

A Guide to a Healthy Weight

Keeping weight off and maintaining a healthy weight requires making a lifestyle change and not turning back to old habits.

Where do I start? Ask yourself: What triggers my unhealthy eating?

- Is it the candy dish tempting me on the counter?
- Could it be the fast food drive thru off the freeway luring me in after a long day of work?
- Have I skipped a meal, breakfast or lunch?
- Do I let myself get too hungry prior to eating lunch or dinner?
- Does my body seem to be grumbling, “Who cares if it has vitamins or minerals, just give me something to fill me up quickly?”
- Do I find myself unprepared with healthy foods when it is meal time?
- Is my home filled with high-calorie and/or high-fat foods?

Weight Loss Realities:

- Lose weight for good by doing it a little at a time, over a long period.
- Lose one to two pounds a week is a healthy goal.
- Make changes to how you eat and move.
- Deciding to “lose weight” is different from making a lifestyle change.
- Have realistic goals.
- In place of an unreasonable weight goal, build up to five days a week of physical activity.
- Find an eating plan that you can work with for the long term.
- Maintain control and confidence by eating smaller meals and by eating slowly.
- Look out for foods that are high in nutrients relative to their calories.

General Tips:

- Overeating is common when extremely hungry.
- People eat what is around and you may consume more calories if healthy foods are not available.
- Learn and observe why you eat, when you eat, and what you eat to help you make the appropriate lifestyle changes.
- Losing weight takes time.
- A low calorie and restrictive diet can make you cranky and irritable.

Make Changes in your Environment.

Tips for Home:

- Drink a glass of water and listen to your favorite music after arriving home.
- While cooking, chew gum or munch on your favorite veggies.
- Place candy dishes on high shelves and replace them with fruit bowls.
- Move tempting items out of sight in cupboards or in the refrigerator (e.g. place them far back as possible or in hard-to-reach spaces).
- To store food, replace see-through containers with opaque containers.
- Clean out tempting high-calorie foods.
- Keep healthy snacks readily available.
- Keep chopped up veggies and fruits in the refrigerator.
- Pre-portion items that you tend to overeat when eating out of a larger package (e.g. crackers).

Tips for your Car:

- To rid the temptation of the fast food drive thru, try taking some fruit, carrots, or string cheese to eat on your commute home or before you leave the office.
- Avoid the tempting, large, high-calorie drink by keeping a water bottle in your car.
- For flavor, add a slice of lemon to a drink or drink flavored water.

Eat a Variety:

- Add plenty of colorful fruits and vegetables to fill your diet.
- Consume whole grains. Whole Grain rice, breads, cereals and pastas have more nutrients than refined products.
- Eat lean meats and low-fat dairy products.
- At each meal, fill half of your plate with fruits and vegetables.

Tips to Avoid Extreme Hunger:

- Have breakfast daily.
- Take breakfast with you if you are running out the door or do not like to eat upon getting up.
- Take healthy snacks with you.
- Curb the need for junk food or unhealthy vending machine choices by eating one of your snacks midmorning or in the afternoon.
- To keep your energy up, try an apple, pear, mini-bag of carrots, V-8 juice, string cheese, or almonds.

For more information or a 1:1 wellness consultation, please contact Julie Chobdee, MPH, Wellness Program Coordinator, at Julie.Chobdee@ucr.edu or x2-1488.

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