



LOSE UP TO
2 POUNDS BY
TOMORROW!

THE

OVERNIGHT

DIE T

THE PROVEN PLAN FOR FAST,
PERMANENT WEIGHT LOSS

CAROLINE APOVIAN, MD

with FRANCES SHARPE



THE OVERNIGHT DIET



**THE PROVEN PLAN FOR FAST,
PERMANENT WEIGHT LOSS**

By CAROLINE APOVIAN, MD

with FRANCES SHARPE,

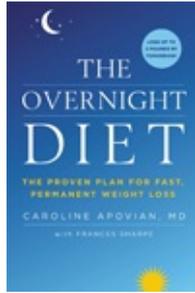
and in consultation with
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and

Wayne Westcott, PhD

GRAND CENTRAL
Life & Style

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*To my mother, Ines Chinni Apovian,
who has always been ahead of her time.*

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Introduction

Overnight results *that last*—that’s what you get with the Overnight Diet. And it’s a big part of how, in the past twenty-plus years, I’ve helped my patients lose over 1 million pounds. You see, helping people slim down is what I do. I’m not a cardiologist, or a family physician, or an emergency room doctor who dabbles in weight management on the side. I’m an obesity medicine physician, which means that I specialize in weight loss. As the director of the Nutrition and Weight Management Center at Boston Medical Center, I’ve helped thousands of people just like you quickly and safely lose pounds and inches for good. And as one of the world’s leading researchers on obesity and weight loss, I’m privy to—and sometimes I’m the one presenting—the most up-to-the-minute scientific findings on what makes people fat, what keeps them fat, and what works to help them lose that fat forever. In fact, my research colleagues have made a revolutionary scientific discovery that shows why most popular diets are doomed to fail. It’s because they lead to muscle wasting, a condition known in medical circles as *sarcopenia*, which sabotages efforts to lose weight. We’ll get to the details on that later. For now, just know that I am here to help translate this research and use it to help you lose weight and keep it off.

The Dark Ages of Dieting

Dieting has gotten stuck in the Dark Ages. I pay attention to every diet that comes out because my patients have usually tried them all and failed. It’s no wonder. Most are either rehashing the same advice or introducing wacky concepts that aren’t based on any research at all. That’s why, despite your best efforts, you haven’t been able to lose those stubborn pounds. Or maybe you have lost weight but can’t seem to keep it from creeping back onto your thighs, butt, and belly, leading to a lifetime of yo-yo dieting. Or perhaps you’re a few pounds lighter but still feel and look a bit flabby and, well, marshmallowy. Is that what you want after all that hard work—a jiggly midsection?

You probably feel frustrated and discouraged. I don’t blame you. I’ve been there myself. I know from personal experience just how hard it can be to lose weight with most diets. When I was in college, I gained the “Freshman 10” then went on to achieve the “Sophomore 15” and the “Junior 20” before slimming down and shaping up with what became the Overnight Diet. I listen with great empathy as my patients tell me all the reasons why they haven’t succeeded at dieting. For example, Tina, twenty-seven,

lamented that one low-calorie diet left her feeling hungry all the time. Jenna, a forty-three-year-old mother of two, complained that she would lose a few pounds then see her weight loss come to a grinding halt even though she was practically starving herself. And fifty-one-year-old Roger told me he would get beyond bored eating the same few bland foods on a diet's "approved" list. The result? They all quit and went right back to their old eating habits. They each told me that they felt like a failure. But I reassured each of them that they hadn't failed dieting; the Dark Ages diets had failed them.

It's bad enough when these diets can't help you reach your goal weight. But for some of my patients, trying to shed pounds with popular diets has had far more dangerous consequences. I've had patients develop high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes, gout, excruciatingly painful kidney stones, or see their muscles wither away—all from trying to lose weight and get healthy. It doesn't make any sense!

I have news for you. Losing weight shouldn't make you suffer. Slimming down—when you do it the right way with a bounty of nutritious foods—should enhance your health and well-being and make you *feel better, not worse!* Hearing what other diets were doing to my patients infuriated me. Seeing that so many of them were not only *not losing weight* with existing diet plans, but also harming their health, feeling deprived, and feeling depressed, I knew I had to do something about it.

Developing the Next Generation of Dieting

After witnessing the struggles of my patients, it became my mission to engineer a twenty-first-century science-based diet that would help you safely achieve rapid weight loss that lasts. The Overnight Diet is that plan: a revolutionary diet based on nearly twenty-five years of research as well as testing with thousands of everyday people just like you. It takes dieting to a whole new level with real, road-tested benefits.

The Overnight Diet is very simple, but before I give you the ABCs of the program, I want to let you know how I developed it. Here's why: Your health and safety are of the utmost importance to me—and they should be to you, too—so I want you to understand that this isn't some fad diet to lose a few pounds at the expense of your health. Rather, it's backed by decades of scientific research showing that in addition to producing quick results, it promotes better health and even longevity. That's right—it's your ticket to looking better, feeling better, and living longer.

For years in my clinic and at the lab at the Nutrition and Weight Management Center at Boston Medical Center, I had been using two time-tested rapid-weight-loss strategies with great success:

The first came from Dr. George Blackburn and Dr. Bruce Bistrian, the renowned creators of the nation's most respected and widely used medically supervised rapid-weight-loss diet. After my residency in internal medicine, I completed a two-year nutrition and metabolism fellowship with these revered nutrition pioneers and soaked up as much knowledge as I possibly could. Their diet was developed to be used in a

highly monitored setting, i.e., the hospital. As successful as it was, I knew that it could be even more accessible and therefore more effective. Over the years, I refined and improved their diet, taking it light-years beyond what they had ever imagined. I have modified it so that it is easier to use and so that you get to eat more food, which allows you to get the lasting results you want with no doctor supervision necessary.

The second is based on a simple dietary habit that has been the subject of decades of research showing that it produces overnight weight loss and a health boost so powerful it increases longevity. It's something humans have been doing for thousands of years. In fact, scientific evidence shows that it's something our bodies are *genetically programmed* to do. But most Americans no longer engage in this once-common practice, and research shows that because of this, our genetic programming has started working against us by piling more and more fat onto our bodies. It's hard to believe, but the weight-loss aspect of this practice has not been explored effectively... until now. I have given this long-standing approach a modern-day reinvention to maximize its flab-fighting ability in the minimum amount of time. The result? Losing more fat faster.

Both strategies had helped my patients knock off unwanted pounds, but I knew they could do even more. One day, one of the staff members at my practice drove up in her new hybrid car, and she started raving about the incredible mileage it got from the combined battery and gas engine. Right then, the wheels in my head started turning, and I had an *aha!* moment.

What if I combined these two separate slim-down strategies into one turbocharged, high-performance diet?

I immediately went to work developing the optimal blend of the best of both plans so they would work synergistically—fueling each other similarly to the way a hybrid car's battery and gas engine work together—to maximize results. I spent years testing and refining this combo diet with real-life people and found that it not only speeds weight loss, but also shatters the typical obstacles to long-term success, making it the ultimate plateau buster. Finally! The next generation of weight loss is here now. So say good-bye to the Dark Ages of dieting and hello to the world's first-ever hybrid diet designed to produce overnight results that last.

Adding Even More Muscle to the Overnight Diet

The synergy that arises from two diet strategies working in tandem is only part of what makes the Overnight Diet so different from any other diet you've tried. Through research, I've also pinpointed the main culprit that thwarts efforts to fight fat, slows metabolism, leads to yo-yo dieting, and can devastate health. And contrary to popular belief, it has nothing to do with a lack of willpower.

It's muscle wasting, a condition known in "doctor speak" as *sarcopenia*, but which I prefer to call the "Shrinking Muscle Syndrome." It is the loss of muscle mass, strength, and function that may occur naturally with age, but that may also occur as a dangerous side effect of or be expedited by most popular weight-loss methods. The nutritional makeup of many diets can cause the body to rob your muscles for energy,

leaving you thinner, but weaker and flabbier. Losing muscle from these diets explains why even though your scale may show that “magic number,” you still can’t fit into your skinny jeans and don’t want to wear a bikini because you look flabby and out of shape. But it gets even worse.

If you regain the weight you lost, as an alarming 95 percent of people on Dark Ages diets do according to statistics, you need to know that it typically comes back as fat rather than as muscle, so there’s *even more* blubber than before. Losing and regaining weight over and over and over throughout your lifetime can be especially harmful. Eventually a person can balloon up like the Michelin Man and not have enough muscle to support all that weight. Think of trying to hold up a watermelon with a couple of toothpicks—you get the idea. It’s what scientists call *sarcopenic obesity*, or fat frail, and it’s a scary condition that makes it difficult for people to stand up or even get out of a chair without assistance. Imagine needing help just to go to the bathroom or answer your front door—that’s how debilitating it can be.

If our diets and weight-loss methods don’t change, in ten years many more people will be in wheelchairs than ever anticipated. Most people who are trying to lose weight have no clue that they could be in danger of developing this condition, but I guarantee that they’ll be hearing a lot more about the Shrinking Muscle Syndrome in the coming months and years.

Preventing it is the ultimate key to rapid weight loss that lasts, and it’s why I’ve engineered the Overnight Diet specifically to maintain lean muscle while torching flab. Don’t worry, this doesn’t mean you have to become a bodybuilder or turn into the Incredible Hulk—in fact, you don’t even have to lift a single barbell. What I’m talking about are long, lean, strong muscles that make you look toned and fit. Isn’t that what we all want? Just imagine how great it will feel to wave good-bye to someone and not feel that embarrassing arm flab flapping in the breeze.

Look Better, Feel Better, Live Longer

There’s more good news—every aspect of the Overnight Diet is designed to promote health and well-being. And I’m not just talking about long-term health benefits that you won’t notice until you’re in your Golden Years. You’ll be thrilled to know that eating the good-for-you foods on this diet can have effects that enhance your health now. Look at what can happen during the first week alone:

- **Immediately:** Compared to eating a fatty breakfast such as greasy bacon or buttery croissants, eating a breakfast such as the ones recommended on the Overnight Diet provides a better boost in mental alertness—no more need for that third cup of coffee to try to power through those morning meetings at work.
- **Within 90 minutes:** Starting just 90 minutes after eating a breakfast similar to what you’ll be eating on the Overnight Diet rather than having a muffin, a scone, or those leftover doughnuts in the break room, the levels of the hunger hormone ghrelin are reduced and remain lowered for three hours. That helps keep your stomach from rumbling.

- **After 24 hours:** You'll lose up to 2 pounds overnight as your body flushes out excess water weight, which reduces insulin levels, improves insulin sensitivity, and minimizes bloat. Plus, it activates the fat-incinerating process.
- **By Day 2:** Eating adequate protein throughout the day as you'll be doing on this diet helps knock out those afternoon energy crashes so you can power through your day.
- **By Night 2:** Eating plentiful amounts of what I call "lean carbs" boosts serotonin production in the brain and can enhance your moods and promote better sleep. Imagine waking up raring to go. Plus, when you sleep better, it helps balance your appetite hormones to control hunger, as well as reducing stress, reducing cravings, and boosting energy.
- **After 1 week:** You could lose up to 9 pounds in one week. In addition, you'll experience reduced hunger, fewer cravings, better moods, higher energy levels, more restful sleep, and enhanced mental alertness. Higher energy levels pump up your desire to get moving with physical activity, which boosts production of a metabolic enzyme called AMPkinase. In turn, this enzyme gives your energy levels an added boost, and it increases production of a hormone called irisin that helps you burn more calories.

Is the Overnight Diet for Me?

Whether you want to lose 5 pounds, 15 pounds, or 50-plus pounds, this hybrid diet will help you do it quickly and safely without feeling deprived. Even if you just want to drop those few extra pounds you piled on over the holidays, you can do it by following this no-fuss plan. In fact, reaching your weight-loss goal has never been so easy. With the Overnight Diet, you can:

- Lose up to 2 pounds overnight and up to 9 pounds the first week, and every week thereafter, until you reach your goal weight.
- Prevent weight-loss plateaus.
- Burn *more* fat faster.
- Eat *more* food while losing *more* weight.
- Exercise *less* while burning *more* fat.
- Stave off hunger pangs.
- Enhance your health.

I've seen it work for thousands of my patients, and I want to see it work for you, too. That's why I'm sharing this program with you in this book. I want you to be able to experience what it feels like to get the rapid results you're looking for and feel good while doing it.

Let's get started!

PART I

HOW THE
OVERNIGHT
DIET WORKS



Overnight Results That Last

With the Overnight Diet, you get the benefit of not just one, but two diet strategies blended into one hybrid plan. Together, they give you the quick results you want—losing up to 2 pounds overnight and up to 9 pounds in the first week—and help you keep the pounds coming off and staying off so you can finally enjoy a long-term relationship with that sleek new shape of yours. Scientific research shows how each piece of this combo diet primes the body to respond better to the other, creating the optimal physiological conditions for rapid weight loss that lasts.

Tales of the Measuring Tape

“A lot of diets promise fast weight loss, but I couldn’t believe it when I lost 2 pounds after the very first day.”

—Renée, 32, lost 18 pounds and 3 inches off her waist

Thanks to this synergy, the Overnight Diet safely delivers rapid weight loss, burns more fat, turns off your “fat” genes, reduces water retention and bloating, staves off hunger pangs, and prevents plateaus. And all of that adds up to enhanced motivation. Of course, it’s pretty easy to stay motivated when the number on the scale keeps going down and your waistline keeps shrinking week after week.

How does this combo diet get you slim fast? It starts with the 1-Day Power Up, which is based on a dietary habit that humans have been doing for thousands of years—taking a temporary break from solid food. This age-old practice has been reengineered for the twenty-first century to jump-start fat burning and weight loss overnight, while reducing hunger. That’s followed by the 6-Day Fuel Up, which builds on the Protein Sparing Modified Fast created by Dr. Blackburn and Dr. Bistrian. “Protein sparing” means that it preserves lean muscle mass, which you’ll learn much more about throughout this book. The Protein Sparing Modified Fast has been reformulated to keep the body in fat-burning mode while allowing you to eat a bounty of tasty foods you love, including peanut butter, avocado, and yes, even potatoes. Then you start the 7-day cycle all over again back at the 1-Day Power Up, which reboots your fat-burning engine and promotes overnight weight loss week in and week out. Just keep cycling these two parts of the plan until you reach your goal weight and your

jeans zip up effortlessly—it’s that simple.

The Overnight Diet at a Glance

1-Day Power Up (Day 1)	Jump-starts weight loss overnight, accelerates fat burning, primes the body to respond optimally to the 6-Day Fuel Up.
6-Day Fuel Up (Days 2–7)	Keeps the fat coming off, feeds the muscles with the optimal amount of protein, fuels the body with an endless array of great-tasting, good-for-you foods for healthy weight loss without deprivation.

This combination primes the body, creating a sort of “metabolic marvel” that maximizes weight loss. So what happens inside the body when you alternate the 1-Day Power Up and the 6-Day Fuel Up?

Burn More Fat Faster

The Overnight Diet is formulated specifically to start incinerating fat faster than other diets. Most diets make you follow a lengthy initiation phase to stimulate weight loss. In today’s “I want it now” society, who has time to wait around? This plan is engineered to turn on the process almost immediately. Thanks to the 1-Day Power Up, your body will begin using fat as energy as soon as 24 hours after you start the diet.

But in order to keep your body in fat-burning mode, you need to shift gears and follow the 6-Day Fuel Up. If you don’t make the switch, the fat-burning process is more likely to stall. Years of testing on thousands of patients has shown that alternating back and forth between these two phases is the secret to keeping the fat coming off.

We need fat burning now more than ever. If you’re reading this book, then you probably already know that America has a problem with fat—we’ve got too much of it. Nearly two-thirds of American adults are overweight and nearly one-third are obese. Middle-aged Americans are more likely to be obese than any other age group.

How much fat is too much? That’s a question patients at the Nutrition and Weight Management Center at Boston Medical Center ask all the time. And it’s understandable why. With so many millions of people expanding into the overweight and obese categories, it seems as if being overweight is the new normal. But as your parents probably told you when you were a teenager, “Just because everybody else is doing it doesn’t mean you should.”

One patient, Lydia, admitted that it took her a while to realize she had a weight problem because everybody in her family was overweight and many of her friends and neighbors were, too. Even though Lydia was more than 30 pounds above a healthy weight, she thought she was at a normal weight because that’s what was normal in her social circle. But then she saw the Body Mass Index (BMI) chart. For decades, scientists have been using BMI as an indicator of a person’s body fat and to determine if a person is underweight, normal weight, overweight, obese, or even morbidly obese. But because so many people think the same way Lydia did about being at a “normal”

weight, it's better to think of it as a "healthy" weight. So forget normal, and get healthy.

With the BMI chart, it doesn't matter if you're the skinniest one in a big family; it's all about the numbers. BMI is calculated using a ratio of height to weight. You can use "Find Your BMI," opposite, to see how your weight measures up. Do note, however, that BMI does have some limitations because it doesn't take into account a person's muscle mass. For example, an elite athlete who is very muscular and has low body fat may have a BMI that indicates overweight, when the athlete clearly does not need to lose weight. On the other end of the spectrum, someone with a very slight build, low muscle mass, and a spare tire may have a BMI that indicates healthy weight or even underweight, but he or she would benefit from losing fat and toning up.

FIND YOUR BMI

Find your height in the left-hand column, then find your weight in the row to the right. Your BMI is at the top of that column.

	<i>Under-weight</i>	<i>Healthy Weight</i>						<i>Overweight</i>					<i>Obese</i>		<i>Morbidly Obese</i>
<i>BMI</i>	<19	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	35	40
<i>Height</i>	<i>Weight (in pounds)</i>														
4'10"	<91	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	167	191
4'11"	<94	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	173	198
5'0"	<97	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	179	204
5'1"	<100	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	185	211
5'2"	<104	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	191	218
5'3"	<107	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	197	225
5'4"	<110	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	204	232
5'5"	<114	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	210	240
5'6"	<118	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	216	247
5'7"	<121	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	223	255
5'8"	<125	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	230	262
5'9"	<128	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	236	270
5'10"	<132	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	207	243	278
5'11"	<136	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	250	286
6'0"	<140	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	258	294
6'1"	<144	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	265	302
6'2"	<148	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	272	311
6'3"	<152	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	279	319
6'4"	<156	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	287	328

Losing Weight by the Numbers

So what's your number? Whether your BMI is in the healthy range and you just want to maintain your weight or lose the last 5 pounds, you have 10 pounds to lose to get into the healthy range, or your BMI is over 30, this diet can work for you. About 450 patients come to the Nutrition and Weight Management Center each month, and they all have unique needs, just like you do. That's why this program has been created so it will work whether you want to lose a little or lose a lot. Just look at how it worked for Angie and her mom, Christina. Both wanted to lose weight, but each of them had very different goals.

Angie, twenty-eight, just wanted to drop about 10 pounds fast so she could fit into a form-fitting dress for her 10-year high school reunion, which was three weeks away. The dress had fit her perfectly when she bought it a couple months earlier, but after that, she had to travel to three week-long work conferences where fattening foods were served up buffet-style and the high-calorie cocktails were flowing. When she got back home and tried on her dress again, the zipper got stuck halfway up.

Christina, fifty-five, had been waging a war with fat for nearly thirty years and wanted to lose more than 40 pounds. She was very frustrated that she hadn't figured out a way to win the battle even though she felt like she'd been dieting her entire life.

They both started the very next day on the 1-Day Power Up and followed it up with the 6-Day Fuel Up. Overnight, Angie lost 1 pound and Christina dropped 2 pounds. By the end of the first week, Angie had lost 4 pounds and Christina was 6 pounds lighter. "We were both amazed how much our bodies had changed in just one week," Christina said. "That was just what I needed to keep going."

By the night of Angie's reunion, she had lost 11 pounds and 2 inches from her waist. "My dress zipped up so easily," she said. "It actually felt a little loose in the waist. I could have worn a smaller size!" Her mom, Christina, stuck with the program for six months and lost a total of 47 pounds, 5 inches off her midsection, and 7 inches off her hips. "I don't think my body has ever looked this good," she gushed at a follow-up appointment.

Get to Know Your Fat Cells

Many people think of the body's fat as the enemy, but your body needs fat cells to be healthy. Your body needs a place to store energy, and your fat cells do the job. Until recently, the theory was that we were all born with approximately the same number of fat cells—in the neighborhood of 10 billion—and that number would grow until we reached adulthood, at which time the number of fat cells would no longer budge. The belief was that if you consumed more calories than you expended, your fat cells would swell in size to accommodate that extra energy, but you wouldn't create any new fat cells. Based on this line of thinking, a lean person and someone who was 100 pounds overweight would have roughly the same number of fat cells, but the lean person's fat

cells would be small and the overweight person's would be stretched like a balloon that's ready to pop. Now we know it isn't quite so simple.

New research is revealing that the secret life of fat cells is far more complex. Overeating does cause fat cells to swell up in size, but when stretched to the limit, some of them may divide and thus multiply, creating new fat cells. Theories now indicate that a lean adult might have about 10 to 20 billion fat cells, while an obese person might have as many as 100 billion. And then some people who cannot stretch their fat cells any further store fat in places such as the liver and muscle and develop diseases such as type 2 diabetes and cirrhosis of the liver.

Fat Burning 101

You know you want to burn fat, but how exactly does it happen? Getting that stubborn fat out of your body depends on a complicated bodily process, but to keep it simple, here are just the highlights. The same way your computer needs a power supply to keep it running, your body needs energy for daily life. It's what allows you to walk from the parking lot to your office at work, play with your toddler, or do housework. It's also required for a host of internal processes such as breathing, keeping your heart beating, and thinking. You may be surprised to discover that this last one is quite the calorie burner—when you're at rest, your brain consumes about 20 to 25 percent of your calories.

However, the body's number one source of energy for all these activities is glycogen, the form in which your body stores the carbohydrates you eat. The more daily activities performed, the more glycogen the body uses. If glycogen stores are completely depleted by these activities, then the body begins to burn fat as an alternate source of energy. When this happens, your body sends a signal to your fat cells to liberate their contents. The fat cells comply by releasing their "stuffing" in the form of free fatty acids that enter the bloodstream, something called *lipolysis*. The fatty acids are then shuttled to the muscles, internal organs, and other tissues, which burn them up for needed energy. This process is called *oxidation*. Once the fat is burned for energy, it's gone, and the fat cells that once housed it shrink. Skinnier fat cells translate into a skinnier you.

Turn Off Your "Fat Genes"

Did you know that your genetics may be working against you to make you fat? Genetic scientists have introduced the "Thrifty Gene Hypothesis," which suggests that in prehistoric times, certain genes helped our ancestors Caveman Joe and Cavewoman Jane thrive in times when food was scarce.

According to this theory, these genes played an important role in a natural cycle that alternated between feasting on food and then engaging in physical activity to hunt for their next meal. When Caveman Joe and Cavewoman Jane were successful at bringing home a wild animal for dinner, they would feast, and the so-called thrifty

genes would go to work to store that food as fat. When the food supply ran out, Caveman Joe had to run, jump, and climb to hunt down their next meal while Cavewoman Jane walked, squatted down, and reached up high to gather plants and berries. That's when their fat stores would be burned as fuel. Feasting and storing fat; hunting and gathering for food and burning fat—that's the natural cycle our bodies were genetically programmed to follow and it's what kept Caveman Joe and Cavewoman Jane lean and athletic. (Have you ever seen a cave drawing of a fat caveman?)

Since those prehistoric times, our diets have changed dramatically. We now have an endless supply of food that we graze on constantly. And the only "hunting" required to acquire it is slowly strolling up and down the grocery store aisles. The nonstop eating and sedentary lifestyle mean that we no longer complete the natural eating cycle. Some scientists suggest that our diets have evolved, but our genetic programming hasn't caught up, and those genes that proved to be such a lifesaver for our ancestors are now making us fat and unhealthy. These experts contend that we've gotten stuck in feasting mode, and our genes are simply doing their job by storing more and more fat on our bodies. Not only is this expanding our waistlines, but it's also contributing to chronic diseases and poor health. Of course, in reality, it's far more complicated than this, but it is certainly possible that our genetics are working against us in the battle of the bulge.

Did you know...

Since the Industrial Revolution 200 years ago, countless fattening ingredients and foods have been introduced to our diets.

1798: Sucrose
1858: Feedlot-produced meats
1886: Coca-Cola
About 1890: Refined grains
1900: Hershey's bar
About 1900: Refined vegetable oils
1918: Hydrogenated oils
1930: Toll-House cookies
1930: Twinkies
1937: Krispy Kreme Doughnuts
1941: M&M'S
1952: Frosted Flakes
1967: Big Mac
1978: High-fructose corn syrup
1978: Ben & Jerry's ice cream
1985: Cinnabon
1994: Wetzel's Pretzels
2001: Deep-fried Snickers
About 2002: Fried Twinkies
2009: Pizza Hut's Stuffed-Crust Pizza
2012: Jack in the Box's Bacon Shake

The Overnight Diet is the antidote for this problem. It signals your genes to take a

break from their job of storing fat so your body can start burning it as fuel instead. Switching between the 1-Day Power Up and the 6-Day Fuel Up helps re-create the natural cycle our bodies were intended to follow so we can get our genes working *for* us rather than *against* us.

Put Your Fat Genes to Sleep

Have you ever blamed your genes for your weight troubles? You could be right, at least partly. To date, scientists have identified dozens of fat genes. In fact, they discovered 18 new ones in 2010 alone, and some say there could be as many as 100 of them. But we don't all possess all of them. The discovery of fat genes helps explain why weight problems tend to run in families. A review of 46 studies involving nearly 124,000 people combined showed that the more fat genes a person has, the more likely he or she is to be obese. People with over 38 fat genes weighed an average of 15 to 20 pounds more than those who had fewer than 22 fat genes.

Get the Skinny on Science

Were You Born This Way? Scientists are beginning to find the answers to this question, and more are on the way. In 2011, the National Institutes of Health gave a \$2 million grant for a five-year study to investigate the impact of genetics on obesity and weight loss. Until the results of that study are revealed, here are some of the existing findings on what your parents might have had to do with your weight:

- Numerous studies on twins show that being obese is 40 to 75 percent hereditary.
- Researchers from London looked at 5,092 pairs of twins aged eight to eleven and found that their BMI and waist circumference were 77 percent hereditary.
- A study in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism* found that children born to a mother who had weight-loss surgery prior to pregnancy were less likely to be overweight than their siblings who were born before the mother had surgery. This suggests that a mother's weight during pregnancy may affect a developing fetus.

But this does not mean that just because your folks were fat you are doomed to be fat, too, or that there isn't anything you can do about it. Your genes are not your destiny! Your daily habits play a major role in what is called the "expression" of those genes. This means that your behaviors can effectively turn on or turn off those genes. Having doughnuts for breakfast and hitting the drive-thru for greasy fast-food lunches and dinners every day can power up those genes to start fulfilling their mission of making you fat. But give your body the delicious healthy foods you will be eating on this diet and it will help put those fat genes into the sleep mode.

Rev Up Metabolism

Metabolism is a complex bodily process that determines how quickly your body

converts food into fuel and how fast it burns that fuel. It is part of the reason why some people can chow down at the all-you-can-eat buffet and still stay slim while the rest of us merely look on with envy. A sluggish metabolism is often blamed when diet after diet has failed.

Several factors play a role in determining the speed of your metabolism, including your age, gender, and genetics. After you hit age forty, your metabolism slows by about 5 percent each decade. Women tend to burn fewer calories than men because they typically have less muscle mass than men. And those genes you inherited from Mom and Dad also count. But so does your body composition and your activity level. One of the main reasons your metabolism slows is that, with age, people tend to lose muscle mass through a process called *sarcopenia*, but we'll get to that in [Chapter 2](#).

Weight-loss physicians use a rather complicated equation to determine a person's resting basal metabolic rate (BMR). That's the number of calories your body uses just to perform all its basic functions, such as breathing, digesting, and keeping your blood circulating. There's no need to bore you with the math here, but basically it means that a woman who is 5-foot-5 and weighs 200 pounds burns more calories on those basic functions than a woman who is the same height but weighs only 125 pounds. Now let's say that 200-pound woman loses 50 pounds. This means her body now uses fewer calories on basic functions, so she needs to eat less to maintain her body weight.

When you carry extra weight, it causes your body to work harder to perform all the necessary processes of life. That's why, when you try a new diet that simply cuts calories, you probably lose weight easily at first, but then it gets harder and harder to keep it coming off. Your BMR naturally declines as you drop the weight. It simply doesn't have to work as hard to keep your body functioning. So even though you're consuming the same amount of calories on your diet, you may stop losing weight, which can make you want to quit dieting altogether.

Tales of the Measuring Tape

"I always thought it was my metabolism that was preventing me from losing weight. A couple of my girlfriends and I tried a few diets together and they all lost weight easily—of course they gained it all back!—but I would lose a few pounds then hit a plateau. I was ready to give up entirely and felt like I was destined to be fat for the rest of my life. Now I know why my metabolism was working against me. We were all eating the same number of calories per day, but because I weighed about 75 pounds less than they did to start, I dropped fewer pounds. Plus, even though I stuck within the calorie restrictions, I was eating foods and doing exercises that did nothing to boost metabolism. With the right foods and the easy workout on the Overnight Diet, I actually lost more weight than my girlfriends!"

—Andrea, 29, lost 28 pounds and four pants sizes

That's part of the reason there is no calorie counting on the Overnight Diet. The synergy of this combo diet is designed to avoid this common problem and *speed up* your metabolism as you lose weight so you can keep the pounds coming off—even if you've got age, gender, and genetics stacked against you. The nutritional makeup of the diet has been formulated with this specific goal in mind. You'll be eating lots of great-tasting, metabolism-boosting foods that will help you burn more calories faster. Plus, in [Chapter 2](#), you will discover many more ways the Overnight Diet increases