

What Keeps You from Reaching Your Goals? By Lisa Schilling RN

Often people *say* they're **really serious** about losing weight, but aren't **taking the best path** to get where they want to be. If your goal is *serious* weight loss and you want to see REAL results, you will have to work *harder* than the person who *only* wants to *improve* health and fitness levels. This is not meant to go against the moderation theory, but to provide a **reality check** and define realistic expectations.

After talking to a diverse population of people, I have found a few basic issues they have in common. Keep in mind that these are *generalizations*, but they apply to *many* people stuck in this situation. Here are some issues that stall the progress of many yo-yo diet and weight-cycling folks.

1. The vast majority are **not exercising enough**, if at all. You can only decrease calories so much. (This actually stalls your metabolism, causing your body to adapt to the caloric decrease.) The alternative is to increase the calories you burn. Pushing the *intensity level* into your target heart range is also important to achieve maximum results.
2. Most who *are* exercising are **not weight training**. Weight training is *critical* to maintaining your muscle mass and tone. If you're not weight training while trying to lose weight, you will lose muscle mass and tone. Your metabolic rate will also decrease, causing you to burn fewer calories in a day!
3. Many **actually consume more calories per day than they think**, some by 500 + calories per day! If you're not sure, write down everything you eat and drink for a few days. This is your opportunity to evaluate food labels, portions, food groups, calorie counts, and realize it all adds *up*.
4. Some **actually consume more fat than they think**. Limiting non-healthy fat intake is important for everyone. Fat is calorie dense and most sources are nutritionally poor. Consuming too many calories from fat will reduce the extra calories you have left to spend.
5. Most **want instant results**. When it doesn't happen, they either give up or go on some crazy *diet*. You **HAVE** to be resolved to the fact that long-term results come from long-term efforts.
6. Many **often skip meals!** This is bad because it slows your metabolism, causing you to burn

fewer calories 24 hours a day. It also produces a rebound hunger that seems urgent.

7. Most **consume far too many sugars or simple/refined carbohydrates**. These foods are rapidly absorbed by the body and give you very few nutrients for the calorie content. This rapid absorption spikes blood sugar, which can cause a rebound crash. Often they are eaten in place of more nutritious foods.

8. Many **consume far too few fruits and vegetables**. Neglecting this part of your diet causes a lack of vital nutrients. The body is designed to utilize all the food groups for its optimum performance. This effects energy balance and immune function as well.

9. Some **don't want to give up or limit their alcohol**. Alcohol is a triple whammy ... it stimulates your appetite, slows your metabolism and is loaded with calories! It also lowers inhibitions which can lead you to make *poor* choices.

10. Many **consume large amounts of artificial additives and shelf stabilizers**. This is seen in most boxed or canned items. The body doesn't recognize these altered substances readily and as a result you may not get the fullness signal sent to your brain. This leads to overeating episodes.

11. Some **consume too many artificial sweeteners** that stimulate the pancreas to release insulin as sugar would. Insulin causes the body to *store fat* and prohibits it from burning stored fat for fuel.

12. Many **always eat until they're full**. *Aim* to stop eating just before you're "full" and see how you feel 30 minutes later. This allows time for fullness signals to be sent and received.

13. Many **don't address being carb sensitive (CS)**. CS people need to eat in a way that reduces cravings and creates feelings of fullness. If this is not done, the CS person will always struggle with excess weight.

Significant weight loss and eventual maintenance is difficult. If this is something you really want, you will make time for it in your lifestyle. Choosing to do what you can do, and building on that, is far better than burning out and then doing nothing at all. Be accountable for what you have control over and decide if this goal is something you are willing to alter your lifestyle to achieve. **Bottom Line:** consistent and targeted lifestyle change is the only way to create life-long results.