



Get in Sexy Summertime Shape

Are you ready to finally shed those last five to ten pounds? Are you feeling motivated by shorts, tanks, bikinis and, dare we say, Paris Hilton? Even if you've tried and failed a million times, it all amounts to long-term determination, perseverance and drive.

The first thing you'll need in your summer weight loss plan is a food log. Don't leave it up to chance, assuming you'll remember what you ate each day. You'd be surprised at how even the smallest of snacks and trips to the cupboard can add up. Write down everything you eat, or put it in an Excel spreadsheet. The extra time you take each day to log your food intake really pays off in the end.

Expect to hit plateaus. A healthy weight loss goal is a mere one to two pounds per week. If you lose more than this one week and less another, it all balances out. It's also perfectly normal to see no changes for a week or two, followed by another dip. So don't despair. Good things come to those who wait.

Exercise is crucial. If you don't work-out regularly, add a half hour walk to your daily routine. If you do work-out regularly, increase your program to burn more calories. Successful dieters combine calorie reduction with fitness.

Eat smart and go back to the basics. Remember those lovely food pyramids we learned about in fourth grade? Eat at least two vegetables and fruits a day. Drink two cups of milk or eat yogurt, and reduce or eliminate your fat intake. This will ensure your body gets the vitamins and nutrients it needs to function.

Stay motivated. Most people give up on their diet because they get bored or because results take too long to achieve. Find ways to make your diet fun - and stay focused on your goal. Get an iPod, so your workout is a bit less intimidating. Find a buddy, and keep each other on track. Vary your meals. Realize that each new day is one more step closer to your goal. With a little persistence, you can succeed.

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