



## BAD NUTRITION ADVICE: THE TEN RED FLAGS

Have you given up on your 2003 New Years resolution to lose weight? Many people have because they've become a victim of poor nutrition advice or fad diets. Unfortunately, a hard lesson to learn is that foods do not have special properties that cause weight loss or gain. A diet that relies on severe or even bizarre food restrictions usually leads to failure. The only good thing about fad diets is that people cannot stay on them long enough to do real damage -- other than the negative toll on self esteem. A society of fast food, convenience and inactivity has resulted in many consuming more calories than their sedentary bodies require. Before falling victim to any of the many diet schemes that bare the red flag of "Nutrition Junk" ask yourself these questions:

1. Recommendations that promise a quick fix
2. Dire warnings of dangers from a single product or regimen
3. Claims that sound too good to be true
4. Simplistic conclusions drawn from a complex study
5. Recommendations based on a single study
6. Dramatic statements that are refuted by reputable scientific organizations
7. Lists of "good" and "bad" foods
8. Recommendations to help sell a product; often food or supplement
9. Recommendations based on studies published without peer review
10. Recommendations from studies that ignore differences among individuals or groups

Think about all those ads in popular magazines using testimonials to sell a plan or product or celebrity "experts" touting something that lines their wallets in green. None of this is science, yet desperate people look for the quick fixes promised. When someone who is obviously overweight tries to tell you about the "diet" that worked for them, put your hands over your ears. If they are overweight, the "diet" did not work no matter how many pounds

they lost (and gained back) or how fast they lost it (and gained it back). Next time you are tempted, why not turn to an expert for advice? You will hear what you already know.

Successful weight loss (losing weight and keeping it off for at least five years) is done with positive changes to both eating habits (embracing moderation, and recognizing portion distortion all around us) and developing a more physically active lifestyle everyday.

Contact your base Health and Wellness Center or Dietitian if you're discouraged about weight loss and need some sound, supportive and helpful advice on how to achieve and MAINTAIN a healthy weight.

*Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™*