

# Lifeline

Dr. James Carson



## Who needs diets

Many people have lost hundreds of pounds in their lifetime only to gain all the weight back once they returned to all their old bad habits.

So why waste your time trying to diet? You know that in the long run you are doomed to fail. Lots of people are ready to take your money while supervising a temporary weight loss.

Do you detect a note of pessimism? Certainly not! I give the following lecture so often I call it "lifestyle 101!" Many of my patients have lost weight and kept it off.

There are three major components to lifestyle: stress, food intake, and exercise.

There are two kinds of stress, positive and negative. First a word about positive stress. When Wayne Gretzky plays against the Leafs he knows that his team will likely win. However, when he plays against Philadelphia he knows he has to play his best. This "pleasure" brings out the best in his abilities.

Negative stress we all know. My method for coping with long hours of studying was to spend most of it with one hand in the fridge! So stress and obesity are directly related. A new book, "The Joy of Stress" by a family physician, Dr. Peter Hanson is excellent reading.

In one minute I would like you to forget all about calories. But first let me use these units of energy to make a point. "Energy in" equals the caloric value of the food and drink that goes down the hatch. "Energy out" equals the caloric value of our waste products plus the energy required as fuel for the body's metabolism and exertion.

Now here is some of that "new math". Your weight will stay the same if energy in equals energy out. Your weight will increase if energy in is greater than energy out. Obviously the reverse also holds true. This last line is the one to strive for when trying to lose weight.

Now for the last word on calories. One pound is equal to about 3,500 calories. If you let your energy in be 500 calories less than your energy out each day, in one week you will lose a pound (500x7=3500).

If you have 26 pounds to lose, a realistic goal would be to lose it over a six-month period. Any quicker and you are on a diet.

How difficult is this? We can decrease energy in by 250 calories by skipping just one doughnut and 2 cookies. We can increase energy out by any one of: walking for 50 minutes; cycling for 30 minutes; swimming for 20 minutes; or running (with your doctor's blessing) for 15 minutes.

This combination of less food intake and increased exercise daily will let you lose one pound a week. Once you reach your goal any sensible combination of the above will allow you to remain at your ideal weight.

What no rules? Of course there are!

1. Decide to lose weight by altering your lifestyle and do it! You don't want to count calories for the rest of your life, so don't waste your time.

2. Don't skip meals. Skip breakfast and you probably will grab a doughnut before lunch, snack all afternoon, pig out at dinner, and raid the fridge all evening.

3. Your meals should be balanced and chosen from roughly equal amounts of each of the four food groups: fruits and vegetables; milk products; cereals and breads; and meat/fish/poultry.

4. Your goal should be to lose one pound (half a kilo) each week.

5. Stay fit. Remember, walking the dog is exercise.

6. EAT SLOWLY. It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to send a message to your brain that it is full. Then your brain sends a message to your mouth to stop eating (if you are lucky!). If you pile enough in after only 10 minutes, you still have 10 minutes to enjoy a moment on the lips and forever on the hips.

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mission. Residents will be able to ask questions of ward councillor, regional councillor and mayoralty candidates. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. at the Penalty Box Lounge in the Markham Centennial Centre.



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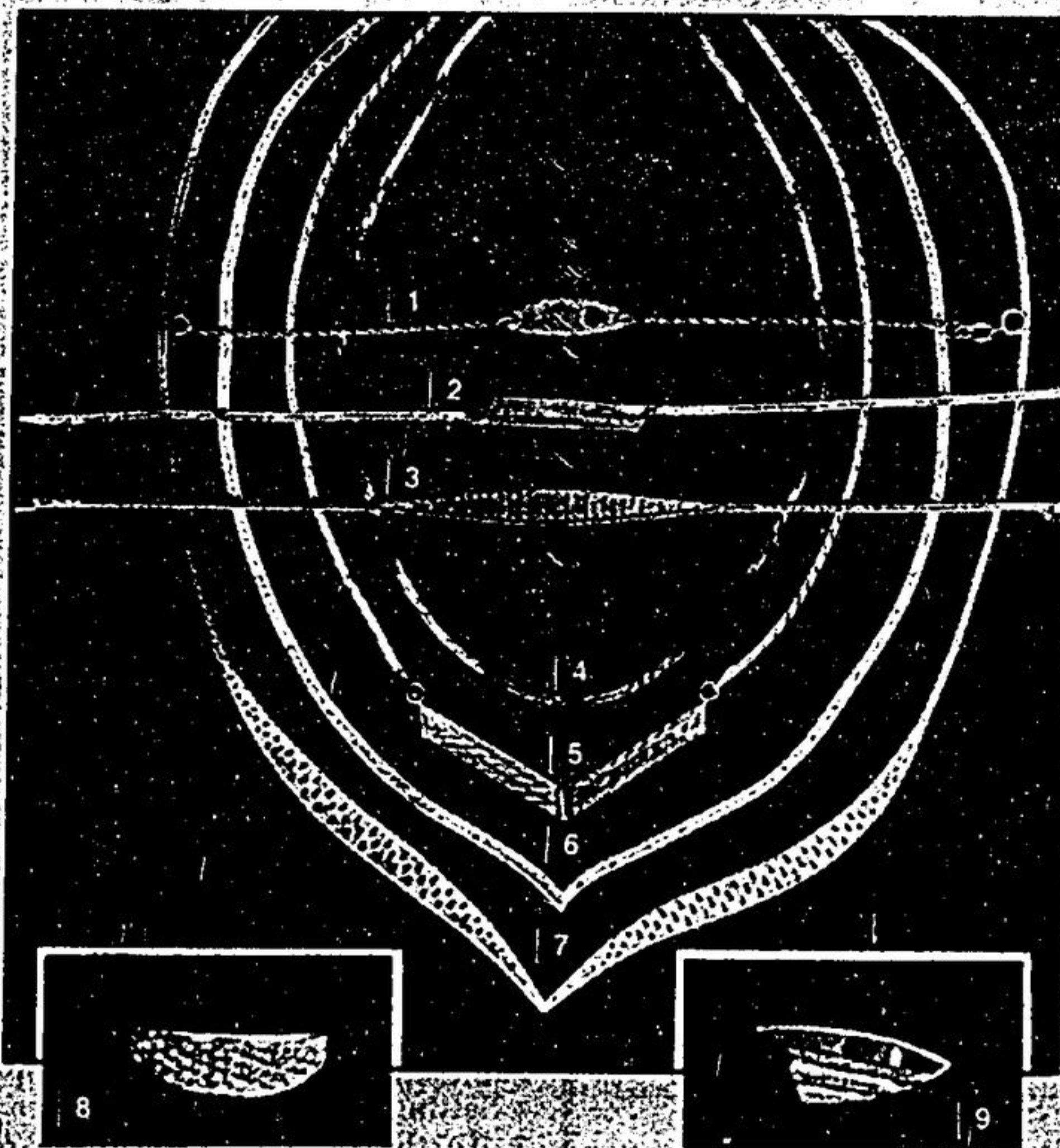
(8 km. East of Port Perry, south off 7A into Village)

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