

Weight until tomorrow

By Ruth Ostrow

STANDING on the doctor's scales this time of year is never much fun. His brow goes up as he stares at the rising kilos. "My, you've put on a bit since you were here last," he says.

I know this already. One pair of pants actually split as I sat down; I wear the other with top buttons open and a T-shirt over the top (God bless the long T-shirt!).

Despite a healthy diet and lifestyle, I'm just like everyone else over the New Year period. First, that one piece of cake – "Well, it is Christmas after all!" Then that next piece with cream – "Oh well, a bit of fat doesn't hurt." Then the glass of wine, which becomes three, and of course we don't want to insult our hosts by refusing their baked potatoes. All this is coupled with the fact that routine is broken, and exercise can cease.

I'm a big believer that it is healthy to binge every now and again. Joy and pleasure are true health tonics. But there does come a time to pay the gatekeeper.

And weight does kill. Having attended many longevity conferences around the world over the past few years, I've seen plenty of research that proves that people on low calorie, low glycemic diets not only live longer but also have a better quality of life as they age – with less arthritis, heart disease, diabetes, depression, and other debilitating maladies.

The best way forward is a supervised detox. The idea behind fasting and detox is that up to 70 per cent of our bodies' energy is used in digestion – being assimilation and elimination. This is often what exhausts us, ages us, and keeps us away from optimal health.

When we rest our digestive system, the body can get to work cleansing the liver and vital organs, regulating hormones, boosting energy and burning unnecessary fat.

I don't go in for commercial packs. Rather, I do my own detox, juicing fresh organic greens, making vegetable broths and drinking loads of purified water; I'm also a big fan of the book *Juice Fasting and Detoxification: Use the Healing Power of Fresh Juice to Feel Young and Look Great*, by Steve Meyerowitz.

I detox two or three times a year with the help of a local nurse who checks my vitals as I go.

The only problem this year is that my mantra seems to be: "I'll start tomorrow", as I savour one last chocolate. I only hope I don't split another pair of pants before tomorrow comes.

www.ruthostrow.com

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