



Reduce Your Back Pain By Dropping A Few Pounds

People who are overweight and suffer from back pain may not be aware that their excess weight is actually contributing to their pain. Those who are overweight are often at greater risk for back pain, joint pain and muscle strain. In order to compensate for extra weight, the spine can become tilted and stressed unevenly. As a result, over time, the back may lose its proper support and an unnatural curvature of the spine may develop.

If you're struggling to lose weight, you probably feel like the odds are stacked against you. You're not necessarily wrong.

"There is so much great-tasting food, and it's abundant and in your face all the time. To me, it's kind of a miracle that people aren't even heavier than they are," says Dr. Meir Stampfer, a professor of epidemiology and nutrition at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. In addition to an abundance of food, most people today also have a far more sedentary lifestyle than past generations.

But don't throw your hands up and resign yourself to keeping those extra pounds. Here are a few strategies that can help you chip away at excess weight. These are simple tips that you can use to get the scale moving in the right direction — and keep it there.

Don't diet — improve your diet. Don't focus your eating solely on weight loss; focus on overall health. Follow a diet that is rich in fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats. "Even today, after all the data that we have, people still think that eating fat makes them fat, and they try to find low-fat products," says Dr. Stampfer. "That has been very well debunked. Eating fat doesn't make you fat." Over all, choose a sustainable diet that is focused on health and not just weight can help you make lasting improvements. Adopt a healthy diet, and eat just a little bit less.

Exercise regularly. This has been said a million times, but it can't be emphasized enough: boosting your activity level can help you lose weight and keep it off. For most people, long-term weight control is hard without some physical activity. Everyone's metabolism slows with age, which means we burn fewer calories to keep basic body functions going. At the same time, bone and muscle mass decline and fat mass increases. This insidious pattern happens naturally as you get older unless you take steps to avoid it.

Try a variety of strategies. Different diets work for different people. Sometimes finding the right strategy takes trial and error. One approach that holds promise for many is mindful eating — taking the time to stop and really focus on and enjoy your food. Another simple trick is to put your fork down between bites instead of holding it in your hands. Pick it up when you are going to take the next bite.

Persevere — Never give up. Losing weight is really hard to do, and most people fail many times before they succeed. Don't give up. Each day, commit to eating a little bit less. If you go off track, recommit the following day and keep at it over time.



*This healthy living information is provided by
your Doctor of Chiropractic and the
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