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Want to Lose Weight and Be Healthy? Then Stop Chasing Golden Unicorns!

By Dr Bill Sukala - 3 July 2018  0

[golden unicorn](#)

Want to lose weight? Eat healthier? Feel better? Have more energy?

Of course you do.

But if you're looking for that elusive golden unicorn that pisses diamonds and farts rose petals, you're not going to find it in a [bullsh*t infomercial gadget](#), [miracle diet](#), ["teatox,"](#) [body wrap](#), or [Instagram muppet](#)

You know what I mean. You bounce from one fad diet to the next, buy every infomercial gadget, and gulp down *"metabolism boosters"* and *"fat burner"* supplements, hoping that maybe, just maybe, THIS one is REALLY going to work....which it never does.

Still with me?

I know, it's tough to think otherwise when your social feeds are overflowing with self-proclaimed "celebrity" [nutritionists](#), [personal trainers](#), and [health coaches](#) spruiking the next latest greatest pill, diet, or exercise routine.

"Revolutionary thermogenic formula! Optimised macros! Dynamic inertia! Gyrotronic resistance! 28 day fat blaster challenge! 5 minute abs!"

Convincing?

Yeah, because that's what health marketing does. It misrepresents science, celebrates the mundane, and embellishes barely legal marketing claims to sell you sh*t you really don't need.

Two words: golden unicorn.

The secret to health is no secret

Want a real golden unicorn that DOES work and is evidence-based?

Granted it's not sexy, but you'll find it in the age-old [scientifically proven](#) advice your [sage grandfather](#) might have given you:

- › Eat more [fruits](#), veggies, and high-fibre whole grains. Less burgers, chips, and processed [sugary crap](#)
- › Move. Often. Do a mix of exercise and [incidental activity](#) throughout the day
- › Get [adequate sleep](#)
- › Get adequate sunlight
- › Drink in moderation
- › Don't smoke

[Golden Unicorn - Diet Exercise Research Summary](#)

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Beware the golden unicorn salesman

There is no limit to the useless sh*t marketers will try to sell you and the lengths they will go to accomplish that end.

And guess what? In their eyes, you're the easy mark. The low hanging fruit. You're the sucker and your wallet is their target.

Their mantra is always the same: *"whatever people are buying, I'm selling."*

Their business is money. Their storefront is health, fitness, nutrition, or whatever.

Do they actually care about your health?

Unlikely.

Can they really be bothered to think about your health when they're too busy counting cash gifted from gullible people desperate to believe in elusive golden unicorns pissing diamonds?

Ethics? Huh? Wha...?

Sure, they'll use lame apologetic excuses like *"well hey, anything that gets people off the couch is a good thing, right?"*

Uh huh. Yeah, sure buddy. Whatever helps you sleep at night.

Species of golden unicorns

As you have seen, there are a variety of golden unicorn species out there and the only way to protect yourself is to know and understand their natural habitat and behaviour.

The following list is by no means exhaustive, but will prepare you for when you come face to face with some of the more common diamond-pissing golden beasts.

Bullshiticus infomercialis golden unicornius

Infomercials. The scourge of late night TV – and now social media.

They come with fancy names like the [Ab Circle Pro](#), [Ab Wave](#), [SpinGym](#), and [Shake Weight](#).

You know the rest.

“Don’t delay! Lose weight NOW for the incredibly low price of \$199.95! That’s right, just \$199.95 for the BODY OF YOUR DREAMS! But WAIT! That’s not all you get! Act now and we’ll throw in a golden unicorn peeing diamonds!”

Back in 2010, I authored a comprehensive review of the [Ab Circle Pro](#)’s deceptive advertising.

I was so viscerally furious about the sheer number of false and misleading claims, I transcribed the entire 10-minute infomercial and then categorically dismantled each claim through the lens of exercise science.

The article generated a lot of buzz in the [media](#) and resulted in my being interviewed by a number of [international TV](#) and [radio stations](#), as well as print and [digital publications](#).

The regulatory agencies eventually caught up with the Ab Circle Pro in Australia and New Zealand and forced them to [amend their ads for making](#)

deceptive claims (i.e., if “*results are not typical*” then they’re misleading).

The final *coup de grâce* came in August of 2012 when the US Federal Trade Commission **fined the company \$25 million for making false claims**, which contributed to the company going out of business.

The moral of the story is that the Ab Circle Pro is not unique and is only one drop in an ocean of dodgy infomercial products.

They all use the same regurgitated formulaic advertising (i.e., hammer on your pain points and insecurities, make grandiose promises, feature hired fitness models who’ve never used the product, add in weepy overacted “*testimonials*,” and repeated calls to action to buy now!) over and over and over again.

Why? Because it works.

When one golden unicorn runs its marketing cycle, the makers recycle the same tactics and invent a “*new and revolutionary*” golden unicorn.

And the end result is always the same. You’re lighter in the wallet, fatter than you were before, and the ab blaster piece of sh*t ends up on your sidewalk waiting for Tuesday morning garbage collection.



Click image to visit Dr Bill Sukala on Facebook

Bottom line

Golden unicorn infomercial pushers are bottom-dwelling scum who cannot sell their wares by honest means. Please do NOT be just another gullible sucker falling into their sales funnels. You are a dollar sign to them, nothing more, nothing less.

Bullshiticus miraculus dietes golden unicornius

Bullsh*t diets have been around for centuries and, like infomercials, there's no limit to the variety of names or wacky regimens.

How do you know if the diet you're following is a golden unicorn?

Nine times out of ten, its name fits this syntax: The _____ Diet.

Here, let's take a look at some real diet Hall of Shamers.

- > [The HCG Diet](#)
- > The Cabbage Soup Diet
- > The Grapefruit Diet
- > The Alkaline Diet
- > The Blood Type Diet

Tried any of these?

Did you lose weight?

Of course you did.

Losing weight is easy when you starve yourself on 500 calories or less per day.

How long did you last on the diet?

One week? Two weeks? Maybe you ran the gauntlet and lasted a full month. Bravo.

Then what happened?

You eventually said "*f*ck this, it's too hard.*" You threw in the towel, went out for a burger, and then scolded yourself for being a failure.

But here's the thing: you didn't actually fail the diet. The diet failed you!

When you go from eating 3000 calories down to 500 calories or less per

day, your body's internal physiology and biochemistry goes, "sweet baaaaby Jesus, the famine has arrived!!"

When a fad diet has you eating 500 calories or less per day, your body's internal physiology goes, 'sweet baaaby Jesus, the famine's arrived!' & will do everything it can to conserve energy & protect fat stores

CLICK TO TWEET



Thing is, your body is a lot smarter than any fad diet that ever was or ever will be. You see, your body has a built-in *famine response mode* to protect you from yourself and idiotic diets.

You might think you're speeding up your metabolism but, contrary to your wishes, starving yourself actually slows down your metabolism. Your body wants to conserve as much energy as possible, which includes holding onto valuable **life-sustaining body fat**, because it has no idea how long this famine is going to last.

You might be thinking, "well, wait a minute. How come I lost weight if my body is holding onto fat? That doesn't make sense to me."

It's because you didn't lose fat, or not that much anyway.

One of the first things you lose on a starvation diet is your muscle glycogen and the water bound to it.

*Glycogen is just a fancy name for stored carbohydrate. It's stored mainly in your muscles and your liver. (FYI, if you're scared sh*tless of carbs, read

my article [Carbohysteria](#)).*

Next, your body begins to break down it's muscle tissue. This is bad – really bad.

Muscle is your body's rock star tissue. Muscle is metabolically active and burns more calories than fat tissue per equivalent weight. In other words, it pays a higher *metabolic rent* in the body to earn its keep.

Not only that, muscle, particularly well-conditioned muscle from regular exercise, protects you from things like heart disease and diabetes by effectively siphoning sugar and fat from your bloodstream and burning it for energy (instead of floating around your body where it can wreak havoc).

Rule: muscle good. No muscle bad.

Fat tissue, on the other hand, is something of a metabolic freeloader... but in a benevolent tough love sort of way. It's a rich source of valuable energy and burns comparatively fewer calories to earn its keep in the body – which is valuable for keeping you alive during a real famine or prolonged stupid diet.

If you're [starving yourself](#) while on a [high protein diet](#), then you might lose even more weight from peeing out all the excess nitrogen.

paleo diet, mediterranean diet - golden unicorn

If you go into [ketosis](#), then it's going to be tough (REALLY tough!) to stay on the diet for any length of time because ketones are sort of your [DEFCON 1](#) emergency fuel. Eventually you'll collapse or get tired of having disgusting smelling breath.

*FYI, check out my related article [Fat Burns in the Flame of Carbohydrate](#)

After several weeks of starving yourself on The Golden Unicorn Diet, yes, you may have “*lost weight*” on the scale, but you definitely haven’t lost as much fat as you think you did.

Tale of the DEXA scan

Last year, I ran before and after [DEXA scans](#) on a couple that was doing a so-called “*weight loss challenge*” at their local gym. They told me they were on a [high-protein diet](#) and were exercising six to seven days per week.

When they came back in for their follow-up scans six weeks later, they were smugly bragging about how much “*weight*” they lost, but the DEXA scan showed them the ACTUAL COMPOSITION of that weight loss.

They each lost a TRUCKLOAD of muscle and, to their astonishment, a comparatively small amount of fat. In fact, because they lost so much muscle, their body fat percentages had actually gone up!

And they were worse off for it because they had lost so much valuable metabolism-stoking muscle.

So what happened? They were under-eating, over-training, and under-recovering.

Bottom line

Focus on slow steady FAT LOSS instead of nebulous golden unicorn goals like “*losing weight*” or “*getting results.*” Steer clear of popular diets your friend Britney and Aunt Gertrude are doing and arm yourself with these [13 principles for safe, effective, and permanent fat loss](#).

Bullshiticus teatoxium goldenunicornius

The market is flooded with all kinds of “teatoxes” which come with all kinds of outlandish health claims.

But what gives? Can you REALLY “detox” yourself into “losing weight” or “cutting the bloat?”

No. It’s physiologically impossible.

It’s not possible because it’s not “toxins” that are causing you to be overweight in the first place.

But you might argue, “What do you mean? I ‘lost weight’ on a ‘teatox.’”

In my [Skinny Teatox](#) and [SkinnyMint Teatox](#) review articles, I point out that these types of products are, in actual fact, nothing more than exorbitantly overpriced diuretics and laxatives.



Get ready to piss and sh*t....a lot...because you and your toilet are about to become good friends again (like back in your university days, downing 11 beers, 5 tequila shots, and a bottle of chardonnay every Friday night).

In an article on [Science-Based Medicine](#), Scott Gavura eloquently provides a real definition for detox:

“Detox” is a legitimate medical term that has been co-opted to sell useless products and services. It is a fake treatment for a fake condition. Real detoxification isn’t ordered from a menu at a juice bar, or assembled from supplies in your pantry. Real detoxification is provided in hospitals under life-threatening circumstances – usually when there are dangerous levels of drugs, alcohol, or other poisons in the body. Drugs used for real detoxification are not ingredients in a smoothie.

Detox is a legitimate medical term co-opted by quacks to sell useless products & services. Real detoxification isn’t ordered at a juice bar. It is provided in hospitals under life-threatening circumstances.

[CLICK TO TWEET](#)



Still with me?

Thing is, these “teatoxes,” aside from making you piss and sh*t all day long, often recommend that you improve your diet to, you know, *“synergistically enhance the effects of the teatox.”*

And I won’t argue, eating better is definitely a good thing and is precisely what any responsible health professional would recommend. But you don’t need to waste your money on overpriced laxatives and diuretics to achieve good health.

Bottom line

Stay alert and don't fall for the cutesy teatox advertising or the photoshopped Instagram pics. Remember, the business is money and the storefront is health.

Bullshiticus corpus wrapum golden unicornius

Body wraps.

Have you seen “*those crazy wrap things?*”

You know, the ones where you smear a herbal concoction over your fatty areas, cover yourself plastic wrap, and whammy, you're thinner!?

I know, kinky right? But hey, who am I to judge...if you're into that sort of thing?

[body wraps weight loss](#)

Yes, [body wraps](#) have been around for quite a number of years and, like bell bottom jeans and bad haircuts, this golden unicorn keeps coming back.

Can you really “melt away the fat” from [those trouble spots](#) with a body wrap?

In a word: no.

Fat doesn't just melt away through the skin. You need to improve your eating habits and become more physically active.

Sure, you might “lose weight” or see brief cosmetic improvements from a body wrap. However, this is more of a temporary illusion than any lasting

effect.

While you may see small reductions in scale weight or inches on the tape measure, the actual composition of your weight loss is not body fat.

By the very nature of being wrapped in plastic (and sometimes heated), you will “lose weight” through sweating and dehydration.

Bottom line

The concept of “[spot reduction](#)” has long since been debunked. You cannot melt away fat through the skin. Once you leave the spa and consume food and water, you will replace what you lost in sweat weight.

For more information on body wraps, please see my general [body wraps](#) article [It Works wraps review](#).

Bullshiticus Instagramicum gurus golden unicornius

I’ve been doing consumer advocacy work in the health space for well over two decades now and never in my entire career have I seen a bigger cesspool of health misinformation than on Instagram.

I’ll admit, Facebook and Twitter are quite prolific on the douchebaggery scale, but Instagram is a [particularly onerous place for someone looking for reliable, trustworthy, and responsible health information](#).

What do I mean?

Think all of the above: teatoxes, 28-day fitness challenges, diets, fake testimonials, airbrushed images, micro-targeted advertising. It’s all there, on your phone, in your face, in 3D, in full colour.

If you’re a teenage girl or young adult woman reading this, please know

that Instagram is a great place to inspire an eating disorder (#fitspo). It has been studied and linked to [poor mental health outcomes](#).

First, in the quest to rise above the social static and noise, Instagrammers are [going to great lengths to image craft and mould their feeds](#). What you're seeing is not reality. It's a carefully coordinated effort to enhance their "personal branding" and social influence.

Second, the "health advice" your getting is, [in most cases, questionable](#). "Influencers" are now getting paid to say a "teatox" was the secret to their success. Spoiler alert: it wasn't.

Third, the images you see are often distortions of reality. Some Instagrammers have had [surgery, botox, and treatments](#) to make them look like a top-heavy mannequin. The photos are often professionally done, with certain looks accomplished by altering angles, using different lighting, playing with after-effects filters, or, if all else fails, airbrushing in Photoshop.

Aside from social media's distorted aesthetics, sometimes information can be downright, well, just plain idiotic.

Last year, a young Australian "health coach" named [Olivia Budgen when down in a media firestorm for saying that "cancer and disease is your body trying to save you."](#)

Olivia Budgen Insta Muppet - golden unicorn

She eventually deleted the Instagram post under intense media scrutiny. Then, in a so-called apology video on YouTube, Olivia blamed everyone else for misunderstanding her. To add insult to injury, she doubled down and had the audacity to spruik her ebooks below the video.

In the video, she cited a well-known cancer quack as the source of her comments. Based on her responses to comments, the only thing she appeared to be sorry for was getting called out (below).

Olivia Budgen fake Youtube "apology"

Bottom line

Social media has given a platform and voice to everyone, irrespective of whether or not they're qualified to give health advice.

If your Instagram feed is plastered with "*detoxes*," "*cleanses*," "*fat-burner*" supplements, and 28-day fitness challenges, then you need to unfollow your #fitspo gurus and follow reputable health professionals instead.

Closing thoughts

Yeah, I know. I sound like the drunk uncle at Christmas time telling the kids there's no Santa Claus. And sometimes I feel like it too.

Maybe it's not what you WANT to hear, but it's certainly what you NEED to hear.

You don't have to like it either, but sticking your head in the sand and continuing to pretend long-term health comes in a cutesy "*teatox*" or "*fat burner*" pill is only going to keep you from achieving [safe, sound, and lasting health changes](#).

I know there's always that little sliver of hope in the back of your mind, hoping that one of those golden unicorns will work.

But I've worked in the health field for a LONG time and I have never, not even once, seen someone attain and maintain good health and body weight by following bad advice and using gimmicks.

Now, having said that, repeat after me:

“Bill, even though I think you're a smug, sarcastic a\$\$hole, I will accept your challenge by trading my golden unicorn for more veggies and walking!”

How Do I Overcome a Weight Loss Plateau?

By Dr Bill Sukala - 5 January 2013  5

[weight loss plateau](#)

It's a familiar scenario. People tell me how great their workouts were going, how much weight (fat) they were losing, but then <BAM!!> a brick wall in the form of a weight loss plateau. But what IS a weight loss plateau, what causes it, and how do you overcome it and get back on track towards your health and fitness goals?

What Is a Weight Loss Plateau?

A weight loss plateau is when, after a period of progressive weight loss, your body weight stabilizes and refuses to budge further. It can be frustrating and leave you disillusioned.

What Causes a Weight Loss Plateau?

1) Sudden Lifestyle Change

If you've made a rather abrupt change in your lifestyle from washing cheeseburgers down with milkshakes one day to eating birdseed and tofu followed by pumping iron and a 10km run the next, then you can bet you're going to see quick results up front. But your body's innate internal metabolism is much smarter than you and will eventually begin to counter your efforts. Any drastic overnight change in either food intake or exercise habits is viewed as a threat to your internal balance (homeostasis). Your metabolism's sentinels come running back to central command screaming "FAMINE!" Thus, your body will start to conserve energy and make weight loss a stubborn exercise in futility.

2) Stale Exercise Routine

If you've been a *Steady Eddie* and made small lifestyle changes over time, then your weight loss plateau might stem from a stale routine. I used to see it all the time in my personal training days: people going to the gym, week in and week out, doing the same old boring routine like programmed automatons.

In the exercise business, an exercise prescription is based upon the F.I.T.T. principle (Frequency, Intensity, Time (duration), and Type of exercise). If you've been attending the gym the same number of days each week, doing the same intensities for the same duration, then you're on a collision course with a weight loss plateau.

The objective of exercise is to stimulate your body above and beyond the level to which it is normally accustomed. This is known as progressive overload. If you keep on doing the same old stale exercises, then there is insufficient stimulus for your body to **build valuable metabolism-stoking muscle**.

3) Closet Compensator

One of the things I talk about in my seminars is something I call “closet compensation.” Bear in mind your internal homeostasis is striving to maintain the status quo – stave off famine at all costs! So while you may very well believe you’re eating less and moving more (i.e., exercise), it is possible you’re inadvertently sabotaging your efforts by eating imperceptibly larger portions or saving energy at other times of the day (i.e., sitting a tiny bit longer). Thing is, these little changes are insidious. They sneak up on you without your being cognitively aware.

4) Snacks and Sports Drinks

While you may be eating all the leafy greens the [dietitians](#) tell you to eat, it’s those little in-between snacks and sports drinks that can throw a monkey wrench in the proverbial machine. You’ll see it in every gym. People doing about 30 to 60 minute workouts while toting a sports drink and nibbling on an energy bar. Thing is, they both have calories (or kilojoules) and while it might not seem like much in the moment, those calories add up down the road and can sabotage your dieting efforts.

5) Hypothyroidism

In a small percentage of cases, there are people who have low levels of thyroid hormone, a condition known as [hypothyroidism](#). Before you self-diagnose and assume you have hypothyroidism, talk to your doctor for a proper evaluation and treatment plan.

How Do I Overcome a Weight Loss Plateau?

In categorical response to the above points:

1) Sudden Lifestyle Change

Make small changes that are realistic and sustainable. I see a lot of people try to make too many big changes virtually overnight.

By trying to do too much too soon, you overload the neural circuits in your brain which can **deplete your willpower** and leave you feeling dejected. More importantly, small changes will be viewed as less of a threat to your metabolism and will allow you to continue to lose weight.

In my experience with people who've just had a **heart attack**, **angioplasty/stent**, and **open heart surgery**, they get a health scare and then want to turn their worlds upside down and start doing Iron Man triathlons the day they're released from the hospital. I have to grab them by the scruff of the neck and pull them back down to planet Earth.

2) Stale Exercise Routine

If your exercise routine has gone stale, mix up the exercise prescription variables for added stimulus. If you're only attending the gym or doing your morning walks twice a week, increase the frequency to 3-4 days and see how you go.

If you're already doing adequate frequency, then consider increasing your intensity or duration. For example, if you've been working at 55% of your max heart rate then consider bumping it up to 65-70%.

If an increase in intensity is not feasible, then bump up your duration from, say, 25 minutes of walking to 35 minutes. You can also have a tinker with your rest intervals. For example, you might reduce the amount of rest between sets in your weight routine.

Most importantly, you must be putting additional exercise stress on your

body, but also getting [adequate rest days](#) in between to [minimise the risk of overtraining](#).

Finally, consider mixing up the type of exercise you're doing. If you've only been doing 20 minute leisurely strolls on the treadmill, then perhaps you could consider a bike or the elliptical trainer. If you've been doing exercise machines that move you through a fixed range of motion, then consider swapping out some exercises for freeweights. This will force you to both balance AND lift the weight which will recruit more muscle fibers and enhance the training effect.

3) Closet Compensator

If you're a "closet compensator," you may need to pay special attention to your portion sizes and/or how much time you're spending sitting or lying down. Portion out your meals so you know precisely how many calories you're consuming. A journal may help you to document your habits and shed some light in these areas. Alternatively, it may be wise to have an exercise buddy keep you on track (i.e., friend, spouse, etc).

4) Snacks and Sports Drinks

Cut out the energy bars and sports drinks. Unless you're engaged in endurance events lasting several hours or more, you don't need them. For most people undertaking recreational exercise, a bottle of water will suffice for hydration and your post-exercise meal will replace what you used. You are highly unlikely to become dehydrated or hypoglycemic during a standard gym routine.

5) Hypothyroidism

As I mentioned above, it is highly unlikely you've got hypothyroidism (sorry Charlie), but if you suspect it, then you should visit your doctor for a proper diagnosis. For more information, check out this link on [PubMed](#)

Weight Loss Plateau: The Bottom Line

There are a number of reasons which might explain a weight loss plateau. While the above discussion is far from comprehensive, it will likely hit the nail on the head for most people.

In the grand scheme of things, forget “weight loss” and look more to losing stored body fat – and keeping it off. Anyone can lose weight on a crash diet, but this is not sustainable and will only leave you worse off in the long-run.

Remember that a side-effect of exercise is an increase in muscle mass which might translate to a slight increase in scale weight. But fear not, this is a good thing because muscle is more compact (takes up less space) and stokes your metabolism to burn more calories. Bottom line: Instead of [fixating on your scale weight](#), focus instead on how your clothes fit.

Raspberry Ketones Review of Marketing Claims

By Lana Eyeington, MSc, BSc (Hons) - 8 November 2012

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[Raspberry Ketone Supplements](#)

The self-proclaimed weight loss “experts” are at it again touting the latest fashionable supplement du jour. Raspberry ketones (RK) derived – not so surprisingly – from raspberries purportedly help you lose that extra fat once and for all. Suppliers can’t keep up with the demand since television health evangelist Dr. Oz and supplement-spruiking side-kick Lisa Lynn gave the product the green light to millions of viewers earlier

this year.

Sounds like a simple solution to a complex problem, but is it really that easy? Are raspberry ketones really a “miracle in a bottle” or are such claims treading on thin ice? In this article, I explore the other side of the marketing hype and dig deep into the science and facts surrounding raspberry ketones.

What are raspberry ketones?

Raspberry ketone, also known as rheosmin is a natural phenolic compound most active in mature red raspberries (*rubus idaeus*) responsible for their distinctive aroma. It is also an additive used in perfumes, shampoos, cosmetics and the food industry, plus we've been consuming it in REAL raspberries for hundreds of years.

Raspberry ketones are produced naturally in the raspberry fruit via a process called biosynthesis. The natural quantity of RK found in raspberries is very low. However, advances in food technology have enabled the compound to be produced synthetically thus making it more commercially abundant.

How do raspberry ketones work and what are the claims?

Respected cardiothoracic surgeon and professor, Dr. Mehmet Oz first made it big on the Oprah Winfrey show but has since swapped his scrubs for a shiny suit and now saturates his popular TV show with fad diets, gimmicks, and supplements “guaranteed” to be your next weight loss solution. No surprise then that raspberry ketones were given a grandiose

reception on a recent show. Dr. Oz unraveled the wonder of Raspberry Ketones with guest and personal trainer Lisa Lynn.

Who is Lisa Lynn anyway?

Before we go on, who is Lisa Lynn anyway and is she qualified to speak on nutrition? Her website lists certifications through the International Sports and Sciences Association (ISSA), but there is no mention of any university degrees or coursework in the nutritional sciences (i.e., nutritional biochemistry, physiology, etc). Moreover, there appears to be a conflict of interest because her “recommendations” for raspberry ketones on Dr. Oz’s show appear to serve her website supplement sales agenda.

A colleague of mine, Joe Cannon, MS, CSCS has also authored a raspberry ketones [article](#) and provides more information on Lisa Lynn.

Dr Oz and nutrition advice: “Trust me, I’m a doctor”

It is noteworthy to point out that when a doctor discredits a popular diet or supplement, the main criticism leveled at the dissenter is that doctors receive minimal university nutrition training. However, if a doctor says a supplement is the latest greatest, then people immediately run out to the shops and sweep the product off the shelves. While Dr. Oz is clearly an intelligent person, he should have done his homework on raspberry ketones before lending his increasingly-dwindling reputation to this product.

CLAIM: Raspberry ketones promote weight loss through their fat-burning properties

Raspberry ketones appear to have a similar chemical structure to capsaicin and synephrine which may have a mild fat-mobilizing effect. This potential weight-loss link prompted the current research which is now being used as “support” for the over-the-top marketing claims for RK. Unfortunately, this is a common theme in the supplement world with previous substances like [pyruvate](#), [caralluma fimbriata](#), and [liproxenol](#) being sold with less than adequate scientific evidence.

CLAIM: Raspberry ketones stimulate the release of adiponectin from fat cells

Adiponectin is a hormone exclusively released by fat cells in adipose tissue and plays an important role in glucose regulation and fat metabolism. It has anti-inflammatory benefits and reduced adiponectin levels are associated with obesity, diabetes, and increased cardiovascular risk. ([More on the role of adiponectin in human disease here](#)).

While it is true that adiponectin has the above protective properties, there is insufficient scientific evidence that raspberry ketones exert a favorable effect on this hormone. More on this below.

CLAIM: “Raspberry ketone can help in your weight loss efforts, especially when paired with regular exercise and a well-balanced diet of healthy and whole foods.” (doctoroz.com)

As of this writing, there is no objective scientific evidence that raspberry ketones contribute to weight loss in humans (see below).

The second half of this claim is probably the best advice you could receive. It is more likely that any associated weight loss would stem from the inclusion of a balanced diet and regular exercise, particularly if you are increasing your energy expenditure above and beyond what you were previously doing. Unfortunately, most people miss the fine print and end up attributing their hard work and results to raspberry ketones alone – the effects of which are yet to be determined in humans.

Raspberry ketones research

When Dr. Oz asked Lisa Lynn “How did you find it and why do you think it’s so valuable?” she replied, “research, research, research!” That might be enough to make most viewers to switch off their boloney detectors, but to which research is she referring? As I start to uncover the missing pieces to the puzzle, it is absolutely clear that **MORE** research needs to be done.

What “they” don’t want you to know about raspberry ketones

As of this writing, there is no evidence that raspberry ketones effectively reduce body fat and improve fat metabolism in human beings. No studies have been conducted involving humans ingesting an oral form of raspberry ketone. We have no information about the short or long-term effects of using raspberry ketones as a dietary supplement, which involves much higher dosages than that used in other industrial applications.

What? Only two raspberry ketone studies?

The evidence is limited to only two preliminary studies involving mice, test tubes and cell cultures:

Study 1:

A 2005 Japanese study investigated the effects of raspberry ketones on obese male mice fed a high fat diet. They wanted to see if: 1) raspberry ketones could prevent obesity; and 2) reduce overall body fat and fat stores around the organs (called visceral fat). The experimental and placebo groups each contained only six (6) mice. The PREVENTION Groups were either fed a normal laboratory diet, a high fat diet (approx. 40% of total calories), or a high fat diet plus raspberry ketone (0.5% – 2%) for 10 weeks. The WEIGHT LOSS groups were fed the same high fat diet for 6 weeks and then high fat plus raspberry ketone (1%) for 5 weeks.

Results from this study demonstrated that the addition of raspberry ketone helped reduce body weight and liver fat stores. A secondary response was that the combination of raspberry ketones with the action of norepinephrine proved better at drawing fat from cells than norepinephrine alone.

To the untrained observer, these results might seemingly warrant a victory lap, but they must be interpreted and put into context for them to be meaningful in a practical sense.

Limitations:

- This is a rodent study. These effects have not been tested or observed in human beings.
- The study used male mice only. It is not known if there is a gender effect, as this was not tested in female mice.

- There were only 6 mice in each group (experimental and placebo). Such a low number may detract from the strength of the statistical calculations. It is necessary to see human studies with a large number of subjects. This would increase the statistical integrity of the study and make it more relevant to dieters.
- These studies were carried out in controlled conditions using rodents. However, if implemented in free-living humans, there is much more opportunity for variations in diet, activity, and overall adherence to the study protocol which would affect the results. Thus, human studies are much more cumbersome (though they must still be conducted).
- Because only two small studies have been conducted, there is no evidence supporting the long-term use of raspberry ketones in humans nor on the effects of different calorie intakes.

Study 2:

This 2010 Korean study investigated the possible mechanism for the anti-obesity action of raspberry ketones. It demonstrated that by stimulating lipolysis, fatty acid oxidation, and adiponectin secretion, raspberry ketones suppress fat accumulation and improve fat metabolism. So the effects of raspberry ketones on these processes were determined but the underlying mechanisms were not confirmed. Unfortunately this study was only conducted in controlled conditions in test tubes and with cell cultures. We may see a different response in humans considering the numerous other factors affecting our accumulation of body fat and taking into account individual differences (Park, K.S., 2010).

An Australian study looked at how adiponectin levels can be affected by exercise in humans. It concluded that after short-term, moderate intensity exercise adiponectin levels increased by 260%. These changes were apparent after 1 week of 2-3 short bouts of exercise (Kriketos, A.D. et al, 2004).

So for no cost at all, you can get a more effective response just by exercising at the right intensity and duration.

How much do raspberry ketone supplements cost?

Wholesale raspberry ketones are widely available through Asian manufacturers.

- Pure Laboratory Raspberry Ketone (Hazardous): Approximately \$5000/kg
- Synthetic Raspberry Ketone Powder: Approximately \$10-\$50/kg
- Raspberry Ketone Capsules: Wholesale can be as little as \$2.50 for one bottle

Raspberry ketone supplements in Australia

Raspberry ketone supplements have made their way down under and can be purchased for around \$50.

The mark ups are huge and you can see why they are so commercially attractive.

The last word on raspberry ketones

Unfortunately raspberry ketones are not the amazing miracle supplement they're claimed to be. The extrapolated evidence is only speculation and the exact mechanisms for raspberry ketone weight loss are not completely understood and, as of this writing, there is limited independent science to substantiate marketing claims.

The obesity epidemic didn't happen because of a worldwide raspberry

ketone shortage so direct your time, money and energy towards a nutritious diet (low in processed foods) and improving unproductive habits. Support this with evidenced-based exercise and you're on the right track!

The age-old adage of **eat a healthy, low-calorie, nutrient rich diet and get regular exercise** still holds true. There is nothing wrong with taking a dietary supplement, but make sure there is a reasonable body of scientific evidence to support the often overblown marketing claims.

For more specific information, consult a university-trained dietitian or clinical exercise physiologist for reliable information on diet and exercise.

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Caralluma Fimbriata Review: Is it Effective for Appetite and Weight Control?

By Dr Bill Sukala - 15 May 2012  4

[caralluma fimbriata](#)

I was recently approached by a company with a financial interest in the sale of the herbal slimming pill *caralluma fimbriata*.

Their aim was to line up a PhD-level academic to go on a prime-time TV program and support their contention that it is a “silver bullet in weight loss and fat elimination.”

The company provided me with a [journal article](#) ([full article here](#)).

What is Caralluma Fimbriata?

Caralluma fimbriata is a plant found around Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and India. Much like *Hoodia Gordonii*, it has been used by indigenous hunters to suppress hunger and appetite and improve stamina.

While this may very well be the case, one must consider the physiological differences between traditional tribesmen who are very physically active versus obese people living in a sedentary environment with an overabundance of food.

The hunters would have very little concern for overweight or obesity and thus the fact that it may stave off hunger is of little consequence to their body weight (which is likely very lean).

On the other hand, the obese dieter may take the herb and possibly experience a mild decrease in hunger, but this is only one single factor of many which contribute both to weight status.

Safe and effective fat loss (and keeping it off) is accomplished through a combined approach of healthy eating, physical activity, and behavioral modification.

So taking *caralluma fimbriata* as a “silver bullet for weight loss” is a simplistic and naive view which promotes a “health in a pill” mentality and does not address deeper underlying obesity issues.

Caralluma Fimbriata Scientific Evidence

Study 1

In a [2006 study out of Bangalore, India](#), 50 adult men and women aged 25 to 60 with a body mass index of 25 kg/m² were assigned to receive 1 gram of *caralluma fimbriata* or a placebo for 60 days.

Blood glucose, lipids, anthropometric measures, and dietary intake and assessment of appetite were performed at 30 and 60 days.

In the study’s abstract, the authors state that waist circumference (a surrogate measure of risk of heart disease and diabetes) and hunger levels significantly declined over the intervention period. Statistical trends towards a decrease in body weight, body mass index, hip circumference, body fat, and energy intake were observed from pre to post-intervention in the *caralluma fimbriata* group.

Analysis

More Research Needed on Caralluma Fimbriata

While this is an interesting preliminary study and should prompt more thorough and conclusive research, it is not correct or ethical to state it that caralluma fimbriata is a “silver bullet in weight loss and fat elimination.”

Unfortunately, a single study is not conclusive evidence that it is a magic pill. The causes of obesity are numerous and this only addresses a single aspect (appetite).

Waist Circumference and Caralluma Fimbriata

While the 3cm reduction in waist circumference was “statistically significant,” one has to question whether or not this 3cm will translate into any clinically meaningful changes inside the body.

To corroborate these numbers, none of the metabolic outcomes were significantly different from pre to post so my guess is that statistical significance in this case has no practical connection to any real physiological improvements.

The lack of change in blood chemistry may be explained by the fact that reductions in waist circumference may have only reflected changes in subcutaneous fat (the external fat you can pinch) as opposed to the deep down fat around the organs (visceral fat) which is associated with metabolic problems. The 3cm difference may have been influenced by a standard margin of error introduced by the assessors.

Body Composition and Caralluma Fimbriata

The [body composition](#) differences between the caralluma fimbriata and placebo groups were negligible and did not reach statistical significance anyway.

The skinfold methodology has a margin of error under which the differences between groups might have been subsumed.

In other words, it is difficult to say whether the method was sensitive enough to detect any legitimate difference in body composition.

Future studies would be wise to include more sensitive measures of visceral fat such as MRI or CT scans.

Study 2

In a [2010 animal study in the Journal of Nutrition and Metabolism](#), Kamalakkannan and colleagues evaluated the antiobesity and antiatherogenic effects of caralluma fimbriata (CFE) extract on a small number of rats.

The animals were divided into three groups: 1) an untreated control group; 2) a control group fed a high-fat cafeteria diet; or 3) an experimental group receiving cralluma fimbriata extract plus the cafeteria diet.

The cafeteria diet consisted of three variants: 1) condensed milk, bread, peanuts, and pellet chow; 2) chocolate, biscuits, dried coconut, and pellet chow; or 3) cheese, boiled potatoes, beef tallow, and pellet chow.

Results showed that CFE induced a dose-dependent inhibition of food intake and prevented gains in body weight, liver weight, and fat pad mass. Alterations in blood lipids and leptin associated with weight gain were

also inhibited. There was also suggestive evidence of a protective effect against atherogenesis (heart disease).

Analysis

Applicability to Humans

This small scale study suggests that supplemental *Caralluma fimbriata* may have important effects for inhibiting appetite and weight gain in rats fed a high-fat cafeteria style diet.

Clearly these are important effects given the prevalence of obesity and all its evil offspring (diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol/triglycerides).

Given it is a rodent study, it would be helpful to see these results replicated in free-living humans who are subject to many more “dietary distractions” (which sometimes makes it difficult to tease out the real effects of a dietary supplement).

Caralluma Fimbriata Safety Considerations

As with any dietary supplement, it is also important to consider the safety effects of *Caralluma fimbriata*.

The scant evidence surrounding this supplement does not give us any firm long-term data to make a conclusive statement of safety, or potential interactions between pregnane glycosides (*Caralluma fimbriata*'s active ingredients) and other medications or supplements being taken.

Summary

Caralluma fimbriata is an interesting supplement which may have some usefulness in reducing appetite and inhibiting weight gain – clearly a much needed weapon in the war on obesity.

There is limited evidence in both humans and rodents which support these findings, however further research is warranted to more thoroughly evaluate the supplement's safety and effectiveness on a long-term basis.

Claims that Caralluma fimbriata is a “[magic bullet for weight loss](#)” are premature and tend to neglect the practical limitations of the existing evidence.

The best available evidence still suggests that a healthy lifestyle which includes reduced calorie intake and increased physical activity levels is our best weapon for losing fat and keeping it off.

Caralluma fimbriata may play a role in facilitating this process, but consumers should be aware that it is a supplement, not a substitute for a healthy lifestyle.

Non Exercise Activity Thermogenesis (NEAT): Incidental Movement For Permanent Weight Loss

By Dr Bill Sukala - 6 October 2011  5

[Non-exercise activity thermogenesis](#)

Non exercise activity thermogenesis sounds like a scary name. And in practice it can be even more scary to innocent bystanders!

I get lots of strange looks every time I go to the supermarket – EVERY time. People usually do a casual glance, and then it's one of those double-take moments where they have to take a better look to be sure their eyes aren't playing tricks on them.

Today was no different. I made eye contact with a woman in the produce section a few minutes after I'd arrived at the local Woolworths supermarket.

Ten minutes later we crossed paths again in one of the aisles, at which point she vocalized what most people were probably thinking, "You should get a trolley (shopping cart) for all those things!"

I was carrying two overflowing handbaskets which were about 15 to 20 kilos each by that point and starting to get pretty darn heavy.

Without missing a beat, I responded, "But ah, there's more to the story than meets the eye." "'Inactivity physiology' is one of my professional research interests, so I have to practice what I preach!"

I proceeded to give her the Reader's Digest version of [why it's important to nix the trolley](#) and shop the old fashioned way. Though in her defense, she did say she's got four kids that keep her on the run!

While everyone shouts the benefits of structured exercise from the rooftops, there is evidence that even if you do your 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity five times per week, your health can still remain at risk if you spend too much time lounging around watching TV ([Abstract here](#)). In other words, it's what you do when you're NOT exercising that really matters, both for weight control and health.

According to an article by James A. Levine of the Mayo Clinic Endocrine

Unit published in the Proceedings of the Nutrition Society, Non Exercise Activity Thermogenesis, NEAT for short, refers to “energy expended that is not from sleeping, eating or sports-like exercise. It ranges from the energy expended walking to work, typing, performing yard work, undertaking agricultural tasks and fidgeting” (see [article by Levine](#)). Without getting into the numbers on calorie burning, the big picture is that when it comes to LOSING WEIGHT and keeping it off, this NEAT background activity plays a crucial role that, over the long-term, can and does make a massive difference (Read my [inactivity physiology article](#) for more specifics on calorie expenditure).

non exercise activity thermogenesis

I know this is ironic coming from an exercise physiologist, but I think we need to effect a shift in our collective views on background activity and structured exercise. Structured, packaged exercise is still important but it should play second fiddle to incidental movement such as standing work stations ([see image on left](#)) and, in general, sitting avoidance for the bulk of the day. Sure, I think it’s a good idea to park farther away from the mall entrance and take the stairs, but if this is only done for a few minutes a day, then it pales against a backdrop of excessive sitting the rest of the day. And I can’t say I’m a fan of sitting on an exercise ball all day either. Once your body adapts to it, then the “training effect” would be minimized into oblivion.

The following image is from one of my seminar slides and highlights a typical day in the life of the average person. Despite hitting the gym for one hour a day, after an eight hour sleep, that still leaves 15 hours of opportunity to either do absolutely nothing or waste energy. It’s not hard to see that time at the gym is minimized, if not negated, by excessive sitting at other times of the day.

non exercise activity thermogenesis

I stopped into the bank this afternoon to take care of some business and, after ascertaining the reason for my visit, the teller told me to “have a seat” while I waited. I told him I “preferred to stand,” to which gave me a funny look as if to imply “well that’s strange.”

We’ve become so numb to physical inactivity that we’re not even aware of our own actions (or inaction). During my seminars on inactivity physiology, I often pose a question to the audience, “Does anyone have any vivid recollection of the physical act of sitting down in your chairs today?” Most people take a moment to ponder it and invariably shake their heads as if to say, “I’m sorry senator, **I have no recollection!**” It’s the same as putting on your seat belt in your car. It’s so automatic and permanently ingrained that physical INACTIVITY has become a conditioned and expected habit. If you’ve forgotten how to stand, don’t miss this [step by step tutorial!](#)

How pathetic are we to have arrived at a point in history where we have to pay money to go into an external box called a gym to do simulated activity that was previously innate, even required, for our day to day survival? How sad is it that we actually have to STAND UP to take a break where historically we needed to SIT DOWN to have a rest after a full day of hunting, gathering, and fending off predators?

There is a prevalent mentality that by doing nothing we can “save energy.” Unfortunately, it doesn’t work this way. Physical activity is the only game in town where you need to SPEND energy to GET energy. One of the most valuable practical lessons I learned was from working with cardiac patients. Some people came into our cardiac rehab program so physically debilitated that even the most basic activities we all take for granted were extremely difficult. From this, I coined a little phrase along the lines of, “You don’t appreciate your ability to move until you LOSE your ability to move.”

Finally, the [National Weight Control Registry](#) is an on-going study which tracks and trends people who've lost weight and kept it off over a long period of time. There are a number of factors which contribute to successful weight loss, but several of them caught my eye:

- 78% eat breakfast every day
- 75% weigh themselves at least once a week
- 62% watch less than 10 hours of TV per week
- 90% exercise, on average, about 1 hour per day

Reading between the lines, you don't need to starve yourself or go on some sort of wacky diet- have breakfast and enjoy it. You don't need to stress over your weight every day – the scale is not your friend. Spend more time “wasting” energy doing incidental movement and less time ass-down in front of the television. And finally, yes, it's still good to do structured exercise but more as a complementary routine to your innate, primal movements!

You want the secret to losing weight and keeping it off, the secret that diet book authors and infomercial exercise gadget hucksters don't want you to know? Here it is: the secret is that there IS no secret. Move more (a LOT more), eat less (particularly less refined/processed foods), quit smoking, and get a daily dose of laughter!

How Can I Speed Up My Metabolism to Lose Weight and Keep It Off?

By **Dr Bill Sukala** - 3 June 2011

 8

[metabolism](#)

It's a common question, but what exactly is metabolism? Simply put, it's your internal calorie-burning firepit – the amount of energy your body burns to sustain itself. This includes your resting metabolic rate and additional calories (or kJ) expended from physical activity and digestion (thermic effect of food).

Your metabolism is influenced by a number of factors, such as genetics, hormones, and your body composition – particularly how much muscle you have. Muscle is very metabolically active (unlike fat, that metabolic freeloader!), so the more muscle you have, the more calories you burn, even at rest.

So how do you stoke the flames of your metabolism (without setting yourself on fire!)? Despite all the [quick-fix pills](#), [potions](#), and infomercial gadgets on the market, the best way to speed up your metabolism and trim away body fat is by making healthy food choices and increasing your regular physical activity.

Increase your muscle mass by adding resistance training to your routine (body weight exercises, free weights, or machines). Then stoke your '*metabolic firepit*' by keeping that extra lean mass active all day through [incidental activity](#) (more time standing, even at work) and through structured exercise such as aerobic exercise. The lunge is a great multi-joint movement to incorporate, and taxes the large muscles of the hips, thighs, and calves.

So how much exercise is enough? [The American College of Sports Medicine](#) recommends you train with resistance two or three times a week, performing eight to 10 separate exercises hitting all of the major muscle groups in the body. For basic conditioning, you should do at least one set of eight to 12 repetitions of each exercise. If you've been sedentary for quite some time, then this should suffice. You can also use

other forms of resistance training such as resistance bands, kettle bells, or anything else that puts stress on the muscles above and beyond a level to which they're normally accustomed (called progressive overload).

Also aim for regular aerobic exercise. The Surgeon General recommends at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week engaging the large-muscles of the lower body such as walking, jogging, swimming or cycling.

When it comes to stoking your metabolism, just remember to be consistent with your routine. After all, a little bit of something is still better than a whole lot of nothing!

Why Does My Body Weight Fluctuate So Much?

By Dr Bill Sukala - 28 May 2011  1

fluctuations

When you're trying to lose weight, it's easy to obsess over the numbers on the bathroom scales as you measure your progress. But fear not, daily weight fluctuations are nothing to worry about and I guarantee you have not put on more fat overnight.

Small daily variations in scale weight are completely normal. For example, your weight might increase after a meal, a delay in bowel movement, or during the premenstrual phase in women, and may decrease after exercise from fluid loss associated with sweating or going to the toilet.

If you need more convincing, then consider that one pound (~½ kilo) of

body fat contains about 3,500 calories (~14,700 kJ) of stored energy. So in order for you to gain three pounds (1.36 kilos) overnight, you would have to consume an additional 10,500 calories (~44,000 kJ) over and above your usual calorie intake!

Try not to fixate on your daily weight, but if it helps you stay on track, weigh yourself once a week at the same time of day under the same conditions (for example, before exercise and meals) for a more accurate reading.

Stand Up For Your Health: The Emerging Science of Inactivity Physiology and Why Your Office Chair May Be Killing You

By Dr Bill Sukala - 23 May 2011  4

Even if you do the recommended 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity at least five days per week, it's how you spend the remaining 23½ hours of the day that really matters. A new and emerging area of science, called 'inactivity physiology', exposes the hidden dangers associated with prolonged sitting – something all too common in modern society.

What is inactivity physiology?

Research shows that vital enzymes in your legs' blood vessels, which are

responsible for siphoning fat out of the blood, virtually shut off when you're in the seated position. The excess fat floating around your bloodstream can negatively alter your cholesterol levels, increase your risk of heart disease, and contribute to obesity and type 2 diabetes.

Prolonged sitting time also translates to a loss of muscle tone and definition. Even if you go to the gym, the negative effects of a full day of sitting can 'undo' all your hard work. The good news is that incorporating more standing and light activity into your day, independent of time spent in the gym, 'reactivates' these enzymes, burns more kilojoules and improves overall health.

Declare your life a no-sitting zone with the following tips:

1: Don't get trolleyed at the supermarket

Nix the trolley (shopping cart in US English)! A hand basket increases the gravitational load on your body and forces you to expend more kilojoules (calories). Besides working your hips and legs, the additional weight also helps sculpt your shoulders and arms.

"Pushing a trolley repeats the same poor postural position most people live in on a daily basis – rounded shoulders, slouching forwards, like when working on a computer or driving a car," says Ian O'Dwyer, owner of Noosa-based Fitness Personally. "Regularly swap the basket from right to left hand, as this is one of the more functional movements you can give your body."

2: Stand and deliver... your work!

The sedentary workplace is the single biggest barrier to good health,

accounting for at least eight hours of wasted opportunity for movement each day. And the reality is that with a few modifications to your desk height, much of what you do while seated can be done just as easily in the standing position (a “standing workstation”).

“The deeply ingrained notion that you have to be seated to work represents an outdated paradigm that has become a health liability in today’s modern world of rampant obesity,” says Jan Pearce, national fitness manager for [City Fitness](#) in New Zealand. “Companies hire ergonomics consultants to make the office environment more comfortable, but are inadvertently sabotaging their employees’ health and productivity by keeping them ‘comfortably’ seated for longer.”

3: The family that moves together stays together

Stand at your kids’ sporting events or extracurricular activities, or take it one step further and get involved as a volunteer. “With both child and adult obesity on the rise, you can’t afford to sit idle on the sidelines,” says Morwenna Kirwan, exercise scientist with CQUniversity’s Centre for Physical Activity Studies in Queensland. “Volunteering is a great way to keep active, spend quality time with your children and reinforce positive images of physical activity.”

4: Beachy keen

When beach weather is here again, try not to just loaf around on a towel. Take advantage of the sun, surf and sand. “Walking on soft sand not only works your muscles and tendons harder, but can actually burn 30 to 50 per cent more kilojoules (calories) than walking at the same speed on a firm surface,” explains Carl Hammington, personal trainer and co-founder of Best Me in Wellington, New Zealand. “The same rules apply to beach games like volleyball, frisbee or paddleball, but be sure to ease into it to

avoid muscle soreness.”

5: Home feet home

Counterintuitive as it may seem, take a stand against all the usual home-activity vampires like watching television or surfing the internet.

According to the recent [Compendium of Physical Activities](#), published in the journal *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, you burn about 500kJ (calories) for every hour spent on your feet at home doing incidental movement. This means that just two hours of standing time per day over the course of a month will translate to a 1kg loss of body fat.

6: Neutralise movement thieves

Hammington advises clients to minimise or avoid the more subtle activity thieves throughout the day – commuting, elevators, moving walkways.

“Driving to and from work can consume up to two hours of your day.

Public transport, on the other hand, reduces costs and contributes to good health. Walk to the bus stop or train station, and choose to stand (using the hand rail for balance) instead of wrestling for a seat. Always take the stairs and avoid the lifts in buildings (unless you have a physical limitation),” he explains. “Small bits of movement today add up to big changes tomorrow.”

7: Take the ‘rest’ out of restaurant

Surely you deserve downtime to relax and enjoy your favourite restaurant?

“I don’t think people should be trying to burn kilojoules (calories) while they are eating or drinking – rather, they should be enjoying the time out and the experience or indulgence,” says [Lisa Westlake](#), physiotherapist and award-winning fitness professional. “Walk to the restaurant or around the block before you head home. During office hours, replace a business lunch with a healthy walk and talk.”

“Walk the walk” while you work

For the past century, we’ve been engineering movement out of our day, but recent innovations are raising the bar for workplace health and are working movement back in to allow you to be simultaneously productive and expend additional kilojoules during work hours.

One such innovation is the fusion of a desk and treadmill. The device, however, is not meant to be a substitute for regular, structured exercise. Rather, it’s a way of incorporating valuable incidental movement into your day.

Regular low-level walking minimises the risk of lower back pain, reduces the imperceptible accumulation of creeping body fat, and improves your overall mood, leaving you feeling energised at the end of the day.

“I am one of the many women who gained an excess 10kg by my mid-30s, and I wanted to shed the weight before my wedding,” says 35- year-old geriatric psychiatrist Dr Molly Davis. “I thought it was a brilliant idea to incorporate low-level walking into my regular working day since I’m a doctor and work very long hours.”

So far, Davis has lost 4kg of fat and says she doesn’t expect any trouble dropping the next 6kg. “I truly think that this could be the answer to many of today’s most pressing health problems – obesity and all its evil offspring including diabetes, high blood pressure, obstructive sleep apnoea, high cholesterol and, perhaps, even anxiety, disorders, depression, insomnia and seasonal affective disorder,” adds Davis.

I Work Out Regularly But Can't Seem to Lose Weight. What Else Can I Do?

By Dr Bill Sukala - 13 March 2011  1

[cant lose weight](#)

Question: I do 40 minutes of cardio five times per week but can't seem to lose weight. What else can I do?

Answer: Even if you exercise regularly, your hard work can be “undone” by excessive sitting the rest of the day (i.e., desk job, watching television). Based on the [Ainsworth Compendium of Physical Activities](#), for a 70 kilogram (154 lb) person, adding two (cumulative) hours per day of light movement to your regular routine can translate to an extra 15kg (33 lbs) of weight loss per year.

When you start a new exercise regimen, your daily energy expenditure also increases which might result in you inadvertently eating slightly more than usual. This could be in the form of eating imperceptibly more at mealtime or snacking at other times of the day.

Bottom line: waste energy at all times of the day. Walk to the bus stop, stand on the train, take the stairs, use a standing workstation, or swap the shopping trolley (cart) for a hand basket. Pay particular attention during mealtime. Make sure you're eating according to physical hunger signals and not emotional cues (boredom, stress, etc). Every little bit counts. The small changes you make today equate to big changes tomorrow.

Too Much Exercise: Am I Overtraining?

By Dr Bill Sukala - 12 March 2011  0

Find yourself unable to sleep at night after grueling exercise sessions? Consider this when insomnia kicks in!

We all know that exercise is a good thing, but you do need to be careful not to get carried away to the point of overtraining. Overtraining may occur when your body's ability to adapt to exercise is overcome by intense training sessions with insufficient recovery between sessions.

Overtraining can cause all sorts of physical and psychological changes, including insomnia. Other symptoms include mood changes, lack of motivation, irritability, loss of appetite and impaired performance during workouts.

It does all depend on the person, but if you're training hard and you feel exhausted all the time, you may need to consider your training intensity relative to your rest periods. For example, if you're doing hour-long sessions, six times a week, experiment by altering the training variables. Try cutting back the length of your workout, the number of days, or lowering the intensity.

Also consider your diet. Caffeine affects everyone differently, but if you're sensitive to it, that late after noon cup of coffee might be keeping you up at night. Other caffeine-containing drinks include tea and soft drinks.

If you're still having trouble sleeping, I'd advise you to contact your physician.

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Managing early childhood obesity in the primary care setting: a behavior modification approach, the creation of a committed buyer, as follows from the above, significantly transforms Callisto, which once again confirms the correctness of Z.

Circadian Clocks and Metabolism, participatory planning is random.

Physiological mechanisms behind Roux-en-Y gastric bypass surgery, the milky Way vitally reflects the subject.

DR BILL SUKALA, as can be seen from the most General regularities of distribution of permafrost zone, the implication is possible.

Bacterial infection of a model insect: Photorhabdus luminescens and Manduca sexta, hybridization complicates the cognitive fear.

Blog|US Wellness Meats, the motion of the satellite is decided by a certain rider.

Green light emitting diode irradiation enhances fibroblast growth impaired by high glucose level, freud.