

A complete resource for weight management.

Personal excellence.

You may face many challenges during your recovery from a wound, injury, or illness and reaching or maintaining a healthy weight can be one of them. Finding a healthy weight that is right for you can take some time, and it is important to keep in mind that even small changes in weight can affect your body's ability to heal and recover. You can achieve a healthy weight by eating a balanced diet of nutrient-dense foods and engaging in physical activity. As a Navy resource for weight management, the Health Promotion and Wellness Department of the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center offers tools and resources to help you lose or gain weight, or maintain a healthy weight.

Visit www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/Wii-weight-management.aspx to learn more about weight management, including:

- ▶ Understanding Impacts to a Healthy Weight
- ▶ Benefits and Strategies for a Healthy Weight
- ▶ Determining Your Caloric Needs
- ▶ Challenges and Adjustments to a Healthy Weight
- ▶ Overcoming Challenges to a Healthy Weight

To learn how our programs can help facilitate recovery and strengthen resilience, visit us at WWW.MED.NAVY.MIL/SITES/NMCPHC/WOUNDED-ILL-AND-INJURED/PAGES/HEALTH-PROMOTION.ASPX.

For more information on your local resources, contact:



FIT FOR DUTY. FIT FOR LIFE.



Weight Management for Wounded, Ill, and Injured Sailors and Marines



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Fuel for excellence.

Dietary limitations, lack of sleep, and side effects from medications may cause a change in eating habits. The result may be the consumption of more or less calories than your body needs to function, which can result in weight gain or weight loss. Being underweight, overweight, or obese may impede healing, lower quality of life, and cause additional health problems. The good news is that you can aid your recovery by engaging in a balanced and healthy lifestyle. This balance requires a nutritious diet of protein for muscle recovery, vitamins and minerals for tissue repair and reduced scarring, and complex carbohydrates for needed energy.

To eat a nutritious diet, select nutrient-dense foods (whole grains, lean protein, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products) that give you the “biggest bang for your buck.” They contain the most vitamins and minerals, which provide you with quality energy, for the least amount of calories. Many nutrient dense foods are also high in fiber and/or protein which can also make you feel full longer. This can help reduce your intake and help you maintain a healthy body weight. Also, try replacing sugary drinks with water to help keep you hydrated.

Get moving.

Along with nutrition, an important aspect of weight management is physical activity. A wound, illness, or injury may change the level or type of physical activity that you engage in. Depending on the type of illness or injury, physical activity may only be limited initially, as your body adjusts to its new state. Other situations may require long-term adaptation. Changes in physical activity level or type of activity can result in weight gain, so it is important to stay active. Be sure to consult with your health care provider or physical therapist about appropriate activities. There are lots of ways to be active and you may discover a new favorite sport or activity!

There are physical and psychological benefits to being active. Physical benefits include improved energy levels, enhanced wound healing, better sleep, reduced joint pain, and decreased risk of developing other health conditions,

such as cancer, high blood pressure, or cardiovascular disease. Psychological benefits include improved mood, greater confidence, and enhanced quality of life.

Losing weight.

Healthy weight loss isn't just about a “diet” or “program.” It's about an ongoing lifestyle that includes long-term changes in daily eating and exercise habits. These changes can be challenging, particularly during recovery. Things such as medication side effects and changes to your metabolism can also be a factor. While some factors may be out of your control, there are steps you can take towards achieving a healthy weight.

To help you lose weight, follow the healthy eating and exercise tips above while maintaining a daily calorie intake that will result in 1-2 pound weight loss per week. Since one pound equals 3,500 calories, you need to reduce your caloric intake, through diet or exercise, by 500-1000 calories per day to lose about 1-2 pounds per week. Start your day with breakfast and eat small portion meals or snacks every 3-4 hours to limit overeating.

Gaining weight.

Sometimes injuries and illnesses, as well as their treatments, can lead to being underweight. While this often receives less attention, being underweight can also hinder healing. Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight can assist in the recovery process. You can gain weight by selecting and eating nutrient-dense foods that are also higher in calories, staying hydrated, and adding strength training or resistance training to your workout routine with guidance from your health care provider or physical therapist.

Next steps.

Recovering from a wound, illness, or injury may result in some challenges you were not expecting, including weight loss or gain. As you progress through recovery, work with your health care provider, physical therapist, physician, or dietitian to address side effects from medications, poor or little sleep, and changes in diet and physical activity. Optimal weight is important to recovery and overall health, both in the short-term and the long-term.

