



## Can you really lose that much weight?

Being that the biggest loser has just finished and the contestants are looking fantastic, I thought it would be quite topical and a great way to answer so many questions you may have about the show. If you've been watching you've seen the contestants smashing it out in the gym, facing temptations AND becoming fitter, healthier and stronger both physically and mentally. But is it really possible to lose that much weight and keep it off?



In short the answer is yes. They're doing it and as we have seen some of the contestants in the past have kept it off... However there are plenty of contestants that haven't kept it off and I'm going to share with you my opinions on why. The Biggest Loser is a reality TV show that is designed to get the contestants to lose as much weight as possible and put themselves through gruelling challenges. In this article I'm not going to debate whether I think it's morally right or wrong or if their methods are fair and reasonable. My aim in this article is to give you an insight into the MATHS & WHY the contestants can lose as much weight as they do in such a short period of time, so you can then make that relevant to you and your situation.

### DIET:

A man that is 100kgs and lives a sedentary lifestyle would have a metabolic rate of 2400 calories per day. (Metabolic rate is the amount of calories he needs to function day to day). If that man was to cut back his calories by 500, he would eat 1900 calories per day he would lose approximately ½ kg per week. This is because he is consuming less energy than he is using on a day to day basis.

However on the Biggest Loser they create a massive energy deficit. Most contestants start at more than 100kg so they require MORE calories per day to function. They also reduce their intake by more than 500 calories, with some of the female contestants eating as little as 1200 calories per day.

So doing the maths, that means that some contestants are reducing their calorie intake by at least 1500 calories before they even hit the gym! With such a big reduction in diet, the maths shows the contestants are on track to lose 1.5kg per week through diet alone!



### CARBOHYDRATES:

When the contestants go into the Biggest Loser house they go onto a calorie restricted diet and their carbohydrate intake is limited. When you eat carbohydrates they are stored as glycogen in the muscles. Something that is not commonly known is that carbohydrates store water. So here is the maths, for every gram of carbohydrate (muscle glycogen), we store about 2-3grams of water. So after a week of carbohydrate restriction, the muscle glycogen stores could be depleted by up to 500g. That then means that the contestant could have lost 1500g (1.5kg) of fluid through carbohydrate restriction. Now add on the 1.5kg weight loss from their diet and they are already at a 3kg loss without adding any exercise!





## EXERCISE:

Now let's throw into the mix their INTENSE exercise regime. These guys are exercising for 4-6 hours PER DAY! Using the example of our 100kg man, if he went for a brisk walk for 4 hours he would burn approximately 1500 calories. If that same guy lifted the intensity of his workout (which for anyone who watches the show knows the contestants do) he could now burn up to 2000 – 2500 calories in a 4 hour workout. But as we said before, these contestants don't weigh around 100kg in the beginning, they weigh more. Let's say our contestant weighs 150kg; with an intense 4 hour workout they could burn up to 3500 calories. That is the equivalent to ½kg PER WORKOUT!!!!



And remember, earlier we said that these guys have already clocked up a 3kg loss from diet & fluid so now with an exercise deficit of 3500 calories per workout ( 3.5kg per week) which adds up to a weight loss of 6.5kg per week. Now remember some contestants do MORE than 4 hours workout per day. It was mentioned on the Australian series that Bob did 8 hours on a treadmill in one day! That is a heck lot of calories in one workout!

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?

So let's bring this back to reality. Let's say you're around 70kg and you do a 30 minute session with your Personal Trainer. You really smash it out and burn between 300 – 600 calories (burning 100 calories every 10 minutes is a great workout!) For this example let's say you burn 300. You leave the session feeling great. But here is the reality. You don't have the constant motivation of being in the biggest loser house, you don't have all of your meals and food provided for you, you don't have 4-6 hours that you can dedicate to working out, you have to go to work, you have to look after your family and you want to take time out for yourself!



So at morning tea when you're offered that delicious looking chocolate muffin you decide to treat yourself (after all you had a great PT session this morning!) however that muffin was worth 400 calories. You've now cancelled out your workout calories and now you are in the red by 100 calories.

Now please understand I'm not telling you this to freak you out, to get you to starve yourself or never feel like you can eat a muffin again. In fact you know I'm completely about the opposite. I'm informing you of this because I want you to be educated about the choices you make and understand what is REALISTIC when trying to lose weight.

If you don't understand the calorie values of food, and exercise – then I hope it's now easy for you to see how and why the weight can creep on, or on the flip side, why it's so hard to lose weight and keep those great results.

For you to be successful, realistic and keep the weight off its recommended that you aim to lose ½ kg per week. To do that you need to be consistent and create a deficit of 3500 calories through both diet & exercise.





In today's society unfortunately we have become so impatient that ½ kg is not enough. We want a quick fix (which will work short term), where we can eat what we want and not really have to work hard for it. People would love to believe that losing 4-5kg per week is realistic and achievable (but rarely do they put the thought into how hard you have to work to get those results). You know from my past articles (and I'm sure your own experiences) that this is not the case. If you do lose weight that quickly you are almost guaranteed that any weight you lose, you will put back on in under 12 months (and more!). Hopefully after today's article you realise how much work is involved and hard it is to achieve such BIG results & then to keep them off forever!

**So please, be realistic about what you can achieve and what your goals are.**

Here are some quick tips to help you be realistic:

- Understand the calorie value of food and stick within your limits.  
*A great FREE resource is: [www.calorieking.com.au](http://www.calorieking.com.au)*
- Be realistic about your expectations (½kg per week is a fantastic result!)
- Allocate time to working out and do it consistently (1 hard work out a week won't help you lose weight)
- Drink lots of water (often we confuse thirst with hunger) and water speeds up your metabolism
- Stay consistent (with eating and exercise)
- Keep mixing it up (for your own sanity & to keep the body guessing)

Remember, sitting on the couch thinking about it won't change it.

Don't wait for it to happen – Make it happen!

Happy Weight Loss & Fitness!

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