

Editorial**Let's Talk About Fitness – Part 2****Mohsin Masud Jan**

Editor

In our last issue I talked about fitness, gave a brief introduction to the topic itself. Now, let's divide it up, into its two main constituents: diet & exercise. For now, let's just focus on diet alone. Baby steps. One thing at a time.

First let me introduce all of you to one basic rule of fitness, and by fitness, keeping the general populace in mind, I mean weight loss over here. The rule goes extremely simply as such: Calories In VS Calories Out. Now what that means is, that the basic essence of inducing weight loss in your body is by increasing the number of calories expended and decreasing the number of calories consumed. Now What are Calories? Simply put calories are a measure of energy stored in the food we eat. Scientifically, a calorie is the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of one kilogram of water one degree Celsius. To elaborate it a bit, our body tends to store excess food, food which we do not utilize or burn off, which we measure as calories, gets stored in the form of fat. Now when we deprive our body of the excess calories, it adapts rapidly, and to keep itself functioning at its peak it turns towards the fat we have stored already, burning it down to provide itself the energy it needs. And a continued drop in the calories consumed leads to a drop in body weight.

Now what exactly is our traditional Pakistani diet, what does it by and large consist of? Oil, Sugar, Ghee, Salt, Gurr, to name a few, are the main ingredients our population is largely addicted to. And all of these, contribute to obesity! As these ingredients make the baseline for nearly everything found in our kitchens and refrigerators, it gets hard to stay away from them. So for now, we won't go into excessive detail about diet plans. For now, let's stick to the basics.

Calories in VS Calories out. That is what is to be kept in mind, and what that basically entails is, consuming less than what you spend. I'll keep it simple, I'll sign off today with just a few tips on how to reduce the amount of calories you consume in a day.

1. Avoid carbonated drinks
2. Decrease portion size, if you eat a single chapatti at lunch, reduce it to 3/4th of a chapatti, if you go for 2, decrease it to 1.5
3. If you're a tea or coffee drinker, stop or reduce the amount of sugar you add to your drink.
4. If you're used to eating dessert after every meal, depending on your choice of dessert, reduce the portion size by half.
5. Knowing us Pakistanis, if you take some biscuits or other add-ons with your noon and evening tea, drop them altogether for healthier alternatives such as fruits or nuts. But, if you must, then go for the sugar free, high fiber biscuits.
6. When you eat out, save half of your food and eat it at your next meal. And remember to skip the drinks and extra sauces.
7. Try to find low fat versions of cheese, milk and mayonnaise, if you're a regular consumer.
8. Whenever you hit up a fast food chain, avoid getting any add-ons or upsizing your meals, and get the diet version of your drink.

Now, couple these with the piece of advice I gave in the previous issue, i.e. exercising, which we will constitute as any form of physical activity other than the norm, be it 15 minutes of walking, and voila! There you are, starting your journey towards a healthier, lighter & happier you!