

## SUPPLEMENTS

Most over-the-counter supplements are designed to be taken alongside a calorie-controlled diet. They aim to make you feel full between meals so you consume fewer calories.

Perfect 10 supplements claim to support the body as it loses fat. They contain a green tea complex that stops cravings and chromium to balance blood sugar levels.

One tablet is taken before breakfast and lunch. Each box has a month's supply and a password for online support which includes access to a nutritionist and a food diary. Perfect 10 costs £24.99 for 60 capsules (perfect10shape.com).



ATKINS: Aniston

## LOW CARBOHYDRATE

Actresses Jennifer Aniston, Renée Zellweger and Courtney Cox are all reported to have lost weight with the Atkins plan. The controversial high-fat, high-protein diet claims that cutting out carbohydrates will make your body burn its fat stores more

## DIET BOOKS

There are numerous weight-loss books on the market but recent releases have moved away from prescriptive diet programmes and towards general nutrition and food education. The GDA Diet (Capstone, £7.99) is written by Nigel Denby, who is not only a registered dietician but also a chef and restaurateur. The book shows you how to shop sensibly at the supermarket by monitoring fat, calorie and carbohydrate intake using the Guideline Daily Amounts found on food packaging. The book includes seven-day plans suitable for busy people, vegetarians and those on a budget.

quickly.

Another option is the GI diet which classifies carbohydrates according to the Glycemic Index.

Foods such as fish, meat and nuts which are low on the GI index are believed to release energy more slowly. High GI foods such as potatoes and white bread are avoided where possible as these are the carbohydrates which raise your blood sugar level most quickly when they break down into glucose during digestion.

## ONLINE

Online dieting is ideal for people who don't want to go to a slimming group but have the motivation and willpower to stick to a weight-loss plan. Some websites such as Bodytrim.eu work in conjunction with a DVD pack and offer online chat to other members and advice from nutritionists. Membership costs £69.95.

Others sites such as Tescotracker.com are free. Using a points system, you keep track of the nutritional

values of what you eat and drink as well as what exercise you have done.

## MEAL REPLACEMENTS

Popular since the mid-Eighties, the Cambridge Diet (0800 161412/cambridge-diet.co.uk) consists of sachets of soup or milkshakes and chocolate covered meal bars.

Dieters are assigned a counsellor who oversees their progress. This programme is mostly aimed at those with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or above.

Lighter Life (0800 2988 988/lighterlife.com) combines counselling with a low calorie diet using meal replacements called food

packs. How many food packs you eat depends on your starting BMI. Slim Fast (0800 587 4471/slimfast.co.uk), a more informal programme widely available from supermarkets and chemists nationwide, can be used by anyone. Dieters have a shake for breakfast and lunch followed by a meal of around 500 calories in the evening.

## GASTRIC BAND

Surgery is a last resort for anyone whose weight is seriously affecting their health. It is most often performed on patients with a BMI of more than 35. While the patient is under anaesthetic a band is inserted around the upper part of the stomach, reducing its size. Patients must have dieted before surgery as this reduces the size of the liver, making it easier to operate.

Mr Haythem Ali, a surgeon with the McIndoe Surgical Centre, says: "In the more straightforward cases the operation takes around 40 minutes. Afterwards patients are fed a liquid diet for six to eight weeks before moving on to a semi-liquid diet. After six to eight months the aim is to reintroduce most normal foods in small quantities. Success rates vary but patients can lose up to 70 per cent of their excess body fat."

Costs of the operation range from £5,000 to £8,000. For more details contact McIndoe's on 0800 917 4922/mcindoe-surgical.co.uk.

## HYPNOTHERAPY

Singer Lily Allen has credited her recent drop from a size 12 to an eight to sessions with

hypnotherapist Susan Hepburn. Marisa Peer, author of *You Can Be Thin* (Little Brown, £10.99) says:

"Hypnotherapy is both powerful and permanent. In a one-on-one hypnotherapy session you need to tell the therapist exactly what you want to achieve, for example: 'I want to stop eating two bags of crisps

when I argue with my boyfriend.' "Hypnosis balances the way you think about food so instead of immediately wanting a slice of cake it trains you to understand that you



HYPNO: Lily Allen

# Ultimate guide to losing weight

If that new year diet has failed then perhaps you've been following the wrong programme. **LAURA JACKSON** investigates the current most popular ways to shape up

can eat cake anytime so you don't need it now. It sounds simple but hypnodieting gives you freedom to choose." A session with Marisa costs £320. Try 07738 707 262/marisapeer.com for more details.

## GASTRIC BALLOON

The gastric balloon is an increasingly popular procedure for those who don't want invasive surgery. A small

**THE WEIGH AHEAD:** Choose one of these diets to help you look trim and keep fit

Pictures: RETNA; WIREIMAGE.COM; GETTY; REX

balloon is inserted into the stomach via the mouth and is then filled with saline. This takes up room in the stomach which makes the patient feel full. The balloon stays in for six months and can be used on patients with a BMI of 27 and above.

Dr John Mason, medical director of the National Obesity Surgery Centre, says: "Results vary but patients have lost as much as six stone in six months. The procedure takes 15 minutes and doesn't require a general anaesthetic so patients usually spend only about two hours in hospital."

A gastric balloon procedure costs around £4,950. For details contact the National Obesity Surgery Centre on 0845 618 7276 or visit [obesitysurgerycentre.com](http://obesitysurgerycentre.com).

## FAT BURNING SHOES

If you want to shed a few pounds and tone up, calorie burning footwear could be

## SLIMMING CLASSES

Weekly meetings are usually held by a trained consultant who has lost weight on the programme. Sessions involve a confidential weigh-in and group discussions to share dieting tips and success stories. Slimming World (0844 897 8000/[slimmingworld.com](http://slimmingworld.com)) offers a food optimising programme with low-fat recipes and no calorie counting. Weight Watchers (0845 712 3000/[weightwatchers.co.uk](http://weightwatchers.co.uk)) uses its Points system and its new Discover programme which focuses on filling foods with a low calorie to volume ratio such as lean meat, brown rice and vegetables.

the answer. FitFlop made calorie-burning shoes an unlikely bestseller by creating a fashionable shoe that also gave legs a workout. FitFlops are said to have an internal micro-wobbleboard that also improves posture. A number of designs are available from flip-flops to more conventional shoes. Log on to [blisslondon.com](http://blisslondon.com) for more details.

## CELEBRITY DETOX DIET

Reese Witherspoon has reportedly lived off baby food, Liz Hurley allegedly survives on one meal a day and Jennifer Hudson ate diet cookies to shed the pounds. Hollywood stars are always finding new diets - many of which promise dramatic weight loss - but such extreme plans are criticised by weight loss experts. "Most faddy diets lack protein, micro nutrients and fibre which can leave you with a sluggish gut," warns nutrition expert Anita Bean. While they might provide a quick fix they are best avoided if you want to stabilise your weight in the long term.



DETOX: Hurley

## ACTIVITY DIETS

Exercise is well known to help boost weight loss so it's no surprise that some diet plans are closely tied to a fitness regime. Curves (0800 130 0544/[curves.co.uk](http://curves.co.uk)) is a gym-based, women-only fitness plan which was hugely popular in America before arriving in the UK two years ago.

A typical Curves gym consists of 12 machines designed to work the upper and lower body. These are arranged in a circle so members workout together and there is always a personal trainer available to ensure the exercises are done correctly.

Unlike conventional gyms there are no mirrors on the wall so members don't feel self-conscious when they are working out. There is a diet plan for members if they want to follow it but the emphasis is on exercise.

Another option is Rosemary Conley's Diet And Fitness Clubs (01509 620 222/[rosemaryconley.com](http://rosemaryconley.com)). Classes start like a typical slimming group with a weigh-in but once that is over members are encouraged to take part in an aerobics session which is led by the trained class instructor.

## DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR

All the hard work of preparing high-quality, low-calorie food is done for you as these diets are delivered straight to your home. Three balanced meals plus snacks are provided each day. Portion sizes are controlled with most plans providing between 1,000 to 1,500 calories per day. Most door-to-door providers will cater for vegetarians.

Try the Go Lower programme which costs £46.50 per week (0800 862 0099/[golower.co.uk](http://golower.co.uk)) or Diet Chef which costs £47.50 per week (020 8242 6273/[ditchef.co.uk](http://ditchef.co.uk)).