



Reasons to Lose Weight Go Beyond Good Looks

Losing weight is a common, but worthy, New Year's resolution many of us make year after year. Unfortunately, most people lose their commitment instead of their weight! This year I challenge you to stick with it to lose the extra weight for all the benefits you'll reap.

Sure, you'll look better after losing weight, but the importance of losing weight goes far beyond vanity. It's a health must. Research continues to show how critical maintaining a healthy weight is to preventing a multitude of diseases and illnesses.

Heart disease, diabetes, even Alzheimer's disease can all be linked to being overweight or obese. With the number of obese people burgeoning to 300 million worldwide, according to the World Health Organization, the growing risk of accompanying health problems is staggering.

The good news is Reliv has a way to put a dent in this health crisis. We've developed a breakthrough nutritional approach to weight management. The Simplicity® program is scientifically designed to help you shed extra pounds — and keep them off — safely and simply.

With Reliv on your side, you can lose weight and enjoy a healthier new year — and a healthier life overall.

To Your Health,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads 'Carl W. Hastings'.

Dr. Carl W. Hastings
Reliv Vice Chairman and Chief Scientific Officer

Bounty of Weight Loss Health Benefits

Brain. A recent study found being overweight causes brain degeneration resulting in less brain tissue than in people with normal weight. This brain tissue loss depletes your cognitive reserves and puts you at much greater risk of Alzheimer's and other diseases that attack the brain. The bottom line: You can greatly reduce your risk for Alzheimer's by eating healthy and keeping weight under control.

Sleep. Losing just 10 percent of your weight can improve sleep patterns in those with obstructive sleep apnea and result in less daytime sleepiness.

Joint pain. Overweight women have nearly four times the risk of knee osteoarthritis, a common joint disorder; for overweight men the risk is five times greater. But studies show for every 11 pounds a woman loses, her risk of knee arthritis drops more than 50 percent. Similar benefits would likely be seen in men.

Blood pressure. Losing even 10 pounds can lower your blood pressure. Losing weight has the biggest effect on those who are overweight and already have hypertension.

Blood sugar. Losing weight can lower blood sugar levels and allow some people with type 2 diabetes to reduce their medication.



Metabolic Syndrome: The Road to Heart Disease and Diabetes

Metabolic syndrome is a cluster of conditions including high blood pressure, elevated blood sugar, excess abdominal fat and abnormal cholesterol levels. And the conditions for metabolic syndrome lead to an increased risk for heart disease as well as stroke and diabetes.

But a study by the Methodist DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center and Baylor College of Medicine in Houston showed losing as little as 6.5 percent of total body weight in people with metabolic syndrome can substantially reduce blood pressure, glucose, triglycerides and total cholesterol, all factors that lead to heart disease. And the benefits kick in even before you reach your ideal body weight.

Weight Loss Lowers Diabetes Risk



According to the Diabetes Prevention Program, making lifestyle changes that target weight loss can significantly reduce your risk of diabetes. Changes including exercise, reducing calories and fat intake, and regular doctor visits reduced the development of type 2 diabetes by 58 percent after three years in overweight people considered at high risk for developing diabetes. In addition, results from the follow-up Diabetes Prevention Program Outcomes Study found patients at high risk for developing type 2 diabetes who made lifestyle changes that included weight loss also had lower blood pressure and triglyceride levels.

Weight Loss Is Good for Your Heart



A two-year study at Washington University School of Medicine shows even modest weight loss can result in heart and blood vessel benefits.

Participants who lost weight in the study experienced improved heart health, including decreased thickness of heart muscle, improved pumping and relaxation functions of the heart and decreased thickness of the carotid artery walls. These are significant results. Heart muscle thickening and impaired pumping and relaxation functions can lead to heart failure, a serious condition in which the heart can't pump enough blood to the rest of the body. Increased carotid artery wall thickness, which can cause heart attack and stroke, is closely tied to diabetes and high blood pressure.

During the study, moderately obese people ate either low-fat or low-carb diets and exercised for about three and a half hours per week. Both diet groups lost about 9 percent body weight, or 22 pounds, over six months. Interestingly, the heart benefits maximized after the weight loss, coming six to 12 months after the study began. Cholesterol and triglyceride levels also improved. After two years, the study participants still kept off an average of 9 pounds from their initial weight and retained some of the heart and blood vessel benefits they had achieved.

Sources:

For a complete list of references for this issue, please view the special addendum posted on the *Science & Health Today* web page, www.reliv.com >> The Products >> articles & research >> Science & Health Today.