



October 5, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Handling Prosperity

Black has white, yin has yang, and adversity has prosperity. I talked about dealing with adversity on Monday. While it's no doubt better, dealing with prosperity has its own set of problems. For sure, it's a lot better to have to watch your lifestyle after you've reached a health or fitness goal, but there are some pitfalls as well, and it's especially true when it comes to weight loss.

I've written several messages about Dr. Hall's weight loss calculator. This time, it's what he and his coauthors said about weight regain: after some initial success, people relax their calorie intake yet still see some weight loss. At that point, they get lulled into a sense of prosperity. In reality, they've already started back on the path to weight gain. It won't be many pounds a week, but just like they put it on in the first place, an extra 50 or 100 calories a day here and there, they've already started to return to their previous lifestyle—and weight.

Here's a suggestion that might help you deal with prosperity when you reach your weight goal: don't add any calories to your daily total unless you're losing more weight than you want to. Even then, add no more than 50 calories a day, every week or two, until your weight stabilizes at your goal weight. Then be prepared to trim calories again if your weight starts creeping up. That's how you get to where you want to be **and stay there**—and after all, that's really our goal, right?

The idea is similar for fitness goals: you might be able to cut back your workouts a little bit, but cut slowly. The goal is to find that happy spot where you maintain your fitness level with a manageable time commitment. The hardest work may be done, but the work is never over.

No matter what your health goal is, you have to keep those new healthier habits and not get complacent. Don't let prosperity lull you into relaxing and reverting back to your old lifestyle—you start sitting in front of the TV and having pizza or wings and beer or big desserts every day, and you'll soon be back where you started.

The health or the body you had wasn't great, and that's why you undertook the process to change it. If you let success go to your head, you'll have to start all over again someday. And I can tell you from experience, that's just no fun at all.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

WGVU FM 88.5/95.3 **npr** **Straight Talk on Health**

Hear Dr. Chet's take on the latest health news and research—listen to *Straight Talk on Health* at 7 p.m. Sunday in the Eastern Time Zone on WGVU-FM 88.5 or 95.3, or listen live via the Internet by going to www.wgvu.org and clicking on "Listen Live" in the gray bar at the top.

The health information in this message is designed for educational purposes only. It's not a substitute for medical advice from your healthcare provider, and you should not use it to diagnose or treat a health problem or disease. It's designed to motivate you to work toward better health, and that includes seeing your healthcare professional regularly. If what you've read raises any questions or concerns about health problems or possible diseases, talk to your healthcare provider today.

Subscribe to the Message from Dr. Chet at DrChet.com — © Chet Zelasko PhD LLC