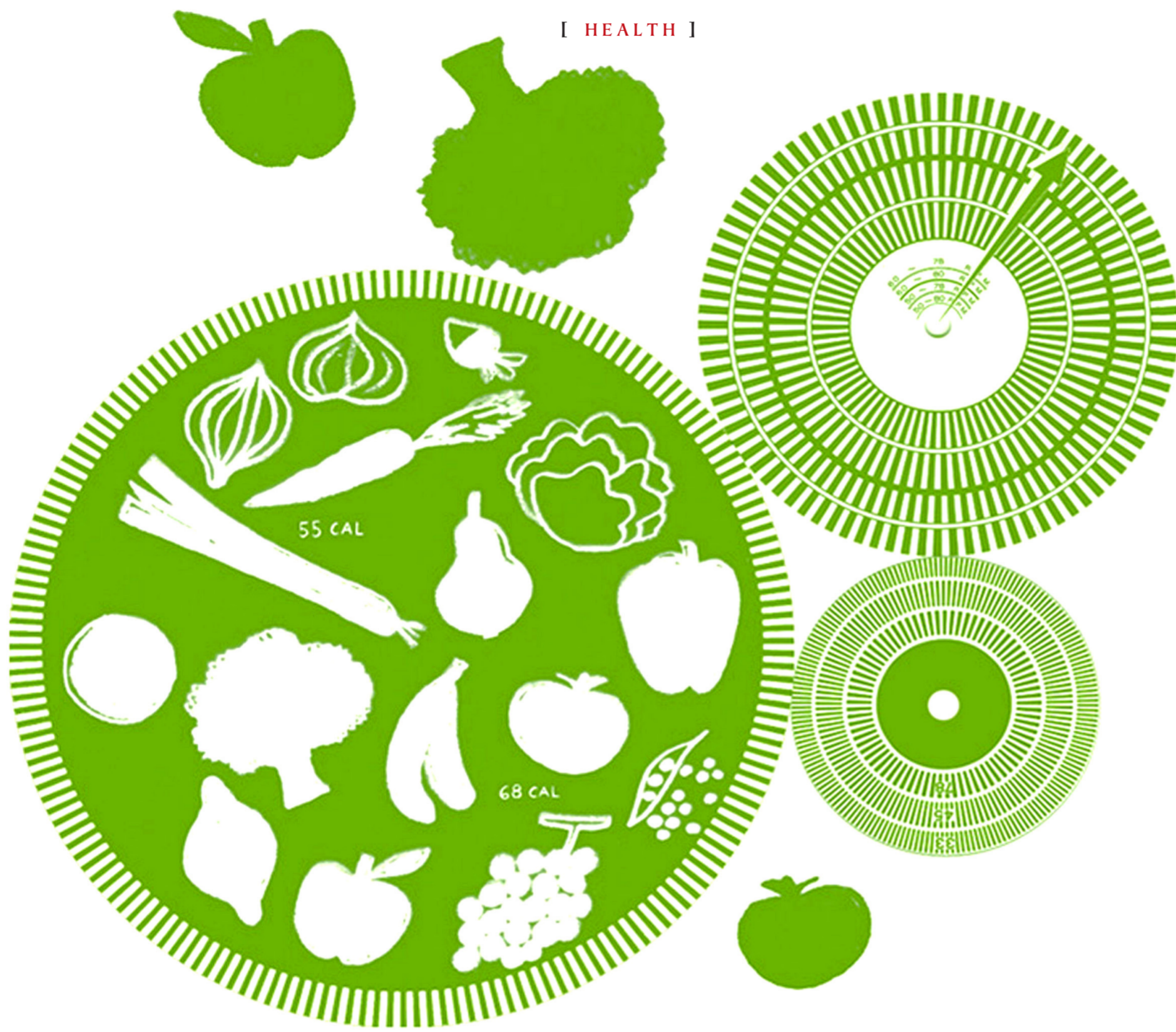


FEATURES

[HEALTH]



Dieting fads come and go, but a recent crop of weight-loss guides based on sound studies and clinical trials may have real staying power

BY JANE E. BRODY
NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE

I don't need to look at a calendar or feel Jack Frost nipping at my fingertips to know that the first of the year is fast approaching. My mailbox gives it away, loaded as it is with review copies of new and reissued diet books.

Publishers consider January the ideal time for these works, figuring that many already overweight Americans will have added more centimeters and kilograms since Thanksgiving and will resolve once more to shed them when they usher in the new year.

But I'm happy to say there has been a tremendous improvement in recent years in the crop of weight-loss guides. Most have been written by research scientists who avoid gimmicks and boring, overly restrictive or quick weight-loss schemes that are bound to fail. Instead, their recommendations are based on sound studies and clinical trials that have yielded a better understanding of what prompts us to eat more calories than we need and, in particular, more calories from the wrong kinds of foods.

These authors are not miracle workers who can get you bikini-ready for a midwinter vacation, but their approaches can work wonders for those determined to lose weight permanently, even with limits on time or budget, or with a social or occupational need to dine out often.

TREATING BODY AND MIND

Science-based improvements in the diet-book genre began about five years ago with the publication of *The Volumetrics Weight-Control Plan: Feel Full on Fewer Calories*, by Barbara Rolls and Robert Barnett (HarperCollins). Rolls, chairwoman of the Department of Nutritional Sciences at Penn State University, shunned specific diet plans and instead developed an approach to eating based on her findings from numerous clinical studies that people need a certain volume or weight of food to feel satisfied.

Accordingly, the "volumetrics" plan, spelled out in a follow-up book, *The Volumetrics Eating Plan: Techniques and Recipes for Feeling Full on Fewer Calories*, emphasizes getting more for less — meals that include filling foods like soups, salads, vegetables and fruits that on a volume basis are naturally low in calorie density because they have a high water content.

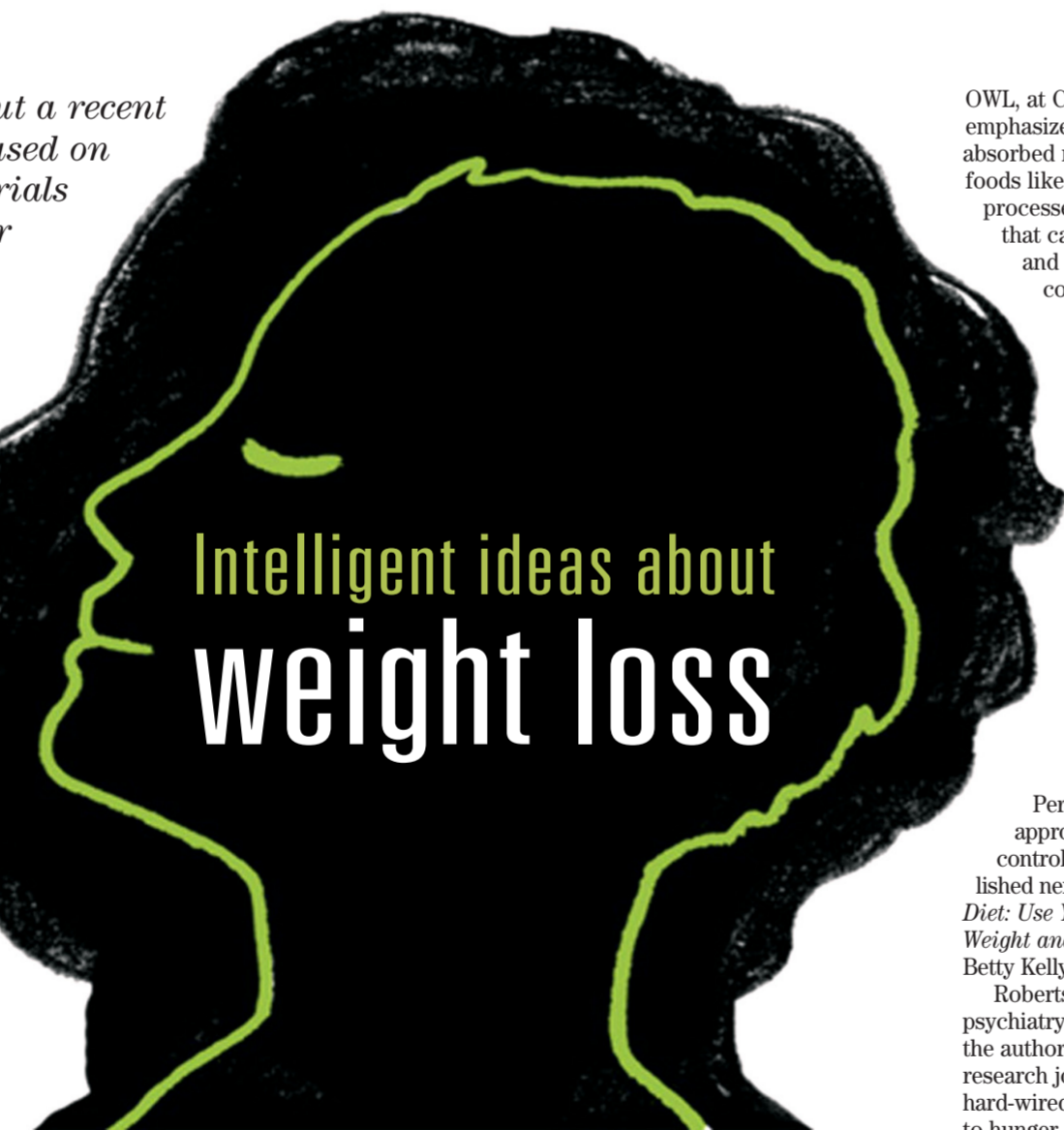


ILLUSTRATION: NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE

But as most dieters know, eating habits that lead to weight gain, a failure to lose weight or an inability to maintain weight loss are as much a matter of mind as of body. If physical hunger were the only thing driving overeating, it is unlikely that 60 percent of Americans would be overweight. Rather, many of us have lost touch with natural hunger and satiety signals, and we overeat in response to emotional and external cues.

Judith Beck, a psychologist and the director of the Beck Institute for Cognitive Therapy and Research in Philadelphia, had spent many years helping patients achieve their weight-loss goals, not through particular diets but by learning how to think and behave differently with regard to food and eating. Her two recent books, *The Beck Diet Solution* and *The Beck Diet Weight Loss Workbook* (Oxmoor House), aim to retrain the brain. Beck teaches someone who is overweight how to think like a thin person, with practical strategies to reduce eating prompted by emotions and stress.

Readers seeking a more lighthearted though still science-based approach might consider the 2006 book, *You On a Diet: The Owner's Manual for Waist Management*, by

Michael Roizen of the Cleveland Clinic and Mehmet Oz of Columbia University (Free Press).

Though the authors are not "diet doctors," they have devised principles of waist control based on the latest findings about appetite, metabolism, temptation and the biology of fat. In emphasizing the medical benefits of losing centimeters and not just kilograms, these doctors focus more than most authors on the importance of exercise to produce a body that is healthy, strong and attractive.

Of course, the modern epidemic of overweight and obese adults didn't spring up overnight — for many people, weight problems have their origins in childhood. Last year, David Ludwig, pediatrician and endocrinologist at Children's Hospital in Boston, tackled the underpinnings of the nation's weight problems in *Ending the Food Fight: Guide Your Children to a Healthy Weight in a Fast Food/Fake Food World* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt).

Ludwig, whose research focuses on how food affects hormones, metabolism and body weight regulation, has published more than 75 articles in medical or scientific journals. He is the founding director of the Optimal Weight for Life program, or

OWL, at Children's Hospital. His approach emphasizes foods that are digested and absorbed more slowly than high glycemic foods like white bread, white rice, highly processed cereals and concentrated sugars that cause a rapid rise in blood sugar and lead to a sugar-hormone "roller coaster" that drives hunger.

But Ludwig recognizes that some foods that have a high glycemic index in the laboratory, like carrots, do not have a high glycemic effect in the body when consumed in normal amounts.

Unlike most fast foods and highly processed foods, the meals and snacks recommended by Ludwig are rich in nonstarchy vegetables, fruits, beans, nuts, minimally processed grains (like brown rice and steel-cut oats), wholesome fats like olive oil and avocado, and protein, including vegetable protein.

DIETING BY INSTINCT

Perhaps the most comprehensive approach to eating for effective weight control is offered in a book to be published next month by Workman, *The Instinct Diet: Use Your Five Food Instincts to Lose Weight and Keep It Off*, by Susan Roberts and Betty Kelly Sargent.

Roberts is a professor of nutrition and psychiatry at Tufts University in Boston and the author of nearly 200 articles published in research journals. She explains how natural hard-wired instincts to eat in response to hunger, availability, caloric density, familiarity and variety, which served us well in paleolithic times (and until the mid-20th century), have been compromised by changes in the kinds, amounts and constancy of foods in the modern world. These changes, in turn, undermine the ability of many people to maintain a normal weight.

The book guides readers to alternative approaches to fulfilling the demands of these instincts in ways that can help them lose weight and, at the same time, adopt a more wholesome, nutritious and healthful eating plan that can be adapted to anyone's lifestyle. Though the instinct diet is rather prescriptive for the first two weeks, it offers a reasonable number of options to accommodate different tastes and eating schedules. The next six weeks of the eight-week program enable dieters to adopt and adapt eating plans that can result in permanent weight loss and improve health.

The diet is high in healthful fiber, which demands a significant intake of water and other noncaloric or low-calorie beverages. As with all sensible approaches to weight control, Roberts insists on three meals a day and wholesome snacks between them to reduce the risk of binges and unwise hunger-driven food choices.

The 64-bit question

Should you go for the 64-bit version of Windows Vista, or the 32-bit version?

BY JAY DOUGHERTY
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Buy a new copy of Windows Vista or a new computer today, and you'll have a decision to make: Should you go for the 64-bit version of Windows Vista, or the 32-bit version?

We've all been using various 32-bit versions of Windows for years now, but clearly the future belongs to 64-bit computing. What do you need to know before you get a jump on destiny? Here are some answers.

Q: Why would I want to run 64-bit Windows?

A: You'll get access to more system memory. The 32-bit versions of Windows — Vista and XP — can access a maximum of 4GB of system memory. In practice, however, some of that system memory is reserved for the operating system and other processes, so your applications end up with significantly less. It's not uncommon for a computer with 4GB of memory installed to have only 3GB available once the operating system and other processes stake their claim to the memory.

While 3GB may have seemed like a lot of memory a few years ago, today all you need to do is run a memory-hungry photo program, load a half-dozen large files, and you could be pushing the limits of your installed memory.

The 64-bit version of Windows Vista can access much more than 4GB of RAM. Vista Ultimate, Enterprise, and Business can access 128GB of RAM. Home Premium can access 16GB, while Home Basic will max out at 8GB.

Having the ability to access more memory in your computer gives you a couple of advantages. First, you can load more applications and more files within those applications. Second, your overall computing experience should be smoother, since swapping from one application to another will hopefully take place in memory and not rely on caching data to the hard drive, which slows you down.

Q: Is the 64-bit version of Windows Vista faster than the 32-bit version?

A: Theoretically, the 64-bit version of Windows should allow your computer to process twice as much data as a 32-bit operating system in the same amount of time. In practice, though, you will not see a doubling of performance with a 64-bit operating system, in part because there are so many variables — both in hardware and software — that must be optimized for 64-bit computing.

In fact, if you run the 64-bit version of Windows with only 4GB of system memory, you may find that the computer runs a tad slower than with a 32-bit operating system due to the way computer instructions are stored in memory in 64-bit systems — essentially, they take up more space. So you should have more than 4GB of memory when running a 64-bit version of Windows. If you do, you should see a slight real-world performance improvement when running a 64-bit application.

Q: Are there any disadvantages with the 64-bit version of Windows?

A: Your primary concerns should be software compatibility and drivers. Since 64-bit operating systems are not yet used as widely as 32-bit versions, not all computer software vendors have gotten around to ensuring that their programs run properly under 64-bit Windows. Many have, though. So before you install 64-bit Windows or buy a computer with it pre-loaded, check your major software applications to ensure that they're compatible.

You'll also want to make sure you can use all of your peripherals — printer, scanner, Webcam — with 64-bit Windows. And that means checking with the manufacturers to see whether 64-bit versions of the appropriate driver software are available.

Q: Do I need a special computer to run 64-bit Vista?

A: No. Any computer you buy today — whether it comes with an Intel processor or one from AMD — will run 64-bit operating systems. If you have an older computer, find out which processor is in it, and check the manufacturer's Web site to determine whether it is 64-bit capable.

Q: I bought Windows Vista Home Premium, and only the 32-bit version came in the box. Do I have to pay extra for the 64-bit version?

A: No. Microsoft will ship you the 64-bit version at no charge. The rule is that you can only run one of the versions, though, not both. To get the 64-bit version after you've already purchased the 32-bit version, go to the "64-bit DVD" section at the bottom of this page, and follow the instructions: www.microsoft.com/windows/windows-vista/compare-editions/64-bit.aspx.