

How to overcome Plateaus in Weight Loss

Plateaus, we've all experienced them, those stalls in weight loss that you just can't seem to get over. What causes them? How can you overcome them? This is a very frequently asked question of all health professionals.

There are many possible causes for plateaus. One of the most prevalent causes that I have found is that your exercise workouts have not consistently increased in intensity or time and your body has adapted to your normal workout. Because of this adaptation your body doesn't have to work as hard to perform them so your calorie burn and muscle hypertrophy (growth) decreases dramatically. The way to overcome this is to change up your routine. With your cardio workout you will need to increase the intensity by going faster, higher, or by increasing the resistance and/or the length of time in which you workout. If you are not currently doing weight training you may want to add this to your routine in order to increase your muscle mass so that your body will burn more calories throughout the day. If weight training is already a part of your program, you should increase the weights, repetitions, number of sets, or maybe take up a new area of interest such as Pilates or Yoga.

Another cause of plateaus can be a change in your body chemistry. Hormonal changes, thyroid problems and adrenal fatigue are just a few of the common reasons for a stall in your weight loss. You can consult a healthcare professional to determine, if a blood work up, which may include T3 and T4 thyroid testing as well as testing of the adrenals is appropriate. In many cases supplements can be taken to correct most problems.

Those last 10 pounds can be the hardest to lose also. Your body has a weight that it has determined to be the healthiest weight for you and it will try and maintain that weight. There is a reason why those last few pounds are called "vanity pounds". Your body likes to maintain a certain percentage of fat in order to protect you from bone loss. Additionally, the fat from your belly area is a prime source of estrogen production. You also need to ask yourself, at this point in your weight loss regiment, do you have a tendency to not be as strict in what you are eating because you feel that you have been deprived enough. It may just be in little ways but when it comes to those last ten pounds it's the little things that matter. If you feel that this is the case you

will have to reestablish your proper eating habits as well as maintaining your exercise routines without skipping any.

Plateaus almost always happen in the course of weight loss programs. Be sure you don't let them get you discouraged. If they last more than two weeks be sure to reevaluate your exercise programs as well as your food intake. If you still have not broken through, have your doctor perform the tests to determine if your body chemistry is to blame. Don't be afraid at this point to have a professional evaluate at your exercise routines in order to advise you how to change them up.

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