

# Sustainable Weight Loss Advice for a Bride

Nutritionist Lauren Ercole, M.S., tells how to look your best on your wedding day.

**W**eight loss for the wedding should be no different than any other point in your life. According to nutritionist, Lauren Ercole, M.S., “there’s no trick or secret that brides should follow.” If you are planning to lose weight for your wedding, Ercole is adamant that a bride must achieve their weight loss goals “in a healthy and sustainable way.” Many brides realize the importance of planning details of the wedding in advance, such as sending out invitations in advance, choosing a wedding gown in advance, and other details. Making changes to your diet, Ercole recommends, should also start as soon as you know you are going to be married.

According to Ercole, it is important that you do not lose more than one or two pounds per week. “Losing more than this means that you would be losing lean muscle or water.” Because one pound is 3,500 calories, a general rule, then is to have a deficit of about 500 calories per day in order to achieve weight loss. Therefore, depending on your weight loss goals, it might be necessary to start a weight loss program months in advance. If you want to lose 25 pounds, for instance, you need to allow at least three months. Ercole also advises brides that “it is important to be realistic about what a healthy weight for you is.” You can consult with a doctor or nutritionist in order to come up with the correct weight and estimated daily calorie intake.

## A FEW COMMENTS ABOUT FAD DIETS

When asked about fad diets, Ercole had a strong reaction and a great piece of overall advice for a bride: “if a diet promises something that sounds too good to be true, it probably is.” She re-iterates that it is not healthy to lose more than two pounds per week, so stay away from any diet that promotes more significant weight loss. Such diets, she proclaims, are simply not sustainable. Secondly, she suggests being weary of diets that eliminate entire food groups or macro-nutrients. “Your body needs carbs, fats and proteins to function optimally,” Ercole states. In particular, there are a lot of diets that advocate low-carb. While processed foods tend to pack in a lot of carbohydrates, and we should avoid such products, Ercole states that “it is important to get about 50% of our calories in the form of carbohydrates through whole grains, fruits, and vegetables.” Lastly, Ercole warns against diets that cost a lot of money or try to sell you products. “Weight loss shouldn’t cost you money,” she points out, “if anything it should save you money.”

Overall, Ercole suggests simply following the standard rules of a healthy diet: eat whole foods and avoid processed foods, eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, and lean sources of protein. By eating such foods, you are going to feel fuller from the added fiber and increase nutrient value of whole foods. Additionally, your body will become more efficient at burning calories because you are giving it the tools (vitamins and minerals) it needs to metabolize the calories.

by Katharine Gardner



## MORE NUTRITIONAL ADVICE:

- Eat breakfast.
- Be hopeful that a healthier lifestyle will become easier over time as your taste buds will change.
- Keep a food diary to increase awareness of your habits and promote better habits that you will be proud to see on paper.
- Measure serving sizes for certain foods that are a significant part of your diet, just once, then you will be able to estimate accurate serving sizes in the future.
- Ensure that each meal and snack includes proteins, fats, and carbohydrates.
- Ercole does not recommend “drinking your calories.”
- Get a bridesmaid to workout with you.
- Incorporate a fitness program and weight training into your healthier lifestyle.
- Think long-term before you make any changes before your wedding, so that it is sustainable after your wedding.

*If you would like to consult with someone for diet advice, Ercole suggests meeting with a registered dietician. Check with your insurance as many times such appointments are covered under your plan.*

### THE WEEK BEFORE YOUR WEDDING

Your diet should not change much from the healthy lifestyle you’ve begun months before. In order to avoid bloating, be more mindful of how much salt you take and ensure that you drink enough water.

### THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

Plan in advance, to have a breakfast that has some protein, carbohydrates, and fat. It could be something very simple like yogurt with granola. You will need the energy for the day, so start it off right.