

## Isn't Weight Loss All About Calories? - Answers to Common Questions

**Dr. Eenfeldt:** Isn't weight loss all about calories?

**Dr. Naiman:** Yes, weight loss is all about... No, weight loss is definitely not about calories. And I have a zillion patients who've gone on low calorie diets.

And you can lose weight that way and you will immediately regain it. And we have plenty of studies that document this. So weight loss is not all about calories.

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**Dr. Eenfeldt:** Isn't weight loss all about calories?

**Dr. Brukner:** Well, so they've tried to convince us for the last 30 years. But calories in, calories out has been the philosophy of the 30 years. But, you know, you're going to tell me that 100 cal from a piece of salmon is exactly the same as 100 cal from candy, or chocolate, or ice cream...

I mean that doesn't make any sense at all, does it? So I mean calories in, calories out has been disproved. I mean there are calories from differences that have markedly different effects. And until we get rid of this whole calories in...

It's been a disaster this calories in, calories out. I mean look at the effect. Since we have adopted that philosophy we have worldwide epidemics of obesity, diabetes, fatty liver and so on... It's been a disaster and the sooner we forget about it... It's sort of an attractive concept, you know, what you bring in, what you take out... But unfortunately it doesn't work.

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**Dr. Eenfeldt:** Isn't weight loss all about calories?

**Dr. Westman:** Well, I think calories matter. The energy balance equation where we talk about energy in... calories in, calories out is a good construct to help, guide people... It's more complicated than counting the calories on a label, for example.

Because the calories are handled differently depending on what type of calorie it is, based on the metabolism for that individual calorie. But I think that it's pretty clear that when people are losing weight, they are eating fewer calories than they were before.

And then of course if the weight loss program that they are doing changes the metabolic rate, that's another factor you have to take into account. But I think it's fair to say that low carbohydrate diet isn't magical. It follows the rules of science that we understand, having to do with energy balance and the calories.

So when I teach the low-carb diet, I don't talk about calories. We don't have to teach calories, but people are still eating fewer calories in general. That's, you know, not the case for everyone. That's the role for the practitioner to help people troubleshoot those situations.

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