

Glossary: VWXYZ

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V

Vegetarian diets. Typically low fat, high carbohydrate, high fiber diets, which are conducive to weight loss but which can be either nutritionally adequate or inadequate depending on food selection. Diets which restrict all animal products (vegan) require particular attention to protein intake and vitamin B12. Diets which include dairy products (lacto-vegetarian) or dairy and eggs (lacto-ovo vegetarian) are easier to plan. Most large weight loss programs include a vegetarian option.

Vein. A blood vessel that carries deoxygenated blood.

Very Low-Calorie Diet (VLCD). Commercially prepared formulas of 400-800 calories or less that replace all usual food intake while providing adequate protein, vitamins and minerals. VLCDs are not the same as over-the-counter meal replacements, which are meant to be substituted for one or two meals a day. VLCDs, when used under proper medical supervision, effectively produce significant short-term weight loss in moderately to severely obese patients.

Vitamins. Organic nutrients that the body cannot produce on its own but are essential in small amounts for good health. They can serve as nutritional supplements in people with poor diets, in people recovering from surgery, or in people with special health problems. Water soluble vitamins are vitamin C and the eight B vitamins; fat soluble vitamins are vitamins A, D, E, and K.

W

Waist-to-Hip Ratio A simple way to measure whether someone is an apple or a pear. Measure the waist at its narrowest point, then measure the hips at the widest point. Divide the waist measurement by the hip measurement. Women with waist-to-hip ratios of more than 0.8 or men with waist-to-hip ratios of more than 1.0 are "apples." They are at increased health risk because of their fat distribution.

World Health Organization (WHO). An international agency concerned with health problems across the world. Provides immunization, emergency health care, etc.



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