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# Things

YOU  
SHOULD  
KNOW  
& DO  
TO

# Lose weight

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BEFORE



AFTER

# Introduction

I've always heard people say that 90% of your weight loss journey is your diet, and that is so true! It's what I've experienced during my weight loss journey.

I went from no workout to low-impact workouts, jogging outside and going to the gym. But every time I stopped exercising, I would regain the weight. I thought exercising automatically resulted in losing weight.

As I've lost 13 kg and have been able to maintain the same weight without exercising everyday. It's safe to say that my previous idea of weight loss was false.

Now, am I saying you don't need to exercise? No, not at all. Exercise is mandatory in your day-to-day life, especially in today's society where we don't move as much as 50 years ago. The point I'm making is that all you need is to change the way you eat to lose weight. If you combine it with 15 minutes of exercise every day or a 30-minute walk, that's all you need to lose weight. There's no need to spend hours in the gym. If you go to the gym, a good 40-minute workout is way more effective than a workout of an hour or more.

So in this book, we're focusing on our nutrition. What are the things we eat that cause us to gain weight? What are the habits we need to change to lose the extra weight we carry? As you read, you'll discover the basics of losing weight. Add it to your daily life, and you'll see a significant change in your weight, mental health and energy level.

Visit my website for more advice on healthy food diets.  
[www.doaav.com](http://www.doaav.com)

*Let's get into it!*

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A lot of focus is put on what you eat while you are dieting. But how you eat is just as important and can help you lose weight. What does that mean?

When you sit down to a meal and start to eat, it takes twenty minutes for your brain to process that you have eaten enough and are full. So if you eat fast and eat a lot, chances are that you feel full twenty minutes after your meal. Because you went over the food limit your body can handle.

A lot of times this happens, when we eat in the car or stand in front of the TV. In other words, it happens everytime we do not sit down to relax and enjoy our meal. The first step to weight loss is to sit down and take a moment to relax.

Even in the car, you can consciously slow your pace of eating to bring yourself more awareness of your meal. Once you've become aware of your pace, be mindful of it for the next twenty minutes and give your brain a chance to register the food. Chewing slowly can also help you lose weight. How? Digestion actually begins in your mouth, not in your stomach. Certain enzymes in your saliva start breaking down simple carbohydrates while your teeth work to grind and tear apart more complex food molecules. This part of the digestion is incredibly important for your weight loss.

When you chew your food better, more nutrients are released. Which causes the body to run more efficiently and results in less cravings. Shortly after that, your fullness alert will follow.

Recent studies show that volunteers who chewed each bite forty times ended up eating twelve percent less food. That could be a whole portion in itself. And it all begins in your mouth!

Getting into the habit of eating slowly and chewing more thoroughly can be a little challenging at first. If you find it difficult to remember, try this trick: put your fork down in between each bite. Consciously stopping the momentum of feeding yourself can be key to setting this practice into a consistent daily routine.





# SODA & PROCESSED FOOD

## Why Diet Sodas Are Not Beneficial To Your Weight Loss

Cutting calories is an expected part of your weight loss journey.

Choosing diet sodas seems like one of the best ways to accomplish that, right?

For years, numerous scientific studies have demonstrated the health problems of regular sugary sodas: tooth decay, diabetes, and of course, weight gain.

But believe it or not, new scientific studies on the effects of diet soda are bringing to light the exact same health problems - including weight gain!

While scientists are not sure why the body reacts to diet sodas as if they were sugar-filled, they do have a few theories. First, there is nothing nutritious or natural in light soda. It's a combination of laboratory chemicals combined with water and carbonation. Whenever the body cannot recognize or break down what it takes in, the body will store it in fat cells. The more you ingest a substance that your body cannot break down, the more weight you will gain.

Other scientific findings point to the disruptions between the taste buds and the brain when it comes to diet soda. Diet soda consumption points to overeating. It works this way: your tongue receives intense signals of sweetness when you drink diet soda. It tells your brain that it has a pretty big incoming load of calories. So your brain prepares the rest of your body for the calories that are about to come. Your body then releases insulin. This makes your cells ready to absorb the energy from the digested food. Now when it comes to diet soda, those calories your body expects are never delivered. Your body is now left with a high insulin level which is bad for your body. Also now your brain is missing the calories it prepared for. This will urge you to overeat later in the day to make up for that load of insulin you ordered earlier.

According to scientific studies, diet sodas contribute to overeating:

Basically, they suggest that diet sodas could dull your taste buds for sweetness, leading you to hunt down sweeter and sweeter things to eat and drink to try to satisfy your sweet tooth.

*NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT,  
DIET SODAS  
DON'T HAVE A PLACE  
IN YOUR WEIGHT LOSS JOURNEY.*

*- Graça Mavinga*

## Definition Of Processed Food

Processed food is spoken of a lot lately. What does it actually mean? Simply put, processed foods are any food that's been changed from its natural, raw form.

That being said, there are different levels of processing. It can be as little as peeling the skin from a banana. It can also be as extreme as white flour bread. The thing that makes it extremely processed is that the natural layers of the wheat are removed and artificial chemicals are added, for instance.

## What's So Bad About Processed Food?

The more processed, the less healthy the food is. Although processed food is more sanitary and has a longer storage time, it lacks nutrients that keep your body healthy. For example, Fresh pineapple and canned pineapple both contain a huge amount of vitamin C. Nevertheless, fresh pineapple has active enzymes that along with vitamin C provide healthy benefits. The vitamins are absorbed with ease because they are in a more natural state. In canned pineapple, the fruit is modified. The high processing temperatures in canned fruit cause nutrients to pass through the digestive system instead of being absorbed. But if we're honest, the taste of canned pineapple will never be able to compete with the taste of fresh pineapples. That sweet fresh taste is your body telling you that you are eating good nutrition.

That being said, we live in a world where fresh food is not always available. If we're honest with ourselves, sometimes processed foods taste so much better even though they're unhealthy. What should we do in that case?

Make sure half of your meals are as natural as possible. That means whole grains and raw or slightly cooked fruits and vegetables. If that is too difficult, try getting that portion of your meals from frozen ingredients. Food in this state still has nutrients because it has usually been frozen. A process that minimizes the loss of vitamins and minerals.

If frozen ingredients are too difficult, try refined grains and canned fruit and vegetables. Although they are still a good source of fiber and a few vitamins, they are so processed that they are almost unrecognized by the body.





## How Do Antioxidants Influence Weight Loss?

One often hears the word antioxidant when people talk about health. But what exactly are antioxidants? And how can it help you lose weight?

The way your body burns fuel is very similar to fire. There must be fuel and oxygen to start the fire and keep it burning. When the fire is extinguished, ash remains in the fireplace. In our bodies, fuel and oxygen are needed to produce the energy we need. When the process is finished, residue remains just like in the fireplace. This residue is known as oxidants. Like ash in the fireplace, the result can be harmful if oxidants are not cleared.

A healthy body is capable of cleaning up the normal load of oxidants. It does this by using antioxidants that remove residues from the body and prevent them from irritating and damaging other nearby cells. But the body can't remove the oxidants as efficiently if we:

- eat a lot of junk food
- do not exercise
- do not drink enough water
- constantly live with high stress levels

If the body is overwhelmed with the oxidant level on a daily basis, then cells and tissues within the body start to deteriorate. This creates an environment for shorter cell life span, reduced immune system functions and general premature aging of the entire body.

Being overweight generates low but persistent levels of inflammation in the body that increase already uncontrollable levels of oxidant activity. Your body is in a state of disrepair and cannot fix itself properly. That means losing weight is even harder because your body sees it as another form of stress.

There is a way to combat oxidative stress. Certain foods, called antioxidants can stop the oxidative effect. These nutrients (especially fruits) clear away residues and stop the chain of degradation caused by oxidants. Making sure to include at least 2 cups (235g) of the following foods in your diet everyday. It will take you a long way. It lowers your body's stress level, allowing it to heal and burn off fat as it improves fuel burn.

### List of antioxidants to eat:



#### FRUITS

Blueberries,  
strawberries,  
prunes, blackberries,  
apples,  
plums,  
raspberries,  
cherries



#### VEGETABLES

Black, red kidney,  
or pinto beans,  
spinach,  
red cabbage,  
kale,  
plantain,  
cassava leaves,  
avocado,  
red and green  
peppers

***Eat & enjoy  
your weight loss!***



# VITAMINES, MINERALS & FATS

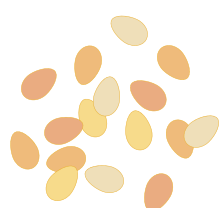
## Essential Vitamins And Minerals For Weight Loss

While we all need to consume vitamins and minerals every day to stay healthy, weight loss can be boosted by making sure we get a few specific nutrients. This is especially important because modern agricultural practices over the past 20 years have consistently produced food that is abundant and attractive. Yet it has 80% less nutritional value than they did a few generations ago. Here are a few vitamins and minerals you must know.



### Chromium

Chromium is a mineral that stabilizes blood sugar levels, decreasing sudden waves of hunger, mood swings, and binge eating. In the long term, it works to prevent diabetes and heart disease because of its leveling effect. You can take chromium as a supplement but it is always best to obtain it through ingredients like: corn, sweet potatoes, apples, tomatoes, and broccoli.



### Magnesium

The media put surprisingly little emphasis on the role the mineral magnesium plays in weight loss. Magnesium plays a critical part in food digestion, insulin regulation (insulin determines whether energy is used or stored as fat), and controlling the body's chemical reactions to stress. The last one causes weight gain. Ingredients that consist of magnesium are: rice, wheat, and oat bran, pumpkin seeds, spinach, flax seeds, sesame seeds, Brazil nuts, almonds, sunflower seeds, molasses and edamame (dry roasted soybeans).



### Zinc

Here's another key player in the weight loss game: mineral zinc. It helps regulate metabolism, fatless muscle mass and the immune system. This is a mineral to pay attention to. Quick tip! You can tell if you are zinc deficient by looking at your fingernails. If there are white spots, then that is a usually reliable indicator that you are lacking zinc in your diet. You can always take zinc in a supplemental form. That said, it is much better to get it from food sources. Zinc can be found in oysters, toasted wheat germ, roasted pumpkin seeds, peanuts, and dark chocolate.



### Vitamin D

Vitamin D was once only seen as useful for strong bones. Now it is becoming an important factor in nutrition, including weight loss. Sufficient amounts of this vitamin help switch the metabolism of the body from storing fat to burning fat. In addition, it has the added benefit of burning belly fat first. Vitamin D is made by exposing the skin to sunlight each day.

## Good Fats vs Bad Fats For Weight Loss

Let's start with the basic truth about fat: It's absolutely essential to our bodies. Fat supports our organs, helps in the absorption of certain vitamins, provides fuel for energy and is essential for the brain. Brains consist of 60% fat! Moreover, eating a little fat with each meal slows down the digestive process and makes us feel full for a longer time.

Now that we've established that fat is critical to the well-being of your body. Let's see how it fits into your diet. It's important to know that there are three types of fat in your food: saturated fat, trans fat and unsaturated fat. Only one of those types will help you lose weight by making you feel full and maintaining your health. The key to fat intake and weight loss is to make sure you don't take in more than 30% of your daily allowed calories in fat.

### Saturated fat

Saturated fat is usually found in red meat, full fat dairy products like: butter, milk and cheese. So what makes it bad? It has been linked to inflammation in our bodies. Which means it creates a continuously unhealthy environment that can lead to heart disease, cancer, and other illnesses. Limiting consumption of red meat to once a week and using free dairy products helps to control your weight and the inflammation.

### Trans fat

Trans fats are man-made fats. Manufacturers found that this fat greatly extended the preservability of baked goods like bread, cookies, and crackers. Today, they incorporate it into most foods we consume. Our bodies can't handle it. Because it is a man-made chemical, the human body doesn't have the ability to break it down properly so it tries to store it. Which leads to weight gain, inflammation, clogged arteries and eventually diseases. Extra tip: trans fats can also be listed as 'partially hydrogenated fat' on food labels. If you see that phrase, don't eat it.

### Unsaturated fat

So what fats are good for you and your waistline? Unsaturated fat. Your body recognizes this type of fat as easily absorbable and containing useful nutrients.



### Ingredients with unsaturated fat:

Olive (oil),  
coconut oil,  
almonds,  
avocados,  
peanuts,  
walnuts,  
seeds,  
spinach,  
kale and  
flax seed oil

***Eat these ingredients, feel full & keep your body healthy!***



Now that we've addressed the nutritional aspect of losing weight, which forms the foundation of effective weight management. I would like to dive into the mental aspect of losing weight.

There needs to be a mental switch. You need to know that there needs to be a lifestyle change for the rest of your life. Call it a mental shift! Losing weight is a decision that you make once, for the rest of your life. If you have no medical condition, you should be able to maintain the same weight for years. A fluctuation in weight is very common among women. Especially when women are on their menstrual cycle. Just keep eating healthy, exercise, rest and live a stress free life. This is all part of maintaining your weight.

If you don't change the perception of who you are, you will always battle with losing weight. For example, if you're someone that eats processed food everyday. Or if you're someone that drinks (diet) sodas everyday. You should work towards never eating highly processed food again. You should make the decision to never drink (diet) soda again.

You might have been raised that way and have no idea how to eat a balanced diet. Well now you're an adult. It's time to redefine your meaning of a healthy and balanced diet. This is your responsibility to find out.

### **Food addiction**

Food addiction is another possible mental struggle. In that case, you should see a qualified therapist who will help you find the underlying problem. Most of the time there is a past trauma that you never dealt with that is causing you to use food as a drug to numb your pain. So in order to change your relationship with food, you first need to deal with your past traumas.

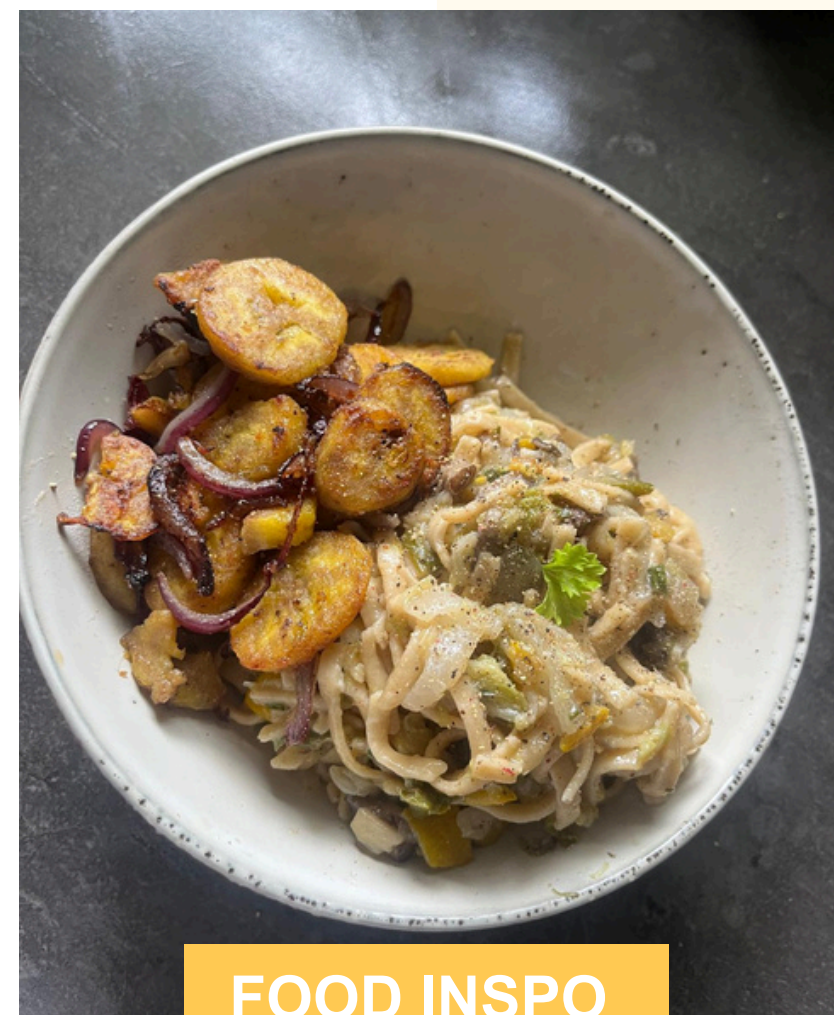
### **The journey**

Will it be difficult in the beginning? Of course! But it's worth the sweat. If you want to live a healthier life for the long run. You should make a lifetime of decisions. And remind yourself everyday who you want to be and what you are doing it for. We live a short time on this earth. At the same time it's also a long time. It would be wasteful if you would live half your adult life in sickness or discomfort. All because you didn't want to change your eating habits! It's all about being intentional and setting realistic goals for yourself. Change small habits and you'll witness big results! I certainly did and today I'm 13 kg lighter than I was 3 years ago.

## Learn From My Lessons

I'll list a short list of what I've done to achieve this.

- 90% of my food is not processed. I never really drink sodas so cutting that off was never an issue.
- I started using a lot less animal fat and protein.
- 90% of my food and drinks are not sugary. I try not to eat sugar at all! But sometimes it's inevitable, because it's literally everywhere even in non sugary foods.
- I only eat whole foods. Meaning I eat brown rice, whole wheat pasta and whole wheat bread (mostly soar dough).
- My main ingredient at every meal is vegetables.
- I only use coconut oil, olive oil and palm oil in some of my African dishes. I can say 90% of my food intake is homemade.



FOOD INSPO

*Whole wheat pasta  
with plantain*

These are some of the habits I adapted to live a more balanced and healthier life. What have I noticed after doing all of the things I've listed? I notice that I have more energy during the day. I can do so much more than before without feeling exhausted. It is normal to feel tired after a long day. But I do not feel exhausted when the day starts or throughout the day. If you feel tired and exhausted during the day or at the beginning of your day. It is an indication of poor nutrition or lifestyle.

Your journey might look slightly different, but everyone should follow these basics. Use less sugar, eat whole food and eat more vegetables and fruits!

As you start your journey you'll learn something new every day! Be intentional about adjusting your habits. Listen to your body, it will tell you what works and what doesn't work.

I hope this will be the foundation of your new beginning.

*Goodluck!*

*Graça Mavinga*