

# **STOP COUNTING CALORIES**

“That's loaded with calories!” “I need to count the calories”

## **What Does A Calorie Mean?**

A calorie is nothing but a unit of measurement - but it doesn't measure weight or length. A calorie is a unit of energy. When you hear something contains 100 calories, it's a way of describing how much energy your body could get from eating or drinking it.

## **Are Calories Bad For You?**

Calories aren't bad for you. In fact, your body needs calories for energy. The problem is when you eat too many calories - and not burn enough through activity – which then leads to weight gain.

Most foods and drinks contain calories. Some foods, such as lettuce, contain few calories. Other foods, like peanuts, contain a lot of calories.

You can find out how many calories are there in a food by looking at the NUTRITION FACTS label. It will also describe the individual components of the food - how many grams of carbohydrate, protein, and fat it contains.

Number of calories each gram of macronutrient contain:

- Carbohydrate - 4 calories
- Protein - 4 calories
- Fat - 9 calories

That means if you know how many grams of each component are in your food, you can calculate the total calories.

That's how simple it is to understand calories. But nutrition is more of quality and quantity of food rather than the calories.

Most of us have this fixed mindset of calorie counting when it comes to losing weight. Some of them are so obsessed with calories that they simply give up on calorie dense foods which are actually healthy e.g. nuts and seeds are packed with good fats and antioxidants but are high on

calories. These are actually good calories and eliminating them from our diet is absolutely not a good idea. Of course, we need to watch the portions we eat.

Thus, it's the portion size of the food rather than calorie content of the food that we need to take care of.

If you are really looking for weight/fat loss, you first need to get them off this calorie counting concept if at all they believe in it and slowly condition them to focus more on the right amounts of nutrients and establishing the correct and a balanced diet.

While eating a particular food, it's important for you to understand where these calories are coming from rather than how many calories the food is adding up to your body. For example- If a person consumes 1200 calories from a processed food and the other consumes 1200 calories from a balanced diet obviously, the balanced diet is a better option, despite having the same calorie content as the diet consisting more of processed foods.

So we can say that 1200 calories matter but what matters more is: Where these calories are coming from and what impact does it have on your body.

Eating fewer and fewer calories in an attempt to lose weight does not really help you lose weight. When your body senses an energy/calorie deficit it slows its metabolism in an attempt to conserve energy.

Choosing the right kind of food in right portions and at the right time is what needs to be the focused. We may end up eating more number of calories, but you need to ensure they are coming from the sources that your body needs.