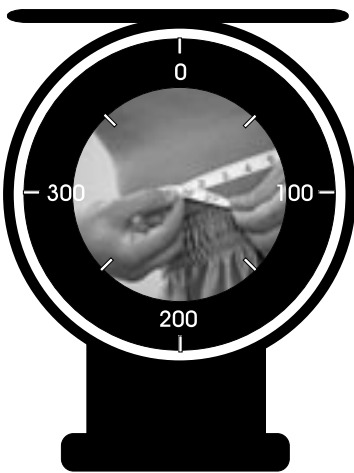


# FTC FACTS for Consumers

Federal Trade Commission ■ Bureau of Consumer Protection ■ Office of Consumer and Business Education

## Weighing the Evidence in Diet Ads



Flip through a magazine, scan a newspaper, or channel surf and you see them everywhere: Ads that promise quick and easy weight loss without diet or exercise. Wouldn't it be nice if — as the ads claim — you could lose weight simply by taking a pill, wearing a patch, or rubbing in a cream? Too bad claims like that are almost always false.

Doctors, dieticians, and other experts agree that the best way to lose weight is to eat fewer calories and increase your physical activity so you burn more energy. A reasonable goal is to lose about a pound a week. For most people, that means cutting about 500 calories a day from your diet, eating a variety of nutritious foods, and exercising regularly.

When it comes to evaluating claims for weight loss products, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends a healthy portion of skepticism. Before you spend money on products that promise fast and easy results, weigh the claims carefully. Think twice before wasting your money on products that make any of these false claims:

### **"LOSE WEIGHT WITHOUT DIET OR EXERCISE!"**

Achieving a healthy weight takes work. Take a pass on any product that promises miraculous results without the effort. Buy one and the only thing you'll lose is money.

### **"LOSE WEIGHT NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU EAT OF YOUR FAVORITE FOODS!"**

Beware of any product that claims that you can eat all you want of high-calorie foods and still lose weight. Losing weight requires sensible food choices. Filling up on healthy vegetables and fruits can make it easier to say no to fattening sweets and snacks.

### **"LOSE WEIGHT PERMANENTLY! NEVER DIET AGAIN!"**

Even if you're successful in taking the weight off, permanent weight loss requires permanent lifestyle changes. Don't trust any product that promises once-and-for-all results without ongoing maintenance.

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## **“BLOCK THE ABSORPTION OF FAT, CARBS, OR CALORIES!”**

Doctors, dieticians, and other experts agree that there’s simply no magic non-prescription pill that will allow you to block the absorption of fat, carbs, or calories. The key to curbing your craving for those “downfall foods” is portion control. Limit yourself to a smaller serving or a slimmer slice.

## **“LOSE 30 POUNDS IN 30 DAYS!”**

Losing weight at the rate of a pound or two a week is the most effective way to take it off and keep it off. At best, products promising lightning-fast weight loss are false. At worst, they can ruin your health.

## **“EVERYBODY WILL LOSE WEIGHT!”**

Your habits and health concerns are unique. There is simply no one-size-fits-all product guaranteed to work for everyone. Team up with your health care provider to design a personalized nutrition and exercise program suited to your lifestyle and metabolism.

## **“LOSE WEIGHT WITH OUR MIRACLE DIET PATCH OR CREAM!”**

You’ve seen the ads for diet patches or creams that claim to melt away the pounds. Don’t believe them. There’s nothing you can wear or apply to your skin that will cause you to lose weight.

For more information, visit the FTC’s website at [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov). Additional information on nutrition and weight loss is available through the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases’ Weight-control Information Network (1-800-WIN-8098). To report fraudulent weight loss product claims, contact your state Attorney General, local consumer protection office, or Better Business Bureau.

The FTC works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint or to get free information on consumer issues, visit [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov) or call toll-free, 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357); TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The FTC enters Internet, telemarketing, identity theft, and other fraud-related complaints into Consumer Sentinel, a secure, online database available to hundreds of civil and criminal law enforcement agencies in the U.S. and abroad.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION	1-877-FTC-HELP
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