

How to lose weight... FAST

Written by CAROL POMEDAY

Wednesday, 30 January 2013 18:40

□□□ *"In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled."*
Daniel 10:2, 3

Based on that passage from the Book of the Prophet Daniel in the Old Testament, John Love of Saukville is in the midst of a 40-day Daniel fast, a plant-based diet consisting of fruit, vegetables, beans, raw nuts and whole grains. No meat or dairy products are allowed or "pleasant foods," such as breads and sweets. Water is the preferred beverage, but fruit and vegetable juices without added sugars are allowed.

A recent evening meal included spinach, whole wheat angel hair pasta, black beans, raw almonds, tomatoes, avocados, mushrooms and plain Triscuit wheat crackers.

There is also a spiritual aspect to the fast.



The diet is Love's secret to losing 85 pounds in one year, dropping from a hefty 330 pounds to 245 pounds on his 6-foot, 2-1/2-inch frame. That's the weight he was on his wedding day 20 years ago.

Love, who is 47 and has type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol, decided in May 2011 that he had to lose weight if he wanted to see his daughters Jamie, 13, and Marissa, 12, grow up.

"I had sore ankles and knees and my blood sugar was way out of whack," Love said. "About the only thing I had going for me was my good cholesterol (HDL) was good."

By the end of the year, he was discouraged. He lost 10 pounds quickly, but then hit a plateau and didn't reach any of his goals.

"I wanted to be a certain weight by my birthday in July and didn't make that," Love said. "Since I didn't make that, I didn't make the next milestone either."

When the Rev. Mark Larson brought the Daniel fast idea to Portview Christian Center in January 2012, Love, an active member of the church, decided to try it. Participants could fast for one week or 21 days.

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Love chose to do it for 21 days, and he started losing weight. When the fast was over, Love continued to follow the diet, adding dairy foods and occasionally eating fish or boneless, skinless chicken breasts.

“I’m a prayer-and-fasting person, and this worked out for me,” Love said.

“I just changed all my eating habits at that point. Black beans are my staple. I love black beans. It’s one of the highest beans in fiber and protein. My favorite dinner is roasted vegetables and black beans.

“After the fast, a treat is an Arby’s roast beef sandwich. I generally don’t eat red meat or pork.”

He not only lost weight, but he was able to reduce his medications.

In addition, he works out at 4:30 a.m. six mornings a week at Anytime Fitness in Port Washington.

Until he had surgery in November to repair a torn meniscus and reposition a floating kneecap, Love’s work out was running on a treadmill for 50 minutes, stretching for 10 minutes and doing sit-ups for five minutes. He then showered and went to work.

He works four 10-hour days a week at Alliance Packaging in Saukville and another 10 hours a week as custodian for Portview Christian School, so finding time to work out was difficult at first.

“When I finally decided I was going to get up at 4:15 a.m. (to work out), I started to really lose weight,” Love said.

“It was hard at first, but now I don’t feel good if I don’t do it. The energy I get from it carries me through the day. I’m a lot more alert at work and I can regulate my eating a lot better.”

Love’s co-workers help him stay on track even when he’s not on the fast.

“When they get doughnuts, they get me pretzels or almonds,” he said.

“I don’t know if this would work for other people, but it does for me. The important thing is to stay with it until you get over the hump.”

A major accomplishment was when he ran the Fish Day 8K in 47 minutes last year.

“I was very happy with my time,” Love said. “I never thought I would be a runner. I went from running 10 seconds and breaking out in a sweat to running 50 to 60 minutes without stopping.”

Love recently returned to the gym after his surgery, but he can’t run for three months.

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That should give him time to train for this year's Fish Day run.

Image Information: A plant-based diet helped John Love lose 85 pounds in a year. Photo by Sam Arendt