So what can we do?

Living a healthy lifestyle takes a commitment to change, and many times a support network is needed to develop a lifestyle that promotes your best weight and good health.

With all the focus on weight in our society, it isn’t surprising that millions of people fall prey to fad diets and bogus weight loss products. Conflicting claims, testimonials and hype by so-called “experts” can fool even the most informed consumers.

The bottom line is if the diet sounds too good to be true it probably is.

According to the Trust for America’s Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (Sept. 2012), half of all Americans will be obese by 2030 unless we change our ways. Obesity raises the risk of numerous diseases including type 2 diabetes and heart disease. If current projections stand true, 7.9 million individuals will be diagnosed with diabetes each year, compared to 1.9 million in past years. Additionally, there could be 6.8 million individuals diagnosed with chronic heart disease and stroke each year compared to 1.3 million each year now. The cost of these projections would be $66 billion in annual obesity-related medical costs compared to today’s $147 billion to $210 billion.

The Truth: Are We Heading in the Right Direction?

There are no foods or pills that magically burn fat. No super foods will alter your genetic code. No products will miraculously melt fat while you watch TV or sleep. Some ingredients in supplements and herbal products can be dangerous and even deadly for some people.
The Myth: You Know It’s a Fad Diet When …

- **It promises quick weight loss.** Slow steady weight loss is more likely to last than dramatic weight changes. If you lose weight too quickly, you’ll lose muscle, bone and water and be more likely to gain the weight back.

- **You have to eat certain food combinations and/or take special supplements.** There is no evidence that combining certain foods will help you lose weight. Eating the “wrong” combination of foods doesn’t cause them to turn to fat immediately or to produce toxins in your intestines as some plans claim. Over-the-counter herbal supplements can be dangerous and are not the answer for achieving a healthy weight.

- **The diet claims “secret” ingredients.** “Secret” ingredients typically are not based on scientific evidence.

- **It has a rigid menu or you have to eat the same foods over and over again.** Life is complicated enough without having to follow a rigid menu and limiting food choices. It is boring to eat the same thing over and over. With any new diet, always ask yourself: “Can I eat this way for the rest of my life?” If the answer is no, the plan is not for you.

- **It excludes certain food groups or severely restricts them.** One of those food groups commonly excluded is carbohydrates. Our brains need enough carbohydrate to function properly. If you are missing important nutrients for a period of time this can lead to other more serious problems.

- **It does not require physical activity.** Physical activity is essential for good health and weight management, and the key to success is finding activities that you enjoy. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of activity on most days of the week.

**Concord Hospital Center for Health Promotion can help!**

For a personalized plan, tailored to you, consult one of Concord Hospital’s registered dietitians specializing in weight management. Find realistic, flexible eating plans that help you feel and be your best, through physician-referred, one-on-one nutrition counseling or a group weight loss program.

To learn more, visit concordhospital.org and select the quick link to “health and wellness” or call (603)230-7300.

**Purchase Tickets Now!**

8th Annual Wine Tasting Benefit

**February 8, 2013 - 6-9 p.m.**

**Courtyard by Marriott Grappone Conference Center, Concord, NH**

All proceeds to benefit the Genetic Counseling Program at Concord Hospital Breast Care Center. Visit [ch-trust.org](http://ch-trust.org) for more information and to purchase tickets!