Why is it so hard to lose weight?
- Over time your metabolism slows, meaning that you need fewer calories as you age.
- Weight gain is a protective mechanism: if you are losing weight your body thinks it is starving and will work against you to try prevent weight loss.
- Time commitment: weight loss takes work. You must pay attention to how much you are eating and engage in regular exercise.
- Fad diets DO NOT work. We’ll learn more as diet myths are debunked.

Myth: Fad diets will work to shed weight for good.
Reality: No diet will work in the long term if you do not learn to modify your eating habits. Losing weight quickly may seem intriguing, but it actually can be harmful if you are restricting calories too much or omitting certain food groups.

Myth: Weight-loss pills will help burn calories faster.
Reality: Weight-loss pills are not guaranteed to help boost your metabolic rate. Currently, there are no FDA regulations in place to ensure that what the manufacturers promise will actually happen. Some ingredients may actually be harmful to take, especially if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, or heart arrhythmias.

Myth: Skipping meals will help promote weight loss.
Reality: Skipping meals will reduce calorie intake at the time of the meal, but it will cause you to become hungrier going into the next meal, which can lead to overeating or poor food choices.

Myth: Carbohydrates are fattening.
Reality: Foods rich in carbohydrates are usually low in fat. Whole-grain foods should be incorporated into a healthy diet. Be aware of portion control and condiments with these types of foods. A baked potato is a healthy choice, but not if it is laden with butter and sour cream.

Myth: Drinking cold water will make you burn calories faster.
Reality: Hydration is key in weight loss. However, it does not matter if beverages are hot or cold. Adequate hydration is an important variable in promoting weight loss.

Myth: Eating at night will cause weight gain.
Reality: It all depends on how much you have eaten in total for the day. If you overeat at any time, you will convert the extra calories that your body does not need into fat storage. If you tend to snack at night, reflect back on your calorie intake for the day and the amount of exercise that you have completed. Make a healthy food choice appropriately to prevent over-consuming calories.

Myth: Eating at restaurants should be avoided when trying to lose weight.
Reality: Eating in restaurants can be part of healthy meal plan. It is important to look at the types of foods that you are ordering and how large a portion is served. Often restaurants serve more than you should eat in one sitting. Try splitting the portion or taking half home for an additional meal. Also remember that hidden calories lurk in the alcohol, dessert-type beverages, and soda. Limit appetizers and desserts or share them with a friend to reduce your calorie intake at the meal.

Myth: Eating less than 1,000 calories will help lose weight for good.
Reality: Lowering your calorie level will promote weight loss. However, reducing calories too low will often cause vitamin and mineral deficiencies.
and relapse of overeating behaviors. Only follow an extreme calorie-restricted diet if under the care of a physician.

**Myth:** Omitting meat will help lose weight.

**Reality:** It is true that vegetarians typically eat fewer calories compared to their meat-eating counterparts. However, omitting a whole food group is not recommended. If you chose to not eat meat as a protein source then it is important to remember to substitute other healthy protein alternatives such as legumes, low-fat cheese, low-fat yogurt, fish, nuts, seeds and eggs.

**Bring to next week’s meeting...**
Be a diet myth sleuth this week. Identify any advertisement that seems too good to be true. This can be from a magazine, television, the internet, etc. Make a list of reasons why the diet advertised will not work in the long term. Then, identify healthy ways to lose weight. You will feel more confident in your pursuit of weight loss if you understand that a quick fix is not the answer. Weight loss takes hard work and motivation!