The Dangerous Truth About Weight Loss Nobody Tells You Transcript

(Transcripts are generated by AI and may contain errors)

Why Weight Loss Should Preserve Muscle

If you lose 30 If you lose 30 pounds, most pounds, most people will congratulate you. people will congratulate you. Your doctor can Your doctor can congratulate you. Your friends congratulate you. Your friends can congratulate you.

can congratulate you. Libra will definitely Libra will definitely congratulate you, but I might not. might not. At least until I At least until I find out what exactly you find out what exactly you lost. Did you lose lost. Did you lose fat or did you lose fat or did you lose muscle? Because if a muscle? Because if a significant portion of that significant portion of that weight is weight is muscle, you haven't muscle, you haven't achieved healthy achieved healthy weight loss at all. You simply weight loss at all. You simply became a smaller, weaker became a smaller, weaker version of yourself. And that's why version of yourself. And that's why I repeat it I repeat it over and over again.

over and over again. Losing weight without Losing weight without preserving muscle is unsuccessful weight loss. is unsuccessful weight loss. I am Dr. Ahmet Ergin.

Muscle, Metabolism, and Glucose Control

I am Dr. Ahmet Ergin. I am an endocrinologist in I am an endocrinologist in Florida. Today I Florida. Today I want to change your want to change your mind about mind about losing weight. Most losing weight. Most people are obsessed with people are obsessed with one number— one number— body weight, right? Your body weight, right? Your scale doesn't distinguish between scale doesn't distinguish between fat and muscle. They won't fat and muscle. They won't tell you if tell you if your insulin sensitivity has improved or if or if you've gotten stronger or you've gotten stronger or weaker. And they won't weaker. And they won't say whether say whether you made your you made your future better or just future better or just became easier. So, became easier. So, your body mass your body mass is made up of is made up of many different many different components: fat, components: fat, muscle, bones, muscle, bones, organs, and water. We organs, and water. We usually want to usually want to get rid of excess get rid of excess fat. We don't want fat. We don't want to lose the tissues that to lose the tissues that help help help control glucose, support our, support our metabolism, metabolism, metabolism, protect our bones, and protect our bones, and ensure ensure ensure independence. This independence. This tissue is muscle.

tissue is muscle. Muscles aren't Muscles aren't just for athletes, my just for athletes, my friends. Muscles aren't just friends. Muscles aren't just for bodybuilders, and for bodybuilders, and they're definitely not just they're definitely not just for for for looks. Muscle is one looks. Muscle is one of the largest of the largest organs in your body, and one of the, and one of the most important for most important for controlling controlling controlling glucose levels. After glucose levels. After you eat carbohydrates, you eat carbohydrates, glucose enters glucose enters your bloodstream, your bloodstream, right? And then right?

Why Muscle Loss Happens During Dieting

And then insulin helps insulin helps direct most of direct most of that glucose that glucose into the muscles, where it is into the muscles, where it is used for used for energy or energy or stored as stored as glycogen or fat.

glycogen or fat. Think of your muscles as a Think of your muscles as a large storage tank for glucose. If this glucose. If this reservoir is large, reservoir is large, healthy, and active, healthy, and active, your body has your body has more capacity more capacity to handle glucose.

to handle glucose. But if this But if this reservoir reservoir reservoir is reduced due to is reduced due to muscle loss, muscle loss, glucose control glucose control becomes significantly more difficult.

becomes significantly more difficult. So, here's the first thought So, here's the first thought I want you to I want you

to remember. More remember. More healthy muscle healthy muscle means more space means more space for glucose, and less for glucose, and less muscle means less space muscle means less space for it. This is very for it. This is very important if you have important if you have prediabetes, type 2 diabetes prediabetes, type 2 diabetes,,, insulin resistance, insulin resistance, insulin resistance, or metabolic or metabolic syndrome. Many people syndrome. Many people believe that diabetes believe that diabetes is caused solely by is caused solely by excessive excessive excessive sugar consumption, but sugar consumption, but glucose control glucose control actually depends actually depends on what your on what your body does with body does with it after it it after it enters your bloodstream.

enters your bloodstream. It's not about what It's not about what she gets, it's about what she gets, it's about what happens happens happens after that. And your after that. And your muscles are an important muscles are an important part of this part of this process. Imagine two process. Imagine two people who have each people who have each lost about 30 lost about 30 pounds. The first person pounds. The first person loses mostly loses mostly fat while maintaining muscle.

fat while maintaining muscle. The second person loses a The second person loses a large amount of both large amount of both fat and muscle. fat and muscle.

The scales show the The scales show the same result for both, same result for both, but from a biological but from a biological point of view these are completely point of view these are completely different things. The first different things. The first person can become person can become stronger, more insulin sensitive, and insulin sensitive, and metabolically metabolically metabolically healthier. The second healthier. The second person may become person may become lighter, but weaker, lighter, but weaker, less active, and more less active, and more likely to gain likely to gain weight again. Same weight again. Same weight loss, but weight loss, but completely different completely different results. This is why results.

Sarcopenia and the Risks of Muscle Loss

This is why losing weight and losing losing weight and losing fat are not the same thing fat are not the same thing. And that's why. And that's why losing weight without losing weight without preserving muscle is preserving muscle is unsuccessful weight loss.

unsuccessful weight loss. Why do people lose Why do people lose muscle when muscle when losing weight? The first losing weight? The first reason is reason is aggressive aggressive aggressive calorie restriction. People suddenly calorie restriction. People suddenly reduce the number of reduce the number of calories they consume calories they consume to an extremely to an extremely low level. They low level. They can can can lose weight quickly, but the lose weight quickly, but the body does not take all body does not take all the energy it lacks the energy it lacks exclusively from fat.

exclusively from fat. The body can The body can break down muscle break down muscle tissue. The second tissue. The second reason is insufficient reason is insufficient protein.

protein. protein. Some people eat very little Some people eat very little while losing weight, while losing weight, but do not consume but do not consume enough protein to enough protein to maintain muscle. The third reason is lack of strength lack of strength training. If you don't training. If you don't load your load your muscles, muscles, muscles, there's no point in your body there's no point in your body storing them. Your storing them. Your body is very body is very pragmatic. If you pragmatic. If you constantly constantly constantly use your muscles, use your muscles, your body gets a signal: your body gets a signal: “Yes, you need “Yes, you need these muscles, right? " these muscles, right? " Save them." If you Save them." If you remain remain remain inactive, inactive, inactive, the body receives the the body receives the opposite signal: “ This tissue needs This tissue needs a lot of energy and a lot of energy and it doesn’t seem to be it doesn’t seem to be needed.” Let's needed.” Let's just get rid of just get rid of it or we'll it or we'll gradually lose it." gradually lose it." This becomes even more important This becomes even more important with age. Starting in with age. Starting in middle age, middle age, most adults most adults gradually lose gradually lose muscle unless they actively muscle unless they actively work to work to maintain it. This maintain it. This process can be process can be accelerated by accelerated by inactivity, inactivity, inactivity,

illness, hormonal illness, hormonal changes, protein deficiency, changes, protein deficiency, and aggressive and aggressive weight loss. Ultimately, weight loss. Ultimately, this can lead to this can lead to sarcopenia—the loss of sarcopenia—the loss of muscle mass, strength, and muscle mass, strength, and physical activity.

physical activity. Sarcopenia is not Sarcopenia is not just a cosmetic just a cosmetic problem, as it problem, as it increases the risk of increases the risk of weakness, falls, weakness, falls, fractures, fractures, fractures, disability, disability, disability, insulin resistance, insulin resistance, insulin resistance, and loss of and loss of independence. You independence. You don't wake up don't wake up one morning with one morning with severe muscle severe muscle atrophy, right? This atrophy, right? This happens happens happens gradually. You are getting gradually. You are getting a little weaker. You a little weaker. You stop carrying stop carrying heavy heavy heavy grocery bags, getting up grocery bags, getting up from a low chair from a low chair becomes difficult, and you becomes difficult, and you avoid stairs. You avoid stairs. You move less because move less because movement has become more difficult.

movement has become more difficult. Then, because you Then, because you move less, you move less, you lose even more lose even more muscle, and it becomes a muscle, and it becomes a vicious cycle.

vicious cycle. Fewer muscles Fewer muscles lead to less lead to less activity. Less activity. Less activity activity activity leads to leads to more muscle loss. And greater. And greater muscle loss leads to muscle loss leads to poorer poorer poorer glucose control. And glucose control. And worsening worsening worsening glucose control contributes to glucose control contributes to further further further metabolic metabolic metabolic dysfunction. That's why dysfunction. That's why protecting your muscles is not protecting your muscles is not optional. This is optional. This is part of the treatment for part of the treatment for obesity. This is part of obesity. This is part of diabetes treatment. This is diabetes treatment.

GLP-1 Drugs and Muscle Preservation

This is part of healthy part of healthy aging. Now aging. Now let's talk about let's talk about GLP-1 drugs, such as GLP-1 drugs, such as Ozempic, Mounjaro, Zepbound, Wegovy.

Ozempic, Mounjaro, Zepbound, Wegovy. These drugs, you know, These drugs, you know, can be can be extremely extremely extremely effective in effective in obesity and diabetes.

obesity and diabetes. They reduce appetite, They reduce appetite, improve improve improve glucose control, and glucose control, and help many help many people achieve people achieve weight loss that they weight loss that they could not achieve through could not achieve through lifestyle changes alone.

lifestyle changes alone. But these medications But these medications don't automatically don't automatically guarantee that every guarantee that every pound lost pound lost will come from fat. When will come from fat. When appetite becomes very appetite becomes very low, some low, some patients start patients start to eat too little.

to eat too little. They may They may skip skip skip meals, not consume meals, not consume enough protein, and enough protein, and stop exercising stop exercising due to fatigue. The weight due to fatigue. The weight comes off quickly, comes off quickly, so everyone assumes so everyone assumes the treatment is working the treatment is working perfectly. But the main perfectly. But the main question is what question is what exactly is being lost.

exactly is being lost. Again, the scales Again, the scales can't tell you that can't tell you that. If you. If you are using a are using a are using a GLP-1 drug, you GLP-1 drug, you need a need a muscle preservation plan, muscle preservation plan, not just a not just a weight loss plan. A weight loss plan. A muscle preservation plan muscle preservation plan means getting enough means getting enough protein, protein, protein, strength training, and strength training, and monitoring strength monitoring strength and body composition whenever and body composition whenever possible. This possible. This means avoiding means avoiding unnecessary unnecessary unnecessary starvation. This starvation. This means adjusting your means adjusting your treatment if treatment if the drug suppresses your the drug suppresses your appetite so much appetite so much that you can't properly fuel properly fuel your body. The your body. The GLP-1 drug should GLP-1 drug should help you help you lose excess

fat.

lose excess fat. It shouldn't It shouldn't turn your turn your muscles into a backup muscles into a backup fuel source. fuel source. People often ask, “ People often ask, “ Don’t muscles Don’t muscles speed up speed up speed up metabolism significantly?” metabolism significantly?” The answer requires The answer requires some honesty.

some honesty.

How to Lose Fat Without Losing Muscle

Muscle does Muscle does burn energy, burn energy, but simply gaining a but simply gaining a few pounds of few pounds of muscle won't muscle won't magically allow you magically allow you to consume unlimited to consume unlimited calories. The calories. The metabolic effect is metabolic effect is real, but it is real, but it is often exaggerated. The often exaggerated. The bigger advantage bigger advantage is what is what muscles allow you muscles allow you to do. More to do. More muscle helps muscle helps you stay you stay active. This active. This improves your improves your ability to ability to exercise exercise. This provides. This provides more space for more space for glucose storage.

glucose storage. This supports insulin sensitivity and protects insulin sensitivity and protects your joints and bones. This helps. This helps maintain physical maintain physical function and makes it easier to function and makes it easier to maintain maintain maintain weight loss results over time.

weight loss results over time. Muscles support the Muscles support the entire metabolic entire metabolic system. This is much more system. This is much more important than important than pretending it's a pretending it's a magic magic magic calorie-burning oven.

calorie-burning oven. So, how do you lose fat So, how do you lose fat without sacrificing muscle? First, avoid? First, avoid extreme diets extreme diets that you won't be able to that you won't be able to maintain. You maintain. You need a need a calorie deficit large enough to calorie deficit large enough to lose fat, but not lose fat, but not so large so large that you are constantly that you are constantly exhausted, weak, and exhausted, weak, and unable to exercise. Faster doesn't always. Faster doesn't always mean better. The goal mean better. The goal is not to is not to lose the most lose the most weight in the weight in the shortest amount of time. The goal shortest amount of time. The goal is to is to achieve the greatest achieve the greatest improvement in health.

improvement in health. So the next time So the next time someone tells you they've someone tells you they've lost 13 lost 13 pounds, don't pounds, don't ask, "How much do you ask, "How much do you weigh now?" weigh now?" Ask about the more Ask about the more important thing: “What exactly did important thing: “What exactly did you lose?” Because if you lose?” Because if you lost fat while you lost fat while maintaining muscle, that's maintaining muscle, that's successful weight loss.

But if you've lost a But if you've lost a bunch of muscle just bunch of muscle just for the sake of a lower number for the sake of a lower number on the scale, the job isn't on the scale, the job isn't done. Losing weight done. Losing weight without preserving muscle is unsuccessful is unsuccessful weight loss. So don't weight loss. So don't just get just get lighter, get lighter, get fitter.

fitter. fitter. Get stronger, Get stronger, get metabolically get metabolically healthier. healthier. healthier. Lose fat, Lose fat, preserve muscle. This is what successful weight loss should look like.

successful weight loss should look like.