

## **Eight Dieting Strategies That Work**

*Consumer Reports highlights strategies based on the latest research and statistics gleaned from the National Weight Control Registry, which enrolls people who have documented that they lost 30 pounds and kept the weight off for at least a year. Here are some of the strategies outlined in the report:*

- Start right: Eating a substantial morning meal is recommended by every diet book Consumer Reports analyzed. Seventy-eight percent of the successful losers at the National Weight Control Registry say they eat breakfast, typically some cereal and fruit.
- Crank up the activity: Dieters should get off the couch if they want to lose weight and keep it off. Increasing time spent doing formal exercise and activities such as housework and yard work will help burn calories.
- Fill up on low-density foods: One way to spare calories and still eat a satisfying amount of food is to focus one's diet on foods that have fewer calories per bite. The "Volumetrics" diet, which finished at the top of the Consumer Reports ratings, is based on this strategy.
- Bring back the scale: Dieters who stay vigilant about their weight can make quick corrections before the pounds add up. While many of the books reviewed discourage the practice of frequent weighing in, 75 percent of the members enrolled in the National Weight Control Registry weigh themselves at least once a week.
- Bore yourself thin: This approach is outlined in "The South Beach Diet," "The Sonoma Diet," and "Ultra Metabolism." Since variety stimulates the appetite, the more monotonous one's diet, the less one will eat. People should steer clear of buffet tables, which can be a dieter's worst enemy.

### **Three Diet Doubtfuls**

Consumer Reports informs readers about these dubious tactics, which, though hyped, are unlikely to help:

- Diet pills: Weight loss pills have a discouraging track record. "Fat burners" such as amphetamines and ephedra have been linked to heart palpitations, strokes, heart attacks, and deaths, even in healthy people.
- Angel and devil food: Though it makes sense to purge one's diet of junk food, there's no evidence that the presence or absence of any individual food will make or break a diet of the right calorie level.
- The glycemic index: Research studies have reached conflicting conclusions about whether cutting the glycemic load of a weight-loss diet actually improves results.