

## Fiber, Detox & Personality Diets Reviewed 7/08

Everyone knows someone who is dieting, right? At any given time, a quarter to half the population is on some form of diet. To pursue their largely unsuccessful attempts at weight loss, Americans currently spend over \$30 billion a year on diet-related products. To put that number in perspective, it was only one billion hours ago we were living in the Stone Age.

As much as we do spend on food in this country, over \$2 billion on Halloween candy alone, the amount we spend trying to lose excess weight is equally staggering.

What exactly is a person to do when faced with all of the diverse and often confusing diets available today? They all seem to promise the moon. Many **tout simplicity**. And, **some are so complex you'd need a medical degree to understand them**.

Whichever diet you decide to embrace, know this much: *There is no magic bullet*. In the end, results vary widely, even among very similar people on the same diet. Alas, I can't evaluate every diet out there. That would take longer than Internet-warped attention spans would permit.

Instead I've picked three diets to review, each with fairly distinct approaches, and added one **kat's perspective to the mix**. **Here goes**.

### [THE FIBER 35 DIET](#)

The Fiber35 Diet is written by Certified Nutritional Consultant (CNC), [Brenda Watson](#), and Leonard Smith, M.D. You may remember Cindy mentioning this one in her blog some months back.

#### **The Secret is 35 Grams of Fiber**

The idea for The Fiber35 Diet came from Ms. Watson's decades-long quest to improve her own health. Her pearl of wisdom from this quest: **the secret to weight loss and wellness is 35 grams of fiber a day**. She touts a diet high in fiber as being associated with:

- **Increasing overall nutrition and immunity through fiber-rich foods** "Where you do *not* find fiber in food (other than beef, poultry, and fish), you usually find foods that make you *tired, fat, and unhealthy*."
- **Suppressing appetite** (and thus cravings and calorie intake)
- **Normalizing blood sugar levels** (by slowing conversion of carbs to sugar)
- **Lowering cholesterol** (essentially flushing cholesterol)

Medical studies from reputable sources are included to support her views.

Watson points out that because of fiber's "bulking" effect, humans become satiated sooner than when eating other foods. She explains the role and effect of [cholecystokinin](#) (CCK), a hormonal messenger that acts as a hunger suppressant *and* which is activated by ingestion of fiber. She cites [UC Davis research on women](#) who showed higher serum levels of cholecystokinin after eating high-fiber meals (with fiber-rich and high-fat meals yielding similar satiation results).

Watson goes into great detail to explain exactly how fiber works, the benefits of both soluble and insoluble fiber, and includes handy references on fiber content

She also explains three phases of her fiber diet: accelerated and moderate weight loss followed by lifetime maintenance. Watson offers several easy-to-use math formulas to determine how much energy and fuel is required to maintain a particular lifestyle. Watson recommends an overall diet of 25% protein, 25% fat, and 50% complex carbohydrates that include fiber supplements. She emphasizes that "dietary fat is *not* an impediment to

losing weight” and makes the case for good fats and Omega-3 fatty a

Other topics covered are seven metabolic boosters, exercise programs, stress management, supplements (Watson is big on thermogenic ingredients such as iodine, tyrosine, banaba and [green tea extract](#) and [CLA](#) for lean muscle mass to fat ratios). And, of course, there are plenty of high-fiber recipes (75 pages).

### **Assessment of *The Fiber35 Diet***

Well organized, *The Fiber35 Diet* is an easy read and offers sound recommendations regarding the importance of way more fiber (and nutrient-dense foods that come with fiber) in your diet. Each chapter has a summary, so even if you can't invest the time to read the entire 300-page book, you can pull the basics out easily.

**Rating: Recommended**

### **[THE NEW DETOX DIET](#)**

Not surprisingly, *The New Detox Diet* centers on the role detoxification plays in diet. Its author, [Elson M. Haas, M.D.](#), even goes by the nickname of The Detox Doc, an appellation the good doctor has registered as a trademark. The book is very well laid out and easy to follow, with most chapters following a format of explanation, recommendation, and action plan.

### **The Crux is Eliminating Poisonous Toxins**

Written by a medical doctor with 30 years' experience in healing patients through detoxification, this book's credentials are iron clad. Dr. Haas operates an integrated health care facility in [San Rafael, CA](#).

Dr. Haas talks about the importance of gastrointestinal (GI) health, delivering some very interesting facts about the human digestive tract along the way. Did you know that the GI mucosal surface is equivalent to the size of a tennis court? Or that there are more bacteria in a gram of stool than there are stars in the known universe?! But I digress.

Dr. Haas uses patient case studies throughout to illustrate the benefits of general detoxification, as well as more intensive fasting and juice cleansing approaches. He offers up a 3-week detox diet, which emphasizes the importance of eating organic and whole foods and alkalizing the body's pH (noting disease states correlate to more acid pH).

The chapter on transitional diets is especially interesting as the author explains quality animal foods, sugar alternatives, an anti-yeast diet, and nutritional supplements. Like Watson, Dr. Haas recommends plenty of fiber at 20-40 grams daily. He's also big on vitamin C at up to 4 grams daily and suggests various amino acids, probiotics, flaxseed oil, chlorophyll, apple cider vinegar, and detox herbs for general detox needs.

The book spends several chapters talking about how to detoxify from specific addictions, such as sugar, nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, and chemicals ([SNACCS](#)). Non-toxic living is discussed before the book ends with 42 pages of alkalizing recipes (without the most common reactive foods, like wheat and dairy) and 16 pages of very good resources.

### **Assessment of *The New Detox Diet***

Of the three books reviewed, this one is in a horse race with the next diet, Dr. Kushner's Personality Type Diet. This kat liked the focus on liver-friendly amino acids l-glutamine, l-glycine, DL methionine, and l-cysteine in the supplements section and found the physician-supervised niacin-sauna therapy interesting (preliminary results are good for people affected by herbicides like Agent Orange).

**Rating: Highly Recommended**

### **[THE PERSONALITY DIET](#)**

[Dr. Kushner's Personality Type Diet](#) is written by a husband/wife team based in Chicago, IL. The focus of this diet is to use a simple quiz to determine a weight loss plan tailored to your individual personality.

Dr. Kushner is the medical director of the [Wellness Institute](#) at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and the author of over 100 articles on nutrition and obesity. This background separates this book's content from the other two reviewed here.

## Understanding Unconscious Eating & Coping Patterns

There's plenty here to make this kat purr. Well written, logically laid out, this book is peppered with interesting facts about weight loss in pullouts the author calls, "Nibble on This."

This book just begs to be read and used. The first chapter sets the stage for this diet with what Dr. Kushner calls "Scaling up Syndrome." This has to do with the idea that given the incredible abundance in the US, why do so many people sabotage looking and feeling good by eating so much crap?

Dr. Kushner's answer has a lot more to do with "unconscious adaption to the multifaceted pressures of modern society" than genetics, metabolism, frame size or willpower. He has a chart for mapping life events to weight changes and environments and behaviors to timelines for change.

Dr. Kushner's personality quiz involves answering 66 questions to yield personality profiles related to eating, exercise, and coping. Chapters 3-5 use the results of the quiz to help the reader identify patterns that shaped their eating personality and ways to go from "mindless" to "conscious."

In Chapter 4, Dr. Kushner outlines what determines a person's exercise personality and how to get back on track with something called FITTE, an acronym for the "Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type, and Enjoyment" of whatever exercise program the dieter chooses.

In Chapter 5, Kushner diverges from the other two diets by addressing a dieter's coping personality. This is how emotions, stressors, and personality differences mold a person's views on eating, exercising, and weight loss. He offers handy tools for each personality type. For example, he includes an ABC model to track the "food/mood behavior chain" for the *Emotional Stuffer*. A is for antecedents (emotional triggers that occur before eating), B is for behavior (the eating itself), and C is for consequences (feelings and attitudes that follow eating). For the *Pessimistic Thinker* personality, he offers a chart for transforming negative thoughts (I can't) by reframing them positively (I can).

Chapter 6 outlines ways to stay on track using fill-in forms to define progress, troubleshoot problem areas, and take corrective action. Chapter 7 is a stout 78 pages of recipes and sample menus (including Nutrition Facts panels for each recipe!). The final chapter discusses how to get help with nutritional and psychological issues related to dieting. Three appendices cover the BMI, a three-week starter plan diet, and a list of dieting resources.

### Assessment of *The Personality Diet*

This book is my first choice. It's chock full of great information, diet plans, exercise programs and plain, old good advice for fat cat humans hoping to drop some pounds. And while all three books are valuable in different ways, I've got to give Dr. Kushner's tome my highest tribute. It addresses dieting as about more than great knowledge (regarding nutrition, detox, etc.), and instead emphasizes a more sustainable mental, emotional, physical, environmental process.

**Rating: Very Highly Recommended**

P.S. I won't hold it against Dr. Kushner that his [bio picture](#) has a dog in it!

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