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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, December 10, 1937

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "CONTROLLING YOUR WEIGHT." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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I know a woman who still believes in magic. Probably you've met persons just like her. This acquaintance of mine is looking for a way to reduce her weight. She wants a method that will give her miraculous results. But she also wants to continue eating large meals and have her customary second helping of dessert each evening.

For years this woman has been looking for her ideal reducing program. She's tried diets that her friends advised. She's followed the suggestions of movie stars. In fact, she's consulted nearly everyone but her physician.

Of course, she is going about it in the most roundabout way. The logical thing for anyone to do when he considers that his weight isn't normal is to see a physician.

For weight is an individual matter. A certain reducing program may have done wonders for one of Hollywood's actresses. But that doesn't make it a standard regime for all who are overweight.

The ideal weight for you may not be the ideal weight for anyone else. Not even if that someone else is of your height and is just the same age as you are. Body build makes a difference. Persons with larger bones naturally weigh more than persons of the same age and height with smaller bones.

And you may vary as much as five percent from average weight and still be considered normal. The insurance companies have figured from their statistics that if you are below the age of 35 it is safer to weigh a few pounds more than average. If you are over 35 years old, it is better to weigh a few pounds less than the average.

If your physician believes you are overweight or underweight then he can figure out why. To remedy anything you first have to know what the cause is. That's the reason that diets unprescribed by physicians may be so much waste effort.

And they can do a lot of harm. For instance your overweight or underweight may be the first symptom of a disease. Then you should consult a physician from the beginning. And in another instance you may need to diet to control your weight, but you need a special diet to take care of your special needs.



If your weight is above or below normal because of exercise and diet your physician will outline a health routine for you. And he will tell you how to regulate your diet. Or he will refer you to a nutrition expert who can help you.

Whether you are gaining or losing weight you'll need a balanced diet. You must get enough protein, minerals, vitamins, and water to maintain your health. And enough energy for the day's activities. The easiest way to do this is to eat a variety of foods. It is important that you include the protective foods. These are milk, eggs, fruit, and vegetables. They provide the minerals and vitamins essential to maintaining health.

Of the vegetables, the leafy green varieties and the yellow ones are especially good protective foods. And of the fruits, the citrus are valuable because they are an excellent source of vitamin C.

The foods to eat sparingly if you want to lose weight are the energy-producers. When you eat more of them than your body uses the excess is stored as body fat. The chief energy-materials are sweet, fat, and starchy foods.

To cut down on these, omit candy, jams, marmalades, and other sweet spreads. Eat fruit for dessert instead of pastries, rich cake, or cookies. Reduce your cream and butter to a minimum. However, don't omit them because they are good sources of vitamin A.

Eat lean meats instead of fat ones. Avoid hot breads that tempt you to use lots of butter. Instead, eat thin slices of bread with the minimum of butter. Eat your cereal with milk. And get your daily quota of milk in the form of skim milk that contains a large proportion of the valuable food elements of whole milk.

On the other hand, if you want to gain weight, eat more of these energy foods. Add much butter to bread and cream to your cereal. Eat rich gravies and desserts. Have candy and nuts occasionally following a meal.

Remember that the method of preparing a food can make much difference in its energy value. A plain baked or a raw apple is a suitable dessert for a person who is trying to reduce. But an apple can become a dessert that will help you gain weight if you add sugar, nuts, and raisins to it and eat it with cream. Dressings may double or triple the calories in a salad.

Whether you are gaining or losing weight you'll find the safe way will be the slower way. If you try to increase your consumption of food all at once you may overtax your digestive system.

There is still no magic way of adding or losing weight. The sane way is to see your physician first. And follow his advice. When he tells you to exercise -- follow his directions. And if he prescribes a diet for you be sure that you carry it out. Above all be sure that you include the protective foods in your diet -- namely, green vegetables - fruit - milk - and eggs.

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