchen.** Snacking helps with weight loss. Make sure you replace commercial baked goods, candy, chips, crackers, cookies, and pretzels with healthy snacks such as hard-boiled eggs, cheese, celery, nuts, sugar-free gum, homemade “slow-carb” bars and muffins, protein shakes, cucumbers, yogurt, and sugar-free JELL-O.
- 5. Splurge away from home.** Your healthy eating program is a way of life. Try to stick to your new behaviors and habits everywhere you eat—at restaurants, friends’ homes, and while traveling.
- 6. Consume lots of artificially sweetened foods and beverages.** Artificial sweeteners trigger cravings for additional sweets in some people. Others gain “false fat” or bloating caused by the body’s inability to digest sugar substitutes.
- 7. [Count calories.](#)** Hormone (insulin) levels, not calories, are what determine your metabolism — the rate at which you burn fat. Eat balanced meals to keep your insulin levels steady and your metabolism working efficiently.
- 8. Eat lots of commercial low-carb products.** Many companies have jumped on the “low-carb” bandwagon with high-calorie, low-nutrition snack foods that will not help you change your eating habits or lose weight.
- 9. Adopt a rigorous exercise routine.** Exercise is important, but daily activity that you enjoy and can sustain over a lifetime is more important than killer workouts that are hard to stick with. The name of the weight-loss game is adopting habits that become second nature.
- 10. Load up on protein, eliminate carbs.** Protein-loading has serious health risks, and few people can stay on radical high protein, low-carb diets long term. Switch to a balanced diet that features healthy amounts of protein balanced with lots of high-quality “slow carbs” — carbohydrates that convert slowly into blood sugar.