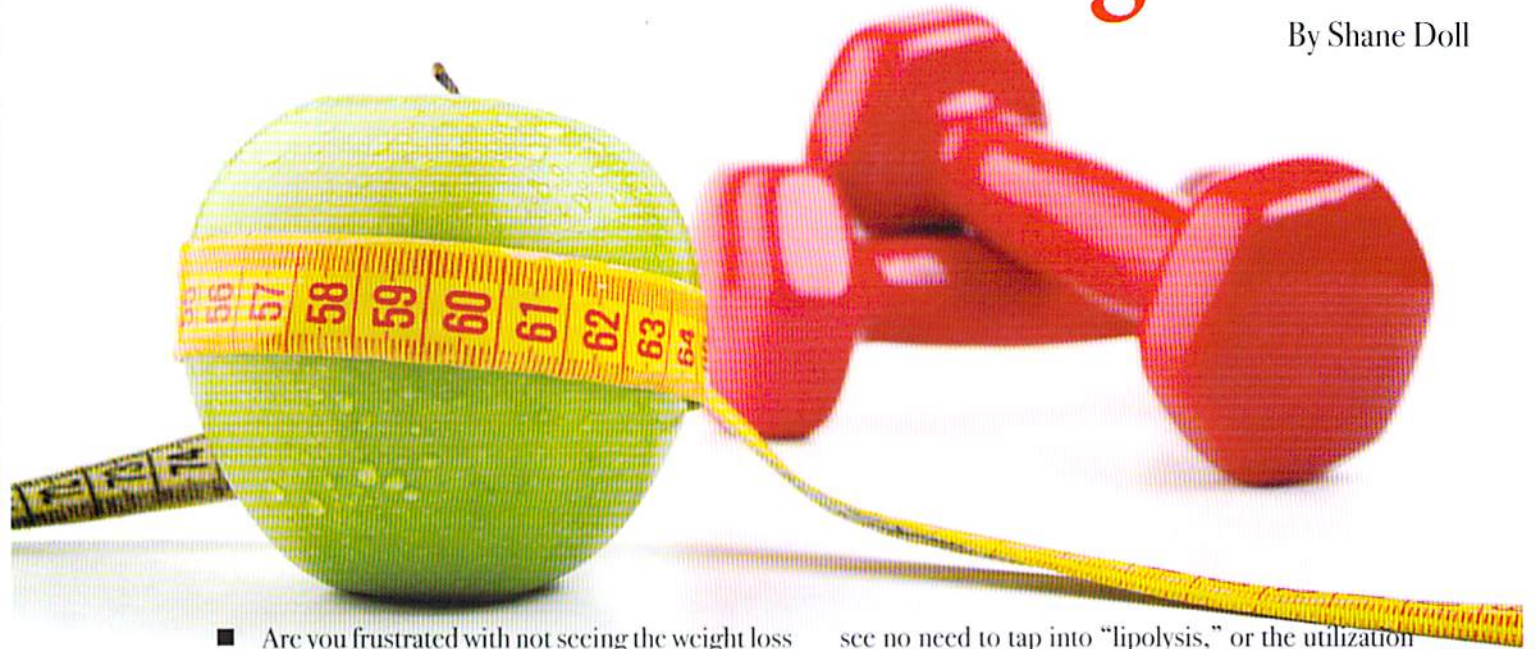


How a Healthy Diet Can

Fail to Produce Weight Loss

By Shane Doll



■ Are you frustrated with not seeing the weight loss you want even after changing up your diet and eating healthy foods? If so, you're definitely not alone. Over the years as a weight loss consultant I've found the idea of eating "healthy" to be misleading for most of my clients.

There's an expectation that if you eat healthy you should lose weight. While it's true that eating healthy foods is at the foundation for any weight loss program it won't always produce automatic fat loss. The best way is to learn how to eat in a way that will produce the right hormonal signals for your body to burn fat. Let me share an example with you that came from a conversation I had recently with a client.

My client informed me that he was eating fruit several times a day for snacks, normally an apple or an orange, and thought he was doing great. He was surprised when I told him that wasn't a great idea. Not a great idea? How could that be? Eating fruit has got to be healthy! Here's the scoop on why I recommended a change.

My client was eating fruit, by itself, several times a day. I'm not a big fan of eating fruit by itself when you're trying to maximize fat loss. Why? Because of blood sugar levels. If you want to get in your fat burning zone you need to lower blood sugar levels. Your body will

see no need to tap into "lipolysis," or the utilization of stored body fat for fuel, unless you give it a reason to through lower blood sugar levels. Make no mistake about it; sugar is the enemy to fat loss.

When it comes to the hormonal balances required to enter into a fat loss state it really doesn't matter all that much if the sugar came from an orange or a Snickers bar. Sure the orange is "healthier" because of all the phytonutrients, fiber, vitamins, and minerals but that's not the point. The point is...are you creating a fat-storing or fat-burning state in your body from the foods you're eating?

The fruit "by itself" strategy is not recommended because of the impact it will have on your blood sugar levels. A much better strategy is to eat fruit with a protein and/or fat. An example would be eating an apple with some peanut butter or a slice of cheese. The fat does several things; it helps to slow down the release of sugar into the bloodstream, it helps to release hormones like leptin to signal fullness, and helps to provide a much more steady release of energy.

Sure, fruit is healthy, but you have to be careful with how you eat it if your goal is to maximize fat burning. Remember, the same rules don't apply to someone with a fast metabolism who burns energy quickly. The

amount of carbohydrate in your diet is very important if you want to burn fat. If you don't eat enough carbohydrates or if you eat too many you'll miss your ideal fat-burning window. Everybody will be different in terms of the amount of carbohydrate they need due to their metabolism. That's one of the reasons why metabolism testing is so valuable. I've found it's easy to over-consume carbohydrates if you're not careful. Remember, you need to change your way of thinking from just eating "healthy" to eating for "fat loss."

Here's a quick summary and the bottom line.

1. If fat loss is your objective, avoid eating fruit by itself and always combine with protein and/or healthy fats.
2. If fat loss is your objective, look to keep your total carbohydrate intake within limits (test your metabolism to see your specific requirements).

I should note that I'm not saying that eating a candy bar is the same as eating an apple, but remember the point I'm trying to make. Of course, I'd rather see

you eating natural foods over processed foods, but the idea is that at the end of the day it's all going to come down to caloric and hormonal balances. Did you take in more energy than your body needed? Did your body have a need to access stored fat for fuel, yes or no?

You can eat all the "healthy" foods you want but if you don't create a need for your body to call on energy reserves (from fat stores), you're not going to see much of a change in your waistline.

Shane Doll is a certified personal trainer, fat loss expert, author and owner of Shaping Concepts Fitness Training Studios. For more information on metabolism testing along with articles on weight loss, fitness, and nutrition go to www.shapingconcepts.com ■



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