

Weight Loss Made Easy

“You have to burn more calories than you eat.”

Easy points to remember:

- Eat Healthy – Most people are well aware of what they SHOULD be eating. We just chose not to listen.
- Eat Right – Don't skip meals, don't eat late at night. Try not to snack between meals.
- Portion Control – It's as much how much you eat as what you eat.
- Exercise – At least 30-60 minutes of a cardiovascular exercise at least 3-5 times per week.
- Set reasonable goals and stick to them; weekly or monthly goals work best.

What should I eat?

- If it tastes good, you should probably think twice about eating very much of it.
- If it swims or flies, eat it. Chicken and fish are low in fat, as long as they are not breaded and deep fried. You need about 2-3 servings of meats per day.
- Grill, steam, broil, or bake your foods; never deep fry.
- Eat more grain, especially whole grain, 6-11 servings per day.
- Fruits and vegetable are always a good choice. You should eat 2-4 servings of fruits and 3-5 servings of vegetables.
- Avoid beverages with a lot of calories like soda and alcoholic beverages. Water is always a better choice. You should also have 2-4 servings of skim milk per day.
- Salads are ok, as long as you don't load them up with dressing, cheese, and other fatty foods.
- Read labels; avoid foods high in saturated fat, cholesterol, sugar, and sodium.
- Beware - most containers have more than one serving per container.
- Try to avoid eating out; it's harder to make healthy choices when you eat out.

When should I eat?

- Don't make a habit of skipping meals. You will tend to overeat at the next meal or snack on unhealthy foods between meals.
- Eat only when you are hungry, not because you are bored, stressed, or tired.
- Don't eat late at night. Eat at least 3-4 hours before bedtime to give your body a chance to work off some of the calories you just took in.
- Try not to snack between meals. If you must, make healthy choices. Avoid chips, cookies, candy bars, snack crackers, etc.

How much should I eat?

First use the following formula to calculate your daily calorie requirements.

This is the number of calories required to maintain your current weight. To lose weight you must either eat less or exercise more. I recommend both! 500 calories less per day will equal 1 pound of weight loss per week.

- You can eat healthy and still gain weight. Learn to eat less.
- What is a portion? A good general rule is a portion is the amount that can fit in the palm of your hand.
- You can still eat foods you enjoy, just don't eat as much of it. A major problem facing us today is the "super size it" phenomenon. We tend to receive, and consume more than we actually need. This applies most to eating out.
- Stop eating when you feel full, avoid the feeling of needing to clean your plate

What about exercise?

- Exercise is a must! Most of us lead busy, but sedentary lives.
- Generally you need 30-60 minutes of exercise 3-5 times per week. An aerobic exercise is best. This may include walking, jogging, swimming, and bicycling. The best exercise is the one you will keep doing!
- If you can't do regular exercise, then try to take at least 10,000 steps a day.

Is there anything else?

- Yes. There are commercial and fad diets (Weight Watchers, LA Weight Loss, Adkins, South Beach, etc), commercial exercise programs (Curves for Women, Jazzercise, etc), and medications. For persons very overweight, surgery may also be an option.

Do you recommend any of these?

- I would caution against most commercial and fad diets, although in a recent study, Weight Watchers was shown to have the most sustainable benefits. Avoid diets that promise quick weight loss. You should lose about 1-2 pounds per week. It took time to put it on, it will take time to come off.
- Commercial exercise programs are a personal choice. I recommend regular exercise; how you choose to do it is up to you.
- Surgery is an option for those that are considered morbidly obese. I can provide you with the name of a local surgeon who can give you more information regarding this if you are interested.

What about medications?

- Yes I do prescribe them. However, I do so only after you have begun to establish a healthy lifestyle. Medications will help you lose weight once you get started, but they should never be used as the sole means of weight loss. Why? Because you can't take the medications forever and if you don't make the lifestyle changes, the weight will just come back as soon as you stop the medication. Medications also come with their share of potential side effects. Before starting a weight loss medication, you should fully understand the potential risks involved.

Recommended Websites

- <http://www.deliciousdecisions.org/>
- <http://www.familydoctor.org/>
- <http://www.mayoclinic.com/findinformation/healthylivingcenter/index.cfm>
- <http://www.eatright.org/>