**TIP OF THE WEEK** weight loss hormones

Ghrelin is a hormone, secreted in your belly and intestines when your stomach is empty that makes you want to eat. And if you ignore the signals, which come every half hour or so, then your belly sends out a ton more ghrelin. “Until you're absolutely famished and have to eat whatever you see." This is why deprivation dieting doesn't work. Ghrelin is so powerful; it will eventually trump your will power. So, how do you get ghrelin to work for you and not against you?

Have a small snack about ½ hour before you eat, a small handful of nuts, fruit, a glass of water with some psyllium fiber mixed in. Having a pre-meal snack stops Ghrelin so that you actually feel like eating less when you finally sit down to dine.

Eat slowly "This is one of the most important things you can do, it gives our ghrelin levels a chance at dropping back down to normal. When we don't feel hungry anymore, we can feel more satisfied by eating less food.

Really pay attention to what you're eating: When we focus on the food we're eating -- as opposed to just shoveling it in during American Idol or Survivor, 1. we appreciate it more and even taste it more. 2. It makes it easier to recognize when our bodies say, "Hey, stop eating, I'm full."

Leptin, which is a protein that's secreted by our bodies' own fat, works the weight loss problem from on the other end. leptin controls how full we feel and lets us know when it's time to put down the fork and push back from the table. And it also helps us burn more calories.

To increase Leptin: Avoid foods rich in high-fructose corn syrup. This can be challenging because high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is added to tons of processed foods. Read labels. If high fructose corn syrup is on the ingredient list, do not buy it. HFCS actually blocks leptin from letting your brain know that you're done eating. It makes you want to keep eating. In other words, fructose makes your appetite runs amok -- you're driven to eat with no brake on your appetite. And those calories get stored as fat!