



Weight Loss & Nutrition

For some individuals, weight loss may be an appropriate way to improve health and manage certain diseases. When losing weight, it is important that it occurs gradually. That is, no more than 1-2 pounds of body weight should be lost per week. When losing weight, the focus should remain on the loss of fat. If more than 2 pounds are lost per week, chances are this loss is going to be in the form of muscle and water, not fat. In addition, research has shown that people who have **gradual weight loss** are more successful at keeping the weight off over time.

Weight loss does not happen overnight. Set **realistic goals**, be **persistent**, and be **flexible**. Successful and permanent weight loss is a **lifestyle change**, NOT a temporary diet.

Goal setting:

- Start off small by setting no more than 3 goals at a time.
- Make goals simple and realistic (for example, "I will eat breakfast every day" or "I will have a salad every day at dinner").



Persistent:

- Everyone slips up sometimes. If you "slip" and don't meet one of your goals, or if you eat something "unhealthy," don't stress out about it, just pick up where you left off.

Flexible:

- Life is unpredictable and sometimes we are faced with food options that aren't "healthy." For example, don't deprive yourself of cake at a birthday party, just try to eat a lighter meal beforehand, and keep the serving small.

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Here are some general tips to promote healthy weight loss:

- **Eat at least 3 meals.** Eating 3 or more meals helps boost your metabolism and prevents you from overeating. When you eat less than 3 times a day, you are more likely to become too hungry and eat a large number of calories at one sitting.
- **Do not assume you must give up certain foods.** Enjoy all types of foods, but eat high-calorie foods in smaller amounts and less frequently.
- **Build your diet on plant based foods.** Make sure you eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day, with plenty of whole grains, beans, and legumes. These foods are naturally low in calories and add fiber, which helps you to feel full, as well as vital vitamins and minerals.
- **Pay attention to your body.** When you feel like you have had enough to eat, stop. Quit before you feel full, stuffed, or sick from eating. You can have more if you are really hungry.
- **Activity/Exercise is very important.** Choose activities you enjoy, and exercise most days of the week. It is best to exercise 30 minutes each day. Walking is a good form of physical activity for most people.
- **Occasional indulging is normal.** Try not to binge, but even if you slip, forgive yourself and get back to following those healthy habits!

Check with a dietitian or doctor for your specific dietary needs.



Additional Notes:

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