

Holistic Medicine And Its Approaches To Weight Loss

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**ADDRESSING THE WHOLE PERSON
TO GREATLY BOOST SUCCESS**

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THE STRUGGLE TO LOSE WEIGHT AND YO-YO DIETING

Losing weight can be a very challenging struggle. There are many different diet plans and diet programs out there that can be confusing and many people just don't feel satisfied with the or find success with the typical diet, as they don't feel as though their whole person is addressed in the process.

Too many people enter into a yo-yo diet struggle. They work very hard to restrict calories for a period of time but then they lose their willpower and fall off the weight loss bandwagon, cheat on their very restricted calorie diet and then cheat again because they feel the damage has already been done. Before long, the weight loss program is out the window and they end up gaining the weight right back again and possible gain even more weight than they are heavier than before they started. Then a few months later, they start another diet, and the whole merry-go-round begins again.

If you recognize yourself in this scenario, you are not alone. Many people just address semi-starvation as a way to lose weight and fail in the end. Yo-yo dieting is not only *not* helping you lose weight but it can also be harmful to your body. While you are restricting calories, you often don't take the time and effort to try and get adequate nutrients into your body and can suffer from things like vitamin deficiency, deficiency of essential fatty acids, protein deficiency, mineral deficiency, and diseases like osteoporosis from a lack of adequate calcium and vitamin D absorption.

Fortunately, there is a better way to deal with weight loss that addresses who you really are as a whole person. This involves using a holistic approach to losing weight. Through a holistic weight loss program, you can address the underlying issues behind your inability to maintain a healthy



weight and can begin to lose weight in a healthier fashion. This eliminates yo-yo dieting and sets you on a path toward having a permanently normal weight.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH

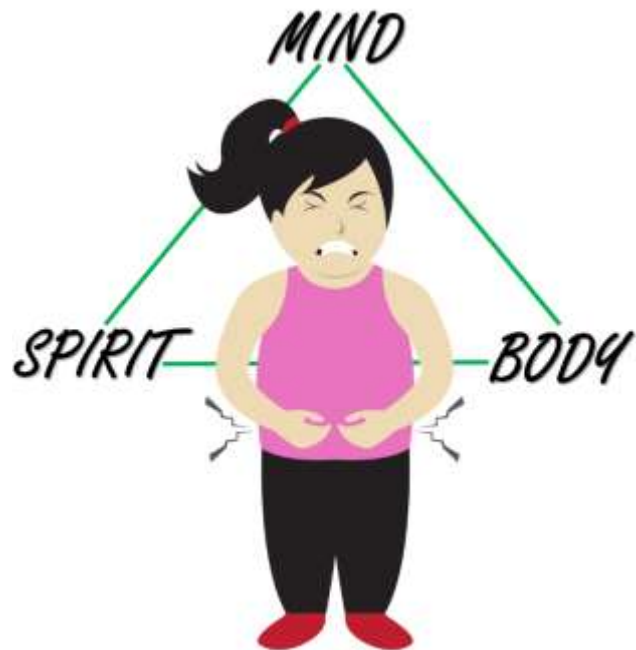
A holistic medicine approach to losing weight addresses the person as a whole being and takes note of the underlying cause of obesity rather than just focusing and treating the person's symptom. When this happens, you can reach a long term and meaningful way of losing weight.

Other weight loss problems fail because they just focus on restricting calories; while a holistic weight loss plan will help you lose the excess weight by recognizing the triggers to overeating and incorporating exercise as part of the weight loss program.

ADDRESSING THE WHOLE PERSON AND INDIVIDUAL VULNERABILITIES

Why practice holistic weight loss? Holistic weight loss recognizes that overweight and obesity is much more complex than simply eating too much or a lack of motivation or self-control.

Since the problems of obesity and eating too much can result in many dangerous health conditions, including stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and some kinds of cancer it is important to make the necessary lifestyle changes to lose the weight and keep it off.



If you can maintain an ideal weight with a body mass index (BMI) of between 18.5 and 25, you will better be able to achieve overall excellent health. Using holistic health practices to achieve a healthy weight, you will not only prevent some serious disease but you will experience a greater quality of life.

Typically, most people are overweight as a result of two key things: the food you eat and the amount of exercise you get.

Unlike, other methods that simply put you on a diet and advise a gym membership, holistic medicine, seeks the underlying causes of the behaviors, emotions and thought process that resulted in you being obese and addresses all aspects of you as a person that lead to this dysfunctional aspect of your wellbeing.

Ask Yourself These Questions:

- Why do you overeat and eat more food than you really should be eating?
- How can you approach eating in a healthier way?
- Why don't you exercise in the adequate amounts?
- How can you improve your exercise plan to incorporate more and healthier exercises?
- What are the various factors, including physical factors, social factors, and psychological factors, getting in the way of exercising and eating properly?
- What are the triggers to overeating?
- How can you stay on a healthy diet and avoid eating the wrong foods?
- What is your relationship with food?
- How do you deal with stress?
- How do you feel about yourself? Do you feel worthy of a healthier lifestyle?

When you uncover the answers to the above questions, you can avoid the unnecessary and unhealthy patterns in your lifestyle that keep you from achieving a proper weight.

Holistic approaches also attempt to uncover other issues in your life that may contribute to weight problems, like relationships, stress management, and any other medical conditions that you may have that can contribute to weight gain.

This overall approach to one's whole being is key to sustained weight loss and is the underlying success of the holistic approach to losing weight.

A holistic medicine practitioner or nutritionist can help.

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO CONQUER OVEREATING

People overeat for a variety of reasons. Often there are triggers to overeating that can be addressed. A trigger might be to walk by a doughnut shop, smelling the freshly baked and fried doughnuts. There also might be social triggers, such as being tempted to eat when others are eating around you.

You might eat when you're lonely as a way of cheering yourself up. You might be depressed and may be using food to make

you feel better. You might be using food as a way to reward yourself for doing something good.



Finding these triggers takes intense scrutiny on your life. When you are overeating, think about the feelings you are experiencing before and after eating.

Is stress behind your weight gain?

Is it a lack of knowledge into healthy eating?

Is self-sabotage an issue you need to deal with?

Perhaps you rely on food to alleviate sadness, loneliness or other difficult emotions?

Think about which things are contributing to your overeating pattern. There can be many different triggers to overeating that need to be dissected out of your behavior so you can avoid the triggers that cause you to eat too much, eat the wrong foods, and to gain weight.

8 ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR WEIGHT LOSS



Here are some alternative methods to weight loss. These techniques are often used in holistic medicine for their many benefits. Remember that diet alone is often not enough to sustain long lasting results, and this is especially true for fad diet.

SEND POSITIVE MESSAGES TO YOURSELF

In many cases, a trigger will tempt you to turn to eating food and this habit can eventually becoming your enemy. Too many people (usually because of environmental issues and problems with past childhood memories) choose to punish themselves for eating too much. Others use food as a way of expressing self-control. This rarely helps the weight loss process and reinforces bad eating habits.

Those who had parents that used food as a way to control them, such as in discipline, or to redirect their child's wayward behavior are at a greater risk of overeating and becoming obese as an adult. These people need a holistic approach to losing weight.

One way to break the pattern of overeating is to try giving yourself positive messages. Positive messages include telling yourself that "my need to eat a snack will not last and will pass over time" or "I have the ability to control my eating behavior" can reinforce positive patterns of eating and can lessen the urges to eat.

When you are successful in reducing your consumption of food, you can send yourself other types of positive messages, such as "Being healthy is great" and "I am proud of myself for eating

healthy foods in the proper amounts today.” These thoughts and phrases can help you in reframing your relationship with food. You think of yourself in a different way—as a responsible person eating food for the right reasons.

Positive messages can work with exercising as well. You can say to yourself “I am strong and exercise will help me” or phrases like “I feel good after I have exercised” and “I am proud of myself for exercising for thirty minutes today.” These will make exercising easier and you will be more likely to partake in it on a daily or near-daily basis.

MEDITATION

Meditation is one of the best techniques used in a holistic approach to weight loss. Those who practice meditation will gain a greater mindfulness of the various thoughts and emotions they are feeling so that they can become aware of emotions they hadn't noticed in the past.

Meditation can help those who binge eat learn the ways they use food in order to cope with negative emotions. It also helps

overeaters understand that they should eat when they actually feel hungry and stop eating when they are full. The underlying causes of eating too much can be addressed by meditating.

In meditation, you sit or lie in a comfortable position. You usually close your eyes and focus on the in and out of your breath as you begin to relax your muscles from your head to your toes. You can say a syllable or mantra in order to deepen the state of relaxation. Then you let your mind remain in the present moment in a state known as “mindfulness.” Do this for several minutes until you feel entirely relaxed. Then you may tell yourself that you do not need to focus on past traumas but can stay in the present, eating less and exercising more.



PSYCHOTHERAPY

Psychotherapy with a qualified psychotherapist can help those who have problems overeating learn to modify their eating behavior. One type of therapy that works particularly well is cognitive behavioral therapy. Rather than searching for the underlying reasons behind your overeating, this type of therapy can teach you how to change your behavior in order to reach your goal of losing weight.

When you seek the assistance of a therapist trained in cognitive-behavioral therapy, the therapist will help you learn how to replace old and well-established patterns of eating with behaviors that are more productive. The therapist might address problem thoughts and beliefs such as "I am depressed so I deserve to eat" and can show you how these thoughts drive you to overeat.

Cognitive behavioral therapy can help you change your obsession with body image as the reason behind your trying to lose weight and help you focus on losing weight because this is a healthy goal rather than because you hate how you look and want to change your appearance. These techniques are very helpful in helping you learn how to eat properly and with a goal of healthy weight loss.

HYPNOSIS

Hypnosis is an alternative therapy technique that has worked on many people who suffer from obesity. A qualified hypnotherapist can use various techniques to put you into a therapeutic and relaxing trance. Then they can help put into your brain thought and suggestions, such as "I want to be healthy" or "I can control my eating" or "I like to exercise." They can give you post-hypnotic suggestions that help you take what you got from hypnosis to use after you have come out of the trance.

You can come away with thoughts in your head that promote healthy eating and exercise. Hypnosis may be done just once or on a regular basis in order to reinforce positive ideas around losing weight the healthy way.

YOGA

Yoga is a centuries-old practice that will not just improve your balance and flexibility but can improve your mind and body connection so that you can begin to eat better. It involves doing several different poses in tune to breathing exercises. Yoga is part meditation and part exercise. It can be one of the forms of exercise you do as part of a weight loss program and can help you learn to eat less because you are more in tune with your body.

GUIDED IMAGERY FOR WEIGHT LOSS

Guided imagery is a form of meditation that involves imagining yourself in a beautiful and serene place while focusing on your breath. You imagine your body to be much thinner and that you can see, hear, and smell everything in the place you have chosen. The place you choose can be anywhere but most people choose beaches, mountaintops, forests, or meadows to imagine. This practice relaxes you and gets you more in touch with your body so that you eat less after practicing this technique.

JOURNALING AND SELF-MONITORING

Try keeping a journal of your thoughts and successes or engage in some other form of self-monitoring method so you can be more aware of exactly what you eat and why you are eating. You can write down a list of everything you eat during the day, which can enlighten you as to your eating behaviors.

You can use your journal to reflect on the various emotions you are feeling, learn what drives you to eat, (and keeps you from eating) as well as the outcomes of your endeavors around eating and exercise. Journaling can reinforce positive behaviors so that you can easily look back on where you once were and reflect on the positive path you are now on.

EXERCISE

Just reducing your food intake will be inadequate in helping you lose weight. You need to engage in some form of physical activity. This is essential as part of a holistic approach to losing weight.

Choose an exercise you enjoy so that you are more likely to stick with it. Better yet, choose several different physical exercise types you are likely to stay with and do different exercises on different days.

SUMMARY

In the spirit of holistic healing, you should select those principles, techniques, and approaches that will best serve you as you embark on a holistic weight loss plan. No individuals are completely alike and know single method will work on everyone. In visualizing yourself thinner, remember the behaviors and eating techniques that resonate most with you. When you engage in exercise, do something you actually enjoy doing. If you choose to do cognitive behavioral therapy, take an active part in your treatment process.

Connect the various techniques. This means doing things like meditation after your exercise for the day and the practice of sending yourself positive messages throughout the day. Remember that you are in charge of your weight loss project so make positive and effective decisions. This will help your weight loss process go much more smoothly.

Use the above techniques along with regular exercising and eating healthy foods. Make the holistic approach to weight loss something that is unique to you and your personal goals. A holistic medicine practitioner or nutritionist can be an invaluable asset in that they can identify your vulnerabilities and then design a plan that will help counteract any pitfalls and issues that may sabotage your success.

Be sure to talk to your doctor before starting any type of weight loss program.

