

SAMPLE CHAPTER

Chapter 5:

Making It Work - The Common Cent\$ Diet for Busy Girls

Weight or Waist: Why Weight is just a number on the scale, but where you carry your weight is so important.



BMI or body mass index is a calculation that experts use to compare your height to your weight, to give an indication of whether you are overfat or if you are within 'normal' limits or below normal compared to large populations of people. Weight may not be the best indicator of health. For example, body builders, men and women both, may have a BMI (body mass index) that says 'overweight' or even obese. Of course, these athletes are not over-fat...just look at them. In fact, they're ultra-fit. So, we don't look at BMI for muscular athletes, or for pregnant women or for seniors either (children and adolescents have a different calculation to assess how much fat they are carrying compared to their height). Experts recently have been discussing changing the BMI parameters for some populations such as Asian Americans and Native Americans, because they may be at a higher risk for disease at a lower weight compared to the norm.

Another factor in addition to your muscle mass that needs to factor in to 'fat' or 'fit' includes your bone structure...for example, a small-boned woman may have a normal BMI, but if she carries any excess weight around her middle, otherwise known as an "apple" shape her risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes may be higher than if her excess weight were carried in her thighs and rear (a pear-shape)...especially if she has a family history of these conditions.

Fat but Fit?

Cardiologist C. Noel Bairey-Merz is the director of the Women's Heart Center and the Preventive and Rehabilitative Cardiac Center at Cedars-Sinai Heart Institute. In a July 10, 2010 interview on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition* she said overweight women who were routinely physically active and overweight were less likely to suffer heart problems than their normal weight counterparts who didn't exercise. If you are overweight, (BMI over 25), but your waist size is less than 35 inches (women) or less than 40 inches (men), you're probably more muscular than fat.

Excess fat stored on the abdomen may lead to hormonal changes, inflammation and possibly arterial plaque buildup. Have a "spare tire" around your waist? You're at higher risk for high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, even cancer.

Measure your waist and hips to find your waist-to-hip ratio.

Wider at your waist with smaller hips = apple-shape (higher risk)

Wider at your hips with smaller waist = pear-shaped (lower risk).

To measure your waist:

Measure your waist at its narrowest point (over your belly button)

Measure your hips at their widest (over your behind)

Divide your waist size by your hip size. Women's waist-to-hip ratio should max out at 0.8, men's at 0.95. Higher than 1.0 indicates risk.

Your BMI may be "normal" but if your waist size indicates "belly fat" then your health may suffer

To calculate your BMI you can use the following formula, or just go to the web and type in "BMI calculator"

<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bminojs.htm>

Divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches (squared) then multiply the result by 703.

$$\text{BMI} = \left(\frac{\text{Weight in pounds}}{(\text{Height in inches}) \times (\text{Height in inches})} \right) \times 703$$

The following chart shows your risk for disease associated with your weight *and* your waist size.

BMI		Waist less than or equal to 40 inches (men) or 35 inches (women)	Waist greater than 40 inches (men) or 35 inches (women)
18.5 or less	Underweight	--	N/A
18.5 - 24.9	Normal	--	N/A
25.0 - 29.9	Overweight	Increased	High
30.0 - 34.9	Obese	High	Very High
35.0 - 39.9	Obese	Very High	Very High
40 or greater	Extremely Obese	Extremely High	Extremely High

Note: BMI 30-39.9 is considered obese; but the risk changes from high to very high when waist increases to greater than 40 inches for men and greater than 35 inches for women

Source: Risk of Associated Disease According to BMI and Waist Size from Partnership for Healthy Weight Management
<http://www.consumer.gov/weightloss/bmi.htm>

Diet: Changing Your Perception

When you're talking about weight loss diets, just about any program will work, that is, if you use it. If you strictly follow a diet by definition you'll eat *differently* than you usually eat. You'll be eating someone else's diet! You will most likely be consuming fewer calories, and hopefully doing more activity than usual. But once you return to your usual eating pattern, and stop watching portions, you'll probably regain the weight.

Interestingly, newer research shows that it may *not* be a strict "calorie-in, calorie-out" scenario, because the type of food you consume may also play an important role in successful weight loss. If you consume all of your calories from refined, processed foods then you will have a harder time of losing and maintaining weight. So, *what* you eat as well as *how much* you eat are both important factors in permanent weight management.

And what and how much you eat is only part of the puzzle. It's vital to factor in activity...otherwise known as exercise. How much you move and how often you undertake 'deliberate' activity will determine your long-term weight loss success.

When you eat high fiber foods, and select smart snacks to boost your nutrition without overdoing on calories, that's a recipe for permanent weight management.

Are you a 'serial dieter'? The Calorie Control Council and the Food & Drug Administration both found that the typical American dieter makes 4-5 dieting attempts per year! Someone who undertakes a weight loss diet at least once a year...maybe more? Have you had success in the past, only to regain? If so, you're not alone. Maybe you're taking on a Spartan "no-carb" Atkins or South Beach approach, working from a list of "good" and "bad" foods, and courting ketosis.

Although weight loss is possible, people commonly regain, as they do on all diets that ask you to eliminate certain foods, since deprivation leads to rebound eating. Perhaps you're counting points on Weight Watchers...and shelling out too many dollars per month to attend meetings...it gets tiresome and you are so 'over' group meetings.

Maybe you're opting in and paying out for packaged 'shelf-stable' meal replacements, such as Medifast or NutriSystem....they are portion-controlled, but eh, the taste leaves a lot to be desired. If your bank account can handle it, you subscribe to fresh (or frozen) meal delivery service. It probably burns you to pay a dollar...or more, for that small apple or banana...right? It's wrong!

But you're too busy, you say, to eat healthfully by preparing nutritious yet tasty meals! You say you hate 'diet foods' and refuse to eat foods that taste worse than the plastic and cardboard packaging they come in. You refuse to eat dehydrated foods, or make your meals from a can, you know that 'meal replacement bar' won't cut it, and you don't want to spend the money on delivery, because you want the flexibility of cooking or dining out when your life requires!

How about signing on for a meal plan that is convenient, affordable, flexible, and best of all, your own? One that you can shop for once weekly, saving yourself thousands of dollars yearly, all the while utilizing the best-of-market frozen and packaged meals, supplemented by fresh fruits and vegetables ...or if you wish, frozen too, because frozen is easy, affordable and nutritious.



The Common Cent\$ Diet for Busy Girls is perfect for you. It will suit your taste, your pocketbook, and your schedule: It is:

Convenient: Buy your food items for the entire week, or longer, when it's convenient for you: your ability to stock up is limited only to the amount of freezer space.

Personalized: You get to choose your favorite foods, cooking style, ingredients, cost: You can choose the top of the line meal entrées or you can buy what is on sale...or you can mix it up. Eat simply, nutritiously, affordably.

Flexible: On days that you may want to eat out, frozen entrées won't spoil. If you're going to a friend's for dinner, and want to stay with your program, no problem! Pop your dinner into the microwave for a few minutes while you can help your host assemble dinner. Stay social, and at the same time stay on track.

Healthy! All frozen entrées and packaged foods are not created equal, so we lay out a guide to shopping for the best of the brands, and provide a template so you can achieve your goals for weight loss and beyond.

"Healthy", "Smart", "Lean"...these are just three words that virtually jump out at you whilst perusing the frozen entrée aisle. Maybe you're attracted by the "natural" label (did you know that the FDA does not regulate this term), others carry the "organic" tag (the USDA does regulate). The good news is that many convenience foods, specifically frozen entrées, have changed and it's possible to buy complete frozen meals, including a meat, vegetables and dessert that are calorie-controlled and that contain only 100% USDA-certified organic foods. We've come a long way from those nasty 'TV dinners', which consisted of some gray "mystery meat", gummy mashed potatoes and whose vegetable consisted of rubbery corn and peas.

The Common Cent\$ Diet is a plan to allow you to lose weight without feeling deprived, eat nutritiously while still staying within your budget, and to stay satisfied by enjoying foods that are full of flavor, and not necessarily full of sodium, a concern for many.

Sodium

In January 2011, The U.S. Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and Health and Human Services (HHS) raised the barrier for preventative health by asking Americans to consume less sodium. Based on the Framingham Heart Study (a very large and comprehensive, years-long undertaking) scientists have found that 90 percent of American adults are expected to develop high blood pressure in their lifetime, and over 70 percent either have high blood pressure now or are at high risk for developing it. (See the press release by the American Heart Association at:

<http://www.newsroom.heart.org/index.php?s=43&item=1243>

New recommendations advise adults over 51 and those with certain risk factors to consume a total of 1500 mg daily and others a maximum of 2,300 mg, making it important to choose wisely, and read food labels prior to purchasing. Although frozen entrées (and so many processed foods in general) are higher in sodium compared to fresh, we can choose from hundreds of convenient options that are moderate or even low in sodium.

Some people want to (and some really need to) follow a lower sodium diet. Eating diets consistently high in sodium may be linked to higher risk for heart disease and high blood pressure, so mix up the higher sodium foods with low sodium foods. If there's a higher sodium entrée at lunch, we've paired it with a lower entrée for dinner, and show the sodium content of all meals and snacks in the menus.

As always, feel free to substitute your favorite frozen entrée for one that is listed, and use the Meal Plan Guide as a template for healthy eating—Your Common Cent\$ Busy Girl Diet is a **guide** to eating healthfully *and* conveniently.

We accumulate sodium throughout the day, and at the end of the day it's important to achieve balance. The meal plans are a guide to eating healthfully.

***14-Day Regular:** All entrées may contain up to **700 mg of sodium or less** *per* entrée but most contain less.

***14-day Lower Sodium:** All entrées may contain up to **500 mg or less of sodium** per entrée.

Why frozen entrées? Because of **Convenience, Cost, Portion Control**, and to avoid **'Diet Fatigue'**.

Let's start with **Diet fatigue**, which is high on the list of reasons for weight loss failure. Fatigue means, "*a lessening in one's response to or enthusiasm for something, typically as a result of overexposure to it*" and ain't it the truth! If your food is boring, if you're eating the same thing every day, it's too easy to quickly tire of the menu and feel deprived. The next thing you know you're reaching for that cookie or donut. Maybe you've experienced this...as soon as you 'go on' a diet, that's when you start craving more...after a few days or weeks, you throw up your hands, and you're back to square one.

Of course, there's nothing wrong with plain broiled fish, salads, and vegetables...but our taste buds yearn for some flavor...*different* flavors. And that's why the Common Cent\$ plan makes so much sense. Explore the world of frozen meal entrées—some are extremely tasty, even gourmet! Choose from traditional favorites, or from different ethnic cuisines, seasonal vegetables and fruits, meats, fish and poultry.

Costs & Common Cent\$ Budgeting

People assume that buying fresh, whole foods and preparing them daily is the best and healthiest way to eat. Right? Sure, when and if we can. But, we're busy; we work full-time, often have another full-time job taking care of kids and home. Although we have precious few hours to make sure we eat well, that doesn't mean we don't want to. The drive-through is an option, but you're almost guaranteed to overdo on sodium there. And it's not as convenient as all that, when you have to leave your office to get the food...and it winds up costing you in time and fuel for your auto.

And, fast food is not so cheap anymore. A burger, medium fries and a soda, or a healthier chicken salad and drink, at a major chain, and will set you back about \$6 in most parts of the country—double the cost of a frozen entrée meal.

Budgeting? Frozen entrées costs range widely—some are quite inexpensive (less than two dollars), however, the cheapest may also be quite ‘skimpy’ on the portions. Some cost more, but they may incorporate better, even organic ingredients. But that’s the beauty of this program. Because you can feel free to use the menu as a guide, not as a requirement to be followed to the letter, if you see an entrée that you don’t like, or if you find some good values and special sales in your local supermarket, then by all means, enjoy.

You can find even better prices at membership discount stores such as Costco and Sam’s Club. Combine this with smart coupon clipping, and you’ll *really* save. Regarding coupons, you can find them at the food company websites:

www.Healthychoice.com

www.amys.com

www.Leancuisine.com

Weight Watchers offers coupons at its Facebook page as well. Con Agra’s Lean Cuisine also has a “Delicious Rewards” program, where you can earn points by entering codes you find in the food boxes, and redeem your points for kitchenware, dining décor and more.

To get coupons at the various websites, just sign up for their free newsletter or check their community or specials links. In addition, there are a bunch of coupon sites that have emerged, where you can grab valuable coupons. Some of these include:

www.eatyourbest.com

www.grocerycouponfree.net

www.frozendinnercoupons.com

www.shopathome.com

www.frozendinnercouponsdelivered.com

Finally, waste not! Using frozen entrées, it’s easy to plan ahead for a healthy meal without actually having to plan, shop and prepare. And, save time and money by not buying ingredients that you only use occasionally. These ingredients taste great when they’re fresh, but when sitting in your pantry for months on end lose flavor and you wind up throwing them out.

Convenience

One of the big pluses for frozen entrées is convenience. We're all time-crunched, and want to still eat well. Salads and sandwiches just don't satisfy. When you don't have to do the cooking and cleaning, but can still eat well, you're more likely to stick with the program. And even more convenient than ordering out, just grab your cooler pack and carry your microwavable lunch to work or school. Look forward to a nice dinner without deprivation, and use the time saved on cooking for taking that 30-minute walk. Stay satisfied flavor-wise, while you lose weight.

Portions

A big plus for using frozen entrées is that they are pre-portioned, and often contain a mixture of main dish, sides and dessert...all in one package. Portion size is the key to healthy weight management, and by paying attention to the portions in your entrée, you can translate what works for you and practice portion control when you dine out or cook at home.

Add-Ins

Since even complete meals' portions don't generally supply enough vegetables to make them "complete" for the recommended servings of veggies and fruits daily, we show you how to **"add in"** to your lunch and dinners, so you stay satisfied and stay healthy while you lose weight conveniently.

Add-ins and snacks may have additional sodium, so we've identified the menu items that balance the sodium intake.

Remember: The goal: each day to consume no more than 2,300 mg of sodium, or if you choose a lower-sodium menu, approximately 1,500 mg of sodium or less.

End of sample, more in actual book....