



body through his structured program can remove wrinkles, speed up metabolism and weight loss, and enhance mood, brain function and overall health. He recommends 10 “superfoods,” including barley, hot peppers and nuts with omega 3 fats, combined with nutritional supplements and state-of-the-art topical applications (he’s a dermatologist) to reverse the aging process in “three easy steps.”

The trend: While The Perricone Promise is relatively new, published in October 2004, he previously hit the #1 spot on the NY Times Bestseller List with *The Wrinkle Cure* and *The Perricone Prescription*. His latest also hit the #1 spot its first week on the list, shortly after his appearance on the Oprah Winfrey show.

The bottom line: Too early to say, but *The Perricone Prescription* also offers a three-day program (which strongly recommends “healthy amounts” of salmon) to help reduce wrinkles and lose weight. If you’re happy with the results from the three-day program, you can always try the 28-day program described in both books.

The plan: The Ultimate Weight Loss Solution:

Seven Keys to Weight Loss Freedom. By Phil McGraw.

The nuts and bolts: Also known as the Shape Up! Plan, this diet emphasizes seven key points: right thinking for self control; healing feelings, the key to emotional control; no-fail environment; mastery over food and impulse eating; high-response cost, high-yield nutrition; intentional exercise; and your circle of support. The plan offers a balanced approach to dieting by offering high-fiber foods – including complex carbohydrates, whole grains, fruits and vegetables – balanced with lean protein and healthy fats. A crucial part of the plan is its reliance on a diet of what “Dr. Phil” calls “high-response-cost, high-yield foods,” such as sunflower seeds, which require several steps before calories are actually ingested and don’t become stored fat. He also strongly recommends foods like broccoli, shelled peanuts and fish, and while no food is restricted he urges followers to avoid fast food.

The trend: Also a NY Times Best Seller, *The Ultimate Weight Loss Solution* has been the topic of recurring discussions and follow-ups on the Dr. Phil show, which has been making headlines and breaking ratings records since its September 2002 launch.

The bottom line: The plan emphasizes tight calorie control, but it also encourages better long-term results, with a loss of one to two pounds a week of slow and steady weight loss, as opposed to crash diets with better initial results.

The plan: The South Beach Diet. By Arthur Agatston, MD.

The nuts and bolts: The plan stresses choosing the right carbohydrates and fats to lose weight through three phases, which end with a “diet for life.” The first phase emphasizes eating lean meat like chicken, turkey, fish and shellfish while avoiding baked goods, bread, fruit, potatoes, pasta and rice. After the initial two weeks, dieters reintroduce controlled portions of carbohydrates into their diets, all the while stressing the importance of choos-

ing monounsaturated fats like olive oil and Omega 3 fatty acids over saturated fat found in butter and fatty meats like

hamburger and bacon. The last stage is a more liberal version of the program that promises to help you maintain your ideal weight after you have reached your weight goal.

The trend: The diet became popular in Miami and has since spawned a frenzy of followers since its introduction in 2003, selling more than 14 million copies and remaining on the NY Times Best Sellers list for more than 85 weeks at the time of this writing.

The bottom line: Dr. Agatston saw the success of patients following high-fat/low-carb diets like the Atkins Diet, but being a cardiologist he was concerned about the effects on the heart. He formulated *The South Beach* plan to promote weight loss in combination with heart health, but critics don’t know enough yet to determine if the protein-heavy menu is a good long-term solution for a person’s cardiovascular health or immune system. Critics also claim some of the menus are complicated and include expensive ingredients that make the diet impractical.

The plan: Weight Watchers. Founder, Jean Nidetch.

The nuts and bolts: The central philosophy of Weight Watchers has always been that dieting is just one part of long-term weight management. Instead of telling you what you can or can’t eat, Weight Watchers provides information, knowledge, tools and motivation to help guide your decision about nutrition and exercise.

One other important aspect of the Weight Watchers plan is regular meetings where members can share successes and ideas, plus support one another in their quest for weight loss. The tradition of these regular meetings began in the early ’60s when founder Jean Nidetch began inviting friends to her home in Queens once a week to discuss weight loss ideas. Now, millions of people around the world meet once a week.

The latest innovation in Weight Watchers has been TurnAround, a program wherein you choose between one of two plans. The first, called the Flex plan, operates on a system of points. You get so many points at a time, and more nutritious foods have smaller point values. This guides dieters towards more nutritious foods, instilling healthy eating habits that stay with you. The Core plan, the other aspect of TurnAround, focuses on a core group of wholesome foods that provide eating satisfaction by don’t encourage overeating.

In addition to easily personalized plans, Weight Watchers encourages weight loss through its Web site, www.weightwatchers.com. It not only helps new members find nearby meetings, it also provides updates on new advances in weight loss.

The trend: Having endured for over 40 years, Weight Watchers has outlasted several weight loss “fads” through its no-nonsense approach and vast support network.

The bottom line: Weight Watchers’ emphasis on keeping up-to-date, support and personalization assures that no matter what your weight loss goals, they can help you.