**How fast should you lose weight?**

It’s always a touchy subject, whether you are talking about it for yourself or for someone you love. Weight loss. If you’ve followed my articles all these years, you know that I am a true advocate of being fit, even if you are fat. Yes, if you are fat and you exercise diligently and daily you will reap many, in fact most, of the health benefits that exercise can provide. So please don’t let your size be the reason why you don’t exercise every day.

With that being said, one of my article angels, sent me an article that was published in UPI (United Press International) entitled “Fast or slow weight loss makes no difference, study say,” Dyson, T. 1/29/19.

It was the perfect timing in my life to get this article, because I had recently started on a weight loss journey with my sweetie. Believe it or not, we had both, initially lost some quick weight and then the frustrations settled in as the weight loss started to neutralize and slow to that healthier, slower pace.

As we all know that first week and often into the second week, the weight loss is usually very rewarding. Often, we easily see 5-8 pounds drop off with very little work, it’s exciting and rewarding, until the third week hits and the weight loss slows to only a couple of pounds a week, and now it feels so much harder work. Truthfully, it’s not any harder, it’s just that the excitement has worn off and the new eating and exercise routine is becoming boring. This study comes out of Toronto, led by Jennifer Kuk, associate professor in York University’s Faculty of Health. They studied, 11,283 patients at a publicly- funded clinical weight management program between July 2009 and July 2017 and found that those who lost weight quickly tended to have bigger reductions in obesity and better health improvements than patients who lost weight slowly, initially. The study specifically pointed out that there are reasons to believe that faster weight loss may have better effects for cardiovascular disease and diabetes risks factors, initially.

However, the health benefits and improvements neutralized once the weight loss evened out in the end. The conclusion that this research came to is that its not the rate of weight loss but the over all amount of weight loss that matters for the best overall health benefits.

“These improvements in health associated with faster weight loss were abolished after adjusting for absolute weight loss,” said Kuk. “The results show that we really need to look at interventions that focus on long term weight management that can achieve sustained weight loss at the recommended one to two pounds per week.”

The study also mentions that faster weight loss increases the chance of gallstones, because fasting and losing weight rapidly causes the body to metabolize fat causing the liver to secrete extra cholesterol into the bile, potentially causing gallstones. Most importantly, losing excess weight is a sure way to reduce risk of gallstones, and experts agree that slow, steady is the preferable way to lose weight.

Rapid weight loss is considered to be three or more pounds per week. The suggested goal for weight loss is a half to two pounds per week, which research shows encourages new habits that can help put an end to the roller coaster of weight cycling up and down.

Other conversations that I have had since starting this weight loss journey, include that there is a difference in what calories you eat. For the longest time and for many of my earlier articles, I preached the simple equation of calories in must be lower than calories out. Research has proven to me that it’s not that simple. The kind of calories you eat matters the most. I also used to preach hard that exercise matters most in weight loss, when in fact it’s simply the bonus engine behind your weight loss. What you eat is 80% of your weight loss and exercise is there for the long-term benefits and solid look when you get to your goal.

So, remember weight loss is cumulative; therefore, you must be patient and focus on the end result.