3 Simple Secrets to Accelerated, Natural, Permanent Weight Loss

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A Special Message from The Sherpa

Every day we are bombarded with mixed messages about weight loss that leaves you dazed and confused.

Take this, do that, eat that, avoid this, get lots of that. And if that's not enough, we've got hundreds of questionable medical "experts" (read: quacks) hocking the latest miracle pills and potions through late night infomercials and now online through fake news reports and fake blogs.

It's enough to drive any person completely insane. But the good news is that the secret to vibrant health, a trim waist, boundless energy and a happy mood is a lot easier than everyone has made it out to be as you'll discover in this report.

But making matters worse is that most of what we hear either comes from companies trying to make a quick buck, conventionally trained doctors who don't have a clue about nutrition or the government whose food pyramid is the nutritional equivalent of buying a ticket on the Titanic - it's a recipe for complete disaster, one that will leaving you sicker, fatter, more depressed and more tired than ever before.

But in this sea of confusion, if you know where to look, there ARE beacons of hope coming from natural therapies that have been proven to work through rigorous scientific study. In this report you'll find a variety of natural therapies that will help you to trim down the toxic fat, slim your waistline, firm your belly, give you more energy, help you sleep better and, most importantly, help you feel better.

WARNING: As you'll see throughout this report, none of these natural therapies should be viewed as a magic bullet - such a thing simply does NOT exist. The brutal truth is that there simply are NO miracle solutions, NO quick fixes, and NO magic pills that will instantly cure you.

But there ARE methods, techniques and therapies that have been proven to work, quickly, safely and effectively if you know where to find them. Our goal is to help you avoid being scammed and save you some time and money, to help you do the SMART things, the things that are backed by science, only the things that have been proven to work.

What we've included in this report are scientifically-backed, common sense solutions. These natural therapies are simply safe and effective add-ons that you can use to help you jumpstart your weight loss efforts.

But as with anything related to health, you must make permanent changes to your lifestyle if you want the weight loss and improve health to stick. To help with that, we've included a handful of proven tips that you can follow. These are simple, to the point, and they flat out work. I know because I've tried nearly all of these suggestions myself!

The single most important action you can take is to eat a nutrient-dense, whole foods diet, followed by engaging in some form of exercise. Yes, I am sure you've heard that before and that's because it's true…there's simply no avoiding that fact.

The food you eat and the exercise you engage in will be the predominant determinants as to whether you lead a vibrant, energetic life or one plagued by one health problem after another.

But, we have to be realistic - we are living in a world full of toxic foods and surrounded by lifestyle choices that inevitably lead us to becoming a sick, overweight couch potato – the deck is stacked against us.

To that end, we could all use a helping hand and that's just what Mother Nature has provided us in the bonus natural therapies that you'll find at the end of this report. What's even better is that these therapies are often not only more effective AND safer than their pharmaceutical counterparts, but they are also far cheaper. And in today's economy, that's not a bad thing!

From the entire team here at Natural Health Sherpa, we truly hope you enjoy this report.

Naturally yours,

The Sherpa

P.S. We all need to work together to become unbrainwashed and focus on the lifestyle choices that actually make us fit, trim, happy and healthy. If this report is something that you like and you feel that others would find helpful, please feel free to share it using the Twitter and Facebook links you'll find throughout.

Step #1: The Optimal High Energy, Delicious, Filling Diet

It's an unavoidable fact that no matter what you do when it comes to health, the single most important step you can take is to eat a wholesome, nutritious diet of foods that provide your body the raw materials it need to operate at optimal levels.

There's not much disagreement with that statement; the disagreement, however, comes with exactly HOW to do that. But here's the dirty little secret that people are finally starting to discover – what the government and food industry have been telling you is healthy is anything but…in fact, their advice can make you sick, fat, tired and depressed.

If you do the exact opposite of what these "authorities" tell you, you'll experience dramatic increases in health, will burn fat, gain energy and feel a hundred times better. To be clear, there is no grand conspiracy here, just decades of old, outdated information that's been institutionalized in every facet of our society, which is going to take decades to undo.

But fortunately for you and me, we don't have to wait decades to find out what the optimal eating plan is. All we need to do look at the latest science and how we evolved eating over millions of years, combine that with common sense and what we actually SEE that works with real people, and the solution is self evident…something that will be elaborated on in this report.

This would take an entire book to give you all of the background material (if you are interested, get a copy of *Why We Get Fat* by NY Times science writer Gary Taubes), but since I know you just want to know what to do right now, I'll cut to the chase and give you the simple steps you can take.

Simply follow these simple rules and you'll automatically avoid the things that are dangerous to your health and you'll automatically include all of the things your body needs to thrive.

Exactly What you Shouldn't be Eating...

Unfortunately, the majority of foods that we eat today are processed – stripped of nearly all of the vital nutrients they originally had and loaded with toxins . This includes everything from hot dogs to chicken nuggets to pasteurized milk to breads to pastas to packaged snacks and more.

Yes, these foods may provide you calories and some level of energy, but they are completely missing the levels of vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients (special plant chemicals like antioxidants that work wonders inside your body) that you need to be healthy.

The fix for this problem is simple, but implementing it can be challenging initially...I'll provide a few tips to help you get started though. To get the maximum amount of nutrition out of your diet, focus on eating whole, real foods with as little processing as possible. This means trying to eat as much food in its original state as possible.

For example, instead of drinking orange juice, which is very high in sugar (yes, too much natural sugar can be bad), eat a whole orange. Or, instead of eating chicken nuggets (which, believe it or not, is mostly NOT chicken), eat a whole chicken breast, skin on. Similarly, avoid hot dogs and focus instead on eating a natural, antibiotic-free (preferably pasture-raised) beef.

In other words, eat the real thing, not some processed, over-engineered version of the real thing.

What You Should Be Eating Instead...

Ok, that may sound a little confusing, so let me explain.

From earlier, now know you need to avoid processed foods and focus on whole, real foods that are rich in the nutrients you need to thrive. But precisely which whole, real foods should you focus on?

Well, the answer is simple: plants and animals.

You've probably heard that whole grains are good...in fact, they are not. Yes, they are better than eating high-calorie, low-nutrient processed white bread. Yes, they are better than eating whole wheat bread. And yes they do have some essential vitamins and minerals.

But the problem is that for 100,000 generations spanning 2.4 million years or 99.97% of all human history, humans didn't touch grains period – we simply didn't evolve eating them and our diets consisted of purely plants and animals (and some insects and even dirt, but let's not go there!).

But all of a sudden (in an evolutionary sense), about 10,000 – 12,000 years ago when agriculture was invented, humans started eating grains. And guess what happened next? Disease such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer started to appear where historically there had never been any record of this before.

Moreover, if you look at the world we live in today, allergies to wheat and gluten (the protein found in wheat), are yet another indicator that our bodies have not evolved to eat these foods – they literally, are for the birds only!

This shouldn't be a surprise to anyone – if we didn't evolve eating a particular food (in this case, grains), then our bodies have not evolved to metabolize that food properly. So if all of a sudden we start eating that particular food and our DNA is 99.97% the same, it's no wonder that all hell breaks loose.

It's the equivalent of pouring glue into your car's gasoline tank and expecting everything to be ok – obviously it won't since your car is built to run on gasoline.

You see, when you consume grains or any processed or refined foods, candy, snacks, sodas or fruit juices, they are quickly metabolized into sugar and your body releases an avalanche of insulin to shuttle that excess blood sugar into your cells instead of it going to your brain. Your brain actually thrives on glucose (sugar), but your body carefully regulates how much it receives and if it received too much, you'd die.

But over time, your cells become full of glucose, the doors close, and the excess glucose is released into the wilderness in your body and its nasty effects start to sink in. You become sick, fat, tired, depressed, and develop all sorts of chronic diseases.

But that really isn't the biggest problem.

You see, aside from regulating your blood sugar levels, the other primary job of insulin is fat metabolism – deciding what to do with fat in your body, when to store it, when to use it, etc.

When you down that next can of sugary soda, as your body boosts its insulin levels to help move that excess blood glucose into your cells, it also signals to your cells to store more fat (through a special enzyme called LPL) as well as to hold on to the existing fat it already has (through another special enzyme called HSL).

So, when you eat refined, processed carbs that quickly turn into sugar, you are essentially programming your body to get fatter by storing more calories as fat as well as preventing it from burning the fat it already has for energy.

And if that wasn't enough, the worst part is that now that your body has been instructed to NOT burn fat for energy, you must find that energy from somewhere. The only place left to get that energy is from carbs, and the only way to get those carbs is to eat, so you get hungry and tremendous cravings ensue.

This is why after you eat a bunch of sugar, a big bowl of pasta, drink a soda, you can get jittery, have tremendous cravings, hunger pangs and more – it's a truly vicious cycle that's reason enough to avoid all processed, refined carbs.

So if eating grains isn't the solution, what is? If we look at cultures that still eat their native diet (who have not been exposed to civilization) and if we look to the research that has studied what we eat prior to 10,000 – 12,000 years ago, a very common sense pattern emerges – plants and animals.

What that means for you is actually good news, but there are some important principles to keep in mind.

Principle #1 - Eat Animals

Ok, I know "eating animals" conjures up the pictures of little cute rabbits, but I am not talking about that.

What I am talking about is eating as much as you like of natural or grass-fed beef (yes, steaks are healthy), free-range or pastured chickens, wild-caught, smaller fish, whole eggs and even ham and bacon so long as it comes from a pastured or wild pig or hog.

This will provide you with all of the necessary healthy protein and healthy fats that are critical in supporting a whole variety of critical biological processes. And no, it won't cause heart disease or high cholesterol; in fact, it will lower your cholesterol, something I'll come back to in a second.

It's extraordinarily important that the meat you eat is as clean and naturally raised as possible to ensure it is devoid of harmful toxins, antibiotics or hormones that plague conventionally-raised meat. The worst type of meat, poultry or fish you should eat is that which is labeled as "natural"; the next best is organic, and the ultimate is anything that's grass-fed, pasture-raised or truly wild.

Now, you may be thinking "but don't animals have a lot of saturated fat and cholesterol and that causes heart disease"? Yes, they do have saturated fat and they do have cholesterol , but it's an utter and complete myth that that is what causes heart disease.

It would take an entire book to explain but rest assured that the real cause of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol is NOT caused by eating too much animal fat or cholesterol.

Instead, it's caused by eating too many foods that quickly turn into sugar and cause oxidation and inflammation, which then lead to those chronic diseases, accelerate aging, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and more.

If you'd like to read more about this, there is a great book by science writer Gary Taubes called *Why We Get Fat* that will provide you all of the detail, research and scientific references that you'll need. Or, if you hate reading, rent a DVD called Fat Head (http://www.fathead-movie.com) , which will unravel the entire story behind how we were all hoodwinked into believing that saturated fat and cholesterol causes heart disease.

Bottom line, don't feel guilty about eating a tasty steak, or bacon, or eggs or chicken with the skin on – it's actually incredibly good for you provided that it's either natural, organic, pastured or wild.

Principle #2 - Eat Plants

This isn't complicated -- we are talking whole fruits and whole vegetables here. Don't worry about the glycemic index, glycemic load or any of those buzzwords as they just will overcomplicate things – just use common sense!

Strawberries, blueberries, apples, oranges, kiwis, raspberries, bananas are all fantastic, but eat them whole, not as juices. On the vegetable side, green peppers, red pepper, kale, spinach, mushrooms, chickpeas, tomatoes, swiss chard, green beans, broccoli, etc. are all delicious and nutritious.

Try to eat a variety of colors as each of the different pigments signify different types of phytochemicals that are contained therein and it's nice to have a good mixture of those working for you, getting rid of any toxins that may have invaded your body and keeping your biological processes running smoothly.

Aside from being loaded with essential vitamins and minerals, both fruits and vegetables are chock full of beneficial plant chemicals called phytochemicals. They include such things as carotenoids, flavonoids, lignans, indoles, saponins, oranosulfer compounds, polyphenols and monoterpenes.

On a biological level, while these phytonutrients are not essential to normal functioning of our body, they play an incredibly active role in helping us stay health, happy, fit and trim. They help our cells talk to each other, prevent mutations, are anti-inflammatory, serve as anti-oxidants and generally help us undo the damage we do to our body.

As with the recommendations for animals, make sure you get organic whenever you can to avoid any toxins or pesticides that may have been used when growing them and try to buy local where possible. Not only do those toxins wreak havoc on you when you ingest them, but they also result in fruits and vegetables that have lower levels of vitamins and minerals.

IMPORTANT: Notice when I say "plants" here I am referring specifically to only fruits and vegetables and NOT grains. You've already read why grains are terrible for your health and how they make you sick, fat, tired and depressed, so just stay away from them as much as you can. This can be hard for some people, but it's the single most important step you can take for better health.

The bottom line is to keep it simple and every time you eat a meal, always try to have a serving of fruits or preferably leafy green vegetables to infuse you with sufficient vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients to provide your body the clean nutrients it needs to thrive.

A Final Thought…

If you read any of the dozens of diet books that are published yearly, each of them tries to come up with a new way to spin how you should be eating, what rules you should be following, low-card, high-carb, low-fat, high-fat, low-protein, high-protein, eat cabbage only, do lemonade fasts, eat every 3 hours, alkaline vs. acidic, blood type, metabolic type, blah, blah, blah.

The good news is that you don't need to worry about ANY of that as it's automatically taken care of when you consume a healthy, nutritious diet full of whole, real foods based on plants and animals – in short, you eat the way your body evolved and it rewards you by automatically becoming fit, trim, happy and healthy.

Yes, there are thousands of ways to fine tune the message of eating clean, real, whole foods based on just plants and animals, but you'll get 95% or more of the benefit from just following the simple instructions I've outlined in this report.

What's more, it is nearly impossible to overeat when you are eating this way as the healthy fats and protein from the animals you eat and the abundant vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients from the plants that you eat create a tremendous and quick sense of fullness because you are giving your body what it needs.

If you don't believe this, just try it for a few days and see how you feel. It may be hard to eliminate items you are used to such as sodas, breads, pastas, candies and other "modern" inventions, but heck, anybody can do anything for a week, so why not just try it and see how you do? I think you'll be amazed at the results.

Step #2 – Exercise Less to Burn More Fat

Next time someone tells you that you need to start jogging relentlessly or go to the gym for a few hours a day to get in shape and improve your health -- just politely laugh and change the topic…you'll know better.

Oh, and if they tell you in a "I am smarter than you" voice to make sure you are staying in your "fat burning zone", please try not to laugh in their face – be nice, politely smile and just walk away.

You can keep this little joke to yourself because you'll have the quiet confidence to know that you don't need to exercise more than 20 minutes a day, 3 times per week to strengthen your heart and lungs, boost your metabolism and burn fat.

In fact, doing those long duration cardio routines actually shrink your lungs, shrink your heart and actually increase the risk of death!

But perhaps the worst part is that those long duration cardio workouts give you the false impression that you are doing something to burn fat and lose weight only to find that after weeks of pummeling your body (and mind) that you have little, if any results to speak of.

This can be tremendously frustrating -- almost depressing -- causing you to think that it's your fault and that you just need to work harder -- but NOTHING could be further from the truth.

You actually need to be doing less, MUCH less...in fact, if you are doing more than 20 minutes a DAY, that's probably too much.

How to Program Your Body to Burn Fat...

The secret to burning fat, strengthening your heart and strengthening your lungs is also the same secret that has been proven to improve bone density, raise your "good cholesterol" and reverse the negative effects of aging.

Not surprisingly, this is the same secret that our caveman ancestors utilized on a daily basis to help them survive in the wild.

Unfortunately, our "top" health institutions are just like your misinformed friend and are under the false impression that long duration cardio workouts are good for your health.

In fact, just take a look at these standard recommendations:

- **American Medical Association** - 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise, 5 days per week
- **American College of Sports Medicine** - 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise, 5 days per week
- **American Heart Association** - 30 minutes of moderate intensity exercise, 5 days per week

The only other major medical institution that says anything different is the National Institutes of Health, which recommends merely "regular, moderate exercise."

Doing the Opposite of What Everyone Says is the Best Route…

But, just as we saw with the proper diet, the proper exercise is exactly the opposite of what so-called medical "experts" have been telling you. But strangely, unlike with diet, there really isn't an entrenched network of financial or industrial interests that are conspiring, whether knowingly or unknowingly, to hoodwink you.

In the case of exercise, it's merely just outdated, irrelevant advice, stuck in old textbooks and curriculums, that's needlessly being regurgitated.

Exercise Intensity and Metabolism

What Does Your Body Use for Fuel?			
ACTIVITY LEVEL	PROTEIN	CARBS	FAT
Resting	1 to 5%	35%	60%
Low intensity	5 – 8%	70%	15%
Moderate Intensity	2 to 5%	40%	55%
High Intensity	2%	95%	3%

Adapted from: McArdle W et al. Sports & Exercise Nutrition. New York, NY: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins;1999

So how is it possible to gain all of the benefits of long-duration cardio in only a fraction of the time? Well, the answer is hidden in our biology and the way our body reacts to stresses that we put it under.

Take a look at the chart to the right, which shows how what type of calories you burn at various activity levels. As you'll see in a moment, the whole "fat burning zone" concept is a total myth.

As you can see, if you followed conventional logic that there is some fat burning zone, based on this chart, you would actually just flop on the coach and by hypnotized by the TV the entire day as resting has the highest % of fat burned. Obviously this makes no sense.

And herein lies the key to burning the maximum amount of fat while gaining the most cardiopulmonary benefit (in other words, goodness for your heart and lungs) from your exercise.

The Key to Sustained Fat Loss and Stronger Heart and Lungs…

Burning fat while you do low-intensity, long-duration exercise signals to your body that you need more fat because it expects you to burn fat again soon through the same type of exercise – your body likes to be prepared. As part of this process, your body holds on tighter to the fat you have and converts more of the food that you consume into fat to be burned as energy later instead of burning it immediately.

But by exercising with higher intensity for short periods of time, you predominantly burn carbs instead of fat and the exact opposite process occurs. You body realizes that it doesn't need as much fat for energy and over the next 24 hours, your body will then use its fat stores to replenish the burned carbs (glycogen), instead of holding on to that fat or storing more.

For living proof of this somewhat counterintuitive process, look no farther than comparing the average physique of a sprinter with that of a marathon or long distance runner. Sprinters are extremely muscular, robust, toned, filled with energy with extremely low body fat. Marathoners look completely wiped out, are skinny, fragile and look like they need a good home cooked meal.

And the Research of Course Backs this Up…

So, aside from the proof that common sense and real life examples shows us, recent research has been piling up to support what should be obvious: long-duration, low-intensity exercise *bad*…short-duration, higher-intensity *good*!

For example, in a study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 8,896 recreational runners were asked to report how long they ran for and how intense those running sessions were.

The results showed that increased intensity was significantly associated with lower blood pressure, lower triglycerides, lower CHOL/HDL ratios, lower BMIs, and lower waist, hip, and chest circumferences, while increased exercise duration had no effect on these parameters.

Similarly, as you can see in the chart to the right, data from the Harvard Alumni Health Study demonstrated a significant inverse relationship between intense physical activity and mortality, with low-intensity exercise failing to decrease the risk of mortality by any cause.

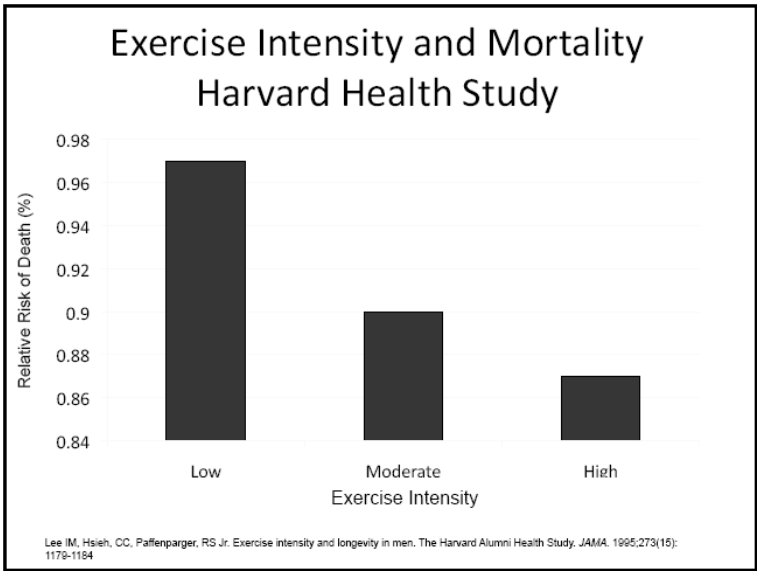
Translation: as exercise intensity increases, the chances of you dying from anything decrease, while on the other hand, exercising longer wasn't associated with that same benefit.

Lastly, of particular interest, and something that's further dramatizing the benefits of short-duration, high-intensity exercise, is a recent study done by scientists at Canada's McMaster University. In this study, they showed that even doing moderate intensity, short-duration exercise beat the pants off of longer-duration, low-intensity exercise.

As the scientists observed: "Doing 10 one-minute sprints on a standard stationary bike with about one minute of rest in between, three times a week, works as well in improving muscle as many hours of conventional long-term biking less strenuously."

They stated further: "To achieve the study's equivalent results by endurance training you'd need to complete over 10 hours of continuous moderate bicycling exercise over a two-week period."

So, in other words, this means you can get the same results as long boring cardio by working smarter in only 1/10th of the time.



And the best part is that the benefits of this type of exercise last up to 24 hours AFTER you've exercised – so you are continually burning fat long after you are done. Remember that next time you flop on the couch after a 20 minute burst of high-intensity, short-duration exercise.

While the benefits of short-duration, high-intensity exercise over low-intensity, long-duration exercise was nothing new, what WAS surprising was just

Why Our Caveman Ancestors Would Approve…

Ok, so this passes the common sense test, we see real world results AND the latest and greatest science backs this up. If you aren't convinced yet by the prospect of exercising 1/10 as much to achieve dramatically better health benefits, just consider the evolutionary support.

It makes sense that a caveman would come into a situation where he had to fight like mad or run like crazy, like when going toe-to-toe with a saber-toothed tiger, but it makes little sense that a caveman would have any need whatsoever to run at a moderate pace for over an hour. If he had to travel great distances, he would just walk!

So while the high-intensity, short-duration exercise fits perfectly into our evolutionary footprint, at a physiologic level, it also makes sense. For example, long duration cardio also trains your muscles, heart (your most important muscle) and lungs to be efficient, which sounds good in theory, but it's not what you want.

You want these various organs and muscles to be able to cope with peak loads, not moderate loads, like what comes with highly stressful emotional or physical experiences. If you don't train your body to be able to adapt to sudden stressors, then you dramatically increase the risk for things such as strokes and heart attacks.

What happens is that when you do long duration cardio, you are training your body to have more endurance, but since your body is efficient and always tries to conserve resources, that endurance comes at the expense of capacity – meaning, your heart, lungs and muscles shrink and that's not a good thing.

Practically, that means that you train your body to do very well when you are exerting yourself moderately, but if an event comes along that requires a sudden burst of effort or stress -- such as a quick sprint to run away from someone who is trying to rob you, or a sudden burst of energy needed to move a piece of furniture or climb a flight of stairs – your body is overtaxed and stroke or heart attack may ensue.

Evolution favored those who could run fast and live to fight another day, not those who could run marathons for which there was no practical use.

In fact the word "marathon" comes from the very true story of when the ancient Greeks were battling the Persians on the shores of Marathon. The Greeks won the battle and sent a runner 26.3 miles from Marathon back to Athens to share the news of victory. Upon arriving in Marathon, she shouted the word "Nike", which means victory, and then promptly collapsed and died!

Ok, How do I Implement This in Every Day Life?

If by now you are not convinced that long boring cardio is not only ineffective at burning fat but also bad for your health, there's not much else I can say to you other than "good luck"!

But if you as eager as most people are to exercise smarter and not harder, to strengthen your heart and lungs, to build new blood vessels to provide your entire body with more energy, to more quickly escort toxins out of your body and to boost your metabolism permanently and to burn more fat, then please read these recommendations.

Here's the key principle: no matter what you do, what exercise you choose, whether it's running, swimming, biking, body weight exercises, jumping rope, using the elliptical machine or anything else, focus on doing short bursts of activity at a moderate or high intensity, with 1-2 minutes of rest in between and do this just a few times per week, NOT every day.

If you read the research and the work of the exploding number of experts who are jumping on this bandwagon, you'll find a wide range of recommendations and arguments over the right duration of your exercise bursts, how many times to do it per week, wearing an expensive heart rate monitor and other nitty gritty details.

But you can forget all of that – just keep it simple and focus on these 5 simple steps:

- **Step 1** – Exercise 3 times per week
- **Step 2** – Each exercise session should last for no longer than 20 minutes
- **Step 3** – Start with a 2 minute low-intensity warm up to get the blood flowing into your muscles and end with a 2 minute cool down
- **Step 4** – After your warm up, alternate between doing 1 minute of moderate to high intensity exercise, for example sprinting, followed by 2 minutes of cool down, for example moderate walking pace.
- **Step 5** – So you don't get bored and to continue challenging your body, after about 4 weeks of whatever routine you settle on, change your routine to something else. For example, if the first 4 weeks consists of sprints, make the next 4 weeks all about swimming, calisthenics, or body weight exercises or use the elliptical machine at the gym. It doesn't really matter so long as you are changing things up.

That's all there really is to it – you can buy all sorts of books, get videos and do your own research into high intensity/interval training, but it all boils down to some variation of this.

As the Nike commercials say, "just do it" – if you are not exercising, start slowly, ease into things and steadily increase your intensity, but remember it's ONLY 20 minutes a day, 3 days a

week, and heck, anybody can do that, no matter what shape you are in. Even if you are too overweight to run sprints, just start with walking at a high intensity and then get more aggressive from there as your body allows it.

This is no magic exercise pill, just doing things smarter, using common sense, keep with the latest science and maintain harmony with our evolutionary roots.

Step #3: Re-program Your Brain to Break Old Habits and Keep the Weight Off for Good

Did you know sugar is more addicting to cocaine?

I am sure you were well aware that sugar is addicting, but you probably had no idea just how addicting it really is. It's a substance more powerful than most drugs – no wonder so many people are addicted to sugar.

Food addiction is a long-neglected topic that fortunately has gotten a lot of press recently surrounding an explosion of scientific research.

So why should you care about food addiction?

Because, whether you realize it or not, you are addicted to the foods you are eating – the highly processed, refined carbs that your body quickly metabolizes into sugar causes a very powerful set of biological forces to come together to hook you on those foods.

This makes sense if you think about it – with the tremendous social stigma that comes with being overweight, the teasing, the looks, the frowns, the condescension, the unwanted advice, why on earth would anyone possibly choose to be fat?

You see, while much of what you've already read in this report may be new information, and while many of you may run with this new information and immediately see dramatic benefits, the reality is that for most of you, it will take some time to break your existing habits.

It would be totally unrealistic to expect that you can do this instantly because of the powerful biological forces that have helped to create the existing habits (typically bad ones) that you already have – food addictions being one of them.

IMPORTANT: Don't think for a second that this absolves you of all personal responsibility, because it doesn't. For every bad choice you make, there is a better choice you could've made.

For example, after reading this report, you can either choose to test on yourself these recommendations to see if they work (good choice!) or you can set them aside, promising yourself you'll eventually get to it only never to return (bad choice!).

But it's also equally irresponsible to ignore the fact that food can be just as addictive, and in some cases more addictive, than drugs

So, instead of just saying "just do it!" and leaving you twisting in the wind, instead, this section is focused on helping you re-program your brain to establish new good habits, to help you

transition your lifestyle to what's suggested in this report and to accelerate you on your way to vibrant health, a happy mood, a trim waist and boundless energy.

Let's get started.

Are You Addicted to Food?

Before we get into the why, take this quick quiz put together by Yale's Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, to see if you exemplify any behaviors of food addiction:

1. I find that when I start eating certain foods, I end up eating much more than I had planned.
2. Not eating certain types of food or cutting down on certain types of food is something I worry about.
3. I spend a lot of time feeling sluggish or lethargic from overeating.
4. There have been times when I consumed certain foods so often or in such large quantities that I spent time dealing with negative feelings from overeating instead of working, spending time with my family or friends, or engaging in other important activities or recreational activities that I enjoy.
5. I kept consuming the same types of food or the same amount of food even though I was having emotional and/or physical problems.
6. Over time, I have found that I need to eat more and more to get the feeling I want, such as reduced negative emotions or increased pleasure.
7. I have had withdrawal symptoms when I cut down or stopped eating certain foods, including physical symptoms, agitation, or anxiety. (Please do *not* include withdrawal symptoms caused by cutting down on caffeinated beverages such as soda pop, coffee, tea, energy drinks, etc.)
8. My behavior with respect to food and eating causes significant distress.
9. I experience significant problems in my ability to function effectively (daily routine, job/school, social activities, family activities, health difficulties) because of food and eating.

If you answered yes to 1 or more of these, you are likely addicted to food in some way, shape or form.

Why We are Addicted To Food…

The simple reason why we can become addicted to certain foods is the exact same reason why a drug addict becomes addicted to drugs, why a compulsive gambler cannot stop gambling or why an alcoholic cannot stop having that next drink: dopamine.

Dopamine is your brains reward substance – when you feel pleasure, that's your brain turning on the dopamine drip. This is normally a good thing as you want to get rewarded for things that are good for you.

But that same dopamine triggered is pulled when you consume sugar, processed carbs or even toxic fats – the dopamine drip starts, you feel pleasure, your brain associates pleasure with that food, and voila, a bad habit is formed.

It gets worse.

The biological mechanism behind feeling the pleasure has to do with a receptor in your brain called DRD2. Unfortunately, many of us are born with fewer DRD2 receptors than others or for some reason, those DRD2 receptors malfunction – let's call this DRD2-inhibited.

This results in those of you who are DRD2-inhibited needing MORE stimulation to feel pleasure – more drugs, more gambling, more alcohol, or more bad food. In other words, it makes a bad situation worse.

How to Re-program Your Brain To Bust Food Addiction…

Regardless of whether your dopamine receptors are broken, humming along just fine or somewhere in between, there are several steps you can take to help you break your current bad habits.

Step 1 – Remove the Temptations…

This is the perhaps the simplest, but most powerful step you can take to help kick your food addictions. If you don't have temptations in front of you, you'll be that much less likely to break. This all comes down to structuring the environment around you for health instead of sickness. This means two things.

First, overhaul your kitchen. Immediately get rid of any foods that don't meet the eating guidelines set out in this report. Yep, that's right, toss all of the candies, the fruit juices, the sugary sodas (even the diet ones), the cookies, crackers, breads, pastas, canned goods, packaged goods, etc.

Second, do the same in your work environment – get rid of any temptation that's within arm's reach. I know this sounds simplistic, but humans are lazy, ahem, I mean efficient, and they like to conserve energy, so if something is not within reach, you are that much less likely to eat it.

You'll be amazed at how this simple act can change your habits overnight.

Step 2 – Eat Well…

Ok, this isn't anything new, but the good news is that by following the eating recommendations I outlined earlier in this report, you'll be automatically eliminating addictive food substances. It will take about 2-3 weeks, but trust me that your cravings and addictions will quickly subside.

WARNING: You may initially feel headaches, be cranky or face other withdrawal symptoms just like a heroin addict experiences when trying to bust this addiction, but this is a good sign as it shows that your body is fighting through the addiction.

This is where a little willpower DOES help and there's no way around that. You do whatever it is that you need to do to make it through these first 2-3 weeks and then, I promise, it will automatically get easier. Your brain chemistry will change and, although it's hard to explain, the cravings you feel now will disappear and all of a sudden one day you just won't have that craving anymore.

Step 3 – Generate a Positive Feedback Loop…

One of the biggest challenges with overhauling your lifestyle is that it may take you more than 1 day to see the results…and that's tough to compete with when it comes to scarfing down a big donut that will give you a quick boost of pleasure.

But, by tracking things such as your weight, body fat, blood pressure and other blood test measurements (like cholesterol, blood sugar, insulin, etc.), you'll provide yourself much more immediate feedback that can give you a dopamine burst of your own making – happiness that you are seeing and feeling results.

Now, this is not to say that this program won't give you quick results, it will, but the point here is that the motivation provided by quick, visible results can be dramatically intensified by actually tracking your by-the-numbers progress. You'll get an immense sense of immediate satisfaction by seeing you're your numbers quickly and steadily improve.

IMPORTANT: You should measure no more frequently than once per week with things such as weight, body fat %, BMI, resting heart rate and hip-to-waist ratio and no more frequently than monthly for any blood tests; anything more frequent than that runs the risk of not giving enough time for substantial changes to occur, which may be discouraging to you.

Step 4 – Change Your Association to Pleasure…

This is a neat little trick that's very simple, but also very powerful.

Right now you've become biologically and mentally conditioned to enjoy a blast of sugar whether from sweets like donuts, cookies or cakes themselves or from foods that quickly turn into sugar like breads, pastas, rice and other grains. You tend to remember how incredibly good it tastes due to the dopamine that's triggered and you tend to forget the sugar crash, cravings, and hunger that ensue afterwards.

But starting now, begin to think what happens to your body each time you eat something that quickly turns into sugar. Think about how you are telling your body to drive your insulin up and to store fat. Think about the biological tidal wave that ensues when you take that first bite that wreaks tremendous havoc on your biology.

You can use whatever intense mental picture, metaphor or visualization you want, but the point here is to consciously re-program your brain so you no longer associate pleasure with eating the way you used to but instead you associate pain.

This may take a few weeks but a combination of this simple mental trick plus actually changing your eating habits works incredibly well together and will provide you an effective 1-2 punch to help make the changes permanent.

And you need all the help you can get with $30+ billion being spent annually marketing all sorts of junk food on TV, radio, the internet, billboards and even now bathroom stalls!

Step 5 – Pull Out the Secret Weapon

Another step that you may want to explore that's been proven to be relatively powerful is good old fashioned hypnosis…stay with me on this. We are not talking here about the type of hypnosis that you'd see at a show in Las Vegas or at a carnival, but hypnosis structured by a clinical professional.

Hypnosis helps to reach beyond your conscious, deep into your subconscious to re-program the behavioral tracks that have been laid down deep in your brain since you were born. This is critically important because that subconscious programming you have essentially dictates nearly everything you do whether you realize it – or want to realize it – or not.

This is a very powerful technique that can help to not only expedite how quickly you lose weight and gain health, but also improve your chances of making those changes permanent. In fact, clinical studies have shown that hypnosis can help to improve weight loss results by 100-200%.

You can either go see a clinical hypnotist and ask for help or look online for a high quality, well-respected program you can do at home.

Now Let's Get Started

Ok, I have no given you 3 very simple principles you can follow to help expedite you jump to become happy, healthy, fit and trim.

You will encounter tremendous headwinds from society, your friends and your family who may not be on board – or actively working against you in some cases – with your new health choices. They probably will tell you that you aren't exercising enough, that you are eating too much meat, that egg yolks are bad for you or some other nonsense.

Prepare yourself for that resistance but keep yourself focused on these 3 simple steps. Don't overcomplicate things by counting calories, worrying about your metabolic type, whether your pH is balanced, what your blood type is or anything else.

Keep it simple, put one foot in front of the other, achieve some initial success and then take the next step.

Celebrate any and all of your successes – when you make it 1 week (and you WILL make it 1 week), do a little happy dance. When you make it the next week, do the same. Celebrate with friends and family or just have a quiet moment to yourself. Just don't celebrate with a bag of candy or a blast of sugar soda!

One final tip that may help you is this: some people feel completely overwhelmed when it comes to changing so many aspects of their lifestyle, so a simple solution is just to focus on your eating habits first.

Improving your eating will account for about 80% of the ultimate health benefits that you'll see, so that's the most important place to start. This is particularly important if you are too overweight initially to exercise. So, just stick to the healthy eating habits and wait until you are physically ready to exercise; then take that jump.

Remember, nature has provided us with everything we need to thrive and by looking at our evolutionary roots, studying the latest science and then combining that with some common sense, we can put ourselves on the path to a trim waist, boundless energy, a happy mind and vibrant health.

A Special Thanks: As a special thank you, I am including an extra bonus section in this report that profiles 4 natural therapies that have been proven to be safe and effective when it comes to burning fat, losing weight and improving your health.

I've also included 1 therapy that has been over-hyped, but with no proof that it works that you'll want to stay away from.

You may not realize this, but Mother Nature has provided a virtually treasure chest of natural medicines that have been proven to work just, if not more, effectively than drugs – but at a fraction of the cost and with little to no side effects.

Lastly, if you have any questions on anything in this report, please feel free to post a question here and I'll try to answer it. I can't promise that I'll be able to answer every question, but I'll get to as many as I can.

I wish you nothing but the best of success in your efforts to lose weight and gain health.

Naturally yours,

The Sherpa

P.S. If you like this report, please share it on Facebook or on Twitter as my goal is to get as many people as possible feeling happy, healthy, fit and trim WITHOUT the guilt, cravings, depression, frustration and lack of results that comes with bogus diets that are full of over-hyped claims of miracle cures, no hard work and instant results.

Bonus Tip #1: A Nutrient Powerhouse and Metabolism Booster

Imagine you are walking the beach on the North Shore of Oahu in Hawaii. All around you, people are surfing, hiking, jogging, swimming and paddleboarding.

Suddenly it becomes obvious which of your fellow sand dwellers are tourists and which are locals. Not only do the locals have a glow about their skin and trim figures, but they also seem to be oozing with abundant health and energy to spare! Plus, there isn't a sniffle, cough, runny nose or apparent headache in sight.

What on earth can their secret be? Is it the sun? The stress-free life? The salt air? Those things may play a role, but the real secret lies within the world's largest seed.

Coconut: A Nutrient Powerhouse…

The Malaysian and Polynesian cultures have revered the coconut for centuries.

Not only has this largest-known seed yielded food and water for hundreds of thousands of people, it also contains nearly all of the essential nutrients your body needs for optimal health.

In addition to a whole host of amino acids, coconut is also a great source of the minerals potassium, calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and manganese, as well as vitamin C and riboflavin (vitamin B2).

Coconut oil contains all of these nutrients and more. It also contains 90 percent saturated fat, which puts it right smack in the middle of the great fat debate.

The Saturated Oil Debate…

Coconut oil is extracted from the dried flesh of the coconut. It is also a source of plant-based saturated fat, the very fat doctors and nutritionists alike have been telling us to avoid like the plague.

While it's true that coconut oil is 90 percent saturated fat, 45 percent of that fat is lauric acid, a medium-chain fatty acid that converts in your body to monolaurin.

Monolaurin is the actual compound found in breast milk that strengthens a baby's immune system. It is also known to promote normal brain development and contribute to healthy bones, as well as protect against viruses and bacteria.[3]

Despite these purported health benefits, many opponents of coconut oil point to the high concentration of saturated fats as a reason to avoid it.

While there may be an argument to avoid saturated fats coming from animals that have been raised using conventional feedlots and fed an unnatural diet of corn and soy, the fat in coconut oil is actually a medium-chain triglyceride. These fats are more easily digested than other fats and are quickly metabolized, giving you a great source of energy.

Also, your body uses medium-chain triglycerides differently than other fats. Most fats are stored in your body's cells. But the fat in coconut oil goes directly to your liver, where it is converted into energy.

In layman's terms, that bacon and cheese omelet you ate most likely sits around in your cells waiting to be burned up or stored as fat for later. However, coconut oil gets shipped directly to your liver, where it is put to work to help you get up and get going.

Back to Those Benefits…

Let's take a closer look at the supposed health benefits.

Coconut appears to be anti-just-about-everything:

- Anti-inflammatory
- Anti-pyretic (it reduces fever)
- Anti-fungal
- Anti-bacterial

A pharmacological study[1] of virgin coconut oil found that it reduced inflammation in rats. The same study also found that when researchers induced hyperthermia (excess heat) in the rats, the coconut oil helped to reduce fever (anti-pyretic) and ease pain in the affected rats.

Researchers concluded: "The results…suggest anti-inflammatory, analgesic, and antipyretic properties of virgin coconut oil."

In other words, it reduced inflammation, eased pain, and reduced fever. That's not bad…for rats. However, we would love to see this type of study tested in humans.

On the antifungal front, researchers studied the effect of coconut oil on *Candida* (the fungus common to yeast infections), as compared to fluconazole, a common antifungal drug.[2]

Fifty-two different isolates of *Candida* were obtained from clinical specimens. Of these, *Candida albicans* was the most common isolate used. This is important, as this form is the common cause of diaper rash, vaginitis, thrush, and yeast infections.

All isolates were tested to see how susceptible they were to both virgin coconut oil and the antifungal drug. Researchers found that *Candida albicans* had the highest susceptibility to coconut oil when the coconut oil had a 1:4 dilution, as compared to fluconazole, which needed a 1:2 dilution to be as effective.

Translation: They needed less coconut oil, compared to the drug, to fend off the fungus.

In simpler terms, the coconut oil worked better (in a smaller quantity) than the drug. Once again, nature beats man's inventions.

When it comes to antibacterial properties, one study in particular found that virgin coconut oil helped to treat skin infections.[3]

Researchers performed a double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 26 people who had atopic dermatitis, a skin condition that often includes painfully dry skin that is highly susceptible to a nasty bacterium called *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Researchers had half the group use virgin coconut oil twice a day for four weeks at two noninfected sites. The other group used virgin olive oil, also applying it twice a day for four weeks.

When the study started, 20 of the 26 participants tested positive for *Staphylococcus aureus*.

At the end of the study period, only one of the virgin coconut oil users (5 percent) tested positive for the bacteria, as compared to six users (50 percent) in the olive oil group. The coconut oil also relieved the users' dry skin.

Researchers concluded that coconut oil might be useful for treating bacteria, fungi, and viruses. While we agree, we'd like to see this type of gold standard study repeated with a larger participant pool, as well as with a variety of bacteria strain, just to be sure.

Heart and Weight Benefits Too…

Advocates of coconut oil also point to its cardio-protective and fat-burning properties, as well as its antibacterial benefits, etc.

According to a population study[4] of about 2,500 people from the Polynesian islands of Tokelau and Pukapuka, high coconut oil intake has no effect on cholesterol levels.

Investigators tracked folks who consumed a high-fat diet derived primarily from coconuts — every meal contained coconut in one form or another. The researchers reported that the participants' overall health was very good, and that vascular disease was uncommon.

In fact, even though these people were consuming high amounts of saturated fat in the form of coconut oil, they did not seem to have high cholesterol. Coronary heart disease, colon cancer, and other bowel disorders were rare as well.

The lead researcher, Dr. Ian Prior, concluded that there was no evidence that high saturated fat intake from coconut oil had a harmful effect.

This conclusion seems right, and then some. Not only does the coconut oil appear to not hurt, it also seems to be beneficial when it comes to gastrointestinal health. However, that cannot be stated conclusively without evaluating the participants' entire diet.

Interestingly, when it comes to weight loss, it appears that coconut oil's medium-chain triglycerides are the very reason it is effective.

It turns out that when you eat coconut oil, your body uses it more quickly rather than storing it as body fat. In this way, those medium-chain triglycerides are thermogenic—meaning that they actually speed up your metabolism, burning more calories and giving you more energy.

For example, according to several online sources, farmers from the 1940s wanted to fatten up their livestock, so they gave them coconut oil. However, the animals became leaner and more active.

This is quite intriguing, but cannot be attributed to any credible source, but we did discover a human study that seems to back this up.

In a study of people in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico, where coconut is a staple food, researchers found that their metabolic rate was an average of 25 percent higher than people in the U.S.

However, like the farmers/livestock example, we cannot substantiate this commonly cited study either. Both appear to be perpetuated by the same author, who never cites the studies he is pulling from.

Though the mechanism of action of medium-chain triglycerides and fat-burning makes sense physiologically, we were ready to dismiss the connection between coconut oil and weight loss due to a lack of clinical evidence. Then we came across several studies which included a randomized, placebo-controlled, double-blind study from Brazil[5].

Researchers tested the effects of coconut oil on 40 women between the ages of 20 to 40, with clinical abdominal obesity (waist circumference of more than 88 cm). Half of the group

received a daily dose of either soybean oil or coconut oil for 12 weeks. Both of the groups were instructed to follow a balanced, low-calorie diet and to walk for 50 minutes each day.

At the end of the study period, those taking the coconut oil had a statistically greater loss of waist circumference that those taking the soybean oil. The coconut oil users also had a statistically higher level of HDL (good) cholesterol and a lower LDL/HDL ratio than the soybean oil group.

Both groups enjoyed a decrease in their body mass index (BMI).

So, those using the coconut oil lost weight, lost inches around their waist, increased their levels of good cholesterol, and improved their bad to good cholesterol ratio. Not bad for a big seed!

Using Coconut Oil…

At the very least, it is clear that coconut is not bad for you and that there is a significant difference between the saturated fat in coconuts and the saturated fat in animals.

Also, there appears to be strong evidence that coconuts are an anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, and anti-inflammatory food. Plus, the research behind its heart and weight benefits seems well founded. Therefore, we support the use of coconut oil…for health as well as taste.

As it turns out, coconut oil is also a great option for cooking due to its high smoking point (350°F for unrefined and 450°F for refined). This is a culinary way of saying that you can sauté and bake with coconut oil and not worry about it turning into a trans-fat before your eyes. Plus, coconut oil is very stable. It has a two-year shelf life and won't turn rancid, even in warm temperatures.

So give coconut oil a try. Just be sure to choose organic, virgin coconut oil that is unrefined, unbleached, made without heat processing or chemicals, and is non-GMO.

We are sure that after a few days with this outstanding oil, you'll be loco for coconut, too!

IMPORTANT: If you'd like to comment on this on our blog, please go here.

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Bonus Tip #2: Can an Indian Cactus Help you Burn Fat and Tone Muscle?

It is the year 1910 and you are trekking through one of the most remote parts of India. You haven't seen a village in over a week and you haven't eaten in days.

Suddenly you realize that you are not hungry and it feels like you have energy coursing through all of the veins in your body. And, incredibly, your belly is flatter, your arms are more toned and your waist is trimmer…how can this be?

No, it's not because you've been doing daily wind sprints and one-handed push-ups while on your trek; it's because you are following an ancient Indian tradition and chewing on *Caralluma fimbriat*a, an edible cactus shown to suppress hunger, enhance physical endurance, burn fat, and improve muscle tone.

In fact, this incredible succulent has been used for centuries to help tribes survive famine, drought, food shortage, and long hunting trips.

Flash forward to 2010, and your great-grandchildren and their contemporaries have taken note of your use of this succulent plant and learned how to use it to treat one of this century's greatest health epidemics: obesity.

Researchers the world over have taken this traditional knowledge and use of *Caralluma fimbriata* and tested it to see if it really can curb the appetite. The initial results are indeed promising.

But is this really the magic weight loss aid we've all been searching for, and is it safe and effective?

Thanks to overinflated promises from late-night infomercials, biased paid celebrity endorsements, and ineffective fad diets, we've all become skeptics of the "quick fix" when it comes to weight loss, increased metabolism, slimmer waistlines, and trimmer abs.

Could *Caralluma* fimbriata really be different? Let's find out.

Ancient Plant, Modern Solution…

Caralluma fimbriata is a member of the cactus family and is commonly found throughout India. It is used as a common vegetable in many areas of India and is either eaten raw, cooked with a variety of spices, or used in chutneys and pickles.

Some Indian tribes continue the practice of chewing on *Caralluma fimbriata* to suppress hunger during a long hunt, while the poorer classes in Southern India also use the cactus to fend off hunger and increase endurance during times of famine or drought.

Even with this common use in India, few researchers (let alone laypeople) had heard of *Caralluma fimbriata* until recent years. Armed with folklore and traditional use of this "famine food," scientists set out to prove (or disprove) its use for weight loss. And what they've found is, quite possibly, a weight loss and diabetes breakthrough.

But before we go and "drink the Kool-Aid," let's see what the evidence has to say so we can discover for ourselves whether there is any legitimacy to the claims.

What the Research Shows…

According to a 2006 double-blind, placebo-controlled study (the gold standard when it comes to study design) from the journal *Appetite,*[1] researchers from Bangalore, India studied the effects of *Caralluma fimbriata* extract on 50 overweight men and women.

The participants were divided into two groups, with one group receiving a placebo and the other receiving one gram of *Caralluma fimbriata* extract a day for 60 days.

At the end of the 60 days, although the placebo group did experience some weight loss, it did not experience any statistically significant changes in any of the key measures that were taken, including body weight, BMI, hip and waist circumference, fat loss, or hunger levels.

On the other hand, the group that was taking the *Caralluma fimbriata* extract did in fact experience statistically significant changes in all of those measures – weight loss, lower BMI, lower hip circumference, and less body fat.

Plus, those taking the extract also enjoyed significantly lower hunger levels as well as waist circumference than the placebo group.

Or, to put it bluntly, less fat overall, smaller love handles, a lower number on the scale, and fewer hunger pangs…not bad.

Similarly, in 2004, researchers from the Western Geriatric Research Institute in Los Angeles presented their findings on *Caralluma fimbriata* and obesity at the 12th Annual World Congress of Anti-Aging Medicine[2]. They too implemented a double-blind, placebo-controlled study, this time with 26 people.

Researchers found that more than 60 percent of the participants who took *Caralluma fimbriata* extract every day for one month lost six pounds or more, contrary to the placebo group which showed little to no weight loss.

Additionally, 72 percent of the participants taking the extract also enjoyed a reduction in waist circumference. The researchers concluded that *Caralluma fimbriata* does indeed promote weight loss and fat reduction.

In other words, three out of four people pinched a few inches off their waist size and lost at least six pounds in a month. Pretty impressive.

However, the downside of both of these studies is that the study groups themselves were relatively small (50 and 26 respectively). While results were consistent with later studies, we would like to see independent follow-up studies performed with a larger subject pool.

Interestingly, *Caralluma fimbriata* did have some additional "side effects." Aside from curbing hunger and promoting weight loss, it was also found to significantly decrease lower blood pressure levels. Plus, participants taking the extract also reported greater energy levels.

How Exactly Does It Work?

The research seems to indicate that *Caralluma fimbriata* helps you drop pounds, build muscle, burn fat, and increase energy…all the things that helped our Indian ancestors on their long hunting trips. But how exactly does this cactus work in your body to achieve these results?

Unlike most "wonder" drugs for weight loss, which really translate into "I wonder if it really works," *Caralluma fimbriata* addresses three key underlying issues related to weight gain: an inability to burn fat, constant hunger, and poor muscle tone.

On the fat front, *Caralluma fimbriata* contains pregnane glycosides, a phytochemical that blocks the enzyme citrate lyase. When this enzyme's activity is stopped, your body cannot produce fat.

Caralluma fimbriata also blocks Malonyl Coenzyme A, another enzyme involved in fat production. By impeding the activity of both of these enzymes, *Caralluma fimbriata* forces your body to start burning its own fat reserves, thereby promoting fat loss.

When it comes to suppressing appetite, *Caralluma fimbriata* is believed to act directly on the appetite control center of your brain, specifically the hypothalamus.

When you are hungry, your hypothalamus sends your brain a message that you need to eat. Once you do eat and your belly is full, the hypothalamus then tells your brain you've had enough and to stop eating.

While researchers are still unclear whether *Caralluma fimbriata* sends it own signal to the brain or blocks the hunger signal, what is clear is that *Caralluma* in some way interferes with the hypothalamus' hunger messages to the brain.

It also appears that *Caralluma fimbriata's* ability to promote lean muscle mass is actually connected to its fat-burning benefits. Thanks to pregnane glycosides, *Caralluma fimbriata* not only blocks fat production but, as stated above, it also helps to burn fat.

Here's how that works: Your body uses glucose (sugar) to create a high-energy molecule known as adenosine tri-phosphate (ATP), which is what gives you energy. When your body creates too much energy, the excess is stored as fat.

When you burn off the fat, the ATP (energy) is released from the cells, helping you feel more alert and active. Additionally, when this extra energy becomes available in your body, it triggers your muscles to burn energy faster.

The result? Your fat shrinks and your muscles gain strength.

Or, better stated, you lose the fat and gain the muscle. That's why people taking *Caralluma fimbriata* show decreased waist circumference within a month or two.

But Is It Safe to Use?

Based on centuries of traditional use, there appears to be little to no adverse effects from *Caralluma fimbriata* when used responsibly. To this day, many people in India eat it daily with no issues. And of those taking the extract during the studies, few complained of any side effects.

The only concerns noted were mild gastrointestinal upset, which may have been caused by the gelatin capsules, rather than the extract itself as some subjects in the placebo group complained of identical symptoms.

Still, researchers at St. John's Medical College in Bangalore, India were not satisfied with conjecture and decided to directly test the safety of *Caralluma fimbriata*.

They gave both male and female rats 5 g of *Caralluma fimbriata* extract for every kilogram of body weight—an extremely high dose, relatively speaking. After two weeks, all rats were alive

and well, leading researchers to conclude that even at very high doses, *Caralluma fimbriata* was not toxic.

While this is a bit comforting, two weeks is not very long. Apparently we weren't alone in this concern.

Another study, this one performed at Intox Pvt. Ltd. in India, looked at long-term usage of *Caralluma fimbriata*. The study found no observed effect for the product when taken orally for six months at a dosage of 1,000 mg per kilogram of body weight. This indicates a very high level of safety.

These are both very strong, promising studies advocating for the safety of *Caralluma fimbriata*. Both toxicity and long-term use are critical in terms of safety.

While these safety studies were well-designed and the results are promising, we would still like to see appropriately designed safety studies performed, where possible, in humans, just to be sure.

The RIGHT Form of *Caralluma Fimbriata* to Try…

While you could head to India and pull off a chunk of the *Caralluma fimbriata* plant to munch on, that wouldn't be very efficient or realistic. Instead, you can use a *Caralluma* fimbriata extract.

When you search for the product online, you will likely find several sources. Be sure to choose a product that has documented research and contains at least 500 mg of *Caralluma* fimbriata extract. For example, the research noted above used the Slimaluma extract.

If the manufacturer is more interested in hype than research, move on to another product.

Make sure the manufacturer uses good manufacturing practices (GMP) for the product and be sure you can find all the ingredients contained in the product before purchasing. And, if the product contains a trademarked extract, research that extract. Is it safe? Has it been through clinical trials?

Finally, be sure the product you choose is free of preservatives, fillers, binders, excipients, flow agents, shellacs, coloring agents, gluten, yeast, lactose, and other allergens. Ideally, you'll also be able to find independent analysis done by a third party to verify the active ingredients and identify any contaminants.

And remember, while *Caralluma fimbriata* appears to be both safe and effective for weight loss, it's no magic bullet.

To lose weight, the most important thing is to maintain a reasonable caloric intake full of nutrient-dense foods and to engage in moderate daily exercise. And, of course, consult with your doctor before experimenting with any new herbs or supplements.

Clearly, there are no shortcuts when it comes to weight loss. It takes dedication, hard work and fundamental changes to your lifestyle.

But if you use the proven tools of a healthy diet and regular exercise, paired with the fat-burning, weight-reducing benefits of *Caralluma fimbriata*, you could be on the road to healthy, lasting weight loss in no time. And without the trek through India!

IMPORTANT: If you'd like to comment on this on our blog, please go here.

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Bonus Tip #3: The Japanese Secret to Weight Loss and Longevity

Quick…what are the three biggest health conditions plaguing Americans today? If you said cancer, heart disease, and obesity, you would likely be right.

Okay, now, what is the one thing that can help reduce your risk for all three? A few hints: it's natural, you drink it and it's a subset of the second-most consumed beverage in the world after water.

If you said green tea, you are right.

You've probably heard of green tea before, but once you're done reading this, you'll never think about green tea the same way again.

And you will likely start drinking it every day to capture some of its remarkable health benefits including its ability to help you lose weight and battle cancer, heart disease and strokes.

Think You Know Green Tea?

Green tea supports your health in so many ways that modern science is still cataloging them. But what exactly *is* green tea?

Technically, black and green teas are the same, as they both come from the same tea plant, *Camellia sinensis*. However, the way the tea leaves are treated after harvest determines their fate.

If the leaves are crushed and allowed to naturally ferment (or oxidize), a process that darkens the leaves, then you have black tea.

Conversely, if the leaves are heated, the natural plant enzymes are inactivated. This blocks oxidation, so the leaves hold their green color. And, voila, you have green tea.

But color is far from the only difference. The key difference is the oxidation, or lack thereof.

Oxidation (or Lack Thereof) is the Key

Freshly harvested *Camellia sinensis* tea leaves contain polyphenols, remarkable compounds with a host of therapeutic benefits. The oxidation that occurs during black tea processing robs the plant of much of its polyphenols and therefore also many of the health benefits they convey.

However, the heating of the leaves blocks the oxidation process, which ironically allows the polyphenols to remain intact. You'd think it would be the other way around, wouldn't you?

The major polyphenols are primarily flavonoids and include:

- catechins, which are also found in cacao beans (yep, chocolate!)
- proanthocyanidins, which were once referred to as vitamins and are also found in apples, cinnamon, grape seed, and red wine
- epigallocatechin gallate, which is abbreviated and commonly referred to as EGCG

Of these, EGCG is the most widely associated with green tea, and is in fact the nutrient that supposedly gives this common beverage its health advantages. Specifically, proponents of green tea claim it can prevent America's most feared health conditions: cancer, heart disease, and obesity.

But are these advantages real or just medical lore? Let's head to the studies to find out.

Green Tea and Cancer Prevention…

Green tea's ability to prevent cancer is well documented.[1] While studies have shown it to be particularly effective in preventing cancers of the gastrointestinal tract (stomach, small intestine, and colon), the areas where it really stands out have been esophageal cancer and breast cancer.

One population-based, case-control study published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*[2] surveyed 902 people with esophageal cancer and 1,552 healthy people, all residents of Shanghai, China. Researchers discovered that drinking green tea reduced the risk for esophageal cancer risk by 57 percent for men and 60 percent for women.

The researchers concluded: "The effects of green tea may be due to polyphenols that possess strong antioxidant properties... suggesting that certain antioxidant micronutrients are protective against cancers of the esophagus and gastric cardia."

In other words, researchers looked at people with esophageal cancer and compared them to people who don't have the disease. The researchers then excluded other lifestyle or genetic factors and looked to see if the consumption of green tea had any impact on one group or the other.

They discovered that the polyphenols we described earlier appear to protect against cancers of the esophagus and the upper part of the stomach, which connects to the esophagus.

In the case of breast cancer, a meta-analysis from *Carcinogenesis*[3] looked at four previously published studies on green tea.

They found an approximate 20 percent statistically significant reduction for breast cancer in

those people who had a high green tea intake.

While these studies (and the myriad of other research in this area[4,5]) appear to support the connection between green tea consumption and a reduction in cancer risk, most studies are in laboratory/cell studies, a study that looks at and analyzes other previous studies, or animal studies.

It would be nice to see a few double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled studies (the "gold standard" in research) on actual humans…not just cells or recaps of other studies. However, given the serious nature of cancer, this may not be feasible.

And, just as there are many studies on green tea's benefits on a wide variety of cancers, there are also many theories on how green tea helps fight cancer. The key hypotheses include:

- The polyphenols appear to enhance the activity of the body's antioxidant and detoxifying enzymes.

- Polyphenols prevent the formation of cancer-causing compounds, such as nitrosamines (compounds formed when the nitrites in cured foods bind with amino acids).

- Polyphenols block carcinogen activity by binding to tissue receptor sites. This would be particularly effective in breast cancer prevention. As polyphenols bind to receptor sites on breast tissue, they prevent carcinogens from binding to and harming the cells. In essence, the polyphenols "seal off" the tissue from invasion by carcinogens.

Regardless of how it may work, or how effective it may actually be, the studies and logic behind the mechanism of action is promising enough that sipping a cup or two of hot green tea a day certainly won't hurt and may actually help prevent some forms of cancer.

Green Tea and Heart Disease…

After cancer, heart disease may be one of the most feared (and common) health conditions. And, proponents of green tea say the toasty beverage can help in this arena as well.

Japanese researchers from Tohoku University School of Medicine spent 11 years studying the relationship between green tea consumption and death from all causes, including cardiovascular disease and cancer.[6] The study included 40,530 people ages 40 to 79 who had no history of cardiovascular disease or cancer at the time.

After 11 years of tracking the participants and tabulating everything they ate and drank, as well as their history of disease and current health habits, researchers found that consumption of

green tea is associated with reduced mortality due to ALL causes, and green tea specifically produced reduced mortality from cardiovascular disease.

Interestingly, though, green tea consumption was not associated with a reduction in mortality due to cancer. While this appears to negate the studies above, remember that this study looked at reduction in cancer deaths, not prevention of the disease.

When it comes to specific types of heart disease such as high cholesterol or stroke, green tea appears to also have a beneficial effect.

A study of 1,306 males in Japan[7] found that those men who drank nine or more cups of green tea a day had an 8 mg/dl reduction in total cholesterol.

This is interesting, but having to drink *nine* cups a day? That seems a bit unrealistic.

Another study considered more realistic amounts: The study of almost 6,000 non-drinking, non-smoking women age 40 and older found that those who drank five or more cups of green tea per day enjoyed a 50 percent reduction in strokes.[8]

Again, the studies appear to be promising, but they lack the gold standard double-blind, placebo-controlled protocol we prefer.

Green Tea and Weight Loss…

Green tea's apparent anti-cancer and heart-protective effects are interesting in their own right, but throw in the theory that green tea also helps you shed excess pounds and burn fat, and nearly all of America should be sitting up and taking notice.

In one randomized, placebo-controlled study,[9] researchers randomly divided 10 healthy men into three groups on three separate occasions, giving them green tea extract (50 mg caffeine and 90 mg EGCG), caffeine (50 mg), or a placebo. Each dose was administered at breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Researchers found that those who took the green tea extract had a statistically significant increase in energy expenditure as compared to the placebo. Those who took the caffeine did not show a significant increase in energy expenditure.

Researchers concluded: “Green tea has thermogenic properties and promotes fat oxidation beyond that explained by its caffeine content.”

Sounds impressive, but what the heck does it mean? It means that green tea helps rev up your metabolism and burn fat. Now why couldn’t they just *say* that!?!

Another study,[10] this one a meta-analysis, looked at 15 studies—a total of nearly 1,230 participants. Researchers concluded that green tea with caffeine significantly lowered body mass index, body weight and waist circumference when compared to caffeine alone.

Also, when compared to a caffeine-free control, green tea with caffeine was found to be associated with significantly decreased body weight. However, the clinical significance of these reductions was modest at best.

Long story short?

Green tea does appear to help boost your metabolism, but it does just that: "boost." It will not magically transform you from fat to fabulous overnight.

And if you want to capitalize on this boost, be sure to choose regular green tea—not a decaffeinated version as the decaffeination process eliminates a significant amount of the flavonols and antioxidants—to get the full weight loss effect.

Brew Up for Good Health…

Across the board, the studies on green tea are intriguing, but not completely bulletproof. Still, we believe they are compelling enough to warrant the regular consumption of green tea.

There are several types of green tea, the most common of which come from Japan. Of the many varieties available, the two recommended ones are sencha and matcha.

Sencha comes from green tea whose leaves are exposed to direct sunlight. It is the most common type of green tea in Japan.

Matcha is a fine, almost powdered, green tea made from Tencha tea, which is grown in the shade and has a slightly sweet smell. Matcha is the primary tea used in tea ceremonies.

To reap all of the benefits of green tea, you'll want to aim for 3-5 8 oz. cups of green tea each day. And to help you get the most out of your tea experience, try these tips:

- For maximum potency, store your green tea leaves or bags in a lightproof, airproof container. And brew a fresh cup every time, allowing the tea to steep for 3-4 minutes.

- Try drinking your green tea "straight up," just to see how naturally delightful it is. If you prefer a bit of sweetener, try a little honey.

- Tuck a small tin of green tea bags into your purse or briefcase so you'll always have it handy.

- If you're eating on the run, look for unsweetened, bottled green tea (such as Ito En). You can even pick up an unsweetened iced green tea at your local Starbucks.

If you prefer not to drink the tea, any of these options provides the same level of protection. You can also opt for 300 to 400 mg daily of green tea extract. Be sure the product is standardized to 80 percent total polyphenol and 55 percent epigallocatechin.

No matter how you pour it, green tea is a cup with clout. With its healthful properties and sensory delights, it's the one beverage that's truly worthy of the toast, "To your health!"

IMPORTANT: If you'd like to comment on this on our blog, please go here.

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Bonus Tip #4: A Natural Calming, Cooling, Weight Loss Accelerator

Once again, you find yourself opening the refrigerator looking for something—ANYTHING—to eat. You bypass the celery and carrots and choose that leftover pizza, brownie, bagel, or bag of chips.

Only, it's not lunchtime, it's not dinnertime, it's not even breakfast. Come to think of it, you aren't even hungry. You simply want to eat.

How often has this happened to you? You eat for virtually any reason *except* hunger. You are bored. You've had a stressful day. You are procrastinating. You are ticked off at your spouse, your kids, your boss, or your life.

Basically, food consumes your thoughts and overtakes your willpower. You start to wonder, "What is wrong with me? Why can't I stop eating?"

If only you could stop the overeating, you could not only stop gaining weight, but maybe you'd actually *lose* weight. Better still, you could regain control over your eating and your life!

As it turns out, this may be more possible than you may think.

Numerous double-blind studies[1, 2] have shown that the amino acid 5-hydroxytryptophan ("5-HTP") is highly effective in easing anxiety and depression. However, over the past decade or so, more and more studies are coming out that show 5-HTP may be a valuable weight loss tool as well.

The question is, if this is true, why? Is it related to 5-HTP's stress-reducing properties or something else entirely? And is this something the average person can take advantage of right now?

Let's head to the research to find out.

Italy Leads the Weigh…

Most of the truly compelling research around 5-HTP and weight loss has come from Italy. In the first study[3] from that country, researchers ran a double-blind, placebo-controlled study on 19 obese women.

Half the subjects were given 5-HTP (8 mg/kg/day) for five weeks, while the control group received a placebo. No diet restrictions were given.

At the end of the study period, those taking the 5-HTP were found to have statistically greater weight loss than the control group. They also consumed significantly fewer calories and carbohydrates than those in the placebo group.

In short, those taking 5-HTP ate less starchy, sugary stuff, and ate less food overall. No wonder they lost more weight!

This same research team then did a second study[4] to determine if 5-HTP would have the same results with calorie restrictions in place. Also double-blind and placebo-controlled, researchers randomly assigned participants to take either 5-HTP or a placebo for two six-week periods. No dietary restrictions were made during the first six weeks.

During the second six weeks, a 1,200-calorie diet was recommended and carbohydrate-rich snacks were prohibited. Patients taking 5-HTP lost an average of 4.39 pounds the first six weeks and 11.63 pounds the second six weeks. Patients taking the placebo lost only 0.62 pounds and 1.87 pounds, respectively.

At first glance, you may be tempted to think that a diet that calorie-restrictive and carb-free would naturally lead to weight loss. But you have to factor in the *difference* in weight loss. The 5-HTP group lost 16 pounds in three months versus just 2.5 pounds in the placebo group. Now *that's* impressive!

More recently, researchers from the University of Pavia in Pavia, Italy, tested the use of a sublingual 5-HTP spray on 27 healthy, but overweight, adult women. In this randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study[5], half of the participants used a 5-HTP oral spray five times a day for eight weeks.

At the end of the study, researchers found that those women using the 5-HTP spray had significantly greater levels of satiety (*i.e.,* they felt more full) than the control group. The 5-HTP group also had a lower body mass index (BMI) and greater decrease in hip circumference than the control group.

Researchers concluded that 5-HTP can help with appetite control for overweight women following a weight loss program.

So, let's get this straight. 5-HTP helped shrink their hips, decreased overall body mass, *and* kept them full? Now THAT's exactly the type of natural solution we are looking for.

The only question we have is that while these studies are compelling and utilize the gold standard in research, they were done with just a handful of participants, all of whom were significantly overweight. It would be interesting to see if a study done with a larger number of

participants, or one using people who only have 10 to 15 pounds to lose, would yield the same results.

It Can't Be Magic…

Even with the low number of participants in the studies cited above, it would be difficult to argue the conclusions reached regarding the use of 5-HTP to help control appetite when used as part of a weight loss program.

That is to say, while it won't make the calories magically disappear from the five pieces of pizza that you gobbled down, it may help you turn them down in the first place. But *how* does it do this?

It has to do with 5-HTP's ability to increase serotonin levels in the brain.

Within your brain, serotonin often inhibits the firing of neurons, which dampens many of your behaviors. In fact, serotonin acts as a kind of chemical restraint system.

When it fails, or there is a serotonin deficiency, results can include binge eating, irritability, and anxiety. Additionally, serotonin deficiency is associated with the brain's perception of starvation and hunger.

Serotonin is produced within the brain from the essential amino acid tryptophan and 5-HTP, which is made from tryptophan. If your diet is deficient in tryptophan (needed to form 5-HTP), your brain thinks it's starving.

By supplementing with 5-HTP, you may be helping to overcome serotonin deficiency, which may help to ease overeating and curb appetite.

How to Take 5-HTP for a Test Drive…

Should you decide to add 5-HTP to your weight loss plan, please do keep your expectations in check. While it may help to take the edge off a stressful day, it won't make the traffic go away or keep you from procrastinating.

Similarly, 5-HTP can help ease cravings and control appetite, but it is not a magic wand full of willpower and calorie erasers. You will still need to maintain a reasonable caloric intake full of nutrient-dense whole foods and engage in moderate daily exercise. And, as always, consult with your doctor before experimenting with any new herbs or supplements.

Be sure to take care when choosing as well as using a 5-HTP product. It should be free of preservatives, fillers, binders, excipients, flow agents, shellacs, coloring agents, gluten, yeast,

lactose, and other allergens. Ideally, you will also be able to find independent analysis done by a third party to verify the active ingredients and identify any contaminants.

When taking 5-HTP, aim for 50–100 mg twice a day, 20–30 minutes prior to a meal and with 50-100 mg vitamin B6 to ensure the timely conversion of 5-HTP to serotonin.

If you experience side effects such as nausea, lower your dosage for the first few weeks as your body adjusts.

IMPORTANT: If you'd like to comment on this on our blog, please go here.

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Bonus Tip #5: The "Magic Pill" for Weight Loss…REALLY?

Nearly 70 years, an unnamed Dutch anthropologist discovered something that many today claim is a weight loss "miracle".

Many centuries ago (and possibly to this day!) the San Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert ate a succulent plant to help stave off hunger and thirst on long hunting trips.

One day, back in 1937, the Dutch anthropologist noted the appetite suppressant effects of the plant and took the revelation back to Europe.

Spurred by the promise that a new cure for obesity had been found, researchers from South Africa and Britain collaborated to isolate the active ingredient in this miracle plant, hoping to give the world the weight loss "magic bullet", it had been waiting for.

No more counting calories! No more exercising! No need for willpower! We can all just pop in a couple of pills and our overweight days are over. We can live happily ever after.

Sounds like a fairy tale? That's because it is. And, that broken promise is known as Hoodia gordonii.

Yes, that's the same Hoodia that's been touted through every possible media outlet as a potential "cure" for obesity.

A Quick History Lesson[1]…

While most people think of Hoodia as a specific plant that has weight loss benefits, there are actually 13 different types of Hoodia. Of these, only Hoodia gordonii contains the active ingredient (P57) that helps to suppress appetite.

When the South African researchers isolated P57, they patented it in 1995, and then licensed its use to their British partner Phytopharm. After spending more than $20 million on research, Phytopharm subbed out the license to Big Pharma goliath, Pfizer in 1998 for $21 million.

While all this may be fascinating to research types, it's actually quite telling about the true promise (or the lack thereof) of. You see, shortly after getting the sub-license, Pfizer returned it. In other words, thanks, but no thanks.

So, you have one Big Pharma company sub-licensing it to another AFTER spending $20 million and then that sub-licensee returns the license. Big Pharma knows a profit when they smell it. The fact that they were treating the license as a red-headed stepchild speaks volumes about their lack of faith in it.

Great Spin, Bad Studies…

Pfizer aside, $20 million on research has to bear *some* fruit, right? Turns out, the press and buzz around Hoodia is stronger than the research.

First, there was the November 2004 *60 Minutes* piece by Leslie Stahl[2]. Billed as the "newest weapon in the war on obesity," Stahl trekked into the desert in search of Hoodia. Once their tracker and native bushman found a Hoodia plant, Stahl ate it. She claimed it did in fact suppress her appetite and had no negative side effects.

And then there's TrimSpa and Anna Nicole Smith. After ephedra was taken off the market, weight loss supplement manufacturer TrimSpa, replaced the banned ephedra with Hoodia. After using the supplement, former model and reality star Anna Nicole Smith slimmed down and credited TrimSpa with her amazing new body.

That's proof, right? After all, it was on TV! While that may be enough for some people, it's not for us. We wanted studies.

What the (Sole) Study Says…

We expected to find study after study proving the effectiveness of Hoodia. After all, it seems to resemble its Indian counterpart *Caralluma fimbriata.* We soon learned that the only thing they have in common is traditional use.

Turns out, there is a severe lack of clinical research on Hoodia. In fact, we could only locate two published studies on Hoodia.

The first was from a 2004 issue of *Brain Research*[3].

Researchers injected Hoodia Extract P57 into the brains of rats. They found that the rats that received the injections ate less than the rats that received the placebo.

One of the issues with this study is that it was done using rats versus animals. More problematic, however, is the use of cerebral injections. While many people are desperate for a weight loss solution and may be willing to try just about anything, we have a hard time believing that brain injections are the next "big idea" in the weight loss battle.

The second study is actually a case report from the October 2010 issue of *Journal of Clinical Pharmacy and Therapeutics.*[4] In this study, a 57-year-old overweight woman questioned whether or not Hoodia could assist her in reaching her weight loss goals. Researchers at the College of Pharmacy at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, decided to look into it.

After an exhaustive search of the literature, including Medline, the Cochrane Library, Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database, and others, they couldn't find a single, published, peer-reviewed study on Hoodia. They did, however, find two unpublished studies that had some promising results.

The first study was a double-blind, placebo-controlled study[1,5] performed in 2001 by Phytopharm, the same British company that licenses Hoodia's active ingredient. They divided 24 participants into two groups. One received the Hoodia extract and the other received a placebo.

At the end of the study period, those taking the P57 had statistically significant reductions in both body fat and caloric intake (about 1,000 calories less per day than the placebo group).

Sounds good, right?

Unfortunately, because the study was never published or peer reviewed, its quality and findings cannot be properly judged. In addition, the fact that they decided NOT to publish it is a fairly negative sign.

Follow the Buzz or the Science?

Normally, we would be telling you how Hoodia works, the scientific studies that prove the claims, and recommended dosages. But, truthfully, we don't think you should waste your time with this supplement.

News anchors and former models are poor substitutes for solid research, and Hoodia falls severely short in that department.

The lesson here is that NO supplement is a magic pill. The real secret to permanent weight loss is to maintain a reasonable caloric intake full of nutrient-dense whole foods and engage in moderate daily exercise.

If you do decide to use herbs or supplements to boost your weight loss efforts, make sure there is real science behind the product. That way, you'll lose more than just money.

IMPORTANT: If you'd like to comment on this on our blog, please go here.

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