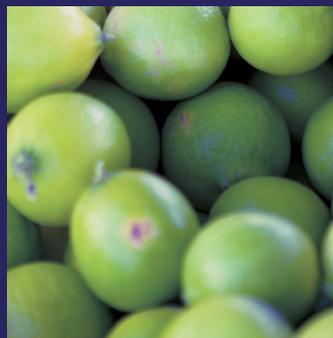




YOUR
WEIGHT *Matters*
FOR YOUR HEALTH

Health and Wellness Guide

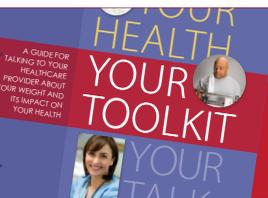


THANK YOU

for your interest in the *Your Weight Matters* Health and Wellness Guide. The journey of weight-loss can often be a difficult one with a variety of pitfalls. This guide was designed with you in mind. The *Your Weight Matters* Health and Wellness Guide aims to help you along your weight-loss journey. Please use this guide as a long-term resource on your journey to improved health and weight. While this guide focuses primarily on nutrition, you will also learn more about how to successfully change your behaviors, manage your weight and, most importantly, how to be successful long term.

The *Your Weight Matters* Health and Wellness Guide is part of the *Your Weight Matters* Brand, which is proudly brought to you by the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC). The OAC, a nearly 50,000 member-strong National non-profit organization, is dedicated to improving the lives of individuals affected by the disease of obesity through education, advocacy and support.

The *Your Weight Matters*SM Brand features a variety of valuable programs, such as the:



Your Weight Matters Campaign
www>YourWeightMatters.org



Your Weight Matters National Convention
www.YWMConvention.com



Your Weight Matters Magazine
www.YWMMagazine.com

All of these programs provide you with different tools to help you in your journey toward improved health. You may have already attended a Convention or taken the Campaign Challenge, and if so, we strongly encourage you to share these resources with others who are dealing with weight-related issues. The OAC strives to offer individuals evidence-based information to help folks make educated decisions about their weight and health.

It is our hope that you utilize this guide in your journey. Inside, you'll find useful tools like a Food Journal, Activity Tracker, Body-Mass-Index Chart and much more. These tools will help you in learning more about your behaviors and help you track your progress. If you have any questions regarding this guide or any other *Your Weight Matters* program, please email info@yourweightmatters.org or call (800) 717-3117.

**And always remember...YOUR Weight Matters
– For YOUR Health!**

Disclaimer: The models used in this publication neither endorse nor are associated with any products or treatments advertised/discussed/editorialized, nor are they representative of any conditions, diseases or other health-related illnesses, conditions or diagnoses depicted/discussed/editorialized within this publication. Before starting any exercise program, please consult with your doctor.

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Your Weight and Your Health

Your weight and health go hand-in-hand. In this opening section, you'll learn more about your weight, obesity, how to measure weight and much more. It's important that you know why your weight impacts your health and what you can do to make healthy changes in your life.

Changing Your Behaviors

Your behaviors greatly impact your weight and health. In this section, we'll look at some easy ways you can change your behaviors through things like SMART Goals and more. Changing behaviors that added to your weight gain is one way to improve your weight, either alone or with other treatments.

Nutrition

There is so much information regarding food and nutrition, it can be difficult to determine what choices you should make on a daily basis. One thing is for sure, the food you eat can impact your body in a positive way. Many people know this but question the specifics. It can get complicated pretty fast! This section will give you the basics for a healthy diet and life-long good nutrition.

Managing Your Weight and Health

Understanding how your weight is impacted by nutrition and your behaviors is very important. We know that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to weight-loss and health and wellness. In this section, we'll talk more about different resources you can utilize to help you manage your weight and health long term.

Tools for Staying on Track and Improving Your Health Long Term

In this section, we'll talk more about how you can make sure you keep your new health and wellness goals, and we'll also provide you with useful tools to help you in your journey toward improved health!



YOUR WEIGHT AND YOUR HEALTH

Your Weight and Your Health

Why does your weight matter to you? Is it because you want to stay healthy for your family? Are you already experiencing the effects of excess weight, such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension or sleep apnea? Weight matters to people for many different reasons, but the most important one is YOUR HEALTH!

In this section, we'll learn more about our weight, obesity, how to measure weight and much more. It's important that you know why your weight impacts your health and what you can do to make healthy changes in your life.

What is Obesity?

If you asked a doctor, "What is obesity?" they would most likely tell you that it is a condition that happens when people have too much body fat. This excess fat can be due to genetics, poor eating habits and environmental factors. Next, they would most likely calculate your body-mass-index, or more well-known as "BMI." Your next question might be, "Am I affected by obesity?" That's a great question, and there are ways that you can find out if you are affected by obesity right at home. Calculating your BMI is easy, and we're going to show you how in this guide.

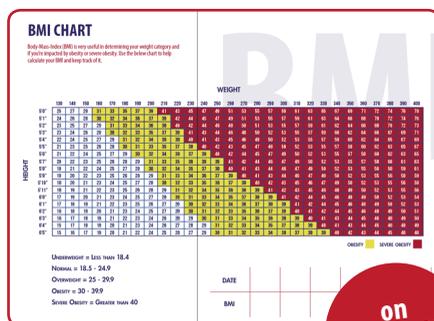
Measuring Your Weight

There are a lot of different ways for you to measure your weight, but for this guide, we're going to focus on body-mass-index or BMI. BMI is a number calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by his or her height in meters squared. There are five categories that someone may fit into when calculating their BMI, such as:

Weight Categories

- ✦ Underweight - <18.5
- ✦ Normal Weight - $18.5-24.9$
- ✦ Overweight - $25-29.9$
- ✦ Obesity - $30-39.9$
- ✦ Severe Obesity - >40

Example: If you are 60 inches tall (5 feet) and weigh 200 pounds, your BMI would be 39. A BMI of 39 would put you in the obesity range.



If you would like to calculate your BMI, please turn to page 44 or visit www.YourWeightMatters.org and click on the "Measure Your Weight" tab in the top menu. Once you've calculated your BMI, if you see that you're affected by overweight, obesity or severe obesity, you may want to consider talking to a healthcare professional about your weight.

on
pg.44!

Obesity-related Conditions

What makes weight such a serious issue are the more than 40 related conditions associated with it, such as:

Diabetes

Hypertension

Sleep Apnea

Heartburn

Gallbladder Disease

Arthritis

Heart Disease

High Cholesterol

Stroke

Depression

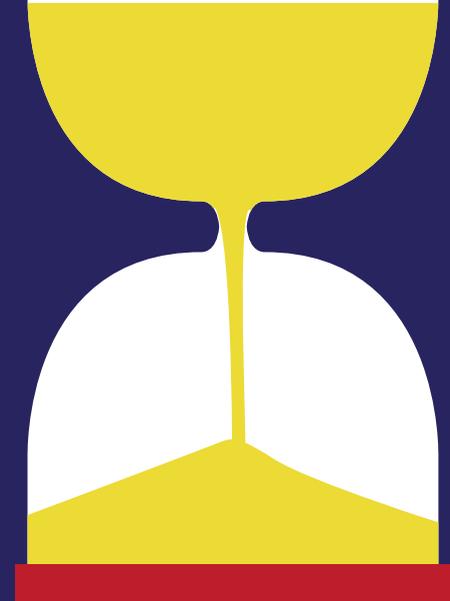
Some Cancers

And More

On its own, weight is a serious issue, and when combined with some of these conditions, weight can seriously impact your health and quality of life. Whether you want to know more about your weight or you have one of the conditions listed here, it's important to discuss these issues with a healthcare professional and let them know how you feel. Many of these conditions can be managed with the help of your healthcare team.

What are the Long Term Effects of

OBESITY?



The long term effects of obesity can be dangerous to your health. From diabetes to hypertension, it is important to take your weight and health seriously. There are many factors that will determine how much obesity can impact your health, such as genetics, how long you are affected and more.

Thankfully, there are ways to treat obesity and excess weight. Today, there are medications available that are specifically for obesity, and depending on your level of obesity, you may even consider bariatric surgery (weight-loss surgery). With any treatment choice, it's important to also make sure that you change your behaviors as well. Remember, there is no "magic pill" for obesity.

Changing Your Behaviors

We do what we do. Our daily routines greatly impact our health. Do you grab something quick for lunch at a fast food restaurant? Do you pack your lunch? Do you make time to exercise? Are your behaviors rubbing off on your family? Behavior plays a big role in weight management. In this section, we'll look at some easy ways you can change your behaviors through things like SMART Goals and more. Changing behaviors that added to your weight gain is one way to improve your weight either alone or with other treatments. A few behavior changes include:

- **Self-monitoring**
- **Exercise**
- **Engaging in a Support Group**

Self-monitoring

Losing weight is not as simple as eating less and moving more. We know that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for weight-loss. Self-monitoring yourself is a great way to help you keep track of what foods you eat, how much you exercise and more. The goal of monitoring your behaviors is to increase self-awareness of your behaviors and change them if you need to at some point.

Some commonly used self-monitoring tools are:

- **Food Diaries**
(see page 40 for your food journal)
- **Regular Self-weighing**



- **Exercise Logs**
(see page 42 for your activity tracker)
- **Pedometers**

All of these tools can be used to track patterns in your daily activity. You can then use these patterns to find out which behaviors tend to result in weight gain or weight-loss. No matter how you do it, self-monitoring should be an important part of your weight-loss, weight maintenance or healthy lifestyle change.

Exercise

Be sure to check with your doctor before starting any exercise plan. Exercise is an important part of any health and wellness plan. Combining an exercise plan with your nutritional plan is a key step in reaching your goals. Increasing your physical activity will help you feel better and give you more energy. Exercise can not only help you control your weight, but it also contributes to healthy bones and makes you feel good.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults age 18-64 should engage in the following amount of exercise each week:



Measuring Your Exercise Intensity

Exercise is measured by a term called, Rate Perceived of Exertion (RPE). Imagine a scale of one to 10. One being the easiest; like lying in bed, while 10 is the hardest; where you feel like you have to stop because you are working too hard. You should exercise at a rate around six to seven.

If you are walking with someone, this will be at the point where you can keep a conversation going, but where you need to take regular deep breaths and you would not be able to sing to your friend. If you are working too hard, you will not be able to talk.



Low Intensity — This will feel like work that you can continue for a long period of time. These are activities like shopping, slow walk or a bike ride on a level surface.



Moderate Intensity — This will get your heart rate up to a place where you feel like you are working and it takes an effort to maintain the intensity. This intensity of exercise will help you maintain your health.



Vigorous Intensity — This will feel like an all-out effort, your heart rate will be high and you will not be able to speak complete sentences without taking several breaths. This improves athletic conditioning.

Exercise can come in many forms and doesn't always have to mean spending hours in the gym. Here are some great examples of simple exercises that you can do alone or with a partner:



- **Brisk walking (a 15 minute mile)**
- **Yard/house work**
- **Leisure bike ride**
- **Playing with family**
- **Light swimming**
- **And More**

Once you have decided why you want to exercise and make a commitment, then you can set a SMART Goal and use the FITT Principle to make a plan.



CHANGING YOUR BEHAVIORS

Developing Your Exercise Goals

Your goals should be SMART:

S

Specific: Choose one specific behavior per goal to work on.

M

Measurable: Can you measure this against a baseline (starting point)?

A

Attainable or Action-based behaviors: Is the goal attainable? Use action words when writing goals such as “I will” and “I do,” rather than “try, should would, could.”

R

Realistic: Do you have honest and realistic expectations of yourself with your time, body, likes/dislikes?

T

Timely: Is the time allotted reasonable and manageable for you right now? And, when will it conclude?

Then use the FITT Principle to make your plan:

F

Frequency: How often?

I

Intensity: What percentage of your target heart rate do you exercise? How hard do you plan on working?

T

Type: What mode of exercise are you using (walk, swim, aerobics, bike, dance, weights, yoga, Pilates, etc.)?

T

Time: How long can you exercise per day? (This does not have to be all in one session. Time can be divided throughout the day.)

The SMART Goals and FITT Principle are great tools to help you put your plan together and make some goals. Here are some examples of poor and well-written goals:



Poor Goals:

- I want to increase my cardiovascular exercise.
- I need to lose weight.

These goals are too general and do not clearly define the plan.

SMART Goals:

- I will increase my exercise by walking Monday, Wednesday and Friday two times a day for 15 minutes each time. I will walk at a pace that is somewhat difficult.
- I will record my food intake and exercise every day. My goal is to stay under 2,000 calories and to exercise 150 minutes this week.

These SMART goals are better and allow you to easily know if you are following your plan or not.



Remember these few things about exercise:

- **Make it simple.**
- **Make it realistic.**
- **Make it happen.**
- **Most importantly, make it fun!**

The most important commitment YOU make is to YOUR weight and health!

Support Groups

The journey of improving your health and weight can often be a difficult and lonely one. We all know that one person who can “eat anything and not gain a pound.” This is not true for most of us. Most folks battling excess weight, obesity or severe obesity find themselves needing support. Support groups are an excellent resource to share your story and learn from others. Here are some quick tips to help you find and engage in support groups:

- **Ask your doctor for support group references. There are a wide variety of support groups available (women-only, men-only, faith-based, and others).**
- **Don't be afraid to speak up and share your story. There's a good chance someone is thinking the same thing you are.**
- **Not ready to meet face-to-face? There are numerous online support groups available.**

Support groups can be an excellent place for you to find others who are dealing with the same struggles. Often times, support groups also provide a place for you to speak freely about your issues with weight.

Changing your behaviors is very important when it comes to managing your health. It may also be one of the hardest things to do in your weight-loss journey. Our behaviors are built into our daily routines, families, lifestyles and more. Don't expect to change your behaviors in one day or even one week for that matter. It will take time, but it is important to stick with your behavioral changes, as they will greatly help you in your weight-loss journey.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know the average person burns 1.3 calories a minute while laughing?



Nutrition

What should I eat? How much do I eat? Why is the food I eat important? These are common questions people ask every day. There is so much information regarding food and nutrition, it can be difficult to determine what choices you should make on a daily basis. One thing is for sure, the food you eat can impact your body in a positive way. Many people know this but question the specifics. It can get complicated pretty fast! This section will give you the basics for a healthy diet and life-long good nutrition.

What is Nutrition?

Let's start from the beginning. What is nutrition? Nutrition is how the food we eat affects our body. By following a healthy, balanced diet, your body will get the nutrients it needs for proper health to prevent disease, maintain a healthy weight, and provide you with the energy you need for the day. One of the biggest reasons people should follow a nutritious diet is because it affects your health in many ways. Health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and obesity are directly impacted by the foods you eat. Choosing certain foods can help with managing these conditions.

Obesity is one of the biggest concerns as it is linked to so many other problems. As your weight increases, you may develop other health conditions such as diabetes, sleep apnea, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and some cancers, just to name a few. Multiple studies show a high fat diet can be linked to heart disease. Other studies show a high fiber diet can reduce your risk of heart disease. With so much information out there, people are bound to be confused, but it is important to move toward a healthy meal plan for you!

When looking at your diet, it is important to remember that all foods can fit into your plan. There is no such thing as a perfect diet. Many health professionals recommend three things when it comes to nutrition:

- **Moderation**
- **Balance**
- **and Variety**

This is a great way to look at nutrition and can be a good rule to live by. When thinking of moderation, remember, every food can fit. Don't think of foods as good or bad. For example, eating French fries, a greasy hamburger and a big slice of chocolate cake all in the same meal would not be a great idea.

By balancing the foods you eat, you choose most foods that are high in nutritional value and may occasionally put in a food with lower nutritional values. So pick one of those foods and swap the others. Instead, choose a salad with grilled chicken and light dressing. For dessert, have a small slice of chocolate cake. That is balance and moderation.

Don't forget variety. Each food you eat will provide you with a variety of different nutrients. If you eat the same foods every day, you will be getting the same nutrients each time. By trying a variety of lean protein, fruits, vegetables and grains, you will provide your body with an array of wonderful nutrients.

Nutrition Basics

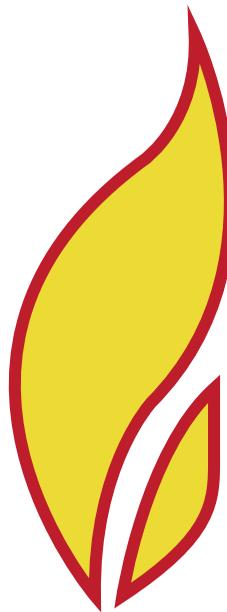
Calories

Each food you eat contains calories. A calorie is a unit of energy. The specific definition for a calorie is approximately the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of one kilogram of water by one degree Celsius. Depending on the ingredients, each food contains a certain number of calories. Some foods that contain high amounts of sugar and fat may have a high amount of calories. Foods which contain a lower amount of these would typically have fewer calories.

Your body requires energy every day to perform your daily activities. Each person needs a different amount of calories to get the energy they need. The amount of daily calories you need depends on lots of things such as your size, the amount of muscle your body has, how old you are, how active you are and even genetics. Below, you will find a chart from the USDA regarding average calorie amounts needed for different populations. Remember, this is just a guide and may vary from person to person.

Age and Gender	Estimated calories for those who are not physically active <i>Total daily calorie needs*</i>
Children 2-3 yrs	1000 cal
Children 4-8 yrs	1200-1400 cal
Girls 9-13 yrs	1600 cal
Boys 9-13 yrs	1800 cal
Girls 14-18 yrs	1800 cal
Boys 14-18 yrs	2200 cal
Females 19-30 yrs	2000 cal
Males 19-30 yrs	2400 cal
Females 31-50 yrs	1800 cal
Males 31-50 yrs	2200 cal
Females 51+ yrs	1600 cal
Males 51+ yrs	2000 cal

Chart from ChooseMyPlate.gov



The chart to the left gives you an idea of the calories you burn each day while at rest. It does not take into account extra calories you may burn when you are more active. Activities like taking a walk, cleaning the house, and even running errands burn extra calories. The more active you are, the more calories you burn every day. Another factor is your current weight. People who are heavier require more calories to do certain tasks.



What do Calories Look Like?

1800 (approximately) Total Calories

Breakfast

2 eggs and veggies
 ½ cup Orange Juice
 Toast
 Cup Berries
 Skim Milk

450 calories

Snack:

Veggies
 2 String Cheese
 200 calories

Lunch

3 oz. Chicken
 Salad with Light Dressing
 Whole Grain Rice
 Fresh Fruit
 Skim Milk

430 calories

Snack:

Whole Grain Bagel (1/2)
 1 Tbsp. Peanut Butter
 250 calories

Dinner

3 oz. Roast Beef
 Baked Potato
 Green Beans
 Small Dinner Roll
 1 tsp. Margarine

460 calories



Or this:

1 Donut

300 Calories

Fast Food Hamburger
 Medium French Fries
 Soda

1000 calories

One Piece Pepperoni Pizza
 Breadstick
 Kool-Aid®

700 calories

NUTRITION

The chart below shows how many extra calories you need when you perform various activities based on how much you weigh.

Activity (1-hour duration)	160 pounds	200 pounds	240 pounds
Aerobics, high impact	533	664	796
Aerobics, low impact	365	455	545
Aerobics, water	402	501	600
Backpacking	511	637	763
Basketball game	584	728	872
Bicycling, < 10 mph, leisure	292	364	436
Bowling	219	273	327
Canoeing	256	319	382
Dancing, ballroom	219	273	327
Football, touch or flag	584	728	872
Golfing, carrying clubs	314	391	469
Hiking	438	546	654
Ice skating	511	637	763
Racquetball	511	637	763
Resistance (weight) training	365	455	545
Rollerblading	548	683	818
Rope jumping	861	1,074	1,286
Rowing, stationary	438	546	654
Running, 5 mph	606	755	905
Running, 8 mph	861	1,074	1,286
Skiing, cross-country	496	619	741
Skiing, downhill	314	391	469
Skiing, water	438	546	654
Softball or baseball	365	455	545
Stair treadmill	657	819	981
Swimming, laps	423	528	632
Tae kwon do	752	937	1,123
Tai chi	219	273	327
Tennis, singles	584	728	872
Volleyball	292	364	436
Walking, 2 mph	204	255	305
Walking, 3.5 mph	314	391	469

Balancing your calories with the energy you take in every day determines your weight. When you take in the number of calories you need every day, your weight is maintained. Taking fewer calories in every day, you can lose weight. If you take in more than your body needs, you may gain weight. The proper balance between activity and calories will lead to a healthy weight. As we talked about earlier in this guide, there are other factors that determine your weight such as genetics, health conditions and medications.

Macronutrients

The food you eat is broken down into three macronutrients:

Carbohydrate

Protein

Fat

Each of these has a different function in your body and provides it with something your body needs. Most of the foods you eat can have a combination of carbohydrate, protein and fat and each of these do something very specific in your body. Despite what you might read in magazines, all of these are necessary and perform a specific function in your body and it's the combination of all three that keep you healthy.

Carbohydrate

Carbohydrate (or "carbs") is used for providing your body with the fuel that it needs to get through the day. Carbohydrates are your main source of energy because your body breaks down the carbohydrate in the food you eat and turns it to glucose. This glucose is used for energy or can be stored in the body for energy or stored in the muscle or liver if you don't use it. Carbohydrate provides your body with 4 calories per gram.

Food sources that are carbohydrate based include:

- Grains (pasta, rice, bread and tortillas)
- Fruits (apples, pears and bananas)
- Vegetables (corn, peas and potatoes)
- Dairy (milk and yogurt)



Good Carbs versus Bad Carbs

Some carbohydrates are better for you than others – although all foods can truly fit.

Simple Carbohydrates: These simple carbohydrates or simple sugars are easily broken down or digested by your body. Some examples of simple carbs are milk and fruit. These are great choices that provide your body with the key nutrients it needs. Other examples of simple carbohydrates are refined grain products such as white bread, white pasta, and white rice. These foods have been processed and lack the fiber and nutrients that whole grain choices do. Simple carbohydrates can also be like the sugars you find in a candy bar or a bowl of sugar. They are broken down easily in your body and provide little nutritional value to you, but they do provide a lot of calories.

Complex Carbohydrates: These carbohydrates provide your body with energy as well as the fiber and nutrients it needs. These carbohydrates take your body a little longer to digest. Some examples of these include whole grain pasta, brown rice, whole grain breads, and vegetables. It is recommended these foods are chosen more often than simple carbohydrates.

Fiber: Fiber is a complex carbohydrate and is important for a healthy diet. It passes through your digestive system undigested. Fiber is found in foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans. We all know fiber can help prevent constipation, but it has a variety of other benefits as well. Fiber can keep you full and satisfied for a longer period of time, reduce your risk of developing heart disease or diabetes, and help with weight management.

Healthy adults should aim for at least 25 grams of fiber per day. It can be tricky to meet your fiber needs. Whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, and beans can all be great fiber sources.



Food	Amount	Fiber Grams
Raspberries	1 cup	8 grams
Blueberries	1 cup	4 grams
Apple (with skin)	1 medium	5 grams
Pear (with skin)	1 medium	4 grams
Whole Wheat Spaghetti	1 cup	6 grams
Popcorn	3 cups	4 grams
Brown Rice	1 cup	4 grams
Lentils	1 cup	15 grams
Black Beans	1 cup	15 grams
Broccoli, boiled	1 cup	5 grams
Carrot	1 medium	3 grams



Sugar: We eat lots of sugar; in fact, we eat about 20 teaspoons of sugar a day according to a report from the 2005–10 NHANES (National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey) database. Sugar can be found naturally in foods or added to improve the taste of foods. Sugar is added to beverages, desserts, candy, and cereal, just to name a few. As obesity rates are rising, sugar is one of the main problems. Adding sugar to nearly everything will increase the caloric intake of Americans, which may lead to weight gain.

Sugar is also found naturally in things like fruit and milk. Choosing foods that are naturally sweet are a better choice for you. Avoiding added sugar is the most important goal. It is also important to be aware sugar comes in many different forms you may see it listed on the nutrition ingredient panel as:

- **Sucrose**
- **Glucose**
- **Fructose**
- **High fructose corn syrup**
- **Cane sugar**
- **Agave**
- **Honey**

No matter what form it comes in, it is still a form of sugar and can add increased calories to your diet.

How Much Sugar Should You Have?

Follow the Three Ingredient Rule – Ingredients are listed in order on the ingredient panel of the label. For example, if sugar is listed first, it is the ingredient there is the most of in the product. When you are reading the ingredients from the ingredient panel on the label, if sugar or any form of sugar listed in this guide is in the first three, determine if this is a food you truly want to add to your diet. Limit these choices to once in a while when shopping.

Sugar Substitutes: Sugar substitutes are becoming very popular as they can be a way to have a product taste sweet without having the extra calories from sugar added into the product. They are sweeter than sugar and are added to drinks, yogurts, and even some desserts. They make foods taste sweeter without adding the extra calories. There are multiple types of substitutes and a few more popular choices are listed below:

Artificial Sweeteners

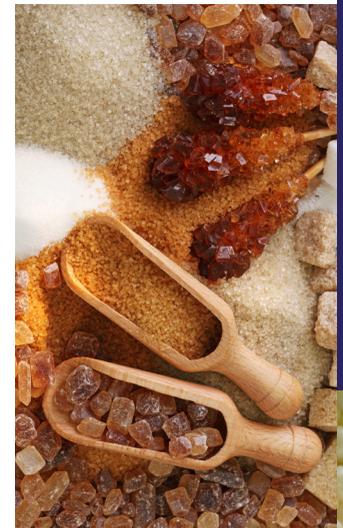
Artificial substitutes such as NutraSweet, Sweet’N Low and SLENDA®, are artificial sweeteners that add sweetness to a product without adding the calories. They are also helpful for people with diabetes. Sometimes, artificial sweeteners are criticized because they are not a natural product. Remember, everything should be consumed on moderation. This is true for sweeteners. For those who prefer natural sweeteners, Stevia is a natural sweetener which is also a no calorie sweetener. It comes from the Stevia plant and is a way to naturally sweeten your foods. All substitutes are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and have recommended intake amounts.

Sugar Alcohols

Sugar alcohols are also sweeteners used in products such as baked goods, protein bars, and other processed foods. These are products such as xylitol and mannitol. They provide a sweet taste with fewer calories, but do contain a small amount of carbohydrates. Sometimes they are used with artificial sweeteners. These sweeteners are also regulated by the FDA. One concern is that eating large amounts of foods containing mannitol may have a laxative effect.

DID YOU KNOW?

DID YOU KNOW that sweetened beverages can contain up to 8 teaspoons of sugar per serving?



Fat

Fat gets a bad name from a lot of people, but is a necessary part of your diet. Fat does have a high amount of calories (9 calories per gram) and is a source of energy. Fat also helps your body absorb the fat-soluble vitamins you eat. Fat provides satiety (feeling of fullness) as you eat, improves the flavor of food and also improves the mouth feel of foods. Every person needs a certain amount of fat. The problem is most of us eat too much of it, and many of the foods we enjoy contain high amounts of fat. People who eat too much fat have a higher risk of developing heart disease and hyperlipidemia. Fat consumption also plays a role in weight management. When you choose higher fat foods, you are likely taking in more calories, which can affect your weight. There are different types of fat that have different functions in your body.

NOT SO HEALTHY FATS

Saturated Fat: Saturated Fat comes from animal products and full fat dairy products. Saturated fat should be limited due to the way it affects your body by raising your total cholesterol and your LDLs (bad cholesterol). The American Heart Association recommends you consume no more than 5 percent to 6 percent of your total calories from saturated fat. This means if you eat around 1500 calories, you should take in only around 75 calories from saturated fat, or 8 grams.

Trans-fat: Trans-fat is mostly made by the hydrogenation of food products while processing. Hydrogenated oil is easier to cook with and does not spoil like natural oil, so manufacturers prefer it. Trans-fat is found in things such as:

- **Baked goods**
- **Crackers**
- **Cookies**
- **Margarines**

Trans-fat will be labeled as “partially hydrogenated fat” on the label. Trans-fat can increase your LDL (bad cholesterol) and decrease your HDL (good cholesterol) which can affect your risk for heart disease. The American Heart Association recommends people limit their consumption of all trans-fat containing foods.

HEALTHIER FATS

Monounsaturated Fats: These are a healthier option of fats and can be used to replace saturated and trans-fat. These fats include:

- **Olive oil**
- **Canola oil**
- **Sunflower oil**

Many nuts and seeds are also good sources of mono unsaturated fats. These fats can improve your health by lowering your cholesterol levels, which will lower your risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Polyunsaturated Fats: These fats can reduce your risk of developing heart disease by lowering your bad cholesterol. These fats are found in:

- **Corn**
- **Soybean and sunflower oil**
- **Fatty fishes (salmon, herring and trout)**

Some nuts and seeds such as walnuts and flaxseed also contain poly unsaturated fats. Omega-3s are a type of poly unsaturated fat as well and provide necessary fat that your body cannot produce on its own. They are linked to improving lipid levels, improving depression, and other health conditions. They are found in fatty fish, walnuts, soybean oil and flaxseed oil.

Even though monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats provide benefit to your body, it is important to remember these fats also provide 9 calories per gram. By adding these foods to your diet, you will increase your calories, which can also affect your weight. Use these types of fats sparingly.



Protein

Protein is the building nutrient and is used for cell growth and development, healing and to maintain your body's muscle mass. Protein is found in a variety of food sources, but most commonly in meat sources such as:



There is a small amount in some vegetables as well. When choosing protein-based foods, it is also important to watch the fat content. Many protein-based choices are also higher in fat. A few things to remember are choosing lean meats, trimming the fat off your meat, and choosing low-fat dairy when you are choosing your protein sources.

People often wonder how much protein their body needs every day. The Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for protein is 46 grams per day for women and 56 grams per day for men. That may seem like a lot, but it really isn't. Take a look at the chart below to see how quickly you can meet your needs:

3 oz. of meat	21 grams
1 cup milk	8 grams
1 cup dry beans	16 grams
1 eight oz. yogurt	11 grams



Many people wonder if they need protein supplements to meet their needs. When people strength train, they typically need a little more protein, but you are normally able to meet your needs with food. Some people like to use protein supplements because they are easy to use as an occasional meal replacement.

Vitamins and Minerals: Every food that you eat contains different vitamins and minerals and all are important to provide different functions in your body. Eating a varied diet can help ensure you get the nutrition your body needs.



Vitamin A

Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin that has many functions such as for growth and development, the immune system, and for good vision. Vitamin A can be found in foods such as cod liver oil, liver, kale, spinach, pumpkin, collard greens, sweet potato, carrots and broccoli.



Vitamin D

Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin that is naturally found in few foods. It is added to many foods, and you can also get Vitamin D from the sun. This vitamin helps with calcium absorption, cell growth and immune function. It is found in many fortified dairy products.



Vitamin C

Vitamin C is an anti-oxidant and its most important function is to maintain the body's immune system. It is also important in growth and repair of your body's tissues. Good sources of vitamin C include: citrus fruit, mango, cantaloupe, broccoli, peppers and spinach.



Vitamin E

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin and an anti-oxidant as well. It protects your body from free radicals (damaged cells in your body) and also helps in your body's immune function. Vitamin E is found in nuts, seeds and oils.

The foods you eat provide a variety of the nutrients we talk about in this guide, as well as hundreds more. Many people feel if they take a multivitamin, there is no need to eat healthy foods because the multivitamin gives them everything they need. This is incorrect! There are many benefits from healthy food you cannot get by just relying on a multivitamin. Use your multivitamin as an insurance policy but eat a healthy diet as well. Choose healthy foods to ensure your body gets the fiber, antioxidants and nutrient benefits that aren't always in a multivitamin.

Sodium: Sodium (or salt) may be linked to high blood pressure in some people. High sodium diets are common among Americans mostly because we eat a highly processed diet. The American Heart Association recommendation is to aim for less than 1500 mg of sodium per day. This can be tough to meet as many Americans consume close to 3500 mg, but doable if you follow the tips in this guide.



Tips to Reduce Sodium in Your Foods:

AVOID processed foods: Frozen pizza, boxed dinners and canned soups are amongst the highest in sodium. Aim to avoid everything that comes in a box or is packaged.

CHOOSE fresh: When you choose fresh fruits, veggies and meat, you will limit your sodium intake.

SKIP the salt shaker: Don't put it on the table and vow to try your foods before salting.

READ the label: Know your number. Aim for less than 1500 mg of sodium daily. Be aware of high sodium content foods. Limit these or balance them with lower sodium options.

What should I eat? – Food Groups

Now that we know what makes up your food, let's talk about the food that we eat every day. There are many choices you can make in your diet. There are so many foods to choose from and it is important to make choices from each group.

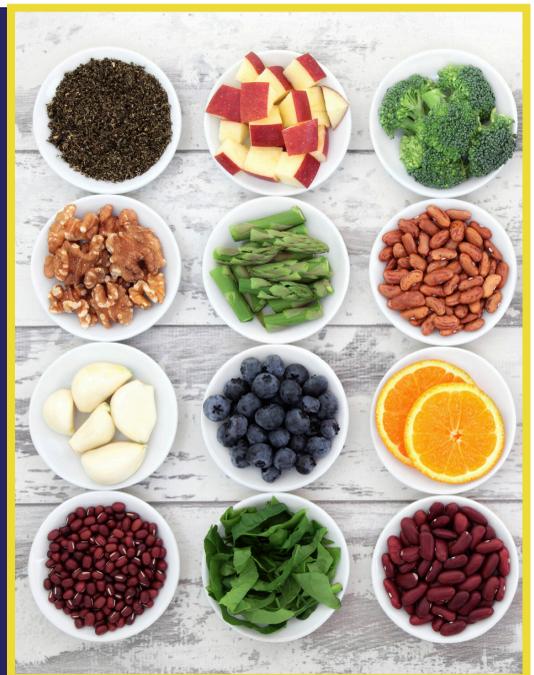
Fruits: Grapes, bananas, watermelon and berries are just a few of the great choices that fit into your diet. Fruits are low in calorie, high in fiber, and packed with nutrients. They are a carbohydrate source and are sweetened with natural sugar. Fruits are offered in many ways, fresh, canned, frozen and juice.

QUICK TIPS:

- Fresh is always best, but canned, frozen or juice can work as well.
- When choosing canned fruits, opt for those packed in their own juice, and when choosing applesauce, opt for unsweetened.
- Juice is a good choice but can add up quickly. Remember a serving of juice is ½ cup. Try to limit your consumption to one serving and then fill up on fresh fruit.

ADDING FRUITS TO YOUR DIET:

- Aim for 2 cups of fruit per day.
- Top your cereal with fresh berries.
- Have a piece of fresh fruit for your afternoon snack.
- Slice bananas on your peanut butter sandwich.
- Blend fruit for a tasty smoothie.



Vegetables: Vegetables provide your body with fiber, nutrients, vitamins and minerals for few calories each day. Vegetables are a carbohydrate source as well and provide your body with a small amount of protein. Remember the recommendation of filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Vegetables can be fresh, frozen, canned or juiced. There are so many options to choose from!

It is recommended that adults should take in 3 cups per day. Again, fresh is always best, but can't always be the option. Frozen vegetables can be a great choice because you can prepare as much or as little as you would like. Canned vegetables are an option as well. It is a good idea to rinse them first to reduce their sodium content.

TIPS TO GET YOUR VEGGIES IN EACH DAY:

- Add fresh peppers and onions to your scrambled eggs.
- Add a side salad to lunch or dinner.
- Chop up veggies and serve with a light dip for an afternoon snack.

Meats and Protein: Most people don't struggle to get these choices in, which include meat, beans, eggs and nuts. Good sources of protein for your body include:

- **Chicken**
- **Beef**
- **Fish**
- **Peanuts**
- **Walnuts**
- **Navy beans**
- **Kidney beans**

It can be a challenge when choosing high protein to limit your fat intake because these choices can also contain a lot of fat. Be sure to choose skinless chicken, lean ground beef, and small amounts of nuts. It can also be difficult to determine how much you should eat at a meal, but a great rule of thumb is when choosing meat, have a palm-size portion.

Dairy: Foods from the dairy group provide your body with the protein it needs and are also good sources of calcium and Vitamin D. Dairy foods provide you with the nutrients you need for strong bones. Dairy choices include milk, cheese and yogurt. When choosing these options, it is important that you remember to choose low-fat versions. Low-fat cheese, light yogurt and skim milk can provide you with the calcium you need without the extra fat.

How many do you choose? It is recommended for adults to take in 3 servings per day of dairy products. This would be 1 cup of milk, 1 cup of yogurt or 1 to 1 ½ oz. of cheese.

Grains: Grains provide your body with the energy it needs from carbohydrates and are made from wheat, rice, barley or corn. These foods are high in fiber and B Vitamins.

Examples of grain-based foods include:

- **Breads**
- **Rice**
- **Pasta**
- **Tortillas**
- **Cereals**



Grains that include the entire kernel are considered whole grains. These are the best choices. They include brown rice, whole grain pasta, and whole grain bread. Refined grains are processed and the bran and germ are removed. This gives the grain a finer texture, but it loses much of its nutritional value. These choices include white bread, white pasta, and white rice. When making a choice, opt for the whole grain option.

The recommended serving for adults would be between 5 to 8 (1 ounce) servings per day. The more active you are, the more you would need. The serving size of grains is important to note because so many people tend to eat larger portion sizes. For products like pasta, many people will eat three times the amount of a serving size.

Pasta	½ cup
Rice	½ cup
English Muffin	½ Muffin
Crackers	5
Oatmeal	½ cup

Fats and Cholesterol: Earlier in this guide, we mentioned how fat fits into your diet and reviewed the types of fats and oils and the benefits they have on your body. As a review, choosing the monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are the best options.

Fats and oils should be limited and chosen in moderation. Depending on your activity level, it is recommended you choose 5-7 teaspoons of oils per day. These servings add up quickly. Use salad dressing, cooking oil and fats sparingly. Reduced-fat options of salad dressings and sauces can be a great way to cut back on the amount consumed.

Portion Sizes

It's always important to make sure you are eating the correct amount. Even if you choose foods that are on your plan, it is important you don't overdo it. Many labels list serving size amounts in cup or half cup. It can be hard to visualize this, so here are some guidelines.



1 cup



1/2 cup



1 medium fruit



3 oz. of meat



3 oz. of fish



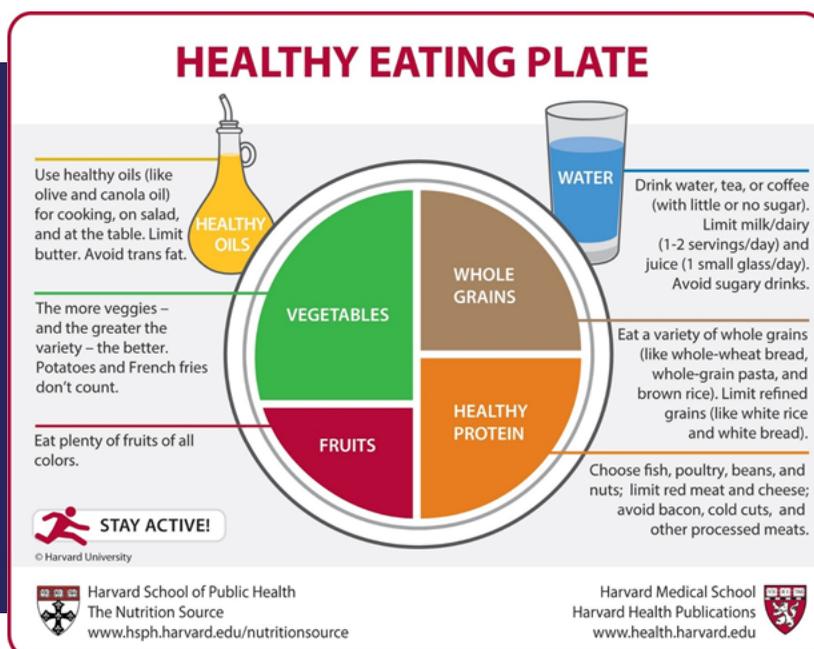
Tsp of butter



1 oz. of cheese

Putting It All Together

Putting all the information together can be difficult to do. The Harvard School of Public Health came up with a way to keep things simple called the Healthy Eating Plate (pictured right). When planning your meals, use this as a guide. This is a simple way for a quick guide of how much to eat and how your plate should look at all your meals!



Fluid Recommendations

Fluid is a very important part of your nutritional plan. Your body needs water to flush toxins out of the body, transport nutrients to your cells and provide a moist environment for your eyes, ears and mouth. If you don't get enough fluid you will become dehydrated and can feel very tired and lack energy.

We all know we need fluid during the day, but typically people are unsure of the amount. A good rule of thumb is to drink at least eight 8 oz. glasses of fluid every day. This is a great start. Remember, if you are exercising or out in the heat, this number may need to increase.

What kinds of things should you drink every day? You have so many choices, but you must choose wisely!

Beverage Choices

Milk

Milk can provide much protein, calcium and Vitamin D. It is a great choice. When choosing milk, be sure to choose a low-fat option like 1% milk.

Juice

Juice can be a good choice in moderation. When choosing juice, remember to choose 100% juice. It is also always important to watch your serving size. The serving size for juice is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. That's not a lot of juice! Many people pour a glass of juice that is 2 or more cups. That is the equivalent of four apples! If you are choosing juice, be sure to keep your choice to one serving.



Water

Water is always best! It will hydrate you with no added sugar or additives. If you aren't crazy about the taste of water, consider slicing a cucumber or strawberry and put it in your water for added flavor.

Sodas and Sweetened Beverages

Regular sodas and sweetened drinks are very popular, but provide your body with lots of extra sugar and calories. Many sodas contain more than 8 teaspoons of sugar in each drink. That's a lot!

Alcohol

Alcohol needs to be consumed in moderation as part of a healthy diet. Alcohol contains 7 calories per gram, so it is higher in calories than carbohydrates and protein. Another consideration is the calories of what alcohol is mixed with.

For example, a shot (1.5 oz.) of alcohol has around 100 calories. An 8 oz. margarita can have around 500 due to the sugar content of the mixer. A 5 oz. glass of wine or a 12 oz. light beer also has around 100 calories, but you must be very mindful of serving sizes. It is easy to drink more than the serving size.

Dispelling the Myths

The area of nutrition can result in much controversy. You will hear people say things like, “The best way to lose weight,” or “A magic food that provides everything you need.” It is very important to remember there is no magic food, and the only way to eat healthy is through the basics of a balanced diet. Below, is a list of food myths you might have heard.

1. MYTH: Eat one meal a day to lose weight.

False! So many people feel that by skipping meals you get in fewer calories and will lose weight. This can be true in theory, but here is the problem. When you only eat one meal per day, your body does not get the fuel it needs to do its daily function. Food is fuel and how can you expect your body to perform its daily functions without fuel! It’s like asking a car to run without gas. The other problem with eating one meal per day is people typically eat one huge meal because they are so hungry from not eating earlier. Sometimes this can even result in more calories than if you would have eaten three meals. When skipping meals, others begin eating snacks throughout the day as a result of being overly hungry.

THE RIGHT WAY: Eat three meals per day to provide your body the fuel it needs. A mix of all the food groups can provide you the energy you need. Try to eat every 4-5 hours. For some, this can be challenging. If you have to go a little longer between meals, consider adding a snack to make sure you don’t get overly hungry.

2. MYTH: If you take a vitamin, you don’t need to eat right.

False! A multivitamin can be a great insurance policy to make sure you get the nutrition you need, but is in no way a replacement for a healthy diet. Some think if they take their multivitamin, they can down a bag of chips with a soda. No such luck!

THE RIGHT WAY: Eat a variety of foods every day. A mix of vegetables, fruits, protein, and dairy will provide you with the nutrition your body needs. It is a good idea to take a multivitamin, because we all know, no one has a perfect diet.

3. MYTH: If I eat low-sugar or low-fat items, I can eat all I want.

False! Again, this seems too easy! The label may say no added sugar or low-fat food. It is important to review the entire label before you make a decision. For most foods, if manufacturers take out sugar, they add extra fat and if they take out fat, they add extra sugar. Typically, the calorie amount is the same. When consumers see these foods, which seem so healthy, it is easy to overdo. Sometimes people eat 3 or 4 times the amount because the items seem healthy.

THE RIGHT WAY: Eat everything in moderation. A low-fat treat is ok. A full-fat treat is even ok. It is just important you balance it with other healthful choices. All foods can fit!

4. MYTH: A low-carbohydrate diet is the best way to lose weight.

False! Any diet that limits a specific food group is not a plan that can be followed long term. Limiting all fat, all protein or all carbohydrate will leave you short of a variety of nutrients.

THE RIGHT WAY: All foods can fit. Develop a balanced meal plan that will contain all nutrients.

Meal Planning

Now that we have the food basics down, let's figure out how to put them into use. Menu planning is an important part of all Americans' overall health and wellbeing. We live fast-paced lives, trying to balance work, family, and activities. Many times without planning ahead for meals, people end up making poor choices, grabbing fast food, or skipping meals. The norm for many is to heat up a frozen pizza or run through fast food for a quick dinner.

Planning meals can seem overwhelming at first, but there are so many positives ways your life can change for the better when you do. First, let's think of the cost. A family of four can quickly spend \$25-\$30 at a fast food restaurant and more than \$50 for a sit down restaurant. Now, take that number and multiply it times the number of times you eat out per week. Many people eat out multiple times per week! Another plus is meal planning saves time. It may not seem that way, but time yourself! How long does it take to get in the car, wait in line, eat and return home? This can add up quickly. Lastly and most importantly, let's think of nutrition. Most restaurants aren't using the leanest meats, low-calorie sauces, and fresh produce, like you would at home, and processed frozen foods and boxed meals are full of sodium, fat and preservatives. You deserve the best nutrition for your health. By preparing meals at home, you guarantee this! It's time to change for you, your family and your long term health.

READY TO PLAN?

Let's Do It!

- 1. Decide the length of time for which you need to plan.** For many, they plan a week in advance, but for others, this is too overwhelming. You may want to start with just planning a few days ahead or just a few meals ahead.
- 2. Do your research.** Check the sale advertisements and build your meals around them. For example, if chicken breasts are on sale, plan a meal or two using chicken this week. If you are really ambitious, try to match your coupons with the sale ads to save extra money. Next, take a quick look around your pantry. You may have some items stored away you can incorporate into a meal this week. For example, if you find frozen lean ground beef, consider using it for "Taco Tuesday" or "Meatloaf Monday."
- 3. Once you know what items are on sale and what's in your pantry, look at your schedule.** If you are planning for your evening meals, consider your evening activities. Many will require different kinds of meals. For example, on a soccer night, you may want to prepare a meal in a crock pot. On a lazy Sunday afternoon, you may choose a homemade soup. Also, think of lunches that need to be packed and breakfast options.
- 4. Make your list and start shopping. By starting with a list, you are more likely to buy what you need.** If you shop without a list, people tend to buy more unnecessary items. This will also make you sure you get what you need and you don't have to make several trips to the store this week. What a time saver!
- 5. Enjoy what you prepared with your family!** Eating as a family is a great way to socialize and talk about each other's day.

Plan Variety for Your Meals

The plan can work, but people often complain they can't think of meal ideas or their family eats the same food every week. Getting out of the food rut your family is in can be a challenge, but very important. If you prepare foods that are nutritious and tasty, there is less of a temptation to eat out. Look online for new recipes, browse Pinterest or check out a cookbook at the local library.

Make it a vow to try one new main dish, salad, or grain per week. If you find one you like, great! Have a three ring binder, computer file or even a recipe box to store all of your "go to" recipes. As you add more and more each week, you will develop a long list of possible entrees. Be brave and adventurous. This is a great way to expose your family to new foods and have them try new things. What a great way to develop healthy eaters.

Tips and Tricks

Use Foods Twice – This can be a really efficient way to meal plan. First, let’s talk about chicken. You may have two meals planned this week that use chicken, chicken and veggie stir fry and chicken noodle soup. Both of these calls for chicken, so when you prepare your chicken for the first meal, prepare it for the other meal as well.

Plan Ahead – Chop, prep and store when you have time. We all have busy nights and not so busy nights. On the slow nights or the weekends, chop up veggies for your lunch, prepare a fruit salad for the week, make sandwiches for your kids’ lunches, and prepare tuna salad for the next night’s dinner.

Double Portions – It doesn’t take that much longer to make extra meals when you have the chance. For example, instead of making one lasagna, make two. Freeze this and use it on one of your busy days when you are pressed for time.

Freeze Leftovers for Quick Lunches – If you have just a little of your dinner left, freeze it and save it for a lunch. This can be your own personal frozen entrée and can be so much healthier! A serving of chili or a piece of lasagna can be a great lunch!

Find Substitutes for Your Old Favorites – Everyone likes greasy pizza, French fries and burgers. You certainly don’t have to give them up. Look for ways to give your old favorites a make-over. Make a homemade pizza topped with lean ham and veggies or cut sweet potatoes into strips and bake for a healthy French fry.

Now it’s time to get started. Get out your pen, paper or your computer and start planning. Remember, progress is the key. You may only get one or two meals planned this week, but it’s a start and one step closer to better health!

Snack Choices

Eating regular meals is great, but there are times when you need to plan a snack to fit into your busy schedule. If you are going longer than 5 hours between meals, consider adding a snack. This will keep your energy level up and prevent you from being overly hungry the next meal. When most people think of snacks, they think about chips, cookies or candy. Remember, food is fuel. Choose something to give your body the nutrition it needs. Try a protein mixed with a whole grain, fruit or vegetable. Here are a few examples:

- **Apple + Peanut Butter**
- **Cheese + Whole Grain Crackers**
- **Greek Yogurt + Berries**
- **Green Peppers + Hummus**
- **String Cheese + Fresh Fruit**
- **Cottage Cheese + Tomatoes**

Reading a Food Label – Nutrition Facts

Determining if a food is an appropriate choice can be difficult. Every packaged food you purchase will have a label. The label will tell you exactly what is in the food you eat and is titled “Nutrition Facts.” It’s up to you to be smart about this and make sure you know what to look at and how to make a good decision.

For many, this label can be confusing. Often, consumers do not know how to interpret. The tips on page 24 will give you quick insight on how to judge a food product.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 bag (66g)
Servings Per Container 1

Amount Per Serving

Calories 270 **Calories from Fat 30**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 3.5g **5%**

Saturated Fat 1g **5%**

Sodium 0mg **0%**

Total Carbohydrate 33mg **11%**

Dietary Fiber 6g **24%**

Protein 27g

Vitamin C 2% • Calcium 8%

Iron 30%

Not a significant source of trans fat, cholesterol, sugars and vitamin A

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.



The Breakdown:

Serving size: Every package will give you a serving size. This can be written a variety of ways, ½ cup, 22 crackers, or 15 chips. The important thing to remember is by sticking to the serving size listed, you will get the nutrients listed on the package. For example, if the serving size says “two cookies” and you eat four, be sure to double all the information on the label. This can be an easy mistake to make, so read carefully!

Calories: Caloric needs were reviewed earlier in this guide. It is important to have a general idea of how many calories you need every day. When you look at a product, determine how it can fit into your plan. You don't need to count every calorie, but just keep in mind your daily total. If you pick up a dessert that contains 500 calories and you need 1500 every day, think about putting it back or cutting it in half and splitting with a friend.

Limit these Nutrients:

The nutrients below are things you need to keep an eye on. Certainly, you do not have to keep a tally of each item. Instead, just know the general ballpark range you should be in and judge each food. Remember, no one is perfect, but this can help you make good choices of what a good option would be.

Fat: The American Heart Association recommended you take between 25-35 percent of your total calories from fat each day. If you are eating around 1500 calories, this means you would need about 50 grams per day (total calories x .3 and divide that total by 9 [calories per gram of fat]). This is a great ballpark number to know. Look at your food and see where it fits in your total number.

Saturated Fat: As recommended earlier, aim for 5-8 percent of your total calories being from saturated fat. For those eating a 1500 calorie diet, this would be around 8 grams of saturated fat per day.

Trans Fat: The recommendation for Trans-fat intake is less than 1 percent per day.

Cholesterol: This comes from animal products, and the general guideline would be aiming for less than 300 mg per day for optimum heart health.

Sodium: Like we reviewed before, aim for less than 1500 mg of sodium daily.

Keep an Eye on These

Total Carbohydrate: This tells you the total carbohydrate in the food you are eating. This is an important number for those who are affected by diabetes as these need to be counted and balanced with the insulin they take. For others, following the serving size recommendations discussed earlier would be appropriate.

Fiber: Remember, the total grams of fiber were reviewed earlier. Know your number!

Daily Value: To the right on the label, you'll see %DV. This stands for percent Daily Value. This shows when you eat the food, your body gets a percentage of the nutrients it needs for the day. For example, if your product has 20 under the %DV, it means you will be getting 20% of the fat you need for the entire day. Keep in mind; this is based on a 2000 calorie diet.

Ingredients: Toward the bottom of the label, you will see a listing of ingredients. These ingredients are listed in order. The first ingredient listed is the ingredient that there is the most of. If sugar is listed as the first ingredient, you will know the product contains lots of sugar.

Grocery Shopping Guidelines

Adding nutritious foods starts with you at the grocery store. By following these Grocery Shopping Guidelines, you will ensure you get the best food for your body. The grocery can be great and tempting at the same time. It is full of wonderful, nutrient rich food and also contains pure junk food loaded with fat, sugar and salt. You must be smart when you enter a grocery store.

The first step is starting with a list. Before you even enter the store, prepare your shopping list. Planning ahead will decrease your likelihood to throw foods in your cart that don't belong. Sit down for a moment before you go and jot down the foods you need for the week. Then shop from that list and don't let other foods make their way into your cart.

The majority of what you need will be in the perimeter of the store. Think about it – produce, meat and dairy line the perimeter of the store, and that’s all you need! When you begin wondering around the aisles in the middle of the store, you may find cookies and chips ending up in your cart.

What Are Must Have Items to Add to Your List?

Produce

Fresh fruits and vegetables are always a must. Make it a goal to add many of these to your diet. There are so many ways to prepare and eat these vegetables. Choose a variety of veggies for a salad. Buy some leaf lettuce to use in place of bread or tortillas in wraps. Pick up a spaghetti squash to prepare on pasta nights instead of white pasta. Cucumbers can be sliced thin and used in place of crackers. A variety of fresh fruits can be blended for a smoothie. Pick up a low-fat fruit or veggie dip and serve with fresh chopped produce. Think of convenience in this section; pre chopped fruits, veggies and bagged salad mix may be a little more expensive than the whole pieces of fruits and veggies, but for some, paying for convenience means you will add these foods to your diet instead of keeping them whole in your refrigerator!

Meats/Proteins

Think lean when you choose these foods. Lean ground beef (90/10) is a good choice. Make sure you purchase skinless chicken or at the least, peel the skin off before cooking. Think of the word loin as you are in this section. Loin can mean lean – sirloin and pork loin are good choices. Eggs are a great source of protein. Use these for a breakfast or boil eggs for a snack. Nuts and seeds can make a great snack option as they are full of protein and good fats.

Frozen

Have some emergency meals on-hand. These can easily be found in the frozen food aisle. For example, frozen chicken breasts can easily be thawed and prepared when you don’t have a dinner idea. Bagged frozen fruit or vegetables are also good choices to keep ensuring there is always an option. Frozen veggie burgers are also a staple to add.

Dairy

Adding low-fat dairy to your diet is a great way to get protein and calcium. Choose low-fat cheese, cottage cheese, milk and yogurt.

Grains

Whole grains are the way to go in this aisle. Choose whole grain pasta, brown rice, crackers and whole grain breads instead of their white flour counterparts. These choices will ensure your body gets the fiber it needs.

Cereals

Resist the urge to purchase sweet sugary cereals. Plain oatmeal can be a wonderful breakfast, or add a high fiber, low sugar cereal to your cart.

Snacks and Treats

Use moderation when choosing these items. Small quantities of these are ok. When you return home, a good idea is to package them in individual serving sizes so you don’t overdo your portions.

GROCERY LIST

Lean Hamburger Meat

Blueberries

Carrots

Whole Grain Pasta

1% Milk

Greek Yogurt

Your Choices Matter – Did you know?

Reduced Fat Peanut Butter: This peanut butter has the same amount of calories as regular peanut butter. Yes, the fat is lower, but what do they use to make up the difference? Sugar! You’re better off going with natural peanut butter and keeping your portion to 2 tablespoons.

Veggie Chips (found in the chip aisle): They look like chips, but they are marketed as veggies. What are they? The answer is fried veggies (mostly potato). That sure sounds a lot like chips and the calorie and fat content are very similar. A better idea? Try baked potato chips and keep it to one serving.

Sugar Free Chocolates: Oh these sound so delicious! Yes, these candies look low calorie and delicious at the same time! Wow! Most people would think of it as a diet food and allow themselves one, or four! Did you know, calorically these provide the same amount of calories as the regular candies. What’s the deal? The sugar in these candies is replaced with fat. You have a higher fat candy with the same calories. People tend to over-indulge in these because they look like a health food. These foods provide little nutritional value as well. What to do? Have the regular candy (just one) and work it into your plan occasionally.

Energy Drinks: These so called energy drinks typically contain nothing but added sugar, a small amount of vitamins, and some caffeine. They are packaged so nicely and look like a health drink. Take a closer look and you will see many of these drinks have more than 200 calories and 30-40 grams of sugar-sometimes more than a candy bar! A better bet- use water! It’s the best way to hydrate. Take your multivitamin and you are set to make sure you are getting your needs met.

Eating Out

Did you know?

- ✦ A Big Mac has 550 calories.
- ✦ Some milkshakes from Steak and Shake have more than 900 calories for a regular size.
- ✦ A Bloomin' Onion appetizer has around 1900 calories.

These are some pretty big numbers. According to a 2013 Rasmussen Report, in 2013, 58 percent of Americans eat out once per week. Additionally, 14 percent of Americans eat out 2-3 times per week, according to the same report.

People eat out for various reasons. Some dine out due to convenience, some is for social reasons, and some find it easier than cooking. Eating out can be part of a balanced diet if in moderation and the appropriate choices can be made.

What Should You Eat When Eating Out?		
	Eat This	Skip This
American Dining	Plain Hamburger Side Salad	Fried Chicken Sandwich French Fries
Italian	Grilled Chicken with Marinara Whole Wheat Spaghetti with Meat Sauce	Lasagna Chicken Parmesan
Mexican	Chicken Fajitas Black Beans Salad and Salsa	Beef Enchilada Refried Beans Chips and Cheese
Chinese	Chicken and Vegetables Beef and Broccoli	Sweet and Sour Chicken White Rice
Pizza	Thin Crust Veggie Pizza Side Salad with Light Dressing	Deep Dish Sausage Pizza Garlic Cheese Bread

When choosing what to eat while dining out, a few things come to mind.

- 1. WATCH our portions.** Portions are huge! A good rule of thumb is to box up half of what you ordered. You may be able to talk a friend or family member into sharing as well. This can also be a great option.
- 2. AVOID fried foods, cheese sauces, or full fat dressings.** The calories of these can add up quickly. For example, a plain hamburger topped with cheese, ranch and bacon, can turn a 400 calorie hamburger into an 800 calorie hamburger.
- 3. PREPARATION is key!** Let the server know EXACTLY how you want to prepare your entrée. Let them know the specifics.
- 4. KNOW what you want to order before you walk in.** It is easy to find menus online. Take a look and decide what you want to order before you walk in. Sometimes, if you don't ask for a menu you won't be tempted.
- 5. SKIP the appetizers, desserts and alcohol.** All of these will add additional unwanted calories. Try to avoid these.

Cooking

Cooking... you love it or you hate it. It doesn't matter which way you feel, it is a necessary part of life. It is important to make sure you prepare foods the correct way for maximum health benefits.

Food Preparation

What's the best way to prepare your foods? There are so many ways, but here are a few that work well with a healthy meal plan.

Baking and Broiling: This is best for most meats. Place meat or vegetable on a pan and bake in the oven. This method does not require the use of extra fat, so can be a great low-fat method.

Grilling: This method can be used all year long, even in the cold. By grilling your meat, the fat drips off of the meat and into the grill. Grilling meats on an outside grill can be a great summertime favorite. Don't limit it to that! Think outside the box and grill vegetable kabobs, fish and even pineapple. When it gets cold, invest in an indoor grill.

Crockpot: Crockpots are great for busy nights. Plan ahead and make chili, barbeque chicken or vegetable soup. The great thing about crockpots is you can turn it on early in the day, forget about it and come home to a healthy dinner.

Pan Frying and Sauté: These methods use a small amount of good fat (remember our healthful oils) in the bottom of a shallow pan or skillet. You can use this for vegetables, meats or stir fry. It uses much less oil and fat than traditional frying.

Swap It Out!

When cooking, you can make many substitutions to boost the nutritional value of the product or lowering the fat content. That's the great part about cooking. It's up to you what you put into the food you are eating. When you choose packaged foods and eat out, you have no idea what is in the food you are eating.

Recipe Swaps

Instead of...

Whole Milk
Cheese
Sour Cream
Bacon
Hamburger
Egg
Dried breadcrumbs
Oil
Sugar
White Flour
White Flour
Pasta
Mashed Potatoes
Tortilla
Rice
Salt

Try this...

1% or Skim Milk
Reduced Fat Cheese
Plain Non-fat Greek Yogurt
Canadian Bacon or Turkey Bacon
Lean Ground Beef
2 egg whites or 1/4 cup substitute
Rolled Oats
Use half amount and half of a fruit puree
Cut the amount by 1/3
Whole Wheat Flour
1 cup Black Bean puree for one cup flour
Spaghetti Squash
Mashed Cauliflower
Lettuce Wrap
Quinoa
Garlic Powder

Spice It Up!

Seasonings are also an important part of any meal you prepare. Different seasonings can turn a plain chicken breast into something delicious very quickly. Stock your cabinets with a few basic seasonings for a cooking success.



Add Some Flavor



Spice	Try it on this...
Basil	Tomato dishes, pesto, marinades
Celery Seed	Salads and dressings
Chili Powder	Chili, stews, and ground meats
Cilantro	Salads, sauces, dressings and sauces
Curry	Meats, vegetables, fish and rice
Mint	Fruit, teas, soups, sauces
Oregano	Italian and Mexican dishes
Thyme	Soup, sauces, meats, and poultry



Now it's time to work on making cooking easy for you. We have reviewed menu planning techniques but when starting to cook, you need to think of the following:

- 1. Have emergency meals ready at all times: These are the meals you can cook in an instant, without a recipe card, that your family loves. Everyone needs these "go to" meals for busy nights.**
- 2. Have some "no-cook" meal options: Who says you have to use a stove. How about chicken salad or left over grilled meat on a crispy salad?**
- 3. Stay organized: When you find something that works, use it again! The best way to do this is by keeping a file (computer or recipe box) of all the things that work well. When you're not sure, go to one of your files for a good recipe.**



Managing Your Weight

Understanding how your weight is impacted by nutrition and your behaviors is very important. So far, in this guide, we've helped you learn more about how these things impact you in different ways. What's very important is that we also know that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to weight-loss and health and wellness. In this section, we'll talk more about different resources you can utilize to help you manage your weight and health, such as:

- **Community programs**
- **Commercial programs**
- **Prescription medicine and other options**

Community-based Programs

Community-based programs can be an excellent way for you to learn from other people who are also dealing with issues of weight. They are also a good source of motivation and will keep you accountable with others. The programs mentioned in this section are not all-inclusive, and you should lookup programs available in your area to find the best fit.

TOPS Club Inc. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly)

Founded in 1948, TOPS is the original non-profit weight-loss support group. TOPS does not sell foods, endorse products, promote quick fixes or push a one-size-fits-all meal plan. TOPS provides members in thousands of chapters across the U.S. and Canada with the information and support needed to make healthy lifestyle changes they can enjoy for a lifetime.

How does it work?

No foods are required, and none is off limits. When it comes to healthy eating, TOPS advocates portion control and balanced eating within two healthy frameworks: the USDA's MyPlate, and the Food Exchange System developed by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the American Diabetes Association. Many dietitians use these same frameworks for teaching healthy eating.

TOPS offers tools, tips and meal planning ideas for using MyPlate and the Exchange System in its membership magazine and other materials. Members are encouraged to move more and eat a greater variety of healthy foods in smaller portions as well as change habits and thinking patterns with the aid of weekly group support.

Weekly TOPS meetings, led by volunteers, focus on making small, steady lifestyle changes that provide lasting weight-loss and better health. Each meeting includes a confidential weigh-in so members can stay accountable to the scale, a brief educational program on nutrition, fitness, health or behavior change, and an opportunity to share challenges and successes from the previous week if the member chooses to share. Weekly meetings provide a supportive, educational environment where people are encouraged and not judged.

Members are urged to consult with their regular doctor or healthcare provider to set a realistic, healthy goal weight and a calorie level that is safe, effective and sustainable.

Weight-loss:

TOPS stands for "Take Off Pounds Sensibly." The organization advocates slow, steady weight-loss using techniques and small behavior changes that members can naturally incorporate into their day and keep for a lifetime. A recent university study of 42,500 TOPS members found that those staying in TOPS for three years were able to maintain their weight-loss throughout that time and lost as much weight as dieters using popular commercial weight-loss programs.

The first visit to any chapter is free. The annual cost to join TOPS is \$28 for chapter or online membership. Chapter members also pay local chapter dues, which vary by community but average \$5 or less per month. Fee and chapter dues cover the costs of weekly weigh-ins and meetings, chapter materials, subscription to the magazine, quick-start guide and online tools. Support online includes facilitated online chat, recipes and self-care program as well as online weight and exercise trackers.

Concerns:

TOPS can't do the work for you. You only get out of TOPS what you put into it. Regular attendance and participation in a local chapter (or online community) are necessary for success. Each chapter tends to take on its own personality, reflecting the ages, backgrounds and interests of its members. Finding a local chapter that is a "fit" for your personality and schedule is important.

YMCA Diabetes Prevention Program

As a leading nonprofit for strengthening community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, the Y believes that all people should be able to live life to its fullest, healthiest potential. In the YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program, a trained lifestyle coach will introduce topics in a supportive, small group environment and encourage participants as they explore how healthy eating, physical activity and behavior changes can benefit their health.

How does it work?

The 12-month group-based program consists of 16 one-hour, weekly sessions, followed by monthly sessions led by a trained lifestyle coach who facilitates a small group of people with similar goals. You will discuss topics such as healthy eating, increasing physical activity, reducing stress, problem solving, and much more. The Program will also help you stay motivated to maintain progress toward program goals with monthly maintenance sessions.

Weight-loss:

Based on research funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Program has been shown to reduce the number of new cases of type 2 diabetes by as much as 58 percent. The reduction was even greater, 71 percent, among adults aged 60 years or older.

Diabetes Prevention Program goals include:

- **Lose 7 percent of your body weight**
- **Gradually increase your physical activity to 150 minutes per week.**

The program states that you will accomplish these goals by healthy eating, increasing physical activity and losing weight.

- **Healthy Eating** – Eating smaller portions, reducing fat in your diet and discovering healthier food options has been proven to help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes.
- **Increasing Physical Activity** – Studies have repeatedly shown that moderate physical activity (walking, swimming, mowing the lawn) for as little as 30 minutes, five days a week can help improve your blood pressure, raise your good cholesterol and prevent blood flow problems.
- **Losing Weight** – It has been shown that reducing your body weight by even a small amount can offer tremendous benefits for people at risk for diabetes.

Concerns:

As with all support-based programs, you must take part in the program to experience the results. The main focus of this program is to prevent diabetes; however, weight is also addressed as weight and diabetes are related. You must also be diagnosed with pre-diabetes to enter the program.

Commercial Programs

This section reviews some of the most popular types of commercial weight-loss products and programs that may help you in your weight-loss journey. Commercial programs include, but are not limited to, weight-loss chains, such as Weight Watchers, health coaches, diet books, Web sites such as www.eDiets.com or www.SparkPeople.com, meal replacement items, and meal replacement system programs such as Jenny Craig and Nutrisystem.

Diet Books

It is not uncommon for people to turn to popular diet books when seeking to lose or manage weight. Diet books have been around since at least the mid-19th century, so clearly there is an enduring market for those seeking to improve their weight and health in this way.

How do they work?

One of the primary benefits of following a weight-loss program from a book is the cost. Most books are relatively inexpensive to purchase or can be obtained for free from a local library. Most do not require you to invest in packaged foods or other tools. You are usually looking at some form of dietary change and portion control, often paired with exercise and self-monitoring. For most people, the cost to follow the diet will be similar to what they already spend on the food they eat now.

Weight-loss:

Depending on your ability to follow the program, you may experience a one to two pound weight-loss per week.

Concerns:

The cons of using a diet book as your means of weight-loss include verifying the safety and efficacy of the plan. Authors trying to sell books are often biased, as they profit from book sales, and they may not have the qualifications necessary to provide health advice. With the huge variety of plans available, the simple truth is that some diet books are good and others are not, and if you are not an expert, you may have a hard time choosing what ones are acceptable.

Online/Web-Based Diet Programs

Like diet books, web-based diet programs come in many shapes and sizes. Some are free, some charge a fee. Some are nutritionally sound, some are not.

How do they work?

A number of these programs are online versions of in-person programs (www.weightwatchers.com) or books (www.southbeachdiet.com or www.jillianmichaels.com) while others, such as www.eDiets.com or www.SparkPeople.com, may allow users to select from a variety of programs to suit their needs. Most online sites offer simple tools like recipes, meal ideas, eating out tips, workouts and progress tracking. Forums or chat-style discussions, which allow users to connect with one another for tips and ideas, are commonly found at these sites. Many sites offer “add-on” services (usually for a fee) such as a personal counselor, more in-depth tools or prepared meals. Many now also have “apps” that can be loaded onto a computer, tablet or smartphone to help with self-monitoring, reminders, shopping and more.

Weight-loss:

Depending on your ability to follow the program, you may experience a one to two pound weight-loss per week.

A good rule of thumb is if a product or claim sounds too good to be true, it probably is. If a weight-loss method claims to help you lose significantly more than one to two pounds a week, steer clear of it.

Concerns:

Like diet books, a self-directed web-based diet program may suit your needs if you are looking for flexible tools to help you manage your weight. In addition, both diet books and web-based diet programs allow people to use regular grocery store food, which most people prefer. As the quality of the eating plans vary both in their nutrition and safety, especially for those with certain medical conditions, it is best to discuss the plan you have chosen to follow with a healthcare professional before you start.

Commercial Weight-loss Centers/Programs

Utilizing a commercial weight-loss center or program is one of the most popular options for someone dealing with weight issues. Centers often provide various resources such as pre-packaged meals, support and more. Centers usually offer a 1,000 to 1,500 calorie-per-day diet plan, which can provide quick weight-loss results; however, as weight-loss slows down, it is easy for people to get frustrated and discouraged.

Before starting any commercial program, ask the following questions to a program representative:

- How much, on average, do clients regain long-term?
- What is your maintenance and follow-up program?
- What rate of weight-loss does your program aim for?
- Does the program emphasize balanced food choices and exercise?
- Are you required to buy specially formulated foods or supplements?
- What are the costs of membership, weekly fees, brand food, supplements and counseling?
- What are the credentials of those running the program?
- What are the health risks?

Commercial programs usually fit into two categories – those that use meal replacements and those that do not use meal replacements. Let's take a brief moment to examine these two categories:

Meal Replacement

Meal replacement through pre-packaged meals can be appealing because of the convenience and ease of choice they offer; however, when meals are pre-packaged, participants may not learn the basics of nutrition and healthy eating. In such a case, weight maintenance becomes difficult and people quickly regain the weight they've lost. Pre-packaged meals may also be expensive (this claim is dependent on the normal weekly food cost an individual would incur).

Liquid meal replacement plans, if used for too long, may be harmful because they can cause nutritional deficiencies. Also, people often have trouble sticking with these programs for continued weight-loss because of the difficulty of maintaining a "normal" lifestyle. Unfortunately, when participants have not learned the principles of healthy eating and portion control, they often resume prior eating patterns.

Non-meal Replacement

Some centers do not utilize meal replacement as part of their program. Their main goal is to teach you how to nutritiously feed your body and make smart food choices. While this is helpful long term, many individuals find it hard to adjust to at first.

Overall, a safe and effective commercial program will offer educational materials that have been reviewed by a licensed healthcare professional. These materials will include information on healthy eating plans, exercise and behavior therapy.

Commercial Weight-loss Programs that Use Meal Replacements

Nutrisystem

Nutrisystem, founded in 1972, offers pre-packaged meals delivered to your home, and dietary counseling. Years ago Nutrisystem was a storefront business but for more than a decade the company has offered an online & telephonic weight-loss program, complete with counseling and menu planning.

Nutrisystem features portion-controlled foods and structured meal plans that are both high in protein and low in glycemic index (GI). Low-GI means that the foods do not cause your blood sugar to rise sharply. For people with diabetes, a low-GI diet can help keep blood glucose in control. Nutrisystem's program for people with or at risk of type 2 diabetes, Nutrisystem D, has been proven effective in three clinical trials to date.

How does it work?

Nutrisystem plans, tailored for men and women, encourage you to consume three meals and two or three snacks per day. The plans offer about 130 different pre-packaged foods to choose from. Foods are home-delivered, typically in shipments every four weeks, after you place an order online or over-the-phone. You have to purchase additional fruits, vegetables and dairy products on your own. These are grouped into three categories: SmartCarbs (nutrient-rich, high-fiber carbohydrates), PowerFuels (lean proteins and healthy fats) and Vegetables (non-starchy ones, which can be eaten freely). A meal planner explains how and when to add these foods into your diet. The program has an active online community, including discussion boards and dietitian-led chats. Counseling, for those who want it, is available and included with most Nutrisystem programs.

Weight-loss:

With the recommended fruits, vegetables and dairy products, this diet plan can be considered well-balanced. Participants following the plan's diet and exercise recommendations should see about a one to two pound per week weight-loss. Research on Nutrisystem customers showed an average weight-loss of 18 pounds at three months and 27 pounds at six months.

Concerns:

Evidence is mixed for Nutrisystem's claim that low-GI foods are better for weight-loss. Some research finds a small weight-loss advantage for low-GI diets over high-GI ones, but other studies find no difference. Whether or not a low-GI diet is "better" for weight-loss, Nutrisystem's meal programs are low in calories and are designed to meet national nutrition guidelines; so, this should be a healthy way to lose weight.

Another concern is that participants using pre-packaged meals do not necessarily learn good nutrition, which makes maintaining weight-loss difficult once they return to buying food on their own. In 2011, Nutrisystem began to address this with "transition and maintenance" plans that reduce the number of pre-packaged foods and increase the focus on preparing and choosing healthy meals in the proper portions. Counselors are also available throughout the program and during transition and maintenance to educate about good eating habits during program and on your own.

The final concern is the cost of the food. Membership is free and there is no long-term contract; the Nutrisystem foods cost about \$230-\$350 for a 28-day package. This does not include the additional fruits, vegetables and other food that you must purchase on your own. Although Nutrisystem claims that the full cost of eating while on the program is about 15 to 40 percent less than what the average American spends on food, some consumers would rather buy food week-to-week. Some employers and health plans subsidize or reimburse program costs.

Jenny Craig

The Jenny Craig program was founded more than 15 years ago and has 800 centers nationwide. It offers frozen or pre-packaged prepared meals to help with portion management and calorie control. Jenny Craig offers weekly one-on-one nutritional and motivational counseling. It was developed by registered dietitians and psychologists and focuses on lifestyle changes.

How does it work?

A typical Jenny Craig program consists of three meals and three snacks per day, which are calorie-controlled based on your height and weight. Sixty percent of the day's food comes from carbohydrates, 20 percent from protein and 20 percent from fat.

You are required to purchase main dishes from Jenny Craig for the first phase, which is defined as the first half of your total weight-loss goal. You work with your diet counselor to incorporate other foods, such as fruits, vegetables, dairy and grains, into your meals.

After the initial phase, you transition entirely to foods you purchase yourself; however, you are required to keep a food log and work with the diet counselors on making good food choices.

Weight-loss:

Overall, the Jenny Craig diet is a well-balanced, reduced-calorie diet in which you can expect to lose about one to two pounds per week. In a research study conducted by Jenny Craig, participants who received the prepackaged food items and program free of charge lost an average of 16 pounds, or 7.9 percent of their initial weight after two years of treatment.

Concerns:

There are some concerns with this program. First, the program may not teach the basics of nutrition in the initial phase, which could lead to weight regain in the long run. Also, counselors are not dietitians and, as with many commercial programs, they are encouraged to sell products. Finally, the cost of the program averages about \$90-\$125 per week. This includes only the entrées and snacks provided by Jenny Craig. You must purchase the additional fruits, vegetables, dairy and grains required from the grocery store.

The program offers fitness tapes and videos for purchase. Participants must also pay membership fees that run from \$10 to \$40 per month.



Slim-Fast (Available in supermarkets, grocery stores and pharmacies)

Slim-Fast has been around for more than 25 years and offers relatively quick weight-loss by substituting a calorie-controlled, sweet-tasting fortified meal replacement shake or bar for some of your regular meals. The program offers online support that includes weight, diet and exercise charting, chat rooms with online buddies, chat sessions with registered dietitians, a weekly newsletter, exercise programs and meal planning.

How does it work?

The diet plan is centered on two Slim-Fast meal replacements. One meal consists of a “Meal-on-the-Go” shake or bar and the other is a similar shake or bar combined with 200 calories of your favorite healthy foods. The third meal is a “sensible meal” of about 500 calories, with 1/2 of your plate filled with veggies, 1/4 with lean protein (such as chicken without the skin), 1/4 with starch, a salad on the side and fruit for dessert. A snack of 120 calories is also offered during the day. Fruits and vegetables (about 3-5 servings) are encouraged in addition to the meals and snack.

As dieters approach their weight maintenance phase, they can replace the shakes or bars with two additional “sensible meals;” however, Slim-Fast provides little instruction on transitioning from portion-controlled products back to regular foods, an omission which is likely to leave dieters struggling to maintain their weight-loss or relying on Slim-Fast products indefinitely.

Weight-loss:

Overall, if followed correctly, the plan does encourage additional fruits and vegetables and it stays at or above 1,200 calories a day, leading to more balanced consumption than traditional liquid diets.

Meal replacement diets such as Slim-Fast are appealing because of their simplicity and convenience. If you plan to use Slim-Fast, you should consider doing so under the supervision of a healthcare professional, who can help teach you how to transition yourself from the shakes and who can monitor you for potential complications of fast weight-loss.

Concerns:

The shakes are about \$1.40 and the meal replacement bars about \$1. The biggest drawback is that dieters may not receive comprehensive information about nutrition, which means that as they transition back to regular foods, which they are likely to do eventually, weight gain may be inevitable. Also, the recommended calorie level may be too low for some dieters.

Commercial Weight-loss Programs that Do NOT Use Meal Replacements

Weight Watchers

Weight Watchers was founded in the 1960’s and offers weight-loss guidance and support. The plan emphasizes a well-balanced diet and encourages lifestyle changes and exercise.

How does it work?

Weight Watchers offers two plans, so dieters can pick the one that better fits their lifestyle. The Flex Plan is based on a points system. All food is assigned a certain number of points according to calories, fat and fiber content. Dieters are allowed to consume a certain number of points each day based on their body weight and the number of pounds they want to lose. The Weight Watchers system teaches that all food can potentially be incorporated into a healthy eating plan, as long as the daily point values are not exceeded.

Dieters on Weight Watchers learn to balance their food choices. They can also trade physical activity for more points. A second option, the Core Plan, focuses on healthy foods (whole grains, fruits, vegetables and low-fat protein foods) which users can eat at will, without the need for tracking points.



Weight Watchers offers weigh-ins and weekly meetings, which can be private, online or in groups. In the weekly meetings, dieters receive a lot of encouragement, help, suggestions and strategies. No foods are forbidden, and no foods are required to be purchased.

In addition, most foods, even restaurant foods, already have points assigned to them, which makes keeping track of consumption a lot easier. Weight Watchers encourages dieters to keep a food log, which turns off a lot of dieters, but tracking what you eat has been shown to have a strong positive effect on weight-loss. Weight Watchers counselors also teach the basics of nutrition and healthy lifestyle choices at the weekly meetings, which increases the chances of long-term success.

With Weight Watchers, dieters learn that higher fat and calorie foods can be incorporated into daily consumption but do “cost” more points and therefore must be traded off for less food later in the day or week or increased exercise, in order not to exceed point allowances. In 2014, Weight Watchers unveiled a new resource for its users, OnlinePlus. Weight Watchers OnlinePlus offers users a 24/7 Expert Chat option that allows customers all-hours access to certified coaches.

Weight-loss:

Overall, Weight Watchers can teach healthy, balanced eating for a one to two pound per week weight-loss. Weight Watchers is most similar to what dietitians would teach (calorie counting and food logging), and most healthcare professionals regard it as a standard against which to measure other commercial programs. In a research study conducted by Weight Watchers in Europe, participants who received the program free of charge lost an average of 11 lbs of their initial weight after one year of treatment.

The cost of a Weight Watchers membership is about \$19.95, and meetings cost about \$10-\$15 per week, although some discount packages are offered. The online version costs about \$20 per month after a \$30 membership fee. Support online includes chat rooms, message boards, recipe ideas, meal plans and online journaling.

Concerns:

One concern is that while counselors are trained to provide the support and encouragement needed for weight-loss, they are not licensed dietitians. Another concern is that foods that are zero in point value can have as much as 60-80 calories in them. Eating a lot of these zero point value foods throughout the day can slow or stop weight-loss, especially for smaller older women or for people with slower metabolisms.



Evaluate Your Choices

If you are in the market for a commercial weight-loss program, you will find that you are faced with hundreds of choices, many with claims sounding too good to be true. It is important when choosing a commercial program to evaluate them based on what will work for you. As a wise dieter once said, “The best diet is one you can stick with.”

Tips for Evaluating Commercial Weight-loss Programs

Make sure whatever plan you choose:

- Promotes gradual weight-loss
- Teaches you how to make permanent lifestyle changes
- Encourages exercise
- Does not exclude major food groups
- Does not make certain foods “bad” or “illegal”
- Does not make outlandish weight-loss claims



Prescription Medicine and Other Options

As we’ve stated throughout this guide, there’s no one-size-fits-all approach for weight-loss. Many of the programs mentioned in this guide, along with behavioral and nutritional changes, have been successful for people. What works for one person may not work for someone else.

Today, there are a variety of medications available to treat obesity. Also, there are surgical options, called bariatric or weight-loss surgery. These options have been evaluated by the FDA and are evidence-based. It is important that when you choose your treatment option, you consult with a healthcare professional.

Ready to Talk to Your Healthcare Provider?

Before you talk to your healthcare provider, consider taking the *Your Weight Matters* Campaign challenge. By taking the challenge, you’ll measure your weight and see if it is impacting your health. You will also learn more about how to prepare yourself for the discussion of weight with your healthcare provider.

To take the Challenge today, visit www.YourWeightMatters.org!

If you’ve already talked to your provider and are currently treating your obesity, we encourage you to keep this guide to help you along your journey toward improved health!



Tools for Staying on Track and Improving Your Health Long Term

The body has a lot going on inside of it. Knowing this and making an effort to learn more will be very helpful to you on your journey. Here are some tips to help you along the way:

HINT!

If you like using food journals or activity trackers, make a copy of the resources on the next few pages, so you can use each resource in the future.

- Write down food consumed in a food diary (even snacks).
- List any exercise activities you participate in daily, weekly.
- List any family history of conditions (type 2 diabetes, heart disease, etc.).
- Bring a list of any medications and dietary supplements you currently take (hint: almost all pharmacies can easily print this information for you for free).

Speak to a Dietitian – Dietitians are an excellent resource for an individual wanting to lose weight and improve health. Quite often, we think we know what's healthy for our bodies, but we are commonly mistaken. Dietitians can provide you with the following:

- Meal plans
- Information on foods and how they impact your weight and health
- Help developing nutritional goals

Setting Realistic Goals

When developing your goals for weight-loss, exercise, eating healthy and more, it is important to keep them realistic. Quite often, individuals become frustrated when they do not see immediate weight-loss results. It is important to not let yourself become frustrated with your weight-loss plan. Changing your diet, incorporating exercise and more can all be significant life changes and they need to be taken seriously. Here are a few tips for developing realistic goals:

- Average weight-loss is one to two pounds per week.
- Start slow with exercise and find an activity you enjoy.
- Ask your spouse, family member or friend to exercise with you.
- Make meal times a family affair. Have your children help with cooking and let them choose healthy foods as well.
- Recognize your progress. Continue a proactive mindset and remember that each day is another day forward.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help. Feel like you might be slipping with your eating or exercise routine? Talk to a family member, friend or healthcare professional and they'll help you get back on track.

Always remember, YOU are the leader of YOUR healthcare team, YOUR WEIGHT MATTERS – FOR YOUR HEALTH!

TOOLS FOR YOUR JOURNEY

YOUR FOOD JOURNAL

Your Food Journal is a great way for you to keep track of the food you consume on a daily basis. Use this section to write down the foods you eat, how much you ate and more. Tracking your food intake is very important!

	Meal	Servings
Breakfast	Eggs, Poached	Two
Lunch		
Dinner		

ACTIVITY TRACKER

You've learned that it's important to be active and get moving! Use this activity tracker to keep track of your daily activities, favorite exercises, exercises you might want to try in the future and more!

Monday

What activity did you do?

How long did you exercise?

What was the intensity?

How did you feel?

Tuesday

What activity did you do?

How long did you exercise?

What was the intensity?

How did you feel?

Wednesday

What activity did you do?

How long did you exercise?

What was the intensity?

How did you feel?

Thursday

What activity did you do?

How long did you exercise?

What was the intensity?

How did you feel?

Friday

What activity did you do?

How long did you exercise?

What was the intensity?

How did you feel?

BMI CHART

Body-Mass-Index (BMI) is very useful in determining your weight category and if you're impacted by obesity or severe obesity. Use the below chart to help calculate your BMI and keep track of it.

	130	140	150	160	170	180	190	200	210	220	230	240
5'0"	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47
5'1"	24	26	28	30	32	34	36	37	39	42	44	45
5'2"	23	25	27	29	31	33	34	36	38	40	42	44
5'3"	23	24	26	28	30	32	33	35	37	39	41	43
5'4"	22	24	25	27	29	31	32	34	36	38	40	41
5'5"	21	23	25	26	28	30	31	33	35	37	38	40
5'6"	21	22	24	25	27	29	30	32	34	36	37	39
5'7"	20	22	23	25	26	28	29	31	33	35	36	38
5'8"	19	21	22	24	25	27	28	30	32	34	35	37
5'9"	19	20	22	23	25	26	28	29	31	33	34	36
5'10"	18	20	21	23	24	25	27	28	30	32	33	35
5'11"	18	19	21	22	23	25	26	28	29	31	32	34
6'0"	17	19	20	21	23	24	25	27	28	30	31	33
6'1"	17	18	19	21	22	23	25	26	27	29	30	32
6'2"	16	18	19	20	21	23	24	25	27	28	30	31
6'3"	16	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	26	28	29	30
6'4"	15	17	18	19	20	21	23	24	26	27	28	29
6'5"	15	16	17	19	20	21	22	24	25	26	27	29

UNDERWEIGHT = LESS THAN 18.4

NORMAL = 18.5 - 24.9

OVERWEIGHT = 25 - 29.9

OBESITY = 30 - 39.9

SEVERE OBESITY = GREATER THAN 40

DRAMA

WEIGHT IN POUNDS

	240	250	260	270	280	290	300	310	320	330	340	350	360	370	380	390	400
315	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	67	69	71	72	74	76	78
314	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	64	66	68	70	72	74	76
312	44	46	48	50	51	53	55	57	59	61	62	64	66	68	70	72	73
311	43	44	46	48	50	52	53	55	57	59	60	62	64	66	67	69	71
310	41	43	45	46	48	50	52	53	55	57	59	60	62	64	65	67	69
308	40	42	43	45	47	48	50	52	53	55	57	58	60	62	63	65	67
307	39	40	42	44	45	47	49	50	52	53	55	57	58	60	62	63	65
306	38	39	41	42	44	46	47	49	50	52	53	55	57	58	60	61	63
305	37	38	40	41	43	44	46	47	49	50	52	53	55	56	58	59	61
304	36	37	39	40	41	43	44	46	47	49	50	52	53	55	56	58	59
303	35	36	37	39	40	42	43	45	46	47	49	50	52	53	55	56	58
302	34	35	36	38	39	41	42	43	45	46	48	49	50	52	53	55	56
301	33	34	35	37	38	39	41	42	44	45	46	48	49	50	52	53	54
300	32	33	34	36	37	38	39	41	42	44	45	46	48	49	50	52	53
290	31	32	33	35	36	37	39	40	41	42	44	45	46	48	49	50	51
289	30	31	33	34	35	36	38	39	40	41	43	44	45	46	48	49	50
288	29	31	32	33	34	35	37	38	39	40	41	43	44	45	46	48	49
277	29	30	31	32	33	34	36	37	38	39	40	42	43	44	45	46	48

OBESITY



SEVERE OBESITY



DATE						
BMI						

ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)



The *Your Weight Matters* Campaign was developed by the Obesity Action Coalition (OAC). The OAC is a 501c3 nonprofit organization with the mission to elevate and empower those affected by obesity through education, advocacy and support.

The OAC is a membership-based organization with more than 50,000 members nationwide. Regardless of where you are in your weight-loss journey, the OAC provides a variety of resources to help you better understand the disease of obesity, weight bias and more.

To learn more about the OAC or join the Coalition today, visit ObesityAction.org or contact the National Office at (800) 717-3117.

OAC Resources



Order these resources and more for **FREE** online at ObesityAction.org today!





www.ObesityAction.org



The OAC would like to thank Sarah Muntel, RD, for her assistance, knowledge and expertise in creating this resource.