Diet Tricks That Really Work

According to Live Science, these diet tricks will actually help you keep off the pounds:

Avoid corn syrup

Science shows that high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is bad news. One study showed that rats who drank HFCS-sweetened beverages gained significantly more weight than rats consuming the same amount of calories in sugar.

Keep away from junk food -- It's Addictive

Junk food can affect your brain in ways similar to drug abuse.

Structure meal times

Long stretches without food make people crave energy-dense snacks, which can make healthy choices difficult.

Satisfy your body -- especially at breakfast

A protein-rich breakfast leaves you less hungry for the rest of the day. Some fat in the meal can help, too.

Favor foods closer to nature

Favoring whole fresh foods over processed ones will naturally optimize the healthiness of your food choices.

Change your environment

Altering your food environment -- whether this means using smaller plates or keeping seconds out of immediate reach -- can help you lose weight.

Enjoy your food

Food that is eaten mindlessly is neglected food. When you pay attention, you are satisfied in a deeper way.

Sources:

- Live Science May 23, 2010
Two-thirds of the U.S. population are overweight, and left unchecked it seems the rates may climb to 80% -- or four out of five people -- in just a few decades. So there is not only a great need but also a great desire among many Americans to shed some excess pounds.

If you’re reading this article, chances are that you fall into this category, and perhaps have tried more than a handful of diet “tricks” before. But I can tell you right now that if the trick seems too good to be true -- i.e. weight loss pills, massive weight loss in a short period of time, or promising weight loss without dietary changes or exercise -- it almost certainly is.

Virtually the only healthy way to lose weight and keep your weight at a healthy level is to eat right and exercise -- not by starving yourself and putting in 3-hour workouts a day for three weeks, but by adhering to healthy lifestyle principles for a lifetime.

**Want to Propel Your Body Toward its Ideal Weight?**

That said, there are certainly some “tricks” you can use to help slim down in a more expeditious, but still healthy, manner. LiveScience compiled seven great ones above, and what you may notice is they have nothing to do with eating only cabbage soup for three months or wrapping your body in seaweed to lose inches.

Instead, they revolve around making simple, healthy choices, options that will alter the way you think about food and, hopefully, change your relationship with food for the better.

Likewise, the tricks that follow are actually not “tricks” at all but rather smart lifestyle strategies that will propel your body toward its ideal weight, naturally.

**Be Ruthless in Cutting Out Fructose**

LiveScience was spot on when they mentioned avoiding high-fructose corn syrup as a primary way to avoid weight gain. As a standard recommendation, I strongly advise keeping your fructose consumption below 25 grams per day.

However, for most people it would actually be wise to limit your fruit fructose to 15 grams or less, as it is virtually guaranteed that you will consume “hidden” sources of fructose from just about any processed food you might eat.

Why is cutting out fructose so important?

Fructose diminishes your feelings of fullness because it does not stimulate a rise in leptin, one of the most powerful hunger- and fat storage regulators in your body. Fructose also reduces the amount of leptin crossing your blood-brain barrier by raising triglycerides.
Leptin resistance, in turn, is perhaps one of the most significant factors underlying human disease. For example, it plays a significant if not primary role in the development of heart disease, obesity, diabetes, osteoporosis, autoimmune diseases, reproductive disorders, and perhaps the rate of aging itself.

Additionally, whereas glucose suppresses ghrelin (also known as “the hunger hormone,” which makes you want more food), fructose, again, does not.

Fructose also increases your insulin levels, interfering with the communication between leptin and your hypothalamus, so your pleasure signals aren’t extinguished. Your brain keeps sensing that you’re starving, and prompts you to eat more.

As you can see, consuming fructose suppresses feelings of satiety in several ways, which eventually will have serious consequences for your weight and overall health.

How much fructose is in the foods you eat? Just ONE can of soda contains about 40 grams of high fructose corn syrup, which is already well over any kind of healthy limit. You can further gauge the high fructose corn syrup content of some popular foods below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Grams of Fructose</th>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Grams of Fructose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limes</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Boysenberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemons</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>Tangerine/mandarin orange</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>Nectarine</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion fruit</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>Peach</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prune</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Orange (navel)</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricot</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Papaya</td>
<td>1/2 medium</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guava</td>
<td>2 medium</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Honeydew</td>
<td>1/8 of med. melon</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date (Deglet Noor style)</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Serving Size</td>
<td>Grams of Fructose</td>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>Serving Size</td>
<td>Grams of Fructose</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>1/8 of med. melon</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Blueberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>Date (Medjool)</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clementine</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Apple (composite)</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwifruit</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Persimmon</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>1/16 med. melon</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star fruit</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Pear</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries, sweet</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Raisins</td>
<td>1/4 cup</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Grapes, seedless</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherries, sour</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>1/2 medium</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td>(3.5&quot; x .75&quot;)</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>Apricots, dried</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit, pink or red</td>
<td>1/2 medium</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Figs, dried</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please realize that as you cut out corn syrup from your diet, you should NOT replace it with agave sweeteners, as they can be anywhere from 55 percent to 90 percent fructose! (And it’s likely you won’t be able to tell from the product label.)

**Eat Slowly and Savor Your Food**

Chewing your food twice as long as you normally would will instantly help you control your portion sizes, which naturally decreases calorie consumption.

Another benefit of chewing longer is that your food is digested better. The majority of your digestive enzymes are actually in your mouth, not in your stomach. Therefore, chewing your food longer allows it to be broken down better.

You’re also likely to find that you actually enjoy the taste of the food more and feel more satisfied.

A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* last year found that people given identical servings of ice cream on different occasions released more hunger-regulating hormones when
they ate it in 30 minutes instead of five. So although the serving size remained the same, they felt fuller after savoring the ice cream compared to when they wolfed it down.

In another study from 2008, subjects also reported feeling fuller when they ate slowly. Interestingly, they also ended up consuming about 10 percent fewer calories when they ate at a slow pace as opposed to when they were rushing.

A third study, published in the British Medical Journal, found that eating quickly, and eating until feeling full, tripled subjects’ risk of being overweight.

So just by making a conscious effort to slow down when you eat, you may find you need to eat less to feel satisfied. This means you’ll also want to avoid eating on the run, in the car, while standing up or while you’re distracted with another task.

**Cook Your Food from Scratch**

If your diet consists of fast food, restaurant meals and processed food, it will be difficult to lose weight and also to be healthy. Even though this is frequently the most convenient, least expensive and best tasting option, if you regularly engage in this choice you are simply begging for trouble.

Even the healthiest restaurant meals are typically loaded with calories as well. According to a registered dietician and representative for the American Dietetic Association, restaurant meals average between 1,000 to 1,500 calories, and because they’re served in gigantic portions, you’re likely to eat more than you would at home.

The end result is that eating out often means you’re typically eating low-quality food at a premium price, a lose-lose situation for both your health and your waistline.

Unfortunately, many Americans have made eating out a way of life. In 2008, the average U.S. household spent close to HALF of its food budget on meals eaten away from home, according to The Survey of Consumer Expenditures for 2008, released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

I have long stated that if you want to be optimally healthy, you, a family member or someone you hire needs to put some serious time into preparing your meals. This way, you can prepare your meals with unprocessed, high-quality food, you control the portion sizes, and you can enjoy your food in an atmosphere that is calming and not rushed.

**Eat a Healthy Breakfast**

Skipping breakfast can lead to weight gain, plain and simple. On the other hand, studies have shown that eating breakfast can have beneficial effects on:

- Appetite
• Insulin resistance
• Energy metabolism

One study found that obesity and insulin resistance syndrome rates were 35 percent to 50 percent lower among people who ate breakfast every day compared to those who frequently skipped it. This is true of teenagers too, who tend to be about five pounds heavier than their peers if they skip breakfast.

So you want to be sure to eat breakfast, but while you’re at it make certain that you’re not simply eating sugary cereal or refined carbs (bagels, pancakes, toast, etc.). Instead, your breakfast should absolutely include a healthy source of protein, such as eggs, to keep you energized throughout your day. For tips on creating a healthy breakfast you can read what I eat for breakfast here.

5 More Metabolism-Boosting Weight Loss Essentials

Everyone’s metabolism is different, but you can speed it up or slow it down within a reasonably short amount of time by making the following commonsense changes to your diet and lifestyle:

1. **Eat according to your nutritional type** to ensure your body is getting the right fuel it needs

2. Avoid sugar and grains as they are the leading cause of insulin- and leptin-resistance, which affects your hunger levels, your weight, and your risk of any number of diseases

3. Listen to your hunger, and eat a healthy meal or snack when hunger calls

4. Implement a **well-rounded exercise regimen** that includes strength training to build muscle (for every pound of muscle that you gain, your body burns 50-70 calories more per day), as well as **interval training**, which has been demonstrated to significantly increase fat loss

5. Use healthy outlets for stress and negative emotions. Tools like the [Emotional Freedom Technique/Meridian Tapping Technique (EFT/MTT)](http://www.emofreedomtechnique.com) are your friend and ally when it comes to losing weight. For some, emotional eating or emotional traumas are more complex, and an experienced MTT practitioner may be able to help unravel some of these deeper emotional issues that are leading to overeating or junk food binges.

Meditation, prayer, journaling and even exercise can also provide positive outlets for stress.

Remember, the idea is not to deprive your body or starve yourself into a size 2. The goal is to establish a healthy relationship with food, one that will keep you satisfied, nourished and slim, all at the same time.