



Safe Dieting for Teens

Linda Ojeda

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Health and self-image issues affecting teens are constantly in the headlines, and Linda Ojeda strives to present a balanced and realistic approach to weight management.

Ojeda has studied women's health issues for more than twenty-five years and has written several books, including *Menopause Without Medicine* and *Her Healthy Heart*. The first edition of *Safe Dieting for Teens* was released in 1993.

"So you think you're fat. Are you sure?" Ojeda insists that teens approach weight loss with an informed strategy. The psychological, emotional, and physiological components of weight gain and loss are thoroughly discussed, as well as the dietary aspect. Several calorie charts and a web-resource guide provide for further education. Included in the back is a note to parents with tips for success including, "Let them find their own way. Unless you're asked, hold your tongue."

The first half of the book focuses on general diet concepts, such as understanding why common diet techniques fail and simple ways to increase physical activity, like "taking my iPod for a walk." Ojeda also asks the reader to embrace what is already great about them, independent of their weight, and to question themselves about why they want to lose weight.

The second half of the book focuses on food choices. Her cardinal rules are variety, moderation, and balance. She does not prescribe what to eat. "The secret is, *you* decide what route to take (not me), because what *you* choose, you will follow. This is *your* diet. ...And when you succeed, it's because of you, not me."

Ojeda's style is easy to follow. Each chapter is full of good tips, such as a quick way to visualize sugar grams—a teaspoon divided by four. Though the advice generally would apply to anyone, recommended caloric intake is specifically geared to the growing teen body.

Losing weight is not easy or fast. Ojeda's adaptive and honest approach takes more commitment than teens might be used to, but anyone ready to be serious will find this book an approachable and useful tool.

NAOMI MILLÁN (October 9, 2007)

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