



## Unraveling the Weight Loss Mystery

BY REBECCA HUNTON, MD



**There is no single factor that contributes to weight gain. There are a multitude of forces working together...**

**T**here has been much misinformation over the years on the best ways to lose weight and optimize health. In the 1980's, the "low-fat" craze began – leading us all to believe that if we only cut the fat out of our diets, we would lose weight. The problem was that the U.S. population just kept gaining more and more weight as the years passed. The truth is that there is so much more at work than simply fat intake.

In the 1990's, we had the insurgence of "fad" diets: Atkins, Ornish, South Beach, etc. This includes diets that are too caloric restrictive as well. The results from these diets varied, but we learned that excluding any food category – whether it be fat or carbohydrates – is never good for you, and ultimately your health will suffer in one way or another.

Today we are facing the worst obesity epidemic in our country's history. Last year, USA Today reported that by the year 2030, more than 50% of the U.S. population is going to be diabetic because of our poor habits.

There is no single factor that contributes to weight gain. There are a multitude of forces working together, and it's important to educate yourself – then work with your doctor to develop a plan that makes sense for your individual situation and combination of health factors. Here are some things to consider as you assess your own situation:

1. Cut back on eating foods that raise blood sugar and insulin levels in your body. Don't just eliminate carbs, rather choose "healthy" carbs and balance them with protein. Insulin Resistance is the top-contributing factor to obesity in this country today, and it is caused by an overabundance of insulin in our high-sugar, high-carb diets.
2. Consider hormones. In particular, our adrenals, thyroid and pancreas have a significant effect on the way our bodies process fat. Additionally, estrogen and testosterone levels affect the way insulin is processed in our cells. Work with your doctor to optimize hormone levels prior to attempting weight loss.
3. Stress leads to increased cortisol in the body, which leads to increased food intake and abdominal obesity. It is critical to manage your stress levels – not occasionally with a nice vacation

or massage, but every day.

4. **Addiction.** Food addiction is a common problem and unlike alcohol or drugs, you cannot simply “avoid food.” When you have a food addiction and your family members, friends and co-workers put the food your brain craves right in front of you, it is not a matter of willpower. Seek help, as you would for any addiction.

5. **Toxicity.** There are damaging chemicals in our food and in our environment. Toxins put our bodies in self-defense mode, which can result in unnecessary fat storage. Nutritionally support your body and detox to purge those toxins from your system.

6. **Sleep.** Did you know that if you don't get 7-9 hours of sleep a day, you will gain weight? Studies have shown that subjects that only get an average of five hours of sleep per night have 73% increased likelihood to become obese.

7. **Allergies.** If we are allergic to certain foods, those allergies may cause inflammation, and our bodies respond to inflammation by making more cholesterol and fat. Get tested for food allergies.

What Should You Eat?

Changing your eating patterns can immediately get you off to the right start, while you wait for blood tests to rule out some of the other factors listed above.

Eliminate high fructose corn syrup. The problem is that corn is the #1 food product in our country and is heavily subsidized by the government. Therefore, it's much cheaper to purchase foods laden with corn syrup. Look at your labels and avoid this ingredient whenever you can.

Eat healthy fats and sugars. Butter is actually composed of 86% healthy fat while margarine has hardly any. Fructose is not a harmful sugar when you eat the raw fruit. Fruits eaten with the peels on (apples, pears, berries) are healthier than those without (watermelon, applesauce, juice).

Buy certain groceries organic. While organic produce is more expensive, there are certain fruits and vegetables that contain more chemicals and toxins than others. These include apples, potatoes, green peppers, and leafy greens. Also, consider buying organic coffee – it is one of the most toxic food products on our grocer's shelves today.

Finally, talk with your doctor about your lifestyle and determine if you have the symptoms of Metabolic Syndrome/Insulin Resistance. This would include a waist size larger than 35" for women and 40" for men, and elevated triglycerides, blood sugar over 130/80 and HDL levels less than 50 in women and 40 in men. Once you know you've developed Insulin Resistance (many of us have), you can immediately start adjusting your diet and managing the other internal and environmental factors that may be keeping you from fully realizing your wellness goals.

*Dr. Hunton offers a healthy weight loss program that incorporates a patient's personal risk factors, age, lifestyle, hormones, and genetics. Nutritional counseling, HCG options, and appetite suppressants are also available. For more information or appointments call 321-254-6816.*

---

*This article appears in the **July 2011** issue of Melbourne / Vero Beach edition*

---

[Login](#) | [Web Mail](#) | [Intranet](#) | [Copyright](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

[About Us](#) | [Own a Magazine](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Submit Calendar](#) | [Submit Editorial](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Join E-mail List](#) | [My Account](#)

Copyright 2011 Natural Awakenings Magazine. All rights reserved.

powered by **RIVISTA** | A Godengo Technology