



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Welcome to the Weight Loss for Busy Physicians podcast. I'm your host, master Certified Life and Weight loss coach, Katrina Ubell, M.D. This is the podcast where busy doctors like you come to learn how to lose weight for the last time by harnessing the power of your mind. If you're looking to overcome your stress, eating and exhaustion and move into freedom around food, you're in the right place. Well. Hello there my friend. Welcome to today's podcast. I'm so glad you're here with me today. It is a rainy day here today. This is the last day of the week. I'm recording this on a Friday and I want to stay on top of my tasks, which means that I'm going to be recording this while it's raining, which actually adds to the whole feeling, like the spooky [00:01:00] feeling that I'm trying to create.

Maybe possibly for this episode only because it's being released on Halloween, which is very fun. October 31st. But also we're going to be talking about those spooky days, that Halloween kind of a time, but even bigger picture how to handle intense food days. I feel like Halloween is just the epitome of an intense food day, but I know there's other days that also feel intensely food centered. For a lot of people, Thanksgiving can be a big one for a lot of people. Some of the more religious holidays can be that way as well. And honestly, I think even going on vacation, you know, that can apply to what we're going to be talking about here today, particularly if you're going on a food tour as part of your vacation or something, where there's going to just be a lot of food, it's going to be very food centric.

[00:01:49] You know, maybe certain events, you go to parties, things like that. But mainly we're going to be talking about Halloween today just because it is a common, common issue for a lot of people. Now [00:02:00] you might be like, well, but I don't

really like candy. That's not really my thing. So I guess this isn't going to apply to me, but it absolutely will apply to you because maybe you are a salty person and it's like all of a sudden they have all the kettle chips or like whatever the special thing is that is just irresistible to you. That makes it so difficult. So you're absolutely going to get something out of this, even if sweets are not your thing.

So Halloween is coming up here. I think Halloween's a lot of fun. I'm not someone who is like, Halloween is my absolute most favorite holiday kind of a thing, but I do just love just kind of the simple joys of it. It's just, you know, having kids in the home, it's a lot of fun. My kids have been working on their costumes, and it's fun to be able to share in that with them. Honestly, I don't know if I've shared this before, but my mom kept a few of the Halloween costumes that she had made for me, and so several of my kids have worn a Halloween costume that my mother made for me many, [00:03:00] many years ago.

[00:03:03] How many years ago? 30, at least 35 years ago. And it still holds up. It's a good one. It's really good. It's a bag of M&Ms. It's a really good one. So my daughter, my ten year old, she's going as Halloween Barbie. So she's Barbie dressed up for Halloween. So she's going to be wearing pink underneath that M&M costume. And then we got her an awesome Barbie wig and I'll do her makeup and that kind of thing. Super fun. Because you know, where we live, where it's cold. You have to be able to have a Halloween costume where you can dress up warmly underneath. So there's there's a lot that factors into it anyway, Halloween.

So Halloween was something that I struggled with a lot, and I know so many people do. It can be easier if you don't have a lot of trick or treaters, or that's just not really a thing by where you live. You're just like, I'm just not going to buy the candy. It doesn't really matter. But again, like I said, this is going to apply to you in some other way. I'm kind of thinking about like the [00:04:00] opposite of that in the neighborhood where I live, the trick or treating is not actually on Halloween unless Halloween falls on the Saturday of the last Saturday of October.

[00:04:10] So last Saturday of October is when we trick or treat, which is kind of fun because then kids don't have to go to school the next day. They're not missing out on any school activities or anything. But what they also do is like the neighborhood

association chooses. They choose three streets that we can trick or treat on, and it's a grid. Our neighborhood is a grid. So there's three streets that are the trick or treating streets, and only those streets are handing out candy. And then the whole neighborhood comes to those three streets, and then those three streets rotates. So we only pass out candy once every four years. But when we do, it's a huge event. It's a lot of candy, a lot of kids.

We just got the notification from the neighborhood association recently and it was saying 800 kids are expected. So a lot of children, to the point where almost nobody actually stays in their house, [00:05:00] everybody just sits on their front lawn. A lot of people will set up like a fire pit to keep warm. And you just sit out there and the kids come up and you just hand them candy because it's so many of them. It's actually really, really, really fun. We moved to this neighborhood in 2002, and we were actually on the route the first year, and our neighbors were trying to let us know, like, we were interns like, and we didn't know what was going on.

[00:05:22] I remember the neighbors being like, you're going to need a lot of candy, just so you know. And I remember just being completely confused about the whole thing was, in fact, I think I was actually post-call that day because I remember taking a nap on the couch and then. Being woken up by doorbells and being kind of disoriented and being like, oh my gosh, that's now I need to go and do that. Who that was. Yeah, that's how that was. So I have had a history of eating a lot of Halloween candy. If I had it in the house, man, I enjoyed it for sure.

And like I said, maybe it's not that for you. Maybe it's something else. But, you know, those times when we're like, that's around, I'm just going to [00:06:00] be eating a lot of it, and it's kind of fun. It feels like, I mean, obviously you can buy a Snickers bar any day of the year, but for some reason it's like in fun size and it's just, you know, is in a big bag and it's the holiday and it just for whatever reason, right. It's harder. Or you have kids in your life who are trick or treating, they come back with all of this candy and you're like, oh my gosh, what do I do with all this? Or you are at work and people are bringing in a ton of candy, and there's just candy everywhere.

[00:06:28] Remember in the hospital, many times the nurses station would just have a whole bunch of Halloween candy, just like laying on the table for anybody to come and

take. So how do we deal with this kind of stuff? I want to kind of specifically, more specifically talk in this episode about what do you do if you have kids who are trick or treating and, you know, are you passing out candy? But there's like a lot of candy and kids and the excitement of all of that want to kind of specifically hone in on that and how to handle that. But everything I talk about, all the tips I'm going to give you, it's all totally [00:07:00] extrapolate all. Is that a word?

You can totally extrapolate this to any other similar kind of experience that you're having. Okay, so but we'll just use this as the example. I think the biggest issue that a lot of people have in going into this is that they kind of have a plan, but they don't really have a plan. They're kind of like, yeah, I'm going to like try not to eat it or like hopefully they won't get anything good. Like hopefully they'll just get like a bunch of mounds and almond Joy, which don't like I know some people like Mounds and Almond Joy, but seriously, so gross.

[00:07:31] I mean, like only one step down from black jelly beans. Oh, grody grody grody anyway, right? You're like, oh, like, hopefully they won't get anything I like, but then you go, you're out, you're having fun, your kids are running around. It's like so fun. The kids come back, they're dumping out all the candy and you start seeing. You smell it, right? You start seeing the favorites. And then. Then nostalgia from growing up. Oh, I always loved that one. Oh my gosh, you got one of those. Oh, I haven't seen [00:08:00] those in years before. You know it.

You're like, oh what's one piece then you eat one piece. Oh what's one more piece? And before you know it you're just plowing through, right? Or the kids have gone to bed. You're having more, you're hiding it, you're sneaking it, you know, things like that. So what we really need is an actual plan. Like a real plan. So what are you going to do? Are you going to eat some of it? Are you not going to eat some of it? I think for a lot of people, just being like, I'm not having any can be the best thing. Just like kind of an abstinence kind of mentality on it. Like I'm not going to have that. This is what I'm going to eat for the day and I'm just not going to have it. So for a lot of people, that can be the easiest way to approach it.

[00:08:39] And I think that's totally fine. Some other people will say, you know, I'm going to have like, you know, two pieces, like, you know, two of my favorites. If the kids get

whatever brand of candy bar, then, you know, I'll have that and then I'll be done and think, whatever you choose is fine. Just have it be a plan and have it be like, really well thought out. Think of your future self, the you who's in that situation, [00:09:00] what will be the most supportive for them, for you in that situation? Okay, but I believe it was famous boxer Mike Tyson who is famously quoted for the following. He said everyone has a plan until you get punched in the face.

Similarly here everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face with a smell of that candy or the excitement of the day or whatever it ends up being. So I think it's good to have that plan. You are going to do that plan. That is the plan to do the plan. But listen, I think you should have a plan B or a plan C, you know, like something that gets you back. The problem when we are just like, it's just this is the plan is it can get pretty all or nothing. And then if we're not nothing, then we're all right. I wasn't going to have any candy. Well, now that I've had some in for a penny, in for a pound, I might as well eat it all.

[00:09:53] This is my chance. Now that I've blown the day, I might as well eat all the candy that I can. Oh, and let me see what's in the pantry, too, [00:10:00] you know, let's see if there's some ice cream in the freezer. Like that's what we really want to avoid. So what is your plan? And then if that goes haywire for whatever reason, what's your plan B what's your plan C say you decided you're not going to have any candy and then you've eaten a couple pieces. So what happens if that's the case. What's the brake pedal? What is the way? I kind of like the governor.

If you've ever driven like a U-Haul truck, you know that it can only go so fast on the freeway for the governor. It kicks in and slows you down. Like what is going to be the way that. You get yourself to slow down and take, you know, just get yourself kind of back in your brain, back in your body so it doesn't turn into this complete overeating fest. And I want to tell you that plan B is not shaming yourself, judging yourself, beating yourself up, being mean to yourself. That is not how you stop yourself. If you treat yourself in that way, you will only eat more. Okay? To escape [00:11:00] how bad you're making yourself feel.

[00:11:02] So that's not what your plan B is or should be. So what are you going to do? It might be something like recognizing, hey, I just ate this. I'm starting to have a harder

time with this. I'm going to take a minute. I'm going to walk outside and get some fresh air. I'm going to go make myself a cup of hot tea. I'm going to whatever it is I'm going to, you know, move over here and do some dishes, like whatever it may be like, have a plan for how you're going to essentially like change your energetic state, like change what you are doing. Like you have the momentum going in the direction of not following your plan, eating a bunch of this candy.

So how are you going to shift that momentum so you can do something else. So you want to number one you want to have a plan a good plan, a plan you are willing to follow. You want to follow that you think will work. Then you want to have at least a plan B in case things start going awry, and maybe even a plan C if plan B isn't working okay, because everyone [00:12:00] has a plan to, like, get punched in the face. So let's have some revised plans in place in case we get punched in the face. Okay. Number two, I want you to expect it to be hard. I think it's a common thing for us to kind of like underemphasize or downplay for ourselves that it will be challenging.

[00:12:20] We tell ourselves like, this isn't a big deal. It shouldn't be a problem like you just, you know, you're going to be fine. But then it's really hard and we're so unexpecting of it being hard that. We kind of freak out in our heads, or we start feeling really sorry for ourselves or what was me. Oh, why does this have to be so hard all the time? Wish I could just see the candy and it doesn't really matter. And before we know it, we're just eating everything. So just expect it to be hard. Go into it going. You know what? I'm going to really want to eat that candy.

Chances are my desire is going to be very high for this candy. I'm going to be all caught up in the energy of the night and how fun it is and the excitement of [00:13:00] everything. And I'm going to want to go into those old pathways, those old habits, and I'm going to want to eat this, and it's going to be hard not to. So just tell yourself the truth about that. Like it's going to probably be challenging. It might be really, really challenging. And that's okay. You can still do it. This is something that you need to learn how to do. But if you're surprised by the difficulty, how hard it is, that makes it even worse.

[00:13:29] So just expect it to be hard. You don't have to paint like a doom and gloom scenario for yourself, or scare yourself for anything, but just recognize. Yeah, you know

what? I'm going to be walking down the street with the kids, and then there's going to be a family who's like, hey, what about the parents? You guys want something? A big trend now in our neighborhood is people setting up the adult beverages for the parents, which is very sweet and very fun. And, you know, you could be pretty drunk by the end of trick or treating if you said yes to [00:14:00] all the things that are available. So just expect there's going to be temptations.

There's going to be things that you just did not anticipate. It just was not something that you had in mind. And here it is. And it's going to probably take some willpower and be hard to say no. And that's okay. So when it happens, you go, oh, look, here's that hard thing. I knew something hard was going to happen. Here it is. And that's okay because I was expecting parts of this to be hard. So part of anticipating this is kind of like the next part of this expected to be hard part. The next part of this is continuing to prepare yourself. So thinking through like what really will be hard, like what can I anticipate being challenging? Like what will you do when everyone else is eating? So everyone else is having the candy and enjoying themselves.

[00:14:51] They're having so much fun. What are you going to do instead? What? What will you will you just sit there and watch everyone eat? That's totally legitimate. You can [00:15:00] do that. That's fine. But if you're going to feel really sorry for yourself, then it's going to feel really hard. You might want to have something else thought out. What else might you do? Right? You're like getting up. You're what are you doing? And moving around and making some distance between you and the candy. Like, what do you need to do to be able to follow your plan?

Just to share some things that I've come up with over the years, things that have been helpful for me. I found that I really just in my mind, thought that the candy was the best part of Halloween. And as my kids got older, I started just realizing, no, you know what's so fun about this is just the good, clean kid fun that they get to have. The world has changed so much. Childhood has changed so much. Yet this is something that we share. You know, we had these same experiences or similar experiences growing up. It's still so fun and they have so much fun and just seeing the delight on their faces how excited they are, [00:16:00] you know, trading, facilitating trades with a different candy and all that stuff like that is so fun.

[00:16:07] That's a huge part of the pleasure of it. I can get a lot of pleasure, a lot of fulfillment personally, out of seeing them enjoy eating the candy and collecting all the candy and looking at all the candy, all of that. That is where I set my mind to just look at them and how much fun they're having. Soak that up. It's not long. Those days are over, you know? I want to be there for it. I want to be present. I don't want to be in my mind just thinking constantly about the candy. And am I eating the candy and how much candy and when can I have the candy and all of that kind of stuff? Right? So what will you do when everyone else is eating?

And then what else is fun and pleasurable and enjoyable about this experience, right? Like find it. It's there. If you're in a birthday party. [00:17:00] The food is not the best part. It's celebrating the person who's a year older, right? You know, and Thanksgiving. The really the best part is to give thanks, to be grateful, to have gratitude for everybody to celebrate having a delicious meal with the people that you love and care about. But it doesn't mean you have to overeat it, right? It doesn't mean you're stuffing your face right. There's other things that can be really pleasurable and enjoyable and fun. So let's figure out what they are and then train our brains to spend time there so we can have that.

[00:17:34] And then finally. So just to review, have a plan including a, plan B and C and expect it to be hard, then part three let it be easy, right? Sometimes we go in like this would be so hard. We're like doing our Lamaze breathing. We're like, it's gonna be so hard, right? Like, it doesn't have to be that hard. It's just candy. It's not the end of the world to not eat something, right? So keep the mind drama [00:18:00] in check. You know, it's just another day of the year where there's food, like so many other days of the year.

And like I mentioned, like any of the candy that's available, you can go buy that at any gas station, any day of the week that you want to. It's just small. And that's okay. Like in size, you know, it doesn't have to be so dramatic. It doesn't have to be something that we're, you know, just having a whole lot of mind drama and upset about. So think about it in that way. Like we expect it to be hard and then we let it be easy. It's okay for it to just be fun and for it to not be that hard to not eat it. Let it be easy. If it can be easy, let it be easy. It doesn't have to be any harder than it may already be. And if it ends up being super hard, that's totally okay too.

[00:18:52] Because you're there for it. You're there to support yourself. You're there to make it happen and be with yourself. While it's hard, you don't have to escape that by, [00:19:00] you know, eating all the food. But if it being easy is available, go ahead and take advantage of that. Okay, so final review. Have a plan including plans B and C. Expect it to be hard. Be prepared. What will you do when everyone else is eating? What else is fun and enjoyable and pleasurable? And train your brain to that and then let it be easy. It is not the end of the world to not eat all the food. It's okay, all right to not eat it. So we have a little perspective, right? We keep our brains in check on that.

So with that happy Halloween to you. If that's something that you celebrate and think that's coming out at perfect timing for a lot of people, and if you catch this one after Halloween, then for next time or the next intense food centric event, you're going to be in a good place. All right. So that's how you handle those intense food days, whatever they may be for you. And with that, I wish you a Happy Halloween and I [00:20:00] will talk to you next week. Take care. Bye bye. Ready to start making progress on your weight loss goals? For lots of free help, go to katrinaubellmd.com and click on Free Resources.