Healthy Weight Loss and Maintenance

Lifestyle Changes

A combination of lifestyle changes, including healthy eating to reduce calories and increasing calories burned through exercise, are effective ways to healthy weight loss and maintenance. To reach your weight goal, you need to lower the number of calories from food and beverages (energy IN) and increase your physical activity (energy OUT). Healthy eating involves giving your body the nutrients it needs every day without going over your daily calorie goal.

Don't use short-term dietary changes as a way to lose weight. Make long-term lifestyle changes in daily eating and exercise habits. Work with your healthcare team to develop goals that meet your dietary, physical activity, and weight loss needs.

Evidence shows that people who lose weight gradually and steadily (about 1 to 2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping the weight off.

Tips for Eating Healthy

- Know what you are eating! Try keeping a food diary for a few days or use a mobile app/tracker, whichever better suits your lifestyle. Document everything you eat and drink, including the time. Knowing how you feel when you eat or drink is important, too. Include if you were hungry and any emotions you were feeling. Share this with your healthcare team.

Getting Started:

- Make a commitment to lose weight by being physically active and eating healthy
- Know your body mass index (BMI):
  - BMI is a measure of body fat and is calculated from your height and weight
  - BMI is a good gauge of your risk of chronic conditions that can occur with higher body fat including heart disease and type 2 diabetes
- Talk with your healthcare team about your risk of diseases
- Identify local resources that could help you reach your goals
- Stay in touch with your healthcare team, revisit your goals, and check your progress on a regular basis

### BMI Weight Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMI</th>
<th>Weight Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 18.5</td>
<td>Underweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.5 - 24.9</td>
<td>Healthy Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.0 - 29.9</td>
<td>Overweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0 and above</td>
<td>Obese</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did you know?

1 pound = 3,500 calories

To lose one pound per week, reduce or burn 3,500 calories a week or 500 calories per day with a combination of reducing calories and increasing physical activity.
• Pay attention to your eating habits (i.e., are you eating too fast, skipping meals, always cleaning your plate, standing while eating, or eating unhealthy snacks?)

• Learn what triggers your unhealthy eating habits (i.e., are you upset, bored, watching t.v., at a social gathering, or alone?)

  - What can you do to avoid triggers, such as eat something healthy before you go out for a social gathering?
  - If not, can you do something different to make it healthier, such as changing your portion size, choosing healthier options, or eating on a schedule?

• Replace unhealthy habits with new, healthy ones.

  - Be patient with yourself!

Build your Healthy Eating Style

• Choose a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products for your snacks and meals. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that half of your plate is made up of fruits and vegetables.

• Eat lean meats, skinless chicken, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. Be careful with nuts, they are higher in calories and salt. Choose unsalted nuts and know what a serving size is (i.e., 12 almonds or seven walnut halves).

• Avoid oversized portions. Enjoy your food, but eat less!

  - 3 ounces of meat is about the size of a deck of cards.
  - A medium apple is about the size of a tennis ball.
  - 1 serving of cheese is about the size of 6 dice.
  - 2 tbsp of peanut butter is about the size of a ping pong ball.
  - ½ cup of pasta is about the size of a tennis ball.

• Select foods low in saturated fats and trans fats, added sugars, and salt (i.e., sodium). Use Nutrition Fact Labels and ingredient lists to know the amounts in the food and beverages you choose.

• Stay within the daily calorie amount recommended by your healthcare team.

• Drink water!

• Foods that have a lot of water or fiber and little fat usually help you feel full without a lot of calories. Good choices are fruits and vegetables including spinach, broccoli, tomatoes, carrots, watermelon, berries, and apples.

• Eat nutrient dense foods, which are food and beverages that provide vitamins, minerals, and other substances that contribute to nutrient intakes or other positive health effects with little or no solid fats and added sugars.

• A portion is the amount of food or drink that you choose to eat or drink at one time. It can be big or small, it’s up to you. A serving is a measured amount of food or drink, such as one slice of bread or one cup (eight ounces) of milk.

Once you’ve reached your healthy weight, the key to maintaining your weight is to continue balancing the number of calories you consume with the number of calories your body uses. Talk with your healthcare team to make sure you have a maintenance plan.

References

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