

Why 'Diets' Do Not Work

For this article I will start by asking a question. How many of you have tried a diet and were less than impressed with the results? Have you or anyone you know lost weight on a diet only to put it back on when you stopped? This is an extremely common scenario and when it comes to achieving your physique goals it is completely backwards.

Most diets will involve you creating a deficit in the energy you consume through food. While this will make perfect sense to a lot of you when it comes to fat loss, it just doesn't pan out in the long run. When you cut calories below maintenance levels your body goes into a 'survival mode' as it recognises starvation. This will create a decrease in thyroid function and leptin (a hormone that has a central role in fat metabolism). What does this mean for your diet? It means that after an initial period of potentially sudden fat loss your weight levels out and you struggle to lose more. This often results in further deprivation which acts as a catalyst for your diet to appear successful again only to find that after a period of time your fat loss stalls. As your metabolism drops due to the sudden lack of energy you are consuming in comparison you will be very sensitive to any increase in this. Now when you eat more than you were on your diet it is very probable that you will put all of the weight back on. (This is what happens in the term 'yo-yo dieting').

To combat this it is important that when you are looking to achieve your goal of a lean physique you must take into consideration how long it will take for you to get there and if you want to stay there. If you are dieting down for a particular event like a holiday or bodybuilding contest you may accept that the fat will come back on and not worry about it. However in most cases where you are unhappy with your body and want to create lasting changes then healthy modifications to your diet without depriving yourself of vital nutrients will always be more sustainable.