



January 4, 2010 – Grand Rapids, MI

Partners

I hope you've been experimenting with eating 20% less. Remember, you don't care about what type of food—just eat 20% less at every meal. The next step is to call, e-mail, or text your physician to ask them whether it's okay for you to lose weight. Whether you have over 100 pounds to lose, you're joining The 30 Pound Club, or even as some of you've told me you need to gain some weight—get your doctor's okay.

What doctor is going to tell you, "No, I want you to stay 50 pounds overweight!" Not a single one, but there are three reasons you should check first.

First, if you take any medications, weight loss can affect the amount you take. Okay, it's the fourth day since you've begun to lose weight so it isn't an issue yet, but it's something to consider, and as your weight comes down, your doctor will want to monitor your meds more closely.

Second, depending on your age and fitness level, your doctor may want to do a few tests before you start to exercise—and you won't be surprised to learn that exercise is going to be an important part of any effort to lose weight. We'll get to that soon.

Third, and most important, your doctor should be your partner in health. We can turn the healthcare system from one of treating disease to one of preventing disease if we make our physicians our partners. Maybe they'll want to monitor your blood pressure or cholesterol to see how your body responds to the new you. Wouldn't it be nice if at some point in the next year they say, "You know something? I think you can eliminate your blood pressure medications." How cool would that be?

We criticize our doctors when they seem to pull out the prescription pad for every complaint. Let's try using them the way they should be used: to prevent us from getting sick in the first place by helping us be healthier. Make the call.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGUV Straight Talk on Health

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