



Weight Management

Managing Your Weight

In recent years it has become very apparent that excess body weight is an important health concern. Carrying extra weight can contribute to risk for a multitude of chronic diseases including heart disease, diabetes and cancer. For many people, excess weight also contributes to issues with self-esteem and affects functions of daily life.

Successful weight management is a long-term challenge. However, the amount of weight loss needed to improve your health may be much less than you think. Research has shown that losing 5-10% of your initial body weight can have significant positive effects on your health. For a 200 pound person, this equates to a weight loss of just 10-20 pounds.

It is important to approach weight loss with a focus on lifestyle modification, as opposed to going on a "diet." Research indicates that while diets may lead to short-term weight loss, they are not sustainable in the long term and regaining the weight lost is common. The emphasis for weight management should be on developing a lifestyle that allows you to eat well, be active, get enough sleep, and manage stress.

Getting Started: SMART Steps

To adopt new behaviors or change old ones, it is important to establish the steps necessary for you to reach your goals. These benchmarks will help you stick to your commitment and monitor progress. Below are tips on creating SMART steps.

Specific
Language must be specific (what, why, how?)
Measurable
Include numbers you can track (number of vegetable servings daily, number of times per week to exercise)
Action-Oriented
Identify new behaviors/actions you will take
Realistic
Make steps doable – have confidence in yourself that you can achieve eat step
Timely
Give yourself a timeframe (remember to be realistic!)

Behaviors for Successful Weight Loss

Monitor Portions

- ❖ Use a smaller plate to eat meals
- ❖ When eating out at a restaurant put ½ of your meal in a to-go box before you start eating – save it for another meal.
- ❖ Pre-portion foods prior to eating (e.g. put crackers/chips in a small bowl) rather than eating out of the package.

Increase Hunger/Fullness Awareness

- ❖ Rate your hunger before you eat and again right after you eat. A ranking of 1 is starving; a ranking of 10 is stuffed. Try to stay in the 4-6 range, not allowing yourself to get too hungry or too full.
- ❖ If you feel the urge to eat when you are not hungry, distract yourself for 15-20 minutes (e.g. call a friend, take a walk) – the urge will likely pass.

Eat Mindfully

- ❖ Eat without distraction (tv, reading, etc.)
- ❖ Chew food well and place your fork down between bites. Savor each bite.
- ❖ Explore emotional reasons why you may be eating when you are not hungry – are you stressed, excited, or upset? Try to address the underlying feeling in ways that don't involve food.

Practice Self-Monitoring

- ❖ Observe and record aspects of your behavior that you are trying to change (e.g. calorie intake, servings of vegetables, amount of exercise). You could record in a journal, online, or on your phone.
- ❖ Keeping a record of your behaviors allows you to look at them from a different point of view – seeing where you are now and where you might improve.

Reward Success (But Not With Food)

- ❖ It is important to establish rewards to help encourage continued behavior change.
- ❖ An effective reward could be material (a movie, new music) or an act of self-kindness (an afternoon off, some time alone, a massage).

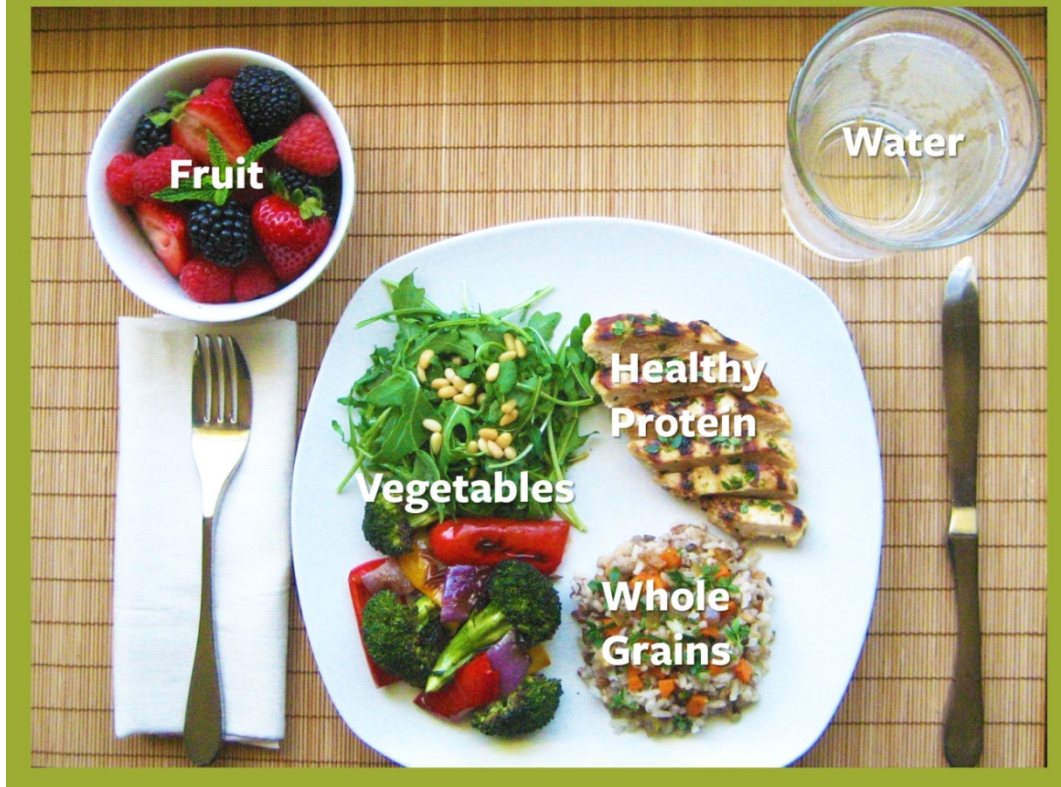
Get Active!

- ❖ Physical activity not only helps to burn calories and maintains muscle mass, it can also improve mood, build self-esteem, and help to manage stress. Start with small goals, and slowly add time and intensity to increase your physical fitness.



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HEALTHY MEAL MODEL



How to Build a Healthy Plate

The idea behind “Building a Healthy Plate” is to illustrate that creating a healthy, balanced meal can be simple. Dividing a 10-inch size plate into three sections and adding healthy accents is a quick and easy way to control portion sizes and create a healthier meal. Here’s how it works:

- ❖ **Non-Starchy Vegetables** make up half of a Healthy Plate. Examples include a tossed salad, sautéed peppers or greens, or steamed broccoli or carrots. Starchy vegetables such as potatoes, corn and peas are included in the “Starches & Grains” section of the plate as they are higher in calories and carbohydrate than Non-Starchy Vegetables.
- ❖ **Lean Proteins** make up a quarter of a Healthy Plate. Examples include skinless chicken, non-fried fish, tofu or lean cuts of beef or pork. Low-fat dairy products and beans/lentils can also be considered a source of lean protein.

- ❖ **Starches & Grains** make up the final quarter of a Healthy Plate. Examples of good starches and grains to include are 100% whole wheat bread or pasta, brown rice, corn, peas, potatoes, sweet potatoes and whole-grains.
- ❖ **Fruits** are an essential component of a healthy diet and should be incorporated into meals as sides or snacks. Focus on whole-fruits and limit dried fruits and fruit juices.
- ❖ **Healthy Fats** are important for developing flavor, improving the absorption of nutrients in a meal, and feeling satisfied. Good fats to include are vegetable oils, nuts & seeds, avocados and olives. Since fats are naturally calorie-dense, they should be consumed in moderation as accents to a meal or small snack.
- ❖ **Seasonings & Spices** add flavor to foods and contribute health-promoting antioxidants.
- ❖ **Water** is the beverage choice for a healthy diet: it is hydrating, calorie-free, and highly accessible.