

Aim For a Healthy Body Weight



A healthy weight is important to prevent health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, certain types of cancer, arthritis, and breathing problems. Choose a lifestyle that combines healthy eating with regular physical activity. By balancing the calories you eat with physical activity, you can maintain a healthy weight which is key to a healthy life.

How is Your Weight?

You can evaluate your weight by taking your waist measurement and determining your Body Mass Index (BMI). A waist measurement greater than 35 inches for women or 40 inches for men usually means you have too much abdominal fat. Measure your waist while standing, just above your hip bones. You can calculate your own BMI (see box) or go to the web site www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi. A BMI for adults should be less than 25. Following are some tips to help you get and keep your weight in a healthy range.

Choose a Variety of Healthy Foods

- ❖ Eat at least 5-10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day
- ❖ Consume more whole grain products
- ❖ Eat non-fat or low-fat dairy foods
- ❖ Eat fish, skinless chicken, legumes and lean meats
- ❖ Substitute fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, or low-fat yogurt for high-calorie snacks

Body Mass Index (BMI)

1. Multiply weight in pounds by 700
2. Divide answer by your height in inches without shoes
3. Divide again by your height in inches
4. My BMI is _____.

Limit Foods and Beverages That Are High In Calories

- ❖ Limit portion sizes of foods high in sugar or fat, such as cookies, cakes, other desserts, soft drinks, and fried foods.
- ❖ Use healthy methods to prepare foods like baking, broiling, and grilling with non-stick cooking sprays

Choose Smaller Portion Sizes

- ❖ Eat sensible portions at meals. A 1/2-cup portion is similar to the size and thickness of a woman's palm.

A 1-cup portion is similar to the size of a woman's fist.

- ❖ Avoid second helpings
- ❖ Use smaller plates
- ❖ When eating out, order small portions, share an entree or take part of the food home to eat the next day



Be Physically Active Every Day

- ❖ Walk, ride a bike, or do other types of moderate physical activity for a total of at least 30 minutes a day for adults and 60 minutes a day for children
- ❖ Be more physically active throughout the day by using the stairs, parking farther away from your destination, and walking your dog
- ❖ Include weight-bearing physical activity to prevent muscle loss
- ❖ Set a good example for children by participating as a family in recreational activities that increase physical activity
- ❖ Limit TV time to 2 hours or less each day

Managing Your Weight

- ❖ Choose a variety of health foods
- ❖ Choose foods low in fat and sugar
 - ❖ Eat sensible portion sizes
- ❖ Do at least 30 minutes of moderate activity every day

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