# **POSSIBILITIES FOR AUTISM**

Feel Better + Live Better

# How I Lost 40 Pounds Without Trying

Three years ago, I lost 40 pounds. Weight loss wasn't even my goal! I had changed the foods I ate because my son had many chronic health and behavioral issues, and I was sick too. I had read that a special medical diet could help us. I had no idea that our family's new way of eating would allow me to lose 40 pounds effortlessly without going hungry. Not only did I lose weight, my son's health improved dramatically, and mine did too.



Curious about my unexpected success, I researched and found the work of Gary Taubes, science journalist. His books, *Good Calories/Bad Calories* and *Why We Get Fat are the* culmination of his 10 years of research about the ever-increasing weight problems in America. I teach Gary Taubes' message to weight-loss clients, and with support from coaching they also lose weight with relative ease.

#### **Common Theory of Weight Gain**

Taubes points out that the predominant theory of weight gain in America today is *"calories in must not exceed calories out."* According to this theory, Americans are overweight because we eat too many calories, especially calories from fat, and we don't exercise enough.

#### "Calories In/Calories Out" Doesn't Help People Lose Weight

My experience, the experience of my clients, and scholarly articles confirm Taubes' finding that *calories in/calories out* is unsustainable at best. He describes another theory of weight loss that I explain later in the article. But, first, let's look at some of the evidence that *calories in/calories out* isn't really as logical as we've come to believe.



<u>My Personal Experience</u>: I had tried balancing my calories and avoiding fat ever since I packed on some pounds when I turned 30. When we started the medical diet and my weight started falling off, I wasn't thinking about cutting or counting calories. As for exercise, I was suffering with severe fatigue, so the last thing I was thinking about was exercise, yet I was dropping pounds every week.

<u>Can We Really "Balance Calories"</u>? Many people find that they put on an extra 10 pounds every decade. Researchers have asked the question, "According to the calories in/calories out theory, how many additional calories per day does a person

need to consume to gain 10 pounds in a decade?" Any idea how many calories it takes according to the *calories in/calories out* theory? Are you prepared for the answer? It's 21 calories a day! Yes, this theory says that if you eat only 21 extra calories per day, you will gain 10 pounds in ten years.

That's pretty depressing. This theory is telling me that I have to regulate my food intake vs. exercise by 21 calories a day. One or two bites of lean chicken breast has 21 calories. I don't think it is feasible for anyone to regulate their intake to this level.

Of course there are all kinds of helpful apps available to help us count calories, but why should we have to? Most people in most societies since the beginning of time have maintained a healthy weight without ever counting a calorie – or even knowing what a calorie is. Their level of activity varied greatly too.

## Exercise - Great for Your Heart, But Does It Help Your Waistline?

Taubes makes the observation that many, many of us are exercising more than our parents did yet we are still overweight. When I was a child, the vast majority of my mom's friends maintained a healthy weight. I never heard of any of them jogging or going to the gym. Most of them had housekeepers too, so being a housewife was not necessarily a vigorous job.

On the other hand, many of the moms I know today exercise vigorously and religiously yet many of them still carry the extra weight they've been told exercise will take off. If calorie counting and exercise help us lose weight, then why was weight maintenance easier for my mom's generation even though they paid little, if any, attention to calories and got less "cardio" exercise than many moms today?

Another example is animals in nature. Whether sedentary or active, animals maintain a constant weight without regard to calories.

Even the American Heart Association and the American College of Sports Medicine made this point in their 2007 Physical Activity Guidelines. I put the last sentence in bold to highlight the point:

'It is reasonable to assume that persons with relatively high daily energy expenditures would be less likely to gain weight over time, compared to people with lower energy expenditures. **So far data to support this hypothesis are not particularly compelling.**'

**Exercise is incredibly important for our health.** It will make you feel better, and it might even help you firm up and drop a pant size. However, there is little evidence that it will help you lose weight. Every weight loss client I've worked with did so successfully without having to increase their current level of exercise.

#### **The Secret to Weight Loss**

OK, so now you're wondering, "If excess calories don't cause weight gain, what does?" The answer to your question is ... **insulin**. Yes, it's the hormone, insulin. You may be thinking that your insulin levels are healthy, so it can't be insulin. It's not necessarily the insulin levels you see on blood tests. Fat accumulates whenever insulin is *triggered*.

So what triggers insulin? The foods that trigger insulin are **sweet and starchy carbohydrates such as candies, cookies, bread, pasta and potatoes.** Milk, especially skim milk, also causes insulin to rise. The good news is that sweet and starchy foods are not as nutrient dense as non-starchy foods and they also cause inflammation. Thus, reducing or eliminating sweets and starches will not only help you lose weight, it will reduce or eliminate many health conditions because most health problems (including psychological conditions) are associated with inflammation.

The women in my mom's generation knew this secret. Whenever one of them wanted to drop a few pounds, they simply cut back on what they called bread – bread meaning bread, sweets, pasta, potatoes and other starchy foods.

Another piece of good news: **Don't worry about fat.** Yes, you heard me right! My clients and I have lost weight while enjoying an abundance of healthy fats! I will follow up with an article about the health benefits of fat. In the meantime, check out the video below and the recent cover article on Time Magazine, *Eat Butter:* 

## Scientists Labeled Fat the Enemy. Why They Were Wrong.



So slather your non-starchy vegetables with butter or cook them with lard and enjoy a nice, juicy piece of your favorite meat. Eat these foods until you are fully satisfied, and you will see the pounds melt away before your eyes and health issues will improve too.

One caveat, keep fruit and nuts to a minimum until you reach your weight goals. Make the rest of the suggestions here a new lifestyle for the long term and you will easily maintain a healthy weight and good health.

I realize that these recommendations, while simple, are not necessarily easy. Yes, I lost weight effortlessly in the sense that I did not count calories, go hungry, or feel deprived. And still, changing my family's diet was hard work. This is where a coach can be a great resource to help you adapt to change, plan new menus, battle cravings for sweet and starchy foods, and provide support and accountability when you need it.

Achieving your weight loss goals and the health benefits that follow will improve the quality of your life in countless ways. Follow the advice here, and losing weight will be infinitely easier and more sustainable.

Here's to You!

Beth

PS A new study that supports the ideas presented in this article was released while I was writing it. The study was financed by the NIH and published in the Annals of Internal Medicine. Check out this article about the study in The New York Times which is listed below.

Video: New Science Destroys the Saturated Fat Myth

#### **Resources:**

Books:

Why We Get Fat by Gary Taubes

Good Calories Bad Calories by Gary Taubes

The Big Fat Surprise by Nina Teicholz.

<u>Articles:</u>

Time Magazine — Eat Butter: Scientists Labeled Fat the Enemy. Why They Were Wrong.

New York Times – <u>A Call for a Low-Carb Diet that Embraces Fat</u>

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