

keys to success in achieving a healthy weight



what is a healthy weight?

A healthy weight is the weight your body naturally settles into when you consistently eat nutritiously, are physically active and balance the calories you eat with the physical activity you do. With the current emphasis on overweight and obesity, it may be easy to forget that good health is the ultimate goal and that a healthy lifestyle — not a specific body size, shape or weight — is the avenue to attain that goal. Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is part of an ongoing lifestyle that if adopted now, can stay with you for years to come.



what causes unhealthy weight?

Numerous factors contribute to weight gain including heredity, activity level and eating habits.

- **PORTION DISTORTION:** Thirty years ago, many serving sizes were smaller; even dinner plates have grown from 10 to 12½ inches in diameter. Larger portions of any food mean more calories.

	then	now
French fries	2 oz. (210 calories)	5 oz. (540 calories)
bagel	3 in. (85 calories)	4½ in. (360 calories)
soft drink	6 oz. (85 calories)	20 oz. (300 calories)

- **LACK OF ACTIVITY:** Most adults simply do not get enough physical activity. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report more than 50 percent of U.S. adults do not get enough activity to reap health benefits. Yet, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services suggests at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week. Take a brisk 30-minute walk on five or more days per week, or complete 10-minute increments of your favorite activities, such as bicycling or hiking, throughout the week to total 150 minutes.



keys to eating well

Eat for optimal health by choosing a variety of foods from the Five Food Groups. MyPyramid.gov has tools you can use to personalize your own eating and physical activity habits — plan food choices, estimate calorie needs, compare eating habits to recommendations and determine the amount you need from each Food Group.

- **MAKE HALF YOUR GRAINS WHOLE:** Eat at least 3 ounces of whole grain bread, cereal, pasta or rice every day. Look for “whole” grain as the first ingredient.
- **VARY YOUR VEGGIES:** Two and half cups of vegetables daily in a variety of colors — deep green, orange and yellow — is an essential part of any healthy eating plan.
- **FOCUS ON FRUIT:** Eat a variety of fruit — fresh, frozen or canned. Aim for 2 cups daily.
- **ENJOY 3-EVERY-DAY OF DAIRY:** Three servings of lowfat milk, yogurt or cheese is a deliciously easy way to help build stronger bones and better bodies.
- **GO LEAN ON PROTEIN:** Choose lean meat, fish and poultry. Bake it, broil it or grill it. These protein-rich foods give you lasting energy and provide satiety.

“Americans continue to gain 1 to 2 pounds a year. Take control by making the small lifestyle changes promoted by America On the Move — walk more, reduce caloric intake and make changes to your environment.”

— James O. Hill, PhD
Director, Center for Human Nutrition
University of Colorado Denver
co-founder, American On the Move

Know Your BMI

The standard calculation used by health care professionals to define a person’s weight in relation to his or her height is the “body mass index” or BMI.

A BMI calculator is available on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) web site. Visit www.cdc.gov and search BMI calculator.

An adult is considered overweight when BMI is 25 or greater; a BMI of 30 or more is considered obese.





small changes, big differences

Small changes in eating habits can help you manage your weight.

- **AVOID SKIPPING MEALS:** Missed meals lead to unplanned eating.
- **PLAN FOR SNACKS:** Plan one to two healthy snacks each day. Continuous snacking can lead to overeating.
- **USE A PLATE:** When eating from packages it's difficult to track how much you've eaten.
- **SLOW DOWN:** Make mealtimes last longer than 15 minutes to give your brain time to register fullness.
- **PORTION SIZE:** Watch your portion sizes by serving foods on a dinner plate; leave food in the kitchen to avoid the temptation for seconds.
- **LEFTOVERS:** Revoke your membership in the "clean plate club." Save leftovers for another meal.
- **EAT MINDFULLY:** Eating while watching TV, reading or using the computer may lead to overeating.
- **STORAGE:** Store food out of sight. Nibbling increases the number of calories consumed.



got steps?

America On the Move™ is an initiative that encourages small changes for a healthier lifestyle and that includes moving more. America On the Move suggests you start by adding 2,000 steps to your daily routine and working toward the goal of 10,000 steps a day. Below are some tips for increasing the number of steps you take each day:

- Park farther away.
- Take the stairs rather than the elevator or escalator.
- Deliver a message to a co-worker personally, rather than sending an e-mail.
- Walk around the field or court while your kids are playing sports.
- Spend time outdoors — gardening and yard work require steps.
- Take several trips to unload groceries from your car.
- Use the bathroom on a different floor.
- Walk or pace while using the phone.
- Return your grocery cart to the store.
- Avoid the drive-thru — go inside.
- Walk during TV commercials.
- Walk the dog.



keys in achieving a healthy weight
to success



buddy up

Adults are more likely to stick with an activity program when they have social support. So enlist a friend, co-worker or family member to enjoy physical activity with you.



resources

America On the Move™
www.americaonthemove.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
BMI Calculator
www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm

International Food Information Council
www.ific.org

MyPyramid
www.MyPyramid.gov

Nutrient Rich Foods Coalition
www.nutrientrichfoods.org

Nutrition.Gov
Provides access to all online federal government nutrition information in one place
www.nutrition.gov

The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports
www.fitness.gov

Weight-Control Information Network
www.win.niddk.nih.gov/

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