

## The RMR Diet: For Clients

You want to lose weight. You may have tried various programs or diets and had some initial success but later failed. You are frustrated. It shouldn't be this difficult.

The RMR Diet is a program based on your individual resting metabolic rate (RMR). It is simple. Your RMR is the number of calories you burn at rest and the number you need to eat to maintain normal body functions (heart beating, breathing, etc.). If you eat the number of calories equal to your RMR, you will lose weight – safely – and keep it off. Why? Because your RMR accounts for about 60-75% of all the calories you burn in a day. The other calories you burn from normal daily activity (working, going to the grocery store, etc.) will go towards weight loss. Remember, weight loss is a simple balance: if you burn more calories than you eat, you will lose weight.

Nearly all diet programs require that you eat less, so why don't they work? Most programs guess at the number of calories that you need to eat to lose weight. Often, this results in restricting your calories too much. This actually decreases your metabolic rate, can be very difficult for you to stick with for very long, and can be dangerous to your health. Other times, the recommended caloric intake is too high for you to lose weight and, of course, you become frustrated when you aren't successful.

RMR is unique to every individual, and it can be vastly different in people who are the same age, gender, height and weight – the normal predictors of metabolic rate. In fact, one study showed that women similar in the characteristics above varied in their measured RMR by about 900 calories/day!<sup>1</sup>

The RMR measurement is simple. You will sit quietly and breath through a metabolic device called the BodyGem™ for about 10 minutes. This measures the amount of oxygen you are consuming which allows determination of the number of calories you are burning. After the measurement, you will know your individual RMR. If you eat an amount of calories equal to your RMR, you should expect to lose about 1 pound per week. If you want to lose weight at a slightly faster rate, then you simply need to add some additional exercise to increase the calories you are expending. It is that simple.

As with any weight management program, you will probably reach a weight loss plateau after a few weeks and stop losing weight or even start to put weight back on. This is a signal that your metabolism has changed as a result of your weight loss and you need to re-measure your RMR immediately to adjust your caloric intake for continued success.

Ideally, you will log the foods that you eat and any exercise you are doing to help you keep track of your calories in and calories out. You can do this on paper or, more conveniently, on your computer or palm device using BalanceLog™ software. BalanceLog keeps track of the calories you eat and calories you burn, as well as other nutrients, and shows you throughout the day/week/month if you are on track to meet your goal.

<sup>1</sup> Foster et al (1988). Resting energy expenditure, body composition, and excess weight in the obese. *Metabolism* 37(5): 467-472.

### Sample RMR diet plans

No exercise				
RMR = calories eaten	Calories burned through activity (lifestyle + occupation)	Total calories burned	Deficit (Total - RMR)	Weight loss (1 pound = 3500 kcal)
1350	450*	1800	450	3150 calories/week (just under 1 pound/week or 47 pounds in 1 year!)

## The RMR Diet: For Clients (cont.)

<b>Moderate exercise: Walking 1 mile per day (1 mile = approx. 100 calories burned)</b>				
RMR = calories eaten	Calories burned through activity (lifestyle + occupation + exercise)	Total calories burned	Deficit (Total - RMR)	Weight loss (1 pound = 3500 kcal)
1350	550*	1900	550	3850 calories/week (just over 1 pound/wk or 63 pounds in 1 year!)

<b>More vigorous exercise: Jog 3 miles, 4 days per week (300 calories per mile = 1200 calories per session) and use cycle ergometer 3 days per week for 30 minutes at a moderate intensity (150 calories per session)</b>				
RMR = calories eaten	Calories burned through activity (lifestyle + occupation + exercise)	Total calories burned	Deficit (Total - RMR)	Weight loss (1 pound = 3500 kcal)
1350	685*	2035	575	4795 calories/week (1.4 pounds per week or 71 pounds in 1 year!)

\* Calculation assumes RMR is 75% of total calories burned. This number will vary slightly for each person depending upon his/her lifestyle and occupation.

## The RMR Diet: For Health Professionals

You likely have clients who are frustrated with their weight. Whether they are dealing with excess weight or are struggling to regain muscle mass lost as a result of an injury, you can use the RMR Diet to help your clients achieve their goals.

The RMR Diet is based on your client's measured resting metabolic rate (RMR). It is simple. Your client's RMR is the number of calories burned at rest and the number needed to eat to maintain normal body functions (heart beating, breathing, etc.). Eating the number of calories equal to RMR will enable them to lose weight – safely – and keep it off. Why? Because RMR accounts for about 60-75% of total energy expenditure. Any additional calories expended as a result of normal daily activities (working, going to the grocery store, etc.) will result in a calorie deficit and weight loss. Remember, weight loss is a simple balance: if you burn more calories than you eat, you will lose weight.

The goal of most weight management programs is weight loss. Although nearly all weight loss programs require a reduction in calorie intake, most do not result in long-term success. Why? Most programs *guess* at the number of calories that your client needs to eat to lose weight. Often, this results in restricting their calorie intake too much. This actually decreases metabolic rate, results in poor long-term compliance, and can have negative health consequences. Other times, the recommended calorie intake is too high to reduce weight significantly and clients become frustrated with their lack of success.

RMR is unique to every individual, and it can be vastly different in people who are the same age, gender, height and weight – the normal predictors of metabolic rate. In fact, one study showed that women similar in the characteristics above varied in their measured RMR by about 900 calories/day!<sup>1</sup>

Measuring your client's RMR with BodyGem™ allows you to know their actual individual metabolic rate. If he/she eats an amount of calories equal to their RMR, a weight loss of about 1 pound per week is expected. If a more rapid weight loss is desired (1½ - 2 pounds/week), simply recommend adding some additional exercise to increase calorie expenditure.

Participation in a weight management program designed to achieve weight loss may lower RMR. Many people are initially successful, lose a few pounds, and then reach a weight plateau. Using the BodyGem and remeasuring RMR when a plateau occurs allows you to help your client adjust their calorie intake and exercise program to achieve further success.

Ideally, your client will log the foods that they eat and exercise they participate in to help keep track of their calorie balance. They can do this on paper or, more conveniently, on a computer or palm device using BalanceLog™ software. BalanceLog keeps track of calories consumed and calories burned, as well as other nutrients, and shows throughout the day/week/month if they are on track to meet their weight goals.

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