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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

How Many Calories do You Really Need?

Last week I discussed a few different methods of calculating what body weight is considered healthy for a person your size and sex. This week, I will show you how to roughly calculate the number of calories you burn in an average day. No, this does not necessarily mean that the number of calories you come up with in your calculation is what you should aim for each day. If you need to lose weight, the number of calories you consume per day should be well under the amount you calculate below. If you do this every day, then and only then will you lose weight. If you need to gain weight, you should try to consume more calories per day than what you calculate below.

Adults can calculate their approximate energy needs using the following two formulas:

A. First, take your body weight and multiply it by 12 (for men) or 11 (for women)
e.g., (150 lb man) x (12) = **1800 calories**

Thus, we determine that a 150-pound man requires approximately 1800 calories per day for his "Basal Metabolic Rate". This is the number of calories a man of that weight would burn just to keep the heart beating, the lungs pumping, etc. You would just burn your basal metabolic rate worth of calories if you slept all day.

B. Second, if you do anything more than just sleep or sit on the couch, you will burn additional calories. This can be roughly calculated by multiplying one third of your body weight by the number of hours you don't sleep, typically 16 hours
e.g., (150 lb man) x (1/3) = 50

then, 50 x 16 hours = **800 calories**

Therefore, the calories burned by a 150 lb male who is of a normal activity level is:

1800 + 800 = **2600 calories**

Once again, if you need to lose weight, you must burn more calories in a day than you eat. The opposite is true for those very few of you who need to gain weight. Since

the incidence of obesity and its resulting ailments (including low back pain) is increasing every year, more of us need to start keeping track of how many calories we are burning vs. consuming.