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Expert advice for losing weight

By **Melissa Erickson**
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“When trying to lose weight it’s equally important to know what to include as well as what to avoid. I recommend avoiding ‘diet’ foods like 100-calorie packs of processed sugary cookies. Just because it’s 100 calories doesn’t mean it will help you drop pounds. It’s also important to avoid large portion sizes of ‘healthy’ foods. Nuts are wonderful, but a small portion can contain a significant amount of calories. One ounce of nuts provides about 160 to 170 calories, and an appropriate portion size equals approximately 49 pistachios, 23 almonds, 28 peanuts or 16 cashews.”

– Registered dietitian **Lauren Harris-Pincus**, owner of *Nutrition StarringYOU.com*

Trying to slim down can be frustrating, especially if you make some common mistakes that sabotage weight loss. Registered dietitians are experts who help clear the roadblocks to losing weight:

“One of the biggest weight loss mistakes is going on a restrictive ‘diet’ instead of focusing on a healthy eating pattern and lifestyle. Restrictive diets can result in weight loss but they are usually not sustainable. Cutting out a whole food group may cause a feeling of deprivation and may lead to rebound weight gain in the long run. Instead of restricting, make smart choices. Focus on the many yummy, healthy options available.”

– Registered dietitian **Jennifer Glockner**, nutritionist and author of “*Teddy Tries a Veggie*,” a nutrition-themed interactive e-book aimed at ages 4-8

“Skipping meals to save calories only to become ravenous and out of control with the next meal or later in the day. People who skip meals usually overeat later and would have done better with eating more earlier.”

– Registered dietitian **Sonya Angelone**, spokeswoman for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

“You should avoid all added sugar that doesn’t count as a ‘sweet’ as much as possible. For example, steering clear of processed and packaged salad dressings, breads and cereals as much as possible, and opting for whole foods as much as possible. These products can be high in both calories and sugar when you might not even be aware of it. Better to save a few sugar grams for a true conscious indulgence instead.”

– Registered dietitian **Keri Glassman**, founder and president of *Keri Glassman, Nutritious Life*, a nutrition practice and health and wellness brand

“Steer clear of the mindless munchies. Having a big open bag of anything can result in overeating. Rather, make a mindful snack plan. Think in-shell nuts. For instance, unlike potato chips, pistachios offer a good source of protein and fiber, with over three times as many pieces per serving. In-shell pistachios may help you fool yourself full because the leftover shells may provide a visual cue for portions, potentially helping to curb intake. You can even choose a 100-calorie pack for a pre-portioned snack.”

– Registered dietitian **Jackie Newgent**, culinary nutritionist and author of “*The All-Natural Diabetes Cookbook*”

“Don’t skip the Zzs’s. Sleep is a non-food component that is frequently overlooked and has a significant effect on hunger, cravings and weight. Too often we see clients who are seemingly eating all the right foods at the right times, but they’re tossing and turning all night. Sleep controls the hormones leptin and ghrelin, which determine whether or not you are hungry or have cravings.”

– Registered dietitian **Cassie Bjork**, founder of *Dietitian Cassie.com* and *Healthy Simple Life* fitness and nutrition coaching