

Weight Maintenance

Weight maintenance is one of the most difficult parts of the weight-loss journey. You will face many challenges and triumphs along the way, and it is important to have a strong support system in place to help you. Here are some important tips on weight maintenance, along with an introduction to a non profit organization that is designed to support individuals in their weight-loss journey.

The Elusive Weight Maintenance *By Monica Ganz, PhD, CWLC*

We all know exactly what weight gain is; the scale goes up in numbers, our clothes start to get tight, it takes more effort to get out of a chair, the seat belt is tighter and we just don't feel as well.

We all know what weight-loss is; the scale shows us a lower number, our clothes hang funny and fall off of us, people start complimenting us about the way we look, we feel better and we need less medicine.

But, weight maintenance is something that we all have failed to understand. We have gone up and down in our weight our entire lives, struggling to keep the weight off, gaining weight over and over again. Gaining it has always been easy; I just look at brownies and I gain two pounds. I never understood my neighbor who was always a perfect size eight and ate everything in sight. We all know people like that.

Weight Maintenance – the Missing Link

What has always been missing is weight maintenance – it was something that I had never achieved. It was elusive to me. I was a constant “yo yo.” I would lose the weight and thought I could maintain my weight-loss, but those old habits would sneak back in and sabotage me one more time. The frustration grew every time that I would go down and then back up again, and many times with bonus extra pounds. Each time getting more and more frustrated.





Successful Make it a Lifestyle Weight Maintenance Strategies

Weight maintenance requires daily exercise, healthy eating, a long-term commitment and constant attention. The following habits are essential to develop in order for you to achieve long-term weight maintenance:

- **Healthy snacks and meals** – Focus on low-calorie, nutrient-dense foods, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Keep saturated fat low and limit sweets and alcohol. Remember that no one food offers all the nutrients you need. Choose a variety of foods throughout the day. Remember to eat two bites of dense protein to one bite of anything else.
- **Exercise program** – One of the most important things you can do for weight maintenance is to continue an aggressive exercise program. Studies suggest that it only takes 30 to 60 minutes of moderately intense physical activity daily to maintain weight-loss. Moderately intense physical activities include swimming, fast walking, biking and hiking.
- **Know and avoid your food traps** – Know which situations can trigger your out-of-control eating. The best way to identify these food traps and emotional eating is to keep a food journal. For as long as you find it helpful, write down what you eat, how much you eat, when you eat, how you're feeling and how hungry you are. This will help you understand and stay in control of your eating behaviors.
- **Regularly monitor your weight** – People who weigh themselves at least once a week are more successful in keeping off the pounds. Monitoring your weight can tell you whether your efforts are working and can help you become aware of small weight gains before they become larger.
- **Be consistent** – Sticking to your new lifestyle plan during the week, on the weekends, and amidst vacation and holidays increases your chances of long-term maintenance.
- **Attend a support group** – Getting support is critical. Whether through a friend, family member, trained professional or support group, support ultimately means the difference between your success and failure.

The Weight Maintenance Road

We all have heard the new Weight Watchers ad campaign, that diets do not work. Every one of us know that diets do not work. We have tried them all and look where we ended up; heavier and more frustrated.

The only thing that will have lasting effects on us is when we are ready to make lifestyle changes. These changes will make us not only lose the weight, but keep it off for life. To lose weight and keep it off, the best approach is to focus on lifestyle changes and develop an eating plan that's enjoyable, yet healthy and low in calories. This approach will result in weight-loss that you can live with – that is, that you can maintain over a long period of time.

We need to attend support groups and get a constant stream of positive motivation to keep us on the maintenance road. It is easy to get lost and to end up in a dead end; your support group can direct you back at anytime. We are here to help you achieve the goals that are important to you.

We each need to learn to make it a lifestyle that you can live with and enjoy day in and day out to continue to maintain your weight-loss.

About the Author:

Monica Ganz, PhD, CWLC, is a behaviorist who has worked with support groups for more than 30 years. She is an internationally known speaker on behavioral changes that are needed to maintain long-term weight-loss and to overcome obesity. She is the founder of www.MakeItALifestyle.com and works with Healthwise Technologies, Inc. as their Corporate Bariatric Program Director.



ABOUT THE OBESITY ACTION COALITION (OAC)

The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



PUBLIC
EDUCATION



ADVOCACY



ANNUAL
CONVENTION



NATIONAL
AWARENESS
CAMPAIGNS



VIBRANT
COMMUNITY

LEARN, CONNECT, ENGAGE

The OAC knows that the journey with weight can be challenging but we also know that great things happen when we learn, connect and engage. That is why the OAC Community exists. Our Community is designed to provide quality education, ongoing support programs, an opportunity to connect, and a place to take action on important issues.

**Through the OAC Community,
you can get access to:**

- Weight & Health Education • Community Blogs
 - Community Discussion Forum
 - Ongoing Support • Meaningful Connections
- AND MUCH MORE**



JOIN TODAY: GO TO [OBESITYACTION.ORG/JOIN](https://obesityaction.org/join)

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