



# January Health Promotion Toolbox

## Healthy Weight

### Message for Commanding Officers

American adults are battling weight issues at an alarming rate with nearly 35 percent considered obese.<sup>1</sup> The military population is waging a similar fight against excess body weight. According to the 2013 Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment Annual Report, approximately 60 percent of Navy and Marine Corps respondents indicated being overweight or obese. The assessment also identified some of their leading health risks as a low daily intake of vegetables, low daily intake of fruits, and a high daily intake of high-fat foods.<sup>2</sup>

For Sailors and Marines, exceeding body composition assessment (BCA) standards can negatively affect one's career and compromise mission readiness. Exceeding BCA can decrease overall quality of life and can increase risk of health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, and some types of cancer.

The start of a new year brings motivation to set new goals. Get your command in top shape and make them stronger for the year to come by promoting tools and resources that contribute to healthy weight through healthy eating, an active lifestyle, and psychological and emotional well-being.

### What Can Leadership Do?

**Commanding officers can promote healthy body weight among their Sailors and Marines by:**

- Establishing a strong command policy on individual and unit-level physical training, and leading by example during command physical training.
- Empowering Command Fitness Leaders to identify Sailors who seem to be struggling with keeping their weight at a healthy level and intervene early, especially before they fail their BCA or Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA). To help active duty personnel who failed or are at risk of failing their BCA, Command Fitness Leaders can refer Sailors to the [ShipShape Program](#), the Navy's official weight management program.



**Leadership can also work with Health Promotion Coordinators and Command Fitness Leaders to:**

- Challenge Sailors and Marines to a [One Day at a Time: 31 Day Challenge for a Healthier Life](#), in which they participate in one activity each day to help them accomplish a larger goal to achieve or increase healthy behaviors.
- Increase awareness about [supplement safety](#) and the [health impacts of taking supplements](#).
- Help Sailors and Marines learn how to [build a healthy meal](#) and let them know about the [20 tips for healthy eating](#).
- Show Sailors and Marines how to [promote weight loss successfully](#) by understanding the barriers that affect behavior change.
- Encourage them to access a [wellness coach through Military OneSource](#).
- Direct them to the [weight management Web page](#) where they can learn how to [promote weight loss successfully](#), about the [challenge of obesity](#), how to [weigh the facts](#), and about [stress eating](#).
- Visit the NMCPHC's [Wounded, Ill, and Injured \(WII\) Web page](#) for tips on [active living](#), [weight management](#), and [healthy eating](#) specifically geared toward wounded, ill, or injured Sailors and Marines.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Adult Obesity Facts. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>. Updated 9 September 2014. Accessed 25 November 2014.

<sup>2</sup> EpiData Center Department, Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment 2013. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/HRA2013-annual-report.pdf>. Published 2014. Accessed 25 November 2014.