

How good are quick weight loss programs in the long run?

MANHATTAN— Quick weight loss programs, also known as fad diets, seem to be losing more credibility every day, said Denis Medeiros, head of the department of human nutrition at Kansas State University.

Regardless of being healthy, people want to lose weight and look great.

For that reason, they search for quick weight loss diets, said Medeiros, who was speaking at a meeting of the Master Food Volunteers recently.

Some of the most popular such diets are the Atkins, South Beach, Scarsdale, Zone, Metabolism, Grapefruit and Cabbage Soup diets. According to Medeiros, being

categorized as having an ideal weight may not mean that someone is healthy.

“Overweight and obese people who have some physical activity are healthier than those who are not overweight but are not physically active,” Medeiros said.

“Physical fitness is best and can outweigh the body mass index numbers that are given to categorize people as ideal, overweight, or obese.”

Being overweight or obese, however, increases the risk of heart disease, cancers, diabetes, bone and joint problems and surgical risks, he said.

Losing a few pounds can improve a person's health and can lower

blood pressure dramatically.

An ideal body mass index is 20 to 25, overweight is 25 to 29.9, obesity class II is 30 to 40 and obesity class III is more than 40.

To calculate the body mass index, take weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared, or pounds divided by inches squared, then multiply that answer by 705.

Medeiros recommends that men and women in obesity class III consider surgical options if they have tried to lose weight, but can not.

The Atkins diet is a popular low carbohydrate diet. It has prompted health concerns because it is high in fat, but clinical trials have not shown that people on the Atkins diet develop risk factors for heart dis-

ease, he said.

In the short term, the Atkins diet can result in more weight loss than some other diets, but most individuals fail to stay on the diet, the nutrition educator said. This is also true of conventional diets. The Atkins diet restricts fruits and vegetables, but does allow for some. It also restricts whole grains, which have health benefits.

“On the other hand, the South Beach diet may have more credibility except for the rapid weight loss in phase I which lasts two weeks,” Medeiros said. “Eight to 13 pounds is claimed to be lost during this phase, which is unhealthy.”

Phase II and III of the diet are relatively healthy however, because

only one to two pounds are lost per week, Medeiros said. It is not as restrictive in fruits and vegetables, and it does allow for the re-introduction of foods slowly during the maintenance phase.

“Because of these fad diets, we are very good at losing weight in the United States, but we do not know how to keep it off,” Medeiros said.

The problem with the two-week Scarsdale diet, is that it only allows for 1,000 calories per day, which is way too few, and according to Medeiros, can be damaging to the body.

“The Scarsdale diet can be damaging to the kidneys if there is not enough water consumed in the process,” he said. “The body begins to

use protein for energy and results in a high amount of nitrogen that the kidneys must get rid of, so without a lot of water, that can be damaging to the body.”

According to Medeiros, the Metabolism, Grapefruit, Zone and Cabbage Soup diets all provide weight loss too quickly, or are not based on scientific reasoning. Weight loss on these diets is probably due to the low amount of calories consumed, Medeiros said.

For those who are serious about losing weight and keeping it off, he suggested reducing portion sizes, exercising and following the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Guide Pyramid. Small lifestyle changes can have bigger payoffs in the long run.

Smoky Hills Television offers ‘Dirty Thirties’ encore

BUNKER HILL — Area residents recount their memories of the “Dirty Thirties” when Smoky Hills Public Television offers an encore presentation of its documentary “Stories from the Dust Bowl,” tonight at 7 p.m.

Doris Trapp, Russell County, F. Robert and Norma Jean Kopke and Bud Campbell of the Great Bend area, Wilson and Velda Nelson and Margaret Maupin, Osborne Coun-

ty, W.R. Brenner, M.D., Ness County, and Wilda Smith, Gove County, are among those giving viewers a unique look at one the most difficult periods in Kansas History.

The 1930s are remembered for extreme drought and unbelievable dirt storms. The region of Kansas, the Oklahoma Panhandle, Texas and the eastern parts of Colorado and New Mexico were referred to as the Dust Bowl. The settlers of

this area faced a tough, harsh climate with adverse temperatures, high winds and a flat landscape. Increased production of farmland cut the soil, making it drier and more vulnerable to the elements. The Dirty Thirties also took its toll on the people of the area as they fought to keep their farms running, shops and banks in business, and schools and churches open. The Dust Bowl tested the pioneering

spirit and fortitude of all who experienced it.

While the Dust Bowl of the 1930s might have been one of the worst experiences in Kansas, it helped to produce new farming methods and soil conservation techniques that remain in use to this day. “Stories from the Dust Bowl” captures the gravity and far-reaching effects of the Dirty Thirties, including discussion of whether such events could

happen again.

Staff of Smoky Hills Public Television traveled throughout the state of Kansas, including stops in Hugoton, Liberal, Great Bend, Hays and Garden City, as well as in the Oklahoma Panhandle. The project was funded in part by the Kansas Humanities Council. Senior Producer and Director Les Kinderknecht at Smoky Hills Public Television developed the program.

Big-band dance club continues to look for younger members

HILL CITY (AP) — Couples glide across the floor, effortlessly in sync with the Vaughn Bolton Orchestra.

Ramona Herman's blue dress flares as her husband, Sunny, twirls her around the dance floor to polkas, two-steps and waltzes.

“It keeps you young,” 68-year-old Ramona Herman said. “The more you dance, the more exercise you get. It also makes us happier because we both like to dance.”

The couple traveled from their

home in Hays to the Bison Club in Hill City for a dance down memory lane with the Big Band Dance Club.

Music from the nine-piece orchestra envelops the dancers as they waltz in a counterclockwise direction around the lightly sanded floor.

Maxine McClelland watches the dancers with a smile during the dance. She remembers organizing the dance club around the kitchen table more than 20 years ago.

“We went to Utica, Neb., for a dance, and that's a long way to go,

plus it takes the entire weekend,” she said. “We got to talking about it and thought we could bring it closer to home.”

So the Hoxie resident banded together with three other couples from the area and put together the Half Fast Dance Club. The name changed several times and is currently The Big Band Dance Club.

In the beginning, the club was so popular that membership was limited to 90 or 100 couples, she said.

Now, the dances are lucky to

draw half that many, averaging 35 couples per dance, event organizer Russ Pennington said.

Yearly memberships are \$175 per couple or half that for a single member. Membership fees are collected to cover the cost of the orchestra, with the price fluctuating depending on the number of members (40 couples currently). The more members, the less the memberships cost.

The club does receive support from the First State Bank in Hill City. Tickets to the dances are given

to people in the Golden Passport Club who are 55 or older as a thank-you from the bank.

But the search remains ongoing for new members.

“I grew up dancing that way and so did my wife. We're in our late 50s.

“By the time we're as old as these people, there won't be that type of dancing available any more. So this helps keep it alive,” said Dexter Potter, senior vice president at First State Bank.

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