

## Using those skinny genes

The hardcover version of "Fat is Not Your Fate" was released Jan. 1, 2005, and it came out in paperback Jan. 1 of this year. Self-help and diet books tend to be released around the end-of-year holidays, when many people start thinking of the upcoming year, says Susan Mitchell, who lives in Orlando.

She and co-author Catherine Christie researched and wrote the book, their third, in a year and a half after deciding to apply what they've learned in more than 15 years of practice.

"Fat is Not Your Fate" is the first book to base a personalized diet on your genetics and family history, Mitchell says.

"What we've found is that the past really predicts the future," she says. "Your genes define you; they really should define your diet."

The book doesn't only focus on weight loss; it also aims to help you improve your health. Mitchell says it shows you how to lose weight and keep potential health problems from becoming reality while you improve your metabolic fitness.

Simple and straightforward, "Fat is Not Your Fate" gives its readers a clear-cut evaluation after they take two quizzes: a phenotype assessment that asks about your family's history and your own risk factors, and a weight trigger quiz that points out the negative factors in your life.

Each of six phenotypes - A (addictive), B (blood pressure), C (cardiovascular), D (diabetic), E (emotional) and H (hormonal) - goes hand in hand with a diet. Mitchell says she and Christie have seen students in their weight-loss classes lose 15, even 20 pounds over five or six weeks by combining their phenotype diets with positive weight-loss triggers such as regular exercise and portion control.

"Many people lose more than the usual two pounds per week, but we don't want them to lose much more than that," she says. "We want weight loss to be realistic."

There's a two-week jump-start program for every phenotype except A during which dieters lose water weight and also get a psychological boost, Mitchell says. She's never seen the program not work for anyone who was ready to commit to it.

Today, the science of nutrition is personalized, so our diets should be as well. "Fat is Not Your Fate" lists certain foods and supplements ideal to each phenotype for men and women, along with phenotype-specific recipes.

Mitchell says healthy living isn't about deprivation; it's about learning to eat real foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains, about learning to eat smaller portions of healthy meals and sensible desserts.

"It's not giving things up or taking things away, but rethinking," says Mitchell, who's phenotype E most of the time. She's a self-declared chocoholic, but she doesn't eat just any chocolate. She eats her favorite kind so she can really enjoy it.

"It's very real-world," Mitchell says. "This is no girlie diet."

Tiffany St. Martin, *features writer*, can be reached at 745-7080, ext. 2035, or [tstmartin@HeraldToday.com](mailto:tstmartin@HeraldToday.com)