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From nonfat to low-carb diets, *Teen Vogue* separates the facts from fiction.



CHEW ON THIS EATING HEALTHY FOODS, LIKE PLENTY OF FRUITS AND VEGGIES, IS A WISER WAY TO MANAGE WEIGHT THAN FOLLOWING FAD DIETS. PHOTOGRAPHED BY JAMES WOJCIK.

MYTH: CUT CARBS

Reality: Pasta won't pack on the pounds—but huge portions will. Eliminating carbs drains energy levels and depletes lean muscle mass.

Strategy: Stick with whole grains, which are found in oatmeal and brown rice. They reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes and keep your belly fuller—and flatter—for longer. A study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* revealed that dieters who consumed whole grains over refined grains lost more than double the percentage of abdominal fat.

MYTH: EATING FATS CAUSES WEIGHT GAIN

Reality: Although fats have more calories per gram than protein or carbs, including them in your diet won't make you fat. "Fats are crucial. They build cell membranes, prevent inflammation, keep our bodies warm, and strengthen our immune system," says Manhattan fitness pro Sarah A. Slattery.

Strategy: Aim for avocados, not doughnuts. "Healthy monounsaturated fats, like those in peanut and olive oils and avocados, should make up at least 10 percent of your diet," Slattery says. Trans fats, present in foods like French fries, and saturated fat (often found in baked goods like cookies), should be avoided as much as possible.

MYTH: IF I WORK OUT, I CAN EAT WHATEVER I WANT

Reality: "Just because you work out doesn't mean you can eat chocolate-chip cookies all the time," Slattery says.

Strategy: Hold off on the fridge raid when you're fresh from a workout. "Water-rich fruit, like apples or oranges, with a protein-loaded yogurt or string cheese is a great post-gym snack," suggests Jackie Keller, founding director of NutriFit, a company that delivers healthy, personalized meals.

MYTH: A DETOX DIET IS AN INSTANT FIX

Reality: "The body cleanses itself—that's what the kidneys and the liver are for," notes New York City-based dietitian Shoshana Werber. Rapid weight loss can be damaging; one possible side effect is muscle breakdown.

Strategy: "Be consistent with how you feed your body," Werber says. "If you want to lose six pounds, give yourself six weeks—one pound per week." Slattery adds: "Getting healthy isn't a quick process. It takes time, but the benefits are endless." —MAURA LYNCH