

# Creating Health & Nutrition

## Weight Management

### Tip

Reducing food intake by just 100 calories a day could result in a 10-pound weight loss in 1 year!

### Nutrition Information

Feel you are overweight? Excess weight can put you at a greater risk for developing heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and some types of cancer. To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, it is important to develop a healthy eating pattern and include physical activity as a regular part of your day.

**ChooseMyPlate.gov** provides a wealth of information on healthy eating as well as online tools to help you develop a healthy meal plan that meets your individual needs and goals. Additionally, SuperTracker, also found on this website, helps you log your food

intake and find out how your diet compares with recommendations. Research indicates that individuals who have lost weight and maintained that loss over time use food records as a way to keep them on track with healthy eating habits.

Physical activity is another important part of weight management. Adults should strive for at least 2½ hours per week of aerobic activity at a moderate level. Spreading activity out over at least 3 days a week is best. Any activity you do should be done for at least 10 minutes at a time for maximum benefit. Strength training activities are recommended at least 2 days per week.

### Nutrition Tips

**Choose beverages wisely.** Avoid drinking beverages that contain added sugars. Drink water or other non-caloric beverages to stay hydrated and quench your

thirst. Low-fat or fat-free milk is a nutritious option with meals. If you drink juice, limit it to one 6-ounce serving per day.

### Eat smaller portions.

Use smaller plates and glasses to make your portions look satisfying, even if they are smaller amounts.

### Eat higher-fiber foods.

High-fiber foods help you feel full longer and also have health benefits. Include fresh fruits and vegetables as well as whole grains in your daily meal plan.

**Never skip meals.** Always eat breakfast. Skipping meals slows your metabolism, making you more likely to overeat at the next meal.

**Downsize.** When you eat out, order the smallest portion or share an entrée. Ask for a doggie bag before you eat so you can place half the meal in the bag and not be tempted to continue eating.

### Use low-fat cooking

**methods.** Steam, bake, broil, microwave, or grill foods instead of frying. If you sauté, use a small amount of oil or a vegetable spray in your pan.

### Shopping Tips

**Preplan meals.** Use a grocery list to ensure you purchase health-promoting foods, and remember to stick to the list. Avoid shopping when you are hungry since it often leads to impulse purchases.

### Skip highly processed

**foods.** Convenience foods, such as many commercially prepared meals and snacks, often contain higher amounts of sugar, fat, and sodium with fewer of the important nutrients we need.

**Read labels.** Choose foods with fewer calories from fats and added sugars. Check the serving size and compare it to what you eat. As a rule of thumb, choose products



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## Examine Your Choices

Food	Source	What I buy	What I plan to buy/change
Fruit	Fruit contains fiber to help you feel full	Apple juice	Apples

### My Goal:

I will increase my physical activity this week by taking 20 minutes of my lunch hour to walk around the block every day. I will keep a pair of sneakers in the office so I am sure to have shoes to wear for walking.

with less than 20 percent of calories from fat.

#### Stock up:

- Whole grains without added sugar and fat—whole-wheat products, oats, and brown rice
- Fruits—fresh, frozen, or canned packed in water or juice
- Vegetables—fresh, frozen, or canned with no salt added
- Low-fat dairy—milk, yogurt, cheese
- Lean proteins—fish, skinless chicken, lean meats, beans

#### Physical Activity Tips

**Start small.** If you have not been physically active, don't set a goal of running a 5K in the next month! At least once or twice a day, start with 10 minutes of some type of activity that gets you up and moving beyond what you normally do in a day, and work your way up.

**Schedule activities.** Just like you schedule appointments, make physical

activity a scheduled part of your day and week. If you can't fit in an hour of walking, think about things you can do for 10 minutes at a time during the day.

#### Choose activities you like.

Walking is one of the best activities you can do. If you don't like walking alone, recruit a friend or family member to join you. Try different things to keep it interesting.

#### Include different types of physical activity:

- Aerobic—activities that make you breathe harder and your heart beat faster (e.g., fast walking, jogging, swimming laps)
- Strengthening—activities that make your muscles stronger (e.g., pushups and lifting weights)
- Balance and stretching—activities that enhance physical stability and flexibility to reduce the risk of injury (e.g., dancing, yoga, martial arts)

Ultimately, the key to weight management is a combination of the foods you eat and your physical activity. Starting with small steps and changes to develop habits that will keep you at a healthy weight is critical. There are many resources available to you, so try different methods and see what works best. SuperTracker ([www.choosemyplate.gov/tools-supertracker](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/tools-supertracker)) is just one tool that may help you develop a plan that works for you.

#### Sources

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Originally prepared by Lois Kilcoyne, former extension educator, Northampton County. Reviewed and revised by Sharon McDonald, senior extension educator, Blair County.

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