

Plenty of Americans want to lose weight, but less than half of those people are make strides to do so. According to a recent Gallup poll, 53% of Americans surveyed said they would like to lose weight, yet only about 25% of those respondents are working toward a weight loss goal.

For many, dieting is simply daunting. According to Jill Lynch, OSF HealthCare Registered Dietician and Weight Loss Specialist, people often start their wellness journey off on the wrong foot by focusing on dieting only, instead of the behaviors that caused the weight gain in the first place.

Losing a certain amount of weight may be good as a long-term goal, but Lynch says you need realistic short-term goals, too. Easy changes can help build a healthy foundation to long term success.

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Jill Lynch, OSF HealthCare Weight Loss Specialist

“When people try to make weight loss their overall goal, they are setting themselves up for failure. Maybe they could do some simple steps like trying to eat more fruits and vegetables, ‘I’m going to eat 5 fruits and veggies a day. I’m going to add in more activity.’”

The old adage, “If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is” certainly applies to weight loss as well. There's no quick fix or magic pill to give you lasting, sustainable change, although a multi-billion dollar dieting industry could make you think differently.

According to Lynch, when people try and fail at fad diets, they often get discouraged and continue a cycle of unhealthy habits.

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Jill Lynch, OSF HealthCare Weight Loss Specialist

“Everybody is different, every *body* is different, everybody’s metabolism is different. So just because someone else in a magazine or a reality star had lost weight on this program that they had done, it doesn’t mean it’s going to work for somebody else.”

The best advice, according to Lynch, is to start slowly and to accept that there will be bumps in the road along the journey to gaining life-long healthy habits.

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“Any small changes that you can make can be a life-long benefit overall to your health,”

(BUMP TO)

“Can I add in a couple more fruits and vegetables? Maybe you can do just 10 minutes of some type of physical activity, and see how that goes each day, how you feel, ‘hey I thought that was easy, and I can do that again.’”

To learn more about the OSF HealthCare Weight Management Center and to take a free weight profiler, click [here](#).