

An age-old excuse used by dieters who can't seem to lose weight is that their metabolism is just too low. Although statistically speaking a very small percentage of people suffer from decreased metabolism, clinging to this fallacy brings comfort to those who aren't reaching their goals. Now a new device called BodyGem is being used at Phifer Wellness Center to help the health-conscious get a true fix on their body's metabolic rate.

Toni Reece, a certified lifestyle and weight management consultant, is enthusiastic about the opportunities the BodyGem affords.

"It allows us to get a very accurate reading on a person's resting metabolic rate (RMR)" said Reece. "After we've determined the RMR, we feed that info into a computer program. The person will set a goal - for instance 20 pounds of weight loss over three months. The BodyGem system will specify exactly how many calories, carbs, proteins and fats the person should take in each day to reach that goal."



The BodyGem system is very flexible, offering pathways to success through a variety of dietary plans, including the American Heart Association diet, USDA diet, a vegetarian option, a low carbohydrate option, and many others.

What exactly is the BodyGem? It's a small unassuming hand-held device that monitors the amount of oxygen you breathe in and

the amount of carbon dioxide you produce. This is the most efficient way to measure a body's energy-burning process, and was once an expensive test that only high-tech medical weight loss clinics and hospitals could offer.

The BodyGem test is quick and painless. Apart from having to fast and refrain from exercise after midnight the preceding night, there's nothing in particular the subject has to do to prepare. A few minutes breathing through the device yields a result you can build a solid dietary plan around.

Reece continued, "The system factors in your exercise level and other lifestyle details, then outlines a plan for weight loss that you can live with."

In fact, the BodyGem's greatest strength is in helping a person eat in a way that helps keep metabolism and calorie burning at a maximum.

"Your metabolism starts slowing down around age 26," said Reece, "because at that age you start losing lean muscle



Toni Reece, a certified lifestyle and weight management consultant, demonstrates the readout from BodyGem and offers clients an interpretation of the numbers.

mass. There are only three ways you can keep your metabolism up - cardiovascular activity, strength training, or eating enough calories."

Reece's last point comes as a surprise to most people. "Women in particular tend to think that if they don't eat, they'll lose weight," she said. "Quite often, because they don't eat enough, their metabolism lessens. Your body needs the calories or it will enter a shut-down stage, holding onto its reserves. It thinks famine is coming. The key is to expend those calories once they come in."

BodyGem analysis normally costs between \$60 and \$100 at health clubs in big cities. Phifer offers the service for \$45 for members or \$50 for people who are curious about learning more about their RMR. People who take the test will get a journal sheet to track calories, carbs, proteins and fats. You can learn more about the BodyGem at www.healthetech.com, or call to schedule your own consultation at 580-6600.