

The 7 Diet™

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The 7 Diet, what is it? How about a simple diet? And a balanced diet? And a FUN diet? And an easy to implement, life changing diet?

Is it a bit novel? Yes. Is it another fad diet? No, It can be easy to adapt to, and more importantly, to enjoy and adhere to for the rest of your life.

And by the way, Is it safe? Yes, "The 7 Diet" is safe if you take reasonable personal responsibility for your own life. Seriously, it is based on eating a balanced diet from the 5 food groups. Notice the continued stress on balanced. Eating any single food type repeatedly, such as a high protein low carb diet, can have dramatic short term affects. Continuing for an extended period can do more harm than good however. For a quick reference of the 5 food groups, visit the [USDA Guide to Daily Food Choices](#).

So what exactly is: "The 7 Diet"? Simply stated, it is a combination of the following 7 concepts. Each of them is important, as they create a powerful plan when combined, that each cannot achieve alone:

Number 1:

Count food, rather than fill a plate or bowl randomly. And when counting food, 7 is the key number. How much easier is it to count 7 cherries into a bowl than counting the calories, grams, or sugar content of the cherries? When you just gotta have a salt snack and you reach for the potato chips, what if you consciously counted out 7 potato chips? It's not an argument that potato chips are good for you. It's acknowledging that you may eat a wide variety of food, and limiting the intake is wise.

Many foods for example, can be quickly and easily served in seven's for a main course, side dish, snack or dessert:

- 7 Carrots
- 7 Spoonfuls of Corn
- 7 Forks of Green Beans
- 7 Brussels Sprouts
- 7 Bites of Top Sirloin Steak
- 7 Bite-side pieces of broiled Chicken breast
- 7 Forkfuls of Tilapia, pan seared in Olive Oil
- 7 Jumbo Shrimp
- 7 Orange slices
- 7 Bing Cherries
- 7 Bite size Fuji Apple Slices
- 7 Fritos Corn Chips
- 7 Pretzels
- 7 Peanut M&Ms

And the list is nearly endless.

The last few items do not fit well with a balanced diet plan, which is why you need to include all seven concepts to develop a healthy diet, and especially to reach your weight loss goals. Sweets, treats, high fat and high sugar foods are not in your best interest. As most of us cannot resist them, limit them to the exception, not the regular rule. Desserts in small amounts can be a treat, but not on a daily basis.

If you've spent years counting carbs at every meal, would this be simpler? There is nothing wrong with counting carbs, often essential for good diabetic care. For most of us however, have you ever noticed that diets involving reading every box label, checking the fat grams of a Big Mac, and checking up on the details of your diet becomes very tedious? Then, when it works, you lose weight and reach your goal, then you slip back into old habits, and the pounds come back? Would simpler be better? For now, and for a life-time?

And what about foods that are not easily sorted into 7s - that's why concept Number 4 is important to The 7 Diet.

If you're wondering why, where, when the number 7 was chosen, the answer is also simple. From ancient times to today, 7 has always been held in high regard in many cultures. Biblically, the number 7 often represents completeness, or perfection. In Genesis, the world was created in 7 days. Joshua and his army marched around Jericho seven times. In Revelation, John talks extensively of the seven churches, seven seals, etc. In music, the musical scale has seven notes. The human head has seven holes and the human ankle seven bones. Okay, you get the idea, it's almost uncanny, If you are so inclined you can spend hours researching the number seven.



7 Rainier Cherries

Number 2:

Eating a balanced diet is crucial to good long-term health, and to losing weight if you are already carrying a few pounds too many. How do you do it? The USDA Guide to Daily Food Choices is a good place to start.

Over the years, the government, universities, teachers, and others have provided detailed plans about nutrition. It's a billion dollar industry and the wealth of information beyond a life-time of reading. Educating yourself in ways you learn best is recommend. Read. Visit nutrition websites, talk with you Doctor or Nutritionist. Many companies offer health and wellness programs, filled with free information. Take advantage of your resources!

How is a balanced diet defined within The 7 Diet concepts:

- You should have food from all 5 food groups, every day.
- These include:
 - Breads & Cereals (carbs, energy, and fiber)
 - Vegetables (vitamins, vitality)
 - Fruits (anti-oxidants, fiber)
 - Dairy (vitamins, bones)
 - Meats (protein)
- Intake should be heaviest on the first 3, less on dairy and meats.
- All are necessary daily for balanced intestinal and developmental health.
- Actual food volume is controlled through concepts Number 1, 3, 4.
- Shop, and eat, as if directly from nature and your garden.
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables when possible
 - Frozen fruits and vegetables otherwise (no canned goods)
 - Fresh or frozen meats (no breeding, processing)
 - Avoid boxed meals, prepackaged, prepared dinners
 - Shop the outer aisles of your favorite grocery.

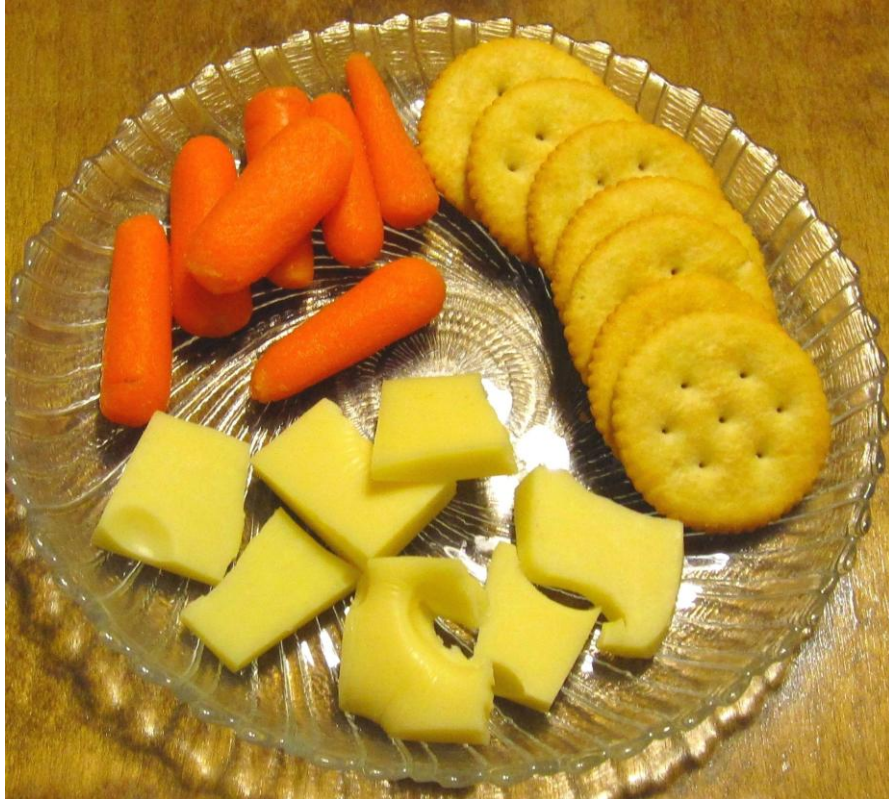
Number 3:

You may have heard the strategy of eating 6 small meals a day, rather than the traditional 3 meals a day. A number of studies and diets support this in depth. The habit provides energy on a more regular basis throughout the day as needed. It also lessens the stress on your body from digesting and metabolizing your food.

A standard rule of thumb is that each of the 6 meals or snacks be no larger than one clenched fist. This is generally about the size of your stomach or an apple. (This is you own fist, not Arnold Schwarzenegger's). Eating in seven's or using the next concept can help tremendously.

By the way, how does eating 6 meals a day fit into The 7 Diet? Well, reality is many of us do not have the long-term discipline it takes to follow a plan. At least not forever. With a goal of 6 meals/snacks daily, there will be those "occasional" days when you have that

7th snack. Rather than kick yourself or be discouraged, recognize it as your 7th for that day, then return to your discipline the next day.



7 Carrots, 7 Swiss Cheese, & 7 Ritz Crackers

Number 4:

What do you do with foods like spaghetti, pasta, potatoes, and watermelon, that do not readily divide easily into seven's?

Limit your food intake to a small plate or bowl. Yes, repeating a well established dieting habit here. If you've heard it before, do you actually do it? If not, it's very basic, and supports the idea of eating no more than the size of your fist at any one meal or snack. If you are having a bowl of spaghetti, eat it from a cereal sized bowl, not a restaurant sized Caesar or Chefs Salad bowl. If you determine mashed potatoes will still be on your diet once or twice a week, limit them to that small salad sized plate next to your 7 bites of Top Sirloin. When the plate is full, it's full, eat no more.

And for a word about eating out. We all love that good Top Sirloin, Taco Salad, Chicken Piccata, or Lasagna dinner in our favorite restaurant. Unfortunately, it does not fit into the 7's, the "no more than the size of my fist", or on to the small salad plate.

Two alternatives are recommended:

- 1) Plan ahead, eat only a portion, and take the rest home in a doggy bag.
- 2) Or, see number 7 below.

Number 5:

Here comes the word expected by many, welcomed by the strong hearted, and faced with dread by others. EXERCISE. Yes, any consideration of improved dietary health, and especially weight loss, must include exercise.

Americans may remember The President's Council on Physical Fitness from the 1960's, which promoted physical fitness throughout school systems across the county. Today that has developed into [The President's Council on Fitness, Sport & Nutrition](#). Exercise receives attention at this level, yet headlines still glare about the obesity of children and remind us there is more to be done.

How about you? Do you exercise regularly? Daily? What types of exercising do you favor? Running, jogging, treadmills and stair climbers, weigh lifting, swimming, and team sports?

The key here is regular and planned exercise, combined with that little extra that makes a difference over time.

Start with your planned exercise. If you use a treadmill, how long is one session? Do you increase the speed? Do you increase the incline? Do you do it 3-4 times a week? Early indications from recent trends, seem to direct toward shortly, yet more intense workouts. 10 minutes at a moderate incline for example, may be more effective than 30 minutes of level walking on an treadmill, even at the same speed.

Strength training has been thought of value only for bodybuilders, football players, and others in the past. More and more evidence now indicates a greater value for everyone, building heart and lungs along with arms, legs, and stomachs.

A daily stretching routine, including balance and control, is an ancient tradition in parts of the world known for their longevity of life and health.

Add to your planned exercise, these 7 extra habits that can make a difference and burn calories:

- 1) Stand when talking on the phone rather than sitting.
- 2) Bend down to tie your shoes, rather than sit on a chair.
- 3) Take the stairs instead of the elevator whenever possible.
- 4) Park farther away in shopping lots, rather than near the entrance.
- 5) If you have shopping near your home, walk or bicycle rather than drive.
- 6) Turn off TV more, step away from the internet, and step outside for a walk.
- 7) Have fun with small children, get down on their level once in awhile.



7 Polish Kielbasa, Onions, & 7 Braised Carrots

Number 6:

Track your success. What gets scheduled gets done. Failing to plan is planning to fail. Successful people have goals. If you don't know where you're going, how will you know when you get there?

This is basic 101 for many people, yet surprisingly absent for many others. Do you like to write down your expectations, create a timeline and sub-goals, and track your progress? Some do and some don't.

For The 7 Diet, start with some simple and straightforward goals:

- What is my weight now?
- What do I want it to be?
- When do I want to reach that weight?
- How often will I check my progress?
- How will I track my diet and exercise?
- What about my Blood Pressure?
- What about my Cholesterol?

Number 7:

Give you self 1 day off each week. What?

Yes, that's right. Follow The 7 Diet daily, regularly, until it becomes a welcome habit. This is not about eating specialty food. It is not about cardboard tasting wafers, or linking on shakes. Please include those on your diet if you like them, but not to punish yourself. The real tragedy is succeeding with dramatic weight reductions eating what you hate, only to regain the weight when you reach your ideal.

Instead, know yourself well enough to know what you like. And when you have a chance for a great restaurant meal, that clearly exceeds your daily meal size, make the choice to enjoy it, or take some of it home for later. Too often the rigidity of a well disciplined diet plan works creates great depths of guilt when you "fall off the wagon". Know that you are human, and it's okay to take a day off now and then. Just remember to return to your regular habits the next day. And if you finish off your meal with the piece of chocolate cake, go for a walk in a nearby park for 30 minutes afterwards!

The Next Step:

Follow all seven of these concepts together: simplify by eating multiples of 7, eat balanced, 6-7 times daily no more than the size of your fist, use small plates and bowls, exercise daily, track your success, and recognize every day will not perfectly match your goal. What's the next step? Read on:

You've read this far. You've decided this may work, or it's just another way of looking at other concepts and bringing them together. No diet is for everyone. Each of us views the world, and ourselves a little differently. You like what you've read and want to actually implement The 7 Diet concepts.

Sample diet plan:

Day 1

1. Bowl of Cheerio's with 7 strawberries and low fat milk.
2. Celery stick cut into 7 bite size pieces
3. Low fat yogurt
4. 7 Ritz Crackers
5. Lean beef, 7 bites. Peas, 7 teaspoons
6. 7 Bing Cherries

Day 2

1. Two egg omelet, with green pepper, mushrooms, and cheese sprinkle.
2. Fresh apple, 7 slices
3. Red & Yellow Peppers, 7 teaspoons Rice
4. 7 small Swiss cheese bites
5. Broiled Chicken Breast, 7 bites. Sweet Corn, 7 teaspoons.
6. 7 bites of fresh Cauliflower

Day 3

1. Hot oatmeal with 7 blueberries.
2. 7 carrot sticks
3. Half sandwich, ham.
4. 7 small bites, fresh Broccoli
5. Tilapia filet, 7 bites. Green beans, 7 forkfuls
6. 7 M&M (a treat once-in-a-while)



7 Spoons of Oatmeal and 7 Blueberries

I trust you get the idea. Each day should include regular meals, 6-7. As you are eating less at every meal or snack, you need them regularly to keep up your energy.

Each day also needs balance, from all the major food groups. And don't forget to treat yourself with small amounts of chocolate, preferable dark chocolate. It keeps you on target better to reach your ultimate weight loss goal, and develop better habits for life!

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