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5 COMMON BARRIERS TO WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS

"This time it's going to happen!" You're motivated and you've set a realistic weight-loss goal. You're watching calories and ramping up physical activity. You've had some initial success and have lost a few pounds. But life starts getting in the way. It helps to have a plan in place when you encounter barriers to your weight-loss efforts. For this month's newsletter we look at five of the most common barriers dieters come up against. We'll examine some of the strategies to overcome these barriers.

1. I HAVE FOOD CRAVINGS EVEN WHEN I'M NOT HUNGRY.

Food cravings can be triggered by seeing or smelling food. When you detect the aroma of melted mozzarella as you walk by a pizzeria, you might crave a slice whether you're hungry or not. Sometimes the mere memory of a favorite food brings on a craving. Cravings come and go, typically fading within 15 minutes. When you feel a craving, notice it, and then distract yourself. For a calorie-free distraction, you might:

- Go for a walk or climb a few flights of stairs.
- Drink water, tea or coffee.
- Try a relaxation technique such as deep breathing.
- Keep your hands busy with a hobby or a task.

2. DINING OUT JUST DOES ME IN. DO I HAVE TO GIVE UP RESTAURANTS COMPLETELY?

One of the biggest pitfalls for losing weight is dining out. Too often we use eating out as an excuse for a "cheat" meal. Proven strategies include:

- Don't starve yourself ahead of time. Have a healthy snack before you go out.
- Pick a restaurant that you know has healthy options.
- Ignore the basket of bread or chips.
- Order an appetizer as your main course or share an entrée.
- Go easy on alcohol. Save money and calories by drinking lots of water.

3. I FEAR I'M MY OWN WORST ENEMY WHEN IT COMES TO DIETING. I KEEP THINKING THAT I'M GOING TO FAIL THIS TIME JUST LIKE I'VE FAILED IN THE PAST.

It takes practice to defeat negative thoughts but it can be done. To switch from negative to positive self-talk, you have to be aware of your negative thoughts. To change your negative thinking, follow these steps:

- Notice when you are having a negative, self-defeating thought.
- Replace the negative thought with a positive one that will help you make better choices.
- Say to yourself "I can make healthy choices and I will achieve my goal."

QUICKTAKES



BEATING BARRIERS TO CHANGE

Making a healthy lifestyle change is hard. Making that change turn into a lasting healthy habit is even harder. Ordinary demands get in the way, motivation drops and it sometimes seems so much easier to go back to old habits than to work on creating new ones. There are many types of barriers that can stand in the way of your success. Common barriers to making a life style change include:

- Family/friends are not supportive
- Self-doubt
- Temptations in your environment
- Not enough time
- Unexpected difficulties
- Weak motivation

Whether you are trying to quit smoking, exercise more, eat a healthier diet or lose weight, recognizing your barriers is key. Having a plan in place to beat those barriers when they arise will help you succeed. This month's newsletter looks at common barriers dieters often come up against. We'll give you simple, practical techniques for moving past those barriers.

4. I'm just too tired to prepare healthy food.

It takes just as much energy to grab a bag of carrots as it does to open a bag of chips.

- If you think you're too tired to exercise, try going for a five-minute walk. It will likely perk you up and you may do even more.
- If you're too tired at the end of the day to cook a meal, don't order pizza. Keep healthy frozen entrées on hand for a quick, no-fuss meal. Or make a simple omelet or a big salad instead.

5. My kids are teenagers and our kitchen is usually loaded with junk food. It's hard not to grab a handful or two.

You've got to control this out-of-control food environment. Willpower alone won't solve the problem of too many temptations. Some strategies include:

- Talk to your family to enlist support for your weight-loss efforts.
- Purge your pantry of sweet treats and fatty snacks.
- Stock your shelves with healthy, low-calorie alternatives.
- Fill the fridge with fresh, snack-able veggies and fruits.
- Keep portion sizes reasonable even when eating the healthiest of snacks.

SWISS CHARD & WHITE BEAN SOUP

MAKES ABOUT 2 QUARTS, FOR 6 SERVINGS

Broth-based, vegetable-rich soups are a dieter's friend. They're satisfying yet low in calories. Busy dieters can make this soup on the weekend and enjoy it for dinner for two or three nights in a row.

INGREDIENTS

Olive oil, for greasing
 6 plum tomatoes
 2 carrots, peeled and quartered lengthwise
 1 onion, cut into 8 wedges
 6 cloves garlic, unpeeled
 6 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
 4 stalks Swiss chard, leaves sliced into ribbons, stalks thinly sliced
 3/4 cup uncooked multi-grain macaroni or other small pasta shape
 1 bay leaf
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 15-oz can low-sodium cannellini or other white beans, rinsed and drained
 Freshly ground black pepper
 Curfs of Parmesan cheese, optional



NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING	
190 Calories	30g Carbohydrate
1g Fat	5g Fiber
0.3g saturated fat	330mg Sodium
9g Protein	

Source: Healthy Living Kitchen

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Generously grease a roasting pan with olive oil.
2. Slice stem ends off tomatoes and cut tomatoes in half lengthwise. Spread tomato halves, onion wedges, carrots and garlic on the baking sheet. Spray the vegetables with cooking spray. Roast for 10 minutes and shake the pan. Roast another 10 minutes or until the vegetables are brown in spots and tender.
3. Slice carrots into 1/2-inch pieces and set aside. Peel garlic cloves and place in a food processor along with tomatoes and onion wedges. Pour 1/2 cup of the broth into the roasting pan to loosen any browned bits; pour this liquid into the processor. Process until roughly pureed, but not smooth. Transfer to a large saucepan.
4. Add the remaining broth, the Swiss chard stems, macaroni, bay leaf and salt to the saucepan. Bring the soup to a gentle boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in beans, carrots and Swiss chard leaves. Cook until the chard leaves have wilted, about 5 minutes.