

The Top 10 Reasons You Aren't Losing Weight

Dr. Bryan P. Walsh

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Introduction

The citizens of industrialized nations are the fattest they have ever been in human history. According to statistics, 8 out of 10 people over the age of 25 are overweight. Perhaps even more alarming is that if obesity trend continue at the same rate, by the year 2030, 100% of Americans will be obese. That study did not say *overweight* . . . it said *obese*. Unless people want to become part of that statistic, they must actively participate in their health.

Unfortunately, far too many people have undertaken fat loss programs and failed to achieve the results they were seeking. Whether they lacked motivation, education or simply did not achieve measurable results, many people give up, and the statistics on weight loss “success stories” are not encouraging. According to studies, dieting typically has only a short-term effect on weight loss and statistics show that approximately 95% of people will regain their weight.

Motivation for weight loss is usually grounded in a desire for better health, improved aesthetics, or both, and rightfully so. There are negative physiological and social implications to being overweight. The top three causes of death in the United States heart disease, cancer and stroke – all of which are strongly correlated with obesity – and statistics also show that obese individuals on average earn lower wages, experience discrimination at work and are considered socially handicapped when compared to their non-obese counterparts. Obesity is well documented for increasing one’s chance of diabetes and arthritis, and it also increases the likelihood of discrimination from health care workers and educators, both for children and adults.

That’s the bad news.

The good news is if you are overweight, you can do something about it. And despite what you have heard, it is *not* only about diet and exercise.

Diet and exercise are *essential* components to a fat loss program, but there are many other determining factors which, if present, will minimize the effects of diet and exercise. In other words, if your body is not healthy enough to perform at its optimum, it will prioritize certain vital functions, and fat loss might not be one of them. By tending to these underlying malfunctions in the body, you can create a healthier, more efficient system, making it much easier for your body to burn and permanently lose fat.

If you have tried losing fat in the past and had either limited success, or zero success, this information may be what you have been waiting for. Fat loss is a multi-faceted process that requires *more* than just diet and exercise, despite what the fitness and nutrition “gurus” have been telling you. Though it is absolutely true that diet and exercise are necessary elements in any fat loss program, your efforts will be wasted if other underlying causes of fat loss resistance are not fixed.

A healthy body does not have difficulty losing weight. In fact, a healthy body is rarely overweight to begin with. The problem with the vast majority of fat loss programs today is that they focus entirely on diet and exercise, and not on health. Health must come first and fat loss will spontaneously happen.

While there is no excuse for being overweight, sometimes there are valid reasons. Being fat might have more to do with one of these hidden problems and it may be the case that you or your doctor have not uncovered what is truly hindering or preventing your weight loss.

What follows is a list of the most common reasons people are not losing weight. Though there are more, these are the most common.

In life, every choice we have made has led us to where we are today, and that is true for our choices about our own health. If you are happy where you are, keep doing what you are doing. If not, it is time to make the important changes that will help make you feel better and look better. You and only you are responsible for your life and your health. It is my sincere hope that, armed with the proper information, you can make choices that will forever change your health for the better and give you the body you've always wanted.

Yours in health, happiness and prosperity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Walsh N.D.", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Bryan P. Walsh

There are many potential reasons for your inability to lose weight. Here are ten of them along with a brief description of each.

1. Wrong Exercise

While exercise is a critical component for any fat loss program, you might be exercising incorrectly to reach your goals. For example long, boring cardio on the treadmill is quickly being replaced with the far more effective Interval Training for reaching one's fat loss goals. Interval Training consists of working hard for a short period of time (i.e. a 100-yard sprint) and then resting before performing another burst. Exercising in this way boosts fat loss, increases the number of calories burned, improves cardiovascular fitness, decreases workout time, adds variety to your workouts and will likely be much more fun than any other workouts you have tried.

Time and time again, interval training has proven to be the fastest method for burning fat. It does not require any equipment, it shortens your workouts considerably and it is far less boring than walking on the treadmill for hours at a time. For ultimate fat loss, interval training is one of the most effective ways to burn fat, beyond what any other type of exercise can provide.

Obviously there are limitations to who should perform this type of exercise and if you are new to it, you will want to start slowly and talk with your physician before embarking on a more intense level of exercise.

Since there are many fitness experts that have already written about this subject in greater detail, I will defer to them if you would like to read more information or if you are looking for specific workouts.

For a video example of interval training using a treadmill, watch fitness expert Craig Ballantyne at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haSljTB1wZM>

For more information on Interval Training programs, visit:

www.turbulencetraining.com (Craig Ballantyne)

www.afterburntraining.com (Alwyn Cosgrove)

2. Wrong Diet

The second part of the formula that must be present if you desire to lose body fat is a proper diet. Without it, your chances of fat loss are virtually nonexistent.

It seems that almost no one can agree on the best way to lose fat through dieting nowadays. While some experts say eat small, frequent meals through the day, others are telling us to eat only once a day. Anyone can now go to a bookstore and find books on low-carbohydrate diets, high-carbohydrate diets, low fat, high fat, paleo diets, vegan diets and everything in between. It is no wonder that people get so confused and end up going back to eating the way they used to, the way they know how.

While I will not offer specifics about dieting here, general rules of thumb have worked for many people.

1. Do not skip breakfast. Eating breakfast, especially a protein-based meal, has been shown to positively affect one's metabolism for the remainder of the day. A couple of eggs and some sautéed vegetables is a great way to start your day.
2. Eat small, protein-based, low-glycemic meals frequently throughout the day. Such a day might look like the following:

- Breakfast:** Two egg omelet with tomatoes and spinach, with a piece of whole wheat sprouted bread
- Snack:** Celery with almond butter
- Lunch:** Green salad with chicken, vegetables and an olive oil/vinegar dressing
- Snack:** Small protein shake
- Dinner:** Salmon with vegetables
- Snack:** Cottage cheese with fruit

The idea is to eat every few hours to maintain a stable blood sugar. Never over eat and never wait too long between meals. Doing either can allow your blood sugar to excessively fluctuate causing unwanted insulin surges.

3. Eat whole foods. Stay away from packaged products whenever possible. If you shop around the perimeter of the grocery store, you will avoid many of the aisles that contain the processed, packaged products. These contain many excess ingredients that we simply do not need.
4. Remove sugar and processed carbohydrates from your diet. Do not eat anything containing sugar, corn syrup or has been sweetened with anything other than a natural alternative such as stevia or polyol sugars (i.e. xylitol).

These recommendations are sparse, but will help you get started on the right track. The most important thing you can do with your diet is regulate and manage blood sugar. The more stable you can keep your blood sugar and insulin, the healthier you will be and the more easily you will lose weight.

If you are in need of good recipes, check out [Gourmet Nutrition](#) by Dr. John Berardi. Overall, it provides the healthiest and tastiest recipes I have ever tried.

If you want to take diet one step further, I recommend looking into a concept called the Metabolic Typing Diet. The major premise with this type of eating is that *no one size fits all*. I will be devoting a whole chapter to this in my upcoming book, *Fat Is Not Your Fault* (Go to www.fatisnotyourfault.com to receive email updates about the book).

3. Wrong Attitude

If you see yourself as fat, you will probably be fat. There is an old saying that states:

*“If you want to know where your mind has been,
look at your body today.”*

It makes sense that we become what we think about all day long. If you want be skinny or more fit, you need to act lean, feel lean and do the things a fit person would do. The more you feel it, experience it and be it, the more you will become it. This can be very difficult to do, but if you do not have the attitude for fat loss, you won't achieve fat loss.

The second part to the saying above is:

*“If you want to know where your body will be tomorrow,
look at your mind today.”*

I am a firm believer that our physiology follows our psychology. In other words, our mind creates our reality, including our body. Take, for example, the last time you felt embarrassed. Did you blush? If so, that is a case of a thought or emotion (embarrassment) manifesting a physical change (blushing). Another example is when people get nervous (thought), their stomach feels queasy (body). Physiology follows psychology.

So if you want a different body than you currently have, to a certain extent you must change your mind and what you are thinking *today*.

4. Stress & Adrenal Glands

Stress will sabotage anyone's ability to lose fat. There are a number of reasons for this, one of the major ones being cortisol. Cortisol is a hormone secreted by the adrenal glands and its primary action on the body is to increase levels of blood sugar during times of stress. The issue with this is that many of us live a stressful lifestyle today, which leads to an over production of cortisol and thus chronically elevated blood sugar. This causes an increase in insulin, which can eventually lead to insulin resistance, or an inability for the cells of the body to respond to insulin, which leads to metabolic syndrome and diabetes.

Vicious Cycle
Stress can sabotage a number of vicious cycles in your body. For example, stress lowers gut immunity, which can lead to food sensitivities and infection. These cause a stress response in the body.

There are many forms of stress today including psychological stress such as money, relationships, and work, as well physical stressors such as infections, lack of sleep, food allergies and even exercise.

Cortisol also:

- decreases your body's signals to produce thyroid hormone

- decreases your body's ability to convert inactive thyroid hormone in the active state

- decreases your body's ability to use insulin

- decreases your body's ability to use leptin, which helps tell your body when you're hungry and to stop eating

- decreases your liver's ability to detoxify substances, including hormones, leaving them to circulate in your body longer

increases gastrointestinal dysbiosis (good-to-bad ratio of bacteria) and leaky gut
suppresses your body's immune system
increases insomnia, leading to blood sugar dysregulation, decreased healing and increased appetite through the hormone, ghrelin
decreases gastric "juices" leading to poor digestion, increased risk of infection and increased risk of ulceration

Even the most well-intentioned person on the best diet and exercise program, can have a difficult time losing weight if there is extra stress in their life.

5. Thyroid

Everyone knows an overweight person who has said who has excused their weight by saying, "I have a thyroid condition." And while a low functioning thyroid can lead to weight gain, their "condition" was probably being mistreated by his or her doctor. The truth is hypothyroidism, though it is intimately connected to so many other functions in the body, is one of the most underdiagnosed and mistreated conditions today, with as many as 30% (or more) of people having a low functioning thyroid. This is a complex topic and there are far too many myths and misconceptions to go into here.

Vicious Cycle
Low thyroid function can lead to fat gain and fatigue, which often results in overeating behaviors. Overeating causes insulin surges, which down regulates thyroid function.

Suffice it to say, if the thyroid is not functioning optimally, or if active thyroid hormone is not getting to where it needs to properly, fat loss will be next to impossible.

Low functioning thyroid symptoms include fatigue, weight gain, depression, constipation, poor circulation, muscle/joint aches, forgetfulness, loss of ambition

and decreased interest, to name a few. All of these signs can contribute to the inability to lose weight for a number of reasons.

A low functioning thyroid will affect fat loss resistance in the following ways.

Low thyroid function:

is associated with low leptin levels, a hormone that helps regulate our appetite and satiety signals.

affects our neurotransmitters (i.e. serotonin), resulting in sugar and fat cravings, depression and overeating behavior.

contributes to anemia resulting in tiredness, muscle weakness and depressed mood. This will generally decrease a person's interest and tolerance to exercise.

reduced levels of protein digestion, which reduces your ability to heal and produce neurotransmitters for brain function.

decreased production of growth hormone, a potent fat-burning hormone.

Testing is the only reliable way of determining what is happening with your thyroid hormones, but if you are interested gaining a rough idea as to whether or not you might have hypothyroid symptoms, you can try the Barnes Basal Body Temperature Test. It is not a definitive test, but it might give you an idea of whether or not your thyroid is sluggish.

Upon waking for the next five days, have a thermometer next to your bed. Use a glass thermometer, not a digital one. Before doing any physical activity, including going to the bathroom, place the thermometer under your armpit. Record the temperature for the next five days and take the average. (Menstruating women should start this test on the second day of their period due to temperature increases during ovulation.) If your average temperature is below 97.6, you *might* have a hypothyroid-type condition and further testing could be warranted. This

test, though good, has confounding variables and should not be seen as a confirmed diagnosis.

Low functioning thyroid will completely sabotage one's ability to lose weight, but it is a *far* more complex issue that will be expounded upon in future publications, including an upcoming audio CD program entitled, "The Definitive Guide to Hypothyroidism". Hypothyroidism, though very real, often has numerous causes that precede it. Merely treating the thyroid is a gross oversight and completely misses numerous important and underlying physiological process that occur in the body.

6. Hormone Balance

Hormones exert a powerful effect on our body and when they are out of control, it can seem that nothing is working correctly. Hormones must maintain a delicate and perfect symphony, and when one is off it is easy for the others to be thrown off. When hormones are out of balance, the results occur system-wide. Think about times in life where there are major hormone surges, and many other issues ensue, such as puberty, pregnancy and menopause, and you will begin to understand just how far-reaching hormones are.

Vicious Cycle
Estrogen dominance leads to obesity, which increases aromatization (conversion of testosterone to estrogen), which further encourages estrogen dominance.

Numerous sex hormones can strongly influence the inability to lose weight. Such hormones include testosterone, estrogen and DHEA. If any of these hormones are out of balance, weight loss will be difficult, if not impossible in both men and women, but for different reasons.

There are two major factors that affect our sex hormones today. One of the problems today is the amount of xenoestrogens in our environment. These are

man-made compounds that mimic the effects of estrogen in our body and disrupt the delicate balance of hormones. They typically come in the form of pesticides and can wreak havoc on our endocrine system, possibly leading to a number of health-related issues, including fat loss resistance.

The second major factor to hormonally-induced fat loss resistance is excessive and chronic stress. Through a number of mechanisms, stress physiology disrupts many of the body's hormones including insulin, leptin, estrogen, DHEA, progesterone, and testosterone.

Correcting the factors for imbalanced hormones will often results in much easier, and more significant weight-loss. But it is not as easy as merely rubbing a hormone cream on your body and in fact, these can make you feel worse if the underlying issue is not attended to first.

7. Neurotransmitter Balance

How many times have you tried to start a fat loss program and could not stay motivated or resist your food cravings. This may have occurred, in part, because of your neurotransmitter balance.

Vicious Cycle
Eating sugar leads to lowered neurotransmitters, which makes you crave more sugar.

Neurotransmitters, or brain chemicals, play a large role in our mood, our motivation and our food cravings. Research is currently learning more about our neurotransmitters every day, which is exciting for those of use wanting to lose fat while also improving our outlook on life.

There are four major neurotransmitters to consider when it comes to fat loss. They are dopamine, serotonin, GABA and acetylcholine.

The first of these neurotransmitters, dopamine, helps regulate our metabolism and it can function similar to a natural amphetamine in our body. It helps to control energy and, if deficient, can lead to fatigue, a loss of energy, carbohydrate binges, sugar and/or junk food cravings, and self-destructive thoughts. The more dopamine you produce, the faster your metabolism and the easier it is to lose weight. But as with all things in the body, you can have too much of a good thing. Excessive dopamine has been linked to excessive and destructive behavior.

Serotonin deficiencies are well known creating symptoms of depression. What is not as well known about serotonin deficiencies is that it also leads to sugar cravings and progesterone deficiencies, which is linked to weight gain.

Lastly, GABA deficiencies also lead to carbohydrate cravings and depression, while acetylcholine deficiencies leads to craving for fatty foods. However, consuming large amounts of fat leads to a decrease in the body's production of acetylcholine production, creating a vicious cycle: the more you consume fatty foods, the more your body will crave them.

As you can see, neurotransmitter balance can have a *significant* role in our ability to lose weight, including our cravings for certain foods. If you've ever "fallen off the wagon" during a diet and binged on sugary foods or skipped the gym, it may not be that you were simple "weak-willed.". It could have been caused by a neurotransmitter imbalance, which can often be corrected nutritionally.

8. Toxicity

We live in a toxic world. Statistics regarding the quantity and negative effects of toxins in our environment are staggering and show that the vast

Vicious Cycle
The more fat you have,
the more toxins you
store. The more toxins
you have, the more fat
you hold on to.

majority of the earth's food, water and air are all contaminated with toxic chemicals, many of which have unknown effects on human physiology. But one thing we do know is, toxicity makes it *really* difficult for us to lose weight.

Consider the following research:

Small amounts of the pesticide dieldrin was given to rats, which lead to a doubling of their body fat.

Another pesticide, hexachlorobenzene, caused rats to gain significant body fat compared to a control group, even though the rats were eating half as many calories.

Humans exposed to PCBs have shown that the greater the toxic load, the greater the body weight.

A mentioned in the Hormone section, a group of chemicals collectively referred to as xenoestrogens are rampant in our food and water supply, which are potent endocrine disrupters and cause a host of estrogen-based hormonal issues, many of which lead to weight gain in human and animal studies.

Synthetic chemicals were once used to be used to fatten up cattle for meat production. For example, animals fed organophosphates gain weight while eating less food. While this practice is no longer used due to the toxic effects to the animals, organophosphates are still widely found in our environment.

Numerous toxic chemicals used in our food supply negatively affect the thyroid gland, slowing down metabolism and our ability to lose weight.

All of these environmental toxins create an enormous burden on our liver, which normally helps the body burn fat for energy. If the liver is toxic and not working properly, it cannot adequately maintain its role in fat burning. Some scientists believe that our body actually creates more fat to deal with the load of environmental toxins we are exposed to. Because toxins are so

damaging to our sensitive cellular DNA, in an effort to protect itself from these toxins, the body can add more storage by increasing the amount of fat we have, and protect us from future damage by holding onto the toxins by not letting us release them back into our system.

Various studies of American adults showed that 100% of them had styrene (Styrofoam), xylene (solvent), dioxins, dieldrin, oxychlorane, heptachlor and para-BHC in their fat cells. Eighty-three percent had chemicals known to damage the nervous system.

The liver is one of the major detoxification organs in the body, and it is also involved in processing sugars and fats and therefore, has an important role in our metabolism. Research has begun to show that in addition to the damage toxins create in our body, they also slow down our metabolic rate, possibly by affecting our thyroid hormones which as previously discussed, play a major role in our metabolism and our ability to burn fat.

9. Gastrointestinal Function

A dysfunctional gastrointestinal system can sabotage our fat loss in a vast number of ways. Consider the following:

Dysbiosis (imbalance of good to bad bacteria)

Thyroid: Dysbiosis negatively effects the conversion of thyroid hormone in the gut.

Approximately 20% of the hormone produced by the thyroid needs to be metabolized by gut bacteria to become active. If someone has a disproportionate amount of good-to-bad gut bacteria in their gastrointestinal system, there will be a decrease in the amount of active thyroid hormone capable of increasing one's metabolic rate.

Vicious Cycle

Eating food sensitivities leads to an inflammatory response, which leads to a stress response (i.e. cortisol). This further suppresses the gut immune system and makes us more sensitive to food intolerances.

Estrogen: Dysbiosis can increase estrogen levels in the body by increasing the amount of an enzyme called beta-glucuronidase. This enzyme breaks a connection that was made in the liver in an attempt to remove the estrogen from the body. When this connection is broken, the estrogen can go back into circulation and lead to weight gain.

Calorie Increase: Quite interestingly, recent research has demonstrated that a dysbiotic state can lead to an increase in the number of calories extracted from food. In other words, if you have an imbalance of good-to-bad bacteria, you could be eating a 1500 calorie diet, but are extracting 1,800 calories from your food.

Maldigestion/Malabsorption

If someone lacks proper digestive capabilities, they will not be able to properly break down and absorb the food they eat. This creates a number of issues for the body including:

An inability to digest protein, which provides substrate for neurotransmitters and helps repair numerous tissues in the body.

Poor digestion can be caused by a deficiency in hydrochloric acid in the stomach, which can eventually lead to anemia, a condition characterized by general fatigue, especially to exertion such as exercise. Someone with anemia will have difficulty sustaining intense exercise, which will decrease their ability to lose weight.

Food Sensitivities/Inflammation

Inflammation in the gastrointestinal system leads to weight gain in a myriad of ways. Firstly, gut inflammation creates a stress response in the body, which will then produce cortisol, leading to a number of the issues discussed in the Adrenal section. This can lead to a suppression of the

immune system, including the immune system of the gut, leading to an increased susceptibility to infection, which further increases inflammatory cycle. This process can lead to food sensitivities and “leaky gut syndrome”.

Food sensitivities are more common than people think. Well beyond the typical food *allergy* causing an anaphylactic reaction (i.e. peanuts), food *sensitivities* are characterized by a low-grade reaction to certain foods that cause an inflammatory response in the body. Again, this leads to a stress response and cortisol release, leading to immune suppression and further gut issues. This viscous cycle will likely continue unless the offending foods are removed, the gut is allowed to heal and the stress response is dampened. However, discovering and addressing your food sensitivities is an effective way to increase your chances for sustained weight loss.

A European study recently showed that the removal of specific food sensitivities from the diet can be an effective treatment for obesity, without additional calorie restriction (i.e. dieting) or exercise. This is a profound statement about how food sensitivities affect weight gain and the ability to lose fat.

There are many reasons the gastrointestinal system can lead to fat loss resistance. If your guts do not work, neither will the body’s ability to lose fat.

10. Cellular Function

Deep within the cells of our body is our mitochondria, or the energy producing powerhouses of our body. The main purpose of glucose (blood sugar) entering our body is to eventually get down to the cellular level and produce ATP

(adenosine triphosphate) to help run our body. This is a critical function of the body that is grossly underrated. As mitochondrial function suffers, so does the vitality of numerous tissues and organs.

In order for the mitochondria to function properly, fatty acids need to be transported through the cell membrane to serve as fuel. A water soluble amino acid, l-carnitine, helps bring these long-chain fatty acids in to the mitochondria for beta-oxidation, where glucose and oxygen combine to help produce ATP. Pantethine, a B vitamin derivative, is also involved in this process. This somewhat complex biochemical reaction can have numerous areas of dysfunction but the long and short of it is, if we cannot adequately get fat into our cells to burn as energy, they will accumulate in the blood and cellular function will suffer.

Vicious Cycle
Altered fatty acid metabolism can lead to an inflammatory response, which promotes obesity. Obesity leads to altered fatty acid metabolism.

Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to educate the reader on the many different reasons the body may have in losing fat. Our ability to burn body fat and achieve a better physique is determined by far more than just diet and exercise. It requires a multi-faceted approach, and if one's body is not functioning properly the ability to lose fat will be greatly diminished.

So it may not be your fault that you are fat, and the good news is that there is something you can do about it. But it takes work and discipline. This is not just about a magic pill or surgery that will make the fat melt off your body. If you put in the time, effort and work, I promise it will have been worth your while because you will have done it yourself.

Feel free to pass this along to a friend, family member or loved one that might benefit from this information. Then visit www.fatisnotyourfault.com to get on an email list with updates of the book, and other products as they are being written.