

Is it time to stop all those fad diets and find a way to reach your target weight and stay that way?

Now is the time of year when we are bombarded with news stories, television programmes and special offers all reporting or advertising yet another foolproof diet to make us lose those pounds, but how many of us have tried every new diet under the sun? Yes, we've lost the weight but then either put them all back on again or gained a few extra pounds as soon as we started eating normally.

This is because our bodies are programmed to protect us. When we severely restrict our calorie intake, the body can't distinguish between it being a diet or a famine. Its defence mechanisms kick in and it can lower metabolism to cope with this. This means that we tend to burn calories at a slower rate and while those unwanted pounds usually tumble off initially, we usually get to a point where weight loss slows or even stops. When we start eating normally again, the body is able to further protect itself by also laying down fat more easily in case it has to experience this kind of famine again.

We have a huge diet industry in this country, with an annual turnover of over £6 Billion. Despite this and the fact that we eat less calories than we ever have as a society, we are a nation getting bigger and bigger. Current figures say that 57% of men and 48% of women are overweight. We don't do as much exercise as we used to and this is a contributing factor, but perhaps the answer lies in what we are eating. There is lots of research that say that fat and thin people often eat the same amount of calories, but the thin people eat a different type of food to the fat people, suggesting that just to look at calories is not a solution to the problem.

The trick is to ensure that the body gets the fuel it needs in the right quantities and from the right sources. Yes, it is worth marginally reducing the amount we eat and therefore the calories we consume, but the key to successful weight loss and maintenance is actually about what you eat. Eating the right foods so that your body gets the nutrients it needs to stay healthy, naturally lose excess pounds and then maintain your ideal body weight.

Eating a diet of fresh delicious food, rich in vitamins and minerals can have the added benefit of increased energy, better sleep, better mood and a decreased risk of common diseases

If you or anyone you know would like more information about eating the right foods to help you shed those pounds and feel fantastic, contact **Jacqui Mayes** on **07710 098 280** or have a look at her website www.jacquimayes.co.uk