

give
to
your
body

By Krista J. Essler, LAc

Dieting seems to have become an American pastime. There is always a new diet on the market with stories from "I've lost over 50 pounds!" to "Why did I spend \$25 on that book?!" Apparently, one diet does not work for everyone. This is because weight loss depends upon each person's individual needs.

Proper nutrition is vital for the key biochemical processes which support weight loss. Limiting calorie intake can also mean limiting your available nutrient spectrum. Have you ever opted to just eat dessert rather than meal? For permanent changes in your body, it is important to approach the subject of diet in the context of lifestyle.

The mind, body and spirit work together in order to achieve balance. Learning how to cope with stress is essential to weight loss. The adrenal glands, located on top of the kidneys, are the body's coping mechanism for stress. In primitive times, stressful situations took advantage of the 'fight or flight' paradigm. For example, in a fire, you would either need energy to fight the fire or to take flight. This adrenal response would tap into your carbohydrate stores and use them as fuel. Nowadays, our stressful situations are sedentary (traffic, work deadlines, the kids yelling) but the primitive coping mechanism has not adapted. So, when the energy is made available but when not used, it is converted to and stored as fat.

Finding quiet time to recharge your battery is very important. Taking 15 minutes to lie in a quiet place and think of nothing can do wonders to relieve stress. You can take this opportunity to breathe deep and increase the circulation to your internal organs. Focusing on all the positive things that you have in your life can have a deep impact on helping you walk through life with a sense of peace and wellbeing.

Exercise can also help to relieve stress. It can counteract the effects of the adrenaline. Yet, in cases of adrenal burnout, high energy exercise such as aerobics can, in fact, be detrimental. The prolonged sweating causes a loss of essential minerals, which are vital for proper adrenal function. In adrenal burnout, the body is very depleted and sees any type of impact as an assault and therefore responds with the release of more adrenaline. You may feel energized during exercise since that is the mechanism of adrenaline, but afterwards or even the next day, you can experience fatigue and carbohydrate cravings. Exercises such as Tai Chi and Yoga

will promote circulation, invoke relaxation and strengthen the muscles thereby creating more insulin receptors and making it easier to burn calories.

Only when you can break this cycle of stress, both mental and physical, will the mind and body let go of the excess baggage. Both sodium and potassium are needed in order to support the adrenal glands. Sodium is often thought as a bad thing but it's the source that is important. Common table salt is devoid of any of the key trace elements that keep sodium levels in balance. Switch from common table salt to Celtic sea salt. In addition to sodium, it contains potassium, iodine, manganese, boron, lithium and about 75 other elements which support optimal health.

Iodine, in conjunction with calcium and potassium, is an crucial element in the health of the thyroid gland. This gland is located in the neck and is responsible for metabolism. When the thyroid is not functioning properly, you may be unable to lose weight, feel tired, be depressed, have cold hands and feet, have dry skin, and even experience hair loss. Proper nourishment of the thyroid can spark the metabolism to burn calories at a higher rate and result in weight loss.

Digestion and absorption of food need to take place before the body can function properly. Elements such as those found in Celtic sea salt are the building blocks for stomach acid and bile salts. Insulin, which is responsible for sugar metabolism depends on at least 5 different minerals. Calcium turns insulin on while magnesium turns it off. Chromium and zinc are building blocks for the production of insulin while potassium is responsible for transporting the energy into each individual cell.

It is not only essential to have these elements available, but they also need to be in a proper ratio to each other. Many minerals are responsible for keeping toxic metals from being absorbed in the tissues. A hair mineral analysis can determine your specific nutritional needs for optimal health. A nutritional regime in the context of diet and supplementation can then be accurately prescribed for the best possible results to support health of the body, mind and spirit.

Krista J. Essler, Licensed Acupuncturist, practices in Boone, NC. The services available at her clinic, The Appalachian Acupuncture & Herbology Clinic, include Acupuncture, Massage, Homeopathy, Nutritional Counseling and Aromatherapy. She can be reached for any further questions or to make an appointment at 828-265-3616.