

SESSION III

THE FAT THERMOSTAT: UNDERSTANDING HOW YOUR BODY BURNS FAT

OBJECTIVES

- *Describe the relationship between knowing how your body stores and burns fat and successful weight control.*
- *Define metabolism.*
- *Describe how your fat thermostat regulates your metabolism and your weight.*
- *Explain how dieting can make you gain weight.*
- *List the seven factors that influence your fat thermostat.*

BACKGROUND

Before you can succeed on this program, you must understand how your body works to regulate and control your weight. This knowledge is essential to your success in losing weight and keeping it off for good. Armed with the understanding this knowledge gives you the power to control your life.

Your weight is regulated by a control center in your brain we call the “fat thermostat.” Like the thermostat in your home that controls room temperature, your fat thermostat controls the amount of fat in your body.

When you set your home thermostat to a desired temperature level, the thermostat works to maintain that temperature. The desired temperature level is called the “setpoint.” Likewise, your brain’s fat thermostat has a setpoint.

That setpoint is the amount of fat (weight) it feels your body needs to survive. When the setpoint is high, your body will demand and store a lot of fat as potential energy—resulting in obesity. When it is low, your body will burn fat as active energy—resulting in leanness.

The fat thermostat for most overweight people is at an unnaturally high level. It got that way through nutritional deficiencies brought on by improper eating and dieting,

sedentary lifestyle and stress. The key to successful weight loss is to lower your fat thermostat to your body's natural level. This is accomplished with fat-burning nutrients, moderate physical activity and a positive self-image. Your body's weight-regulating mechanism is influenced by seven key factors. They are:

1. Genetics
2. Sex hormones (primarily related to reproduction)
3. The food you eat
4. Physical activity
5. Body image: (How you feel about your body)
6. Stress
7. Alcohol and drugs

Genetics is the only one of these factors you can't control. However, in this program you'll see that genetics alone can't prevent you from being a lean, high-energy person.

PRACTICE

1. Listen to/read audio Session III: "Your Fat Thermostat: Understanding How Your Body Bums Fat."

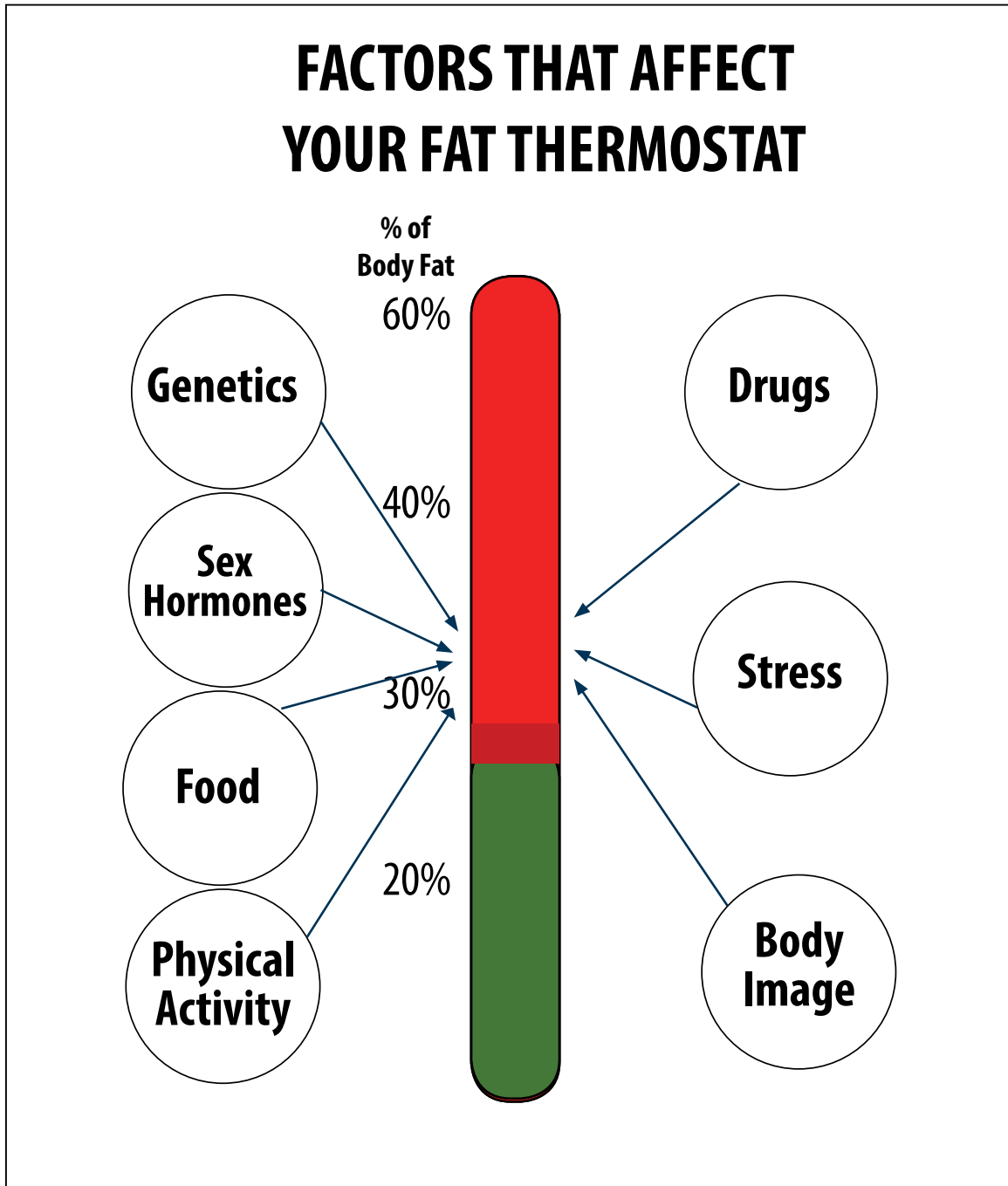
2. Explain why the knowledge of how your body works is essential to your success in losing weight.

3. Explain what metabolism is.

4. Explain what the fat thermostat is and how it regulates and controls your metabolism.

5. Explain how dieting raises your fat thermostat and makes you fatter.

6. Look at the following graphic which illustrates the seven primary factors which effect fat control.



7. Write a brief statement explaining how your weight is influenced by each of the seven factors.

1. Genetics: _____

2. Sex hormones: _____

3. Food: _____

4. Physical Activity: _____

5. Body Image: _____

6. Stress: _____

7. Drugs: _____

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Knowledge is the foundation of successful weight loss.
- Lifestyle is more important than genetics in determining what you weigh.
- Women, due to their reproductive function, have different weight control needs than men.
- Alcohol and certain drugs slow your body's metabolism and increase your cravings for fats and sugar while depressing your desire for physical activity.

- If you see yourself as a fat person, your body's physiology will work to fulfill that image.
- Stress produces hormones that can inhibit weight loss even if you are following the correct principles of weight control.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

The practice you just completed is the Progress Check for this session. For additional feedback, compare your practice work with the Objectives.

Now look at your calendar and schedule your time for completing Session IV.