

normally did. But a recent study conducted by Hollie Raynor, PhD, associate professor of nutrition at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, revealed that when people on a calorie-restricted diet were limited to two types of junk food, they didn't lose more weight than dieters who could eat any kind they wanted.

DIET REDO Branch out. As Raynor says, "Experimenting with different fruits and vegetables could prompt you to eat more of them." Vary your protein, too—a lot of us skimp on superstars like fish and beans.

DIET FAIL #4

Doing daily weigh-ins

Regular scale checks have been linked to better weight-loss maintenance, but you can overdo it. One *Journal of Obesity* study found that women benefited less from daily weigh-ins than men. "Hormonal fluctuations can cause water retention, making it harder to get an accurate reading," says Liz Weinandy, RD, of the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. "Plus,

weight is more likely to be an emotional issue for women. Someone who gets a bad reading can think, 'What's the use of trying?'"

DIET REDO Hop on the scale about once a week—enough to sanely stay on track, according to a *Plos One* study. Wednesday is good,

say Finnish researchers, since most of us get heavier on weekends and then drop the weight during the week.

DIET FAIL #5

Trying to work off the pounds

Eat less, move more: It's the most basic advice,

and yet the two strategies aren't equally effective.

"Weight loss is 80 percent diet, 20 percent exercise," says Craig Primack, MD, an obesity medicine specialist at the Scottsdale Weight Loss Center in Arizona. Calorie burn from exercise is too minimal to compensate for subpar food choices. The average person would have to walk 35 miles to burn the 3,500 calories it takes to lose just 1 pound.

DIET REDO Keep active *and* clean up your diet. In fact, women who did both lost more weight than those who did only one or the other, showed a study in *Obesity*. "Exercise also makes people feel better about their bodies and themselves," notes Dr. Primack, "and that makes it easier to stay with a diet and workout plan." ■

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Variety is the spice of weight loss. Try a new produce pick.



Unexpected Ways to Eat Less

Distract yourself

▶ In a study in the journal *Appetite*, people who played Tetris for three minutes found that their desire to nosh diminished faster than those who weren't distracted. We tend to visualize cravings; mind-stimulating activities stop us from picturing that brownie.

Go to sleep earlier

▶ Lack of shut-eye can add flab, says a Mayo Clinic study that found that sleep-deprived people consumed an extra 549 calories per day, compared with those who were well-rested. Try to follow the National Sleep Foundation's guidelines and get seven to nine hours a night.

Eat more vivid foods

▶ When food contrasts with the color of a plate, you tend to eat less, per research from the Cornell University Food and Brand Lab. People devoured more spaghetti and sauce when it was served on a red plate versus a white one; portion size wasn't obvious, so they OD'd.

Turn off the TV

▶ Seeing commercials for food while watching television can trigger people to snack, according to a study published in the journal *Health Psychology*. That sounds like the perfect excuse to settle in for an (ad-free) Netflix binge instead. Or just pick up a good book.