Ask POZ – April/May 2020

March 30, 2020 By Lucinda K. Porter RN

I do well with diet and exercise for a while, But then I stop. How can I stay focused?

Staying focused requires some thought and discipline. First, try to figure out what causes you to stop. Are you committing to too much, setting unrealistic goals or using a diet or exercise plan that is not right for you?

Once you identify what prevents your long-term success, you can make a plan using manageable goals. Schedule workouts like you would a hair or doctor's appointment. Write them into your schedule, but do not overbook yourself. One or two workouts per week are better than none.

Incorporate activities that you can do with your children or partner. Shop for the week, and preportion meals and snacks. If snacks or sweets are causing the problem, don't buy them.

Sometimes stress is the culprit, so look for ways to streamline your schedule to minimize stress.

Istock

Why didn’t I lose weight when I cut all the fat from my diet?

There may be several reasons. First, our bodies need fat to function, and they tend to store more calories when not getting adequate fat (20% to 30% of calories).

Next, low-fat and fat-free versions of foods often contain more calories than their full-fat versions. The labels usually reveal more salt and sugar to improve the taste.

Last, it would be difficult to get adequate protein when restricting all fats, so you should consider adopting a more balanced diet.

I’ve read in health magazines that I can “walk my belly off in four weeks.” Is that possible?

Walking is a great form of exercise, and it’s important to incorporate exercise into your life. However, statements such as the one cited in your question can be misleading because the result depends on factors such as:

- How close are you to your ideal weight?
- How much walking does the plan entail?
- How many days per week, how far, how fast?
- Will the walking include hills?

It is impossible to guarantee that your belly can be walked off in four weeks, but you will probably look and feel better if you are consistent with an exercise program.

Also, please beware of false advertising. If an ad promises rapid weight loss in a manner that sounds too good to be true (the wine diet, cabbage soup diet, the cookie diet, etc.), then it probably is.

Ask POZ is an ongoing section on POZ.com dedicated to answering general wellness questions. Go to poz.com/ask to read more answers, and email ask@poz.com to submit your questions!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/ask-poz-aprilmay-2020