

Why Slow Weight Loss Wins.

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[Frustrated by slow weight loss? Read on for expert input on why slow and steady wins the race.](#)

"We live in a quick-fix society," says Debra Mandel, PhD, a Los Angeles psychologist who specializes in eating disorders. "When we want something, we want it right away."

Worse, we constantly see advertisements that convince us that we *can* lose inches by tomorrow, and be slimmer by next week. It seems like

there's no harm in wanting to lose weight by yesterday. After all, it *is* possible. Isn't it?

Not at all, insists Mandel. Because when it comes down to it, fast weight loss can't last, because it usually means adapting to very difficult eating habits and an impossible-to-live-with lifestyle.

Quick fix, fast failure

"[With quick-fix diets], our metabolism slows down, and eventually we're eating fewer and fewer calories but not losing weight," says Mandel. "This leads to anxiety, which prompts us to eat even fewer calories to try to lose. The body rebels against that even more."

So it's a vicious cycle. Because if you don't get enough nutrients — which is a major risk when you're going for a quick fix — your brain, and then your body, will, well, *insist* that you eat. To your body, it's nothing more than survival. But to you, it will feel like you're giving in and losing control. Then you'll feel like a failure, which might very well send you to the fridge.

It's a never-ending yo-yo cycle of weight gain, then loss, then gain again. Go for slow and steady weight loss (a healthy rate is two pounds per week or less), and not only will you be doing a service to your body, you'll also be more likely to keep that weight off for good. Isn't that better than rebounding?

Why slow weight loss lasts

"I'm glad my weight loss was slow for me because I feel like I really have made lifestyle changes," says Lyn, a meetings member. "I just keep at it. I continue to see slow progress but overall a great deal of success. Slowly but surely the weight comes off."

It's that kind of "through thick and thin" attitude that will take people from thick to thin for good, says Mandel. Losing weight slowly isn't just healthier, she says, it's a better investment. Not only are you dropping pounds, you're working on building habits that you'll be able to maintain. And those habits will help you maintain the weight you lost, so you can stay at your goal weight for good.

"Plus, you have more energy to live life in the present, because you're not starving

and focusing on food," says Mandel. "You're creating a healthy relationship with food." That's the key to lifelong success.

Maintain a positive attitude

All that said, Cindy, a subscriber to Weight Watchers Online, isn't exactly glad she loses weight slowly. "'Thankful' might be a better word for it," she says. "At least I'm losing and not gaining."

Cindy has also held on during slow losses by maintaining a positive attitude: "I know this plan is something I can stick with for the rest of my life. It's definitely not a 'diet' that I'll go off for a long period of time. It's a lifetime commitment."

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