



# 2020 Nutrition Challenge: September WW

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*Are you ready for some weight loss?!*

WW has definitely reimagined weight loss. They have designed a game to keep you thinking about points and zone colors, instead of calories and nutrition. As a nutritionist, I was disappointed to discover this. WW is promoted by physicians and hailed by [U.S. News and World Report](#) as one of the top diets available. I disagree. Here's why:

Let's start with the program

Here's how to play their game:

1. First tell them your age, height and weight
2. Next answer questions about food preferences
3. Finally, you are assigned a zone color and given a BUCKET of points to spend
4. Log your food, and discover how much each one will cost
5. Stop eating when you are out of points
6. Lose weight
7. Celebrate with your online WW support group
8. In one year watch the pounds return, plus a little extra...



## My 30-day Experience

1) I was given 23 points per day with a bonus 35 points to use over the week. This translates to an average maximum of 28 points per day ( $23 + 35/7$ )

- I made hearty oatmeal for my first breakfast which cost me 19 points.
- How can this be?
- It had raisins, nuts & 1 tsp of butter and 1 tsp of brown sugar. Gack!
- I guess they don't like all that fat and sugar – which by any standard is quite small.

2) I 'double-downed' on my mission, by exploring WW's plethora of low point meals online. They had many zero-point foods, so that should solve my problem.

- Zero-Point foods are ones that WW has determined to support weight loss. Like eggs. Like raw vegetables. Eat them with abandon.
- I managed to get through rest of the first day with salmon and a banana
- Over the next week I averaged 1170 calories/day
- I spent 28 points every day
- By the next week, I had lost 3 pounds and I was HUNGRY
- After that it was game over for me. I broke the rules and spent 36 points per day, which still only averaged 1456 calories

3) WW promises you can lose weight while eating your favorite foods

- Okay, if that's your only meal. I mean, remember the oatmeal?
- You quickly abandon those high point goodies
- This is misleading advertising at best

4) Nutritional compass? None

It's my observation that people don't passively adopt healthy behaviors just because that's their only choice. However, WW states that their program encourages healthy choices. Hmm. For me it felt more like punishment that didn't make sense. How can oatmeal be 19 points and the WW bacon-egg-slider be 5 points. Shouldn't they reward my high fiber, nutritionally dense food?

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## Exercise Tip

Sadly, the COVID-19 restrictions have caused road races everywhere to be cancelled. I have moved to lifting weights in my basement once or twice a week. It is surprising how even 15 minutes of moderate effort has helped my joint pain. A simple short weight lifting routine has dramatically improved my comfort level AND sleep cycle.

## How does WW measure up nutritionally?



I track my intake on [www.cronometer.com](http://www.cronometer.com)

That is how I was able to put a calorie count on the foods I ate. See, WW doesn't talk about calories. If you can distract people with zones and points, then they focus on that. In fact, I know a lot of women who love the WW program. It's got a lot going for it, except that it is a crash-diet plan. Their point system prevented me from eating more than 1200 calories a day, which is definitely not enough to maintain health.

Nutritionally, it suffers:

- 30 percentile for folate, Calcium, Vit D and E
- Below 70<sup>th</sup> percentile for B1, B5, Copper, Magnesium, Potassium, Zinc, Vit C
- Half of the recommended 21gm of fiber per day
- Carbohydrates as a macro: 43% of RDA

**You ABSOLUTELY need to supplement with a multivitamin at the least. Usually I give you some tips for navigating the monthly diet challenge, but I will not this month. I am gobsmacked that WW has not been called out for being a crash diet.**

## Conclusion

*Sure, I get it - that WW would work to drop 10 pounds before your friend's wedding, but it is not a sustainable OR a positive way to relate to food.*

*The fact that WW does not share how they calculate your points or how they assign your zone concerns me. You are subject to their judgement about what foods you need to eat. You must trust them and their formula to guide you through weight loss. I don't know about my reader, but I am not a fan of blind trust.*

*This is exactly why I am doing the 2020 Nutrition Challenge. Trust, but verify. I have been delighted by some diet approaches, but WW misses the mark by a mile. I cannot advocate for a diet that may trigger negative associations with food. I believe that their approach is more hurtful than helpful. We need nutrition. We need to have positive and healthy experiences with food. Unless you are in control and learning to choose and prepare healthy food, then you will struggle with food.*

*I've studied health and nutrition for years. I'd love to help you reclaim your health and energy. Follow me on [Facebook](#) and visit [my website](#). ~ Rose*



### ANNOUNCEMENT!

October 2020 is Whole30 Month!

This is a therapeutic diet to help identify food allergies