

Taking Charge of Weight

Habits for Success:

1. Stay Hydrated -- BUT -- Don't Drink Calories

- Thirst is often mistaken as hunger. Drink before you eat.
- Drink at least eight 8-oz glasses (64 oz) of fluids daily to help cleanse your body and decrease cravings.
- Drinks can be a huge calorie source. Avoid fruit juices, sodas, sports drinks, lemonade, sweet tea, etc.
- Choose 1% or nonfat milk. Try low or non-calorie options for coffee, flavored waters, tea, drink mixes, etc.

2. Eat Balanced Meals that Keep You Full

- Eat breakfast, lunch and dinner to help burn calories and control your hunger and blood sugar.
- Balance meals with ½ plate of fruits/vegetables, ¼ plate healthy grains, ¼ plate lean protein.
- Control hunger with filling foods that are high in water, fiber, protein and bulk. fruits, vegetables, beans/legumes, milk/yogurt, oatmeal, quinoa, meat/fish/poultry
- Limit added fats and sugars: dressing, sauce, syrup, oil, butter, etc.
- Eat small, healthy snacks IF you are hungry between meals.

3. Watch Your Portions

- Large portions lead to excess calories and weight gain.
- Meals that are too small may cause uncontrolled snacking or eating large portions later in day.
- Use small plates, bowls, forks and spoons to help you eat slower and eat less.
- Slow down hunger by enjoying fruits, vegetables, broth soups, or calorie-free drinks before your meal.
- Put food down between bites – slow down and enjoy the food.
- Add spices and seasonings to foods for more satisfaction with smaller portions.
- Do not eat in front of TV, computer, while reading, etc. Pay attention to how full you are.
- Ask for half-portions or share meals with a friend at restaurants. Save half of your meal to take home

4. Exercise and Be Active Daily

- Do 30-60 minutes of brisk exercise that raises your heart rate – DAILY.
- Strength work 2-3 times weekly = more lean body mass = more calorie burn.
- Limit “lazy” time to 2 hours daily (TV, computer, any time without movement).
- Inactive lifestyles can lead to: obesity, anxiety, heart disease, depression, diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, high cholesterol, kidney stones, early death.

5. Keep Track of Your Progress

- Know how many calories you need, and know how many you eat/drink. (journal, tracking sheet, phone app...)
- Check your improvements (weight, waist inches, clothing size, blood pressure, blood sugar,...).
- Keep tabs on yourself for motivation.

Success for Life:

6. Keep Your Emotions Off Your Plate

- Drink before you eat. Are you just thirsty? Bored? Upset? Food only fixes hunger, not sadness, anger, boredom, loneliness, etc.
- Feel your emotions, let them out. Don't stuff them down with food. Express your emotions in person, in writing, through art/other outlet.

7. Get Adequate Sleep

- Get 7-8 hours of sleep daily to help control your metabolism and your cravings.
- Low sleep = high ghrelin (“hunger” hormone) = high appetite for high calorie food.
- Low sleep = low leptin (“fullness” hormone) = uncontrolled over-eating.
- Low sleep = low metabolism = fewer calories burned = weight gain.

8. Learn To De-Stress

- High stress = high cortisol and high insulin = high belly fat storage/weight gain.

- High stress = high emotions = high food intake, low motivation to exercise = weight gain.
- De-stress: Eat healthy, exercise, stay hydrated, sleep, express your emotions.
BREATHE! LAUGH!

9. Hormones, Thyroid, Meds – See Your MD

- Hormonal/thyroid imbalances and some medications can cause weight gain.
- See your doctor for help in adjusting these as needed.
- A multivitamin may help your nutritional balance and help metabolism overall.

10. Aim For Lasting Success

- Weight management is not short term. There is no end date. Weight is a lifetime responsibility.
- Make lifestyle changes you can maintain for life.
- Weight loss isn't something to do for a wedding, a reunion, or a cruise. It's something you do for life.