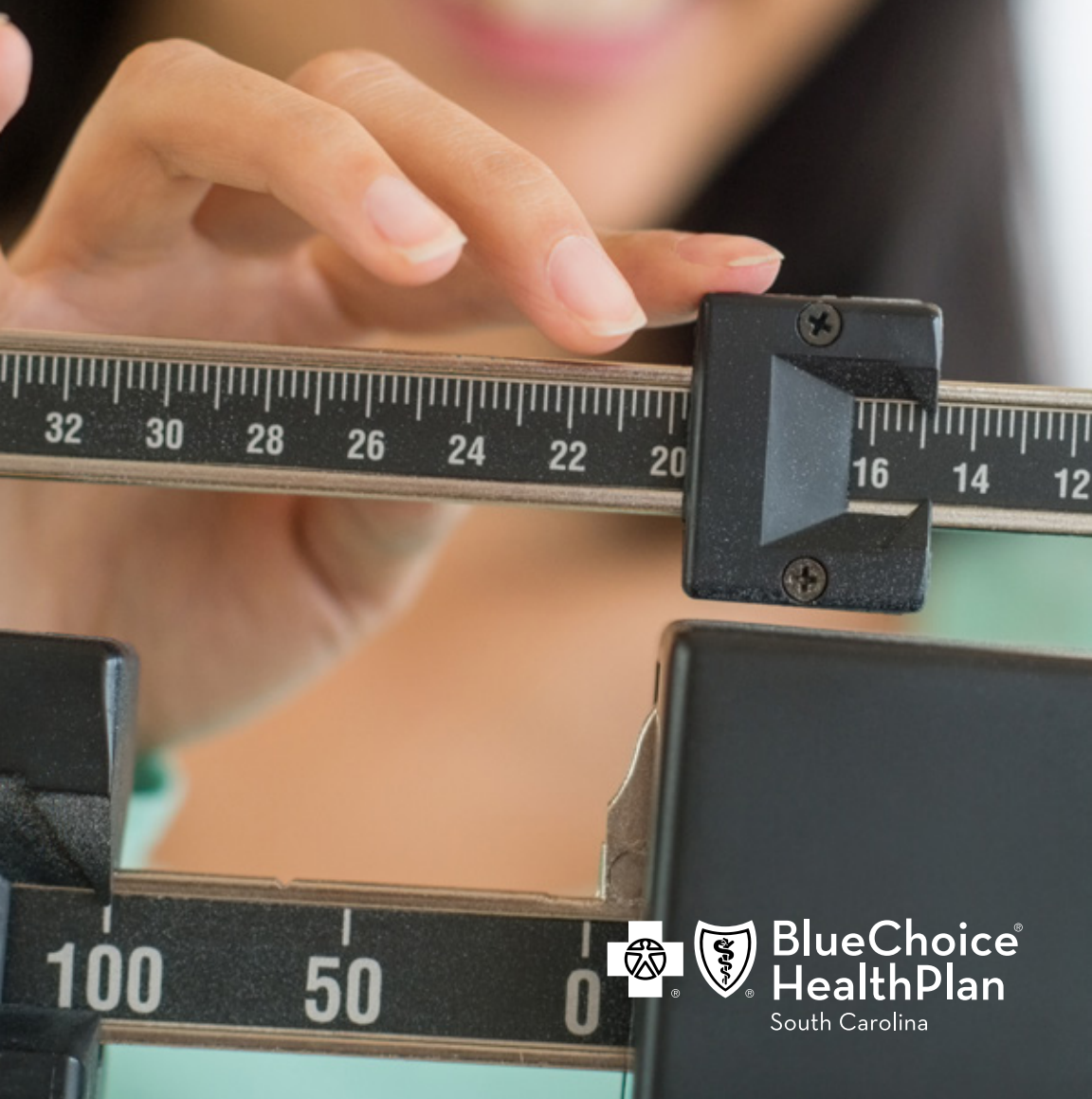




Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Achieve Your Best Health

Health Coaching for Weight Management



**BlueChoice[®]
HealthPlan**
South Carolina

Table of Contents

Introduction	1	Activity log	32
Am I ready to lose weight?	2	How do I stretch?	33
Am I overweight?	3	Walking program	34
Determine your health risks		A sample walking program	35
by waist size	3	Safety tips	35
Figure your BMI	4	Additional tips for getting active	36
Why lose weight?	5	Medications	37
Health risks of excess weight		Weight-loss goals	38
and obesity	5	Visit your doctor	40
Know your risk factors	6	Prepare your environment	40
Benefits of weight loss	7	Pick your allies	41
Pros and cons of weight management	8	Set a date	41
Barriers to weight management	8	Weight-loss contract	42
What motivates you?	9	Managing my weight	43
Preparing for weight loss	10	Reward yourself	43
The basics of weight management	10	Tips for healthy eating	44
The role of metabolism	11	Healthy options for eating out	45
Why fad diets don't work	12	Size up your plate	46
Why do you eat?	12	Tips for portion control	46
How much food is right for you?	14	How to conquer cravings	47
Understanding nutrients	17	Websites for healthy recipes	47
How to read a food label	18	Common excuses for not	
Moderation	22	being active	48
Making smart choices	23	The FITT Principle	49
Additional tips for healthy eating	25	Ideas for getting active	49
Mediterranean Diet: eating		Activities and the calories they burn	50
healthy for your heart	25	Keeping it off	51
DASH Diet: eating healthy		Track your goals and rewards	51
to lower your blood pressure	26	Fight lapse and relapse	52
Commercial diet plans	28	Remember the benefits	53
The importance of physical activity	29	You make the choice	53
Is it safe for me to be		Additional resources	54
physically active?	29	Appendix	55
How much physical activity		Food diary	55
do I need?	30	Activity log	56
What's the difference between		Goal calendar	57
moderate and vigorous activity?	30	Goal tracker	58
Types of activity	31	Notes	59
What are your preferences?	31		

Introduction

Congratulations! By opening this guide, you are one step closer to reaching your weight-loss goals. The sooner you take action, the sooner you'll see the rewards!

Weight loss benefits your health right away. It greatly decreases your risk for many health conditions, increases your life expectancy and enhances your quality of life. The truth is, weight management is hard. Many people bounce from one fad diet to the next, with little or no success. This guide will teach you effective strategies that will help you lose weight and keep it off for good. All it takes is small, gradual steps.

You do not have to become a gym junkie or nutrition nut to lose weight. Small steps add up over time and lead to big results.

You will face many barriers and temptations along your journey, but this guide will help you overcome these challenges. You will learn ways to beat temptation and gain confidence in breaking unhealthy habits. All it takes is commitment to reaching your goals and a willingness to change. Let's begin!

Focus on life. Focus on health. ***Stay focused.***

Am I Ready to Lose Weight?

Losing weight is a process. Use this chart to measure your readiness to change.

	COMMON STATEMENTS	DESCRIPTION	TIME FRAME	STAGE OF CHANGE
<input type="checkbox"/>	"I am not interested in weight loss. I don't think that it's a problem."	Unaware of problem; no interest in weight loss; reluctant to change	No intention of weight loss within the next 6 months	Am I Overweight? (Pre-Contemplation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	"I should lose weight, but I don't know if I am ready."	Aware of problem; beginning to think about weight loss	Seriously considering weight loss in the next 6 months	Why Lose Weight? (Contemplation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	"I need to lose weight, and I plan on doing it soon."	Realize benefits of making changes and want to lose weight	Preparing to lose weight in the next month	Preparing for Weight Loss (Preparation)
<input type="checkbox"/>	"Weight loss is not easy, but I'm working on it daily."	Actively taking steps toward weight loss	Successful weight loss from day 1 to 6 months	Managing My Weight (Action)
<input type="checkbox"/>	"I feel confident in my ability to manage my weight."	Initial weight-loss goals reached	Successful weight management for more than 6 months	Keeping It Off! (Maintenance)

Once you have decided which stage of change you are currently in, flip to that section to read more.



Am I Overweight? (Pre-contemplation)

Determine your health risks by waist size

The National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute recommends measuring your waist to determine your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and Type 2 diabetes. Excess fat in this area can mean a higher disease risk. To get your waist size:

1. Stand up straight with your feet together.
2. Using a non-elastic tape measure, wrap tape around your waist about 1 inch above your belly button. Make sure the tape is not twisted and that it is parallel to the floor all the way around your waist.

	LOW RISK	MODERATE RISK	HIGH RISK
Men	< 35.5 inches	35.5 to 40 inches	> 40 inches
Women	< 32.5 inches	32.5 to 35 inches	> 35 inches

My waist size: _____ Circle one: low risk/moderate risk/high risk

Figure your BMI

Another common way to see if you are overweight is to figure your body mass index, or BMI. BMI uses your weight and height to assess body fat content. Too much body fat raises your risk for many chronic conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke and certain cancers.

While BMI is a good tool, it does have some limits. BMI does not show the difference between muscle and fat. So, some people may have a high BMI but low body fat. For example, highly trained athletes may have a high BMI because they have more muscle mass. Use the chart below to see if your BMI is in a healthy range.

My BMI: _____ Circle one: healthy/overweight/obese/extremely obese

BODY MASS INDEX TABLE																																				
	Normal					Overweight					Obese					Extreme Obesity																				
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
Height (inches)	Body Weight (pounds)																																			
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248	253	258
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252	257	262	267
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250	255	261	266	271	276
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259	264	269	275	280	285
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267	273	278	284	289	295
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278	282	287	293	299	304
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285	291	296	302	308	314
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294	300	306	312	318	324
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303	309	315	322	328	334
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	312	319	325	331	338	344
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322	328	335	341	348	354
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331	338	345	351	358	365
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	334	341	348	355	362	369	376
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	257	265	272	279	286	293	301	308	315	322	329	338	343	351	358	365	372	379	386
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	265	272	279	287	294	302	309	316	324	331	338	346	353	361	368	375	383	390	397
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	272	280	288	295	302	310	318	325	333	340	348	355	363	371	378	386	393	401	408
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	280	287	295	303	311	319	326	334	342	350	358	365	373	381	389	396	404	412	420
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	295	303	311	319	327	335	343	351	359	367	375	383	391	399	407	415	423	431
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304	312	320	328	336	344	353	361	369	377	385	394	402	410	418	426	435	443

Source: Adapted from Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults. The Evidence Report.

Why Lose Weight? (Contemplation)

Health risks of excess weight and obesity

Being overweight or obese increases your risk for these conditions. Check those that apply to you.

- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- High LDL cholesterol (LDL is the “bad” type of cholesterol that sticks to the inner walls of arteries, blocking blood flow to the heart and brain.)
- Low HDL cholesterol (HDL is the “good” cholesterol because it removes bad cholesterol from artery walls, protecting against heart disease.)
- High levels of triglycerides (This can lead to heart disease, stroke and/or diabetes.)
- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- Depression
- Liver disease
- Stroke
- Gallbladder disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Sleep apnea
- Some cancers (endometrial, breast, prostate and colon)
- Joint pain
- Increased arthritis pain

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*



Know your risk factors

TOTAL CHOLESTEROL		TRIGLYCERIDES		
Level	Risk	Level	Risk	
Less than 200 mg/dl	Low risk	Less than 150 mg/dl	Optimal	
200 – 239 mg/dl	Moderate risk	150 – 199 mg/dl	Borderline high	
Higher than 239 mg/dl	High risk	Higher than 199 mg/dl	High risk	
LDL CHOLESTEROL		BLOOD PRESSURE		
Level	Risk	Level	Risk	
Less than 100 mg/dl	Optimal	Systolic	Less than 120	Normal
100 – 129 mg/dl	Near Optimal		120 – 129	Elevated
130 – 159 mg/dl	Borderline High		130 – 139	Hypertension Stage 1
			140 or higher	Hypertension Stage 2
160 – 189 mg/dl	High risk		180 or more	Hypertension Crisis
Higher than 189 mg/dl	Very high risk	Diastolic	Less than 80	Normal
			Less than 80	Elevated
			80 – 89	Hypertension Stage 1
			90 or higher	Hypertension Stage 2
		Higher than 120	Hypertension Crisis	
HDL CHOLESTEROL				
Level	Risk			
Higher than 60 mg/dl	Optimal			
Less than 40 mg/dl	High Risk			

Benefits of weight loss

Health Benefits

Losing just 10 percent of your body weight can add healthy days to your life and greatly lower your health risks. There is strong proof that maintaining a healthy weight can:

- Lower risk for heart disease
- Lower blood pressure
- Lower risk for Type 2 diabetes
- Lower risk for cancer
- Lower risk for sleep apnea
- Lower risk for gallbladder disease
- Lower triglycerides
- Improve cholesterol
- Lower blood glucose levels (blood sugar)

Other Benefits

- Feel better
- Look better
- Save money (fewer medical expenses)
- More energy
- Everyday activities will be easier

Are there activities that you cannot do now that you could do if you weighed less? If so, list them here.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Did you know ...

Did you know that people who are obese have medical expenses that are 29 – 117 percent greater than those of people who maintain a healthy weight?

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Pros and cons of weight management

Weight loss is hard work but is well worth the effort. You may have to make tough changes in your lifestyle, but the rewards far outweigh the time and effort you give to your weight-loss plan. Consider your pros and cons for weight management and list them below.

PROS FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT	CONS FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT
1. I will live longer.	1. I can't eat anything I want and however much I want.
2. I will feel better about how I look.	2. It will take time and energy to plan my meals and work out.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Barriers to weight management

You will likely have things that make it hard for you to stick to your weight-loss plan. Some barriers include unhealthy food options at restaurants, time constraints that make it tough to fit physical activity into your day or stress levels that cause you to overeat. It's so important to have a plan that will help you deal with these barriers.

Make a list of barriers and ways to overcome them.

Barrier		Solution
1. _____	→	_____
2. _____	→	_____
3. _____	→	_____
4. _____	→	_____
5. _____	→	_____

What motivates you?

You also need to find out what motivates you to lose weight. As you work on losing weight, you need to remind yourself why you are doing it. This will help keep you on track. Motivation can come in many shapes and forms. It can be a person, your state of health, a desire to play with your children or grandchildren, etc. It can be internal (from within yourself) or external (from an outside influence). It is best to have a mix of internal and external motivations. Internal motivations usually increase your chances of success. Reviewing your reasons for weight loss can be a great way to motivate yourself to stick with your weight-loss plan and keep weight off for good.

Think of a time in your past when you were motivated to make a change. What things helped you the most? Were they internal or external? Use that information to list your motivations for weight loss below.

INTERNAL MOTIVATIONS	EXTERNAL MOTIVATIONS
1. To improve my health and lower my risk for disease.	1. My friends and family say I should lose weight.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

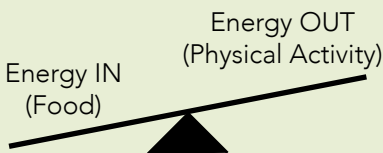
Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Preparing for Weight Loss

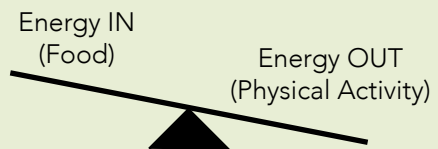
The basics of weight management

Weight management isn't just about numbers on a scale — it's about making lasting, healthy changes to your lifestyle. Think about it in these terms — what means the most to you? The numbers on the scale or your blood pressure? The size of your jeans or the activities you can do with your loved ones? The compliments you receive or knowing that you have added quality years to your life? The changes you make as you lose weight won't just affect you but also your loved ones. Safe weight loss should be slow and steady over time. It's not a race, but a process. Just as it took time to add pounds, it will take time to lose them. Don't let this discourage you. Instead, let it encourage you, knowing that if you put the time and effort in, you'll see lasting results! Now, before you learn how to lose weight, you need to know the basics. Check out these figures — it's pretty simple.

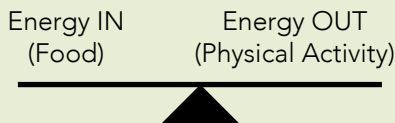
More energy IN than OUT
over time = weight GAIN



More energy OUT than IN
over time = weight LOSS



Same amount of energy IN and energy OUT over time — weight stays the same



The role of metabolism

When people think about weight loss, they often think of the word “metabolism.” It’s the way your body changes food into energy. It sets how fast we burn calories and how easily we gain or lose weight. But weight gain is most often related to an energy imbalance (eating more calories than you burn), not a slow metabolism.

So, what affects your metabolism?

- **Body size and type:** A bigger body requires more energy. Also, muscle burns more calories than fat. So, the more muscle mass you have, the higher your metabolism.
- **Age:** Your metabolism slows down as you age.
- **Gender:** Men generally have a higher metabolism than women.

Here are some small steps you can take to help your body burn more calories.

- **Do more physical activity** each day.
- **Build your muscle mass** with weight training.
- **Eat more often.** Small, frequent meals help keep your metabolism in high gear. This means healthy snacks are OK. Frequent eating keeps you from getting hungry and overeating at mealtime.
- **Don’t skip meals.** When you go many hours without eating, your metabolism actually slows down.

Despite popular belief, dietary supplements are not an effective way to boost your metabolism. They are not tested and approved by the Food and Drug Administration and could harm your health. Although these tips may help to boost your metabolism, it’s really your food intake and physical activity that set your weight — so make sure to balance them!

Why fad diets don't work

Long-term weight loss takes more than just a diet. It requires a lifestyle change! That's why fad diets rarely work. In fact, most people who try these diets end up gaining their weight back within one year. Here's why:

FAD DIETS	LIFESTYLE PROGRAMS
Offer very few food choices.	Allow a variety of food choices.
Are too extreme to maintain over long periods of time.	Teach moderation and focus on healthy habits that can be maintained over time.
Produce rapid weight loss that can hurt your body. Weight is often regained.	Produce a healthy, slow weight loss that is sustained over time.
Fail to teach you about the habits that lead to weight regain.	Teach healthy habits and why behavior change is important to the success of your weight management.
Often fail to emphasize physical activity.	Encourage physical activity in combination with healthy eating.

Why do you eat?

Most people eat for reasons other than hunger — boredom, loneliness, stress or simple love of food. Think about what causes you to eat and make a plan to avoid these triggers. The next time you reach for food, ask yourself, "Am I really hungry?" or "Do I really need this?" Use the food diary on Page 13 to track your food choices for an entire week before you start your weight-loss plan. This will help you find your eating triggers. You may want to make copies of the log on Page 13 so you can track your eating habits as you lose weight.

Focus on life. Focus on health. ***Stay focused.***

Food diary

DATE AND TIME	WHAT KIND (Include preparation)	HOW MUCH?	WHERE?	WHAT AM I DOING? (Activity)	MOOD	DEGREE OF HUNGER (0–4)

After you have found your most common eating triggers, list them below and add beside each trigger what you will do instead of eating. Some ideas are chewing a piece of gum, going for a walk, reading or calling a friend. Figure out which ones work best for you.

Eating trigger		Instead of eating, I will ...
1. _____	→	_____
2. _____	→	_____
3. _____	→	_____
4. _____	→	_____
5. _____	→	_____



How much food is right for you?

Many people hate counting calories, but having an idea of what your body needs each day is a good way to avoid overeating. Use the chart below and on Page 15 to see how many calories you need each day to keep a healthy weight. Try to track your calorie intake for a few days. You may be surprised to see how many extra calories you are eating.

GENDER	AGE	DAILY ACTIVITY LEVEL	DAILY CALORIES NEEDED
Female	19 – 25	Less than 30 minutes	2,000
		30 to 60 minutes	2,200
		More than 60 minutes	2,400
	26 – 30	Less than 30 minutes	1,800
		30 to 60 minutes	2,000
		More than 60 minutes	2,400
	31 – 40	Less than 30 minutes	1,800
		30 to 60 minutes	2,000
		More than 60 minutes	2,200
	41 – 50	Less than 30 minutes	1,800
		30 to 60 minutes	2,000
		More than 60 minutes	2,200
	51 – 60	Less than 30 minutes	1,600
		30 to 60 minutes	1,800
		More than 60 minutes	2,200
	61+	Less than 30 minutes	1,600
		30 to 60 minutes	1,800
		More than 60 minutes	2,000

GENDER	AGE	DAILY ACTIVITY LEVEL	DAILY CALORIES NEEDED
Male	19 – 20	Less than 30 minutes	2,600
		30 to 60 minutes	2,800
		More than 60 minutes	3,000
	21 – 25	Less than 30 minutes	2,400
		30 to 60 minutes	2,800
		More than 60 minutes	3,000
	26 – 35	Less than 30 minutes	2,400
		30 to 60 minutes	2,600
		More than 60 minutes	3,000
	36 – 40	Less than 30 minutes	2,400
		30 to 60 minutes	2,600
		More than 60 minutes	2,800
	41 – 45	Less than 30 minutes	2,200
		30 to 60 minutes	2,600
		More than 60 minutes	2,800
	46 – 55	Less than 30 minutes	2,200
		30 to 60 minutes	2,600
		More than 60 minutes	2,800
	56 – 60	Less than 30 minutes	2,200
		30 to 60 minutes	2,400
		More than 60 minutes	2,600
	61 – 65	Less than 30 minutes	2,000
		30 to 60 minutes	2,400
		More than 60 minutes	2,600
	66+	Less than 30 minutes	2,000
		30 to 60 minutes	2,200
		More than 60 minutes	2,600

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2015.

To get a more exact estimate of your calorie needs based on your age, gender, height, weight and activity level, use the website tool at www.ChooseMyPlate.gov. This estimate may be larger than what the charts here show because this tool takes into account your current weight. The more you weigh, the more calories it takes to maintain that weight.



You can also figure your calorie needs based on your desired weight. This will help you see how much you will need to reduce your daily calories to reach your weight goal. To lose weight in a healthy way, you need to cut about 500 – 1,000 calories per day. Before you use the equation below, make sure your desired weight is within a healthy BMI range for your height. Refer to the BMI chart on Page 4.

Desired weight X 10 if inactive

X 12 if moderately active

(30 – 60 minutes of moderate physical activity most days)

X 15 if very active

(60 minutes or more each day of moderate physical activity)

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Desired weight Activity level Your calorie needs

Understanding nutrients

The body gets energy from three main sources: carbohydrates, fats and protein. Each of these is essential for our bodies to work properly. As you start to change your eating habits, you need to learn the role of these nutrients in your body and how much of them you should eat each day.

MAJOR NUTRIENT	CALORIES PER GRAM	RECOMMENDED % OF DAILY CALORIES	SOURCES	PURPOSE IN THE BODY
Carbohydrates	4	55%	Bread, pasta, rice, fruits, vegetables, milk	Carbohydrates are an important source of energy for your body, especially the brain and the nervous system.
Protein	4	15%	Meats, fish, poultry, beans, cheese, milk	Proteins are the building blocks of cells and tissues and help to preserve lean muscle mass.
Fat	9	30%	Oils, butter, salad dressings, meat, cream	Fat helps to store vitamins and contributes to skin, nerve and brain health.

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*



How to read a food label

Food labels help you ensure that you're eating a healthy, balanced diet. Read food labels when you choose food at the grocery store, as you plan meals and as you cook every day.

Food Label Terms

Learning what the words on food labels mean will help you build your weight-loss plan.

- **Fortified:** foods with added vitamins or minerals
- **Low Fat:** contains three grams of fat or less per serving and 30 percent or less of total calories
- **Reduced Fat:** contains at least 25 percent less fat than the product's original version (not necessarily low-fat)
- **Heart Healthy:** meets American Heart Association guidelines for low saturated fat and cholesterol

On a food label, ingredients are listed in order of weight. Therefore, ingredients that are high on the list are present in the largest amounts.

1. Check the serving size and number.

The Nutrition Facts Label information is based on ONE serving. Look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually consuming.

2. Calories count.

Pay attention to the amount of calories. You'll see the number of calories per serving and the calories from fat in each serving. Remember: Fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free.

3. Know your fats.

Choose foods that are lowest in saturated fat, trans fat and cholesterol. Trans fat doesn't have a % DV, but it increases your risk of heart disease. Total fat includes all different kinds of fats. To lower blood cholesterol, replace saturated and trans fats with monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats found in fish, nuts and liquid vegetable oils. Limit sodium to help reduce your risk of high blood pressure.

Nutrition Facts

1	Serving Size 1 cup (228g)	
	Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving		
2	Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
		% Daily Value*
3	Total Fat 12g	18%
	Saturated Fat 3g	15%
	Trans Fat 3g	
	Cholesterol 30mg	10%
	Sodium 470mg	20%
	Potassium 700mg	20%
	Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
	Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
	Sugars 5g	
	Protein 5g	
	Vitamin A	4%
	Vitamin C	2%
	Calcium	20%
	Iron	4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.		
	Calories:	2,000 2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g 80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g 375g
Dietary Fiber		25g 30g

4. Reach for healthy, wholesome carbohydrates.

- Fiber and sugars are types of carbohydrates. Healthy sources, — like fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains — can reduce the risk of heart disease and improve digestive functioning.
- Whole-grain foods can't always be identified by color or name, such as multi-grain or wheat. Look for the "whole" grain listed first in the ingredient list, such as whole wheat, brown rice or whole oats.
- There isn't a % DV for sugar, but you can compare the sugar content in grams among products.
- Limit foods with added sugars (sucrose, glucose, fructose, corn syrup or maple syrup), which add calories but not nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals. Make sure that added sugars are not one of the first few items in the ingredients list.

5. For protein, choose foods that are lower in fat.

- Most Americans get plenty of protein, but not always from the healthiest sources.
- When choosing a food for its protein content, such as meat, poultry, dry beans, milk and milk products, make choices that are lean, low-fat or fat-free.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 **Calories from Fat 110**

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 12g 18%

Saturated Fat 3g 15%

Trans Fat 3g

Cholesterol 30mg 10%

Sodium 470mg 20%

Potassium 700mg 20%

4 Total Carbohydrate 31g 10%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Sugars 5g

5 Protein 5g

Vitamin A 4%

Vitamin C 2%

Calcium 20%

Iron 4%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

6. Look for foods that are rich in these nutrients.

- Use the label not only to limit fat and sodium, but also to increase nutrients that promote good health and may protect you from disease.
- Some Americans don't get enough vitamins A and C, potassium, calcium and iron, so choose the brand with the higher % DV for these nutrients.
- Get the most nutrition for your calories — compare the calories to the nutrients you would be getting to make a healthier food choice.

7. The % Daily Value (DV) is a key to a balanced diet.

The % DV is a general guide to help you link nutrients in a serving of food to their contribution to your total daily diet. It can help you determine if a food is high or low in a nutrient — 5% or less is low, 20% or more is high. You can use the % DV to make dietary trade-offs with other foods throughout the day. The * is a reminder that the % DV is based on a 2,000-calorie diet. You may need more or less, but the % DV is still a helpful gauge.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup (228g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving

Calories 250 **Calories from Fat** 110

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Potassium 700mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%

6

7

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g



Moderation

Less healthful foods should be eaten in moderation for long-term results. This doesn't mean that you can never eat certain foods, but save them for special occasions. Be smart about what you eat and how much you eat. Here's a look at what recommended portion sizes look like.

Tip of a thumb =

- 1 teaspoon of butter or peanut butter

Palm of a hand =

- 1/2 serving of meat or fish
- 1 serving of nuts or beans

Finger length =

- The width across one serving of fruit

Closed fist =

- 1 cup or a serving of cooked veggies, pasta, or rice

Whole thumb =

- 2 tablespoons or 1 ounce
- 1/2 serving of cheese

Making smart choices

Make Half Your Grains Whole

What's in the grains group: Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley or another cereal grain. "Whole grains" include whole-wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole cornmeal and brown rice.

- Get a whole-grain head start with oatmeal or whole-grain cereal.
- Use whole grains in mixed dishes such as barley in vegetable soup or stews, or brown rice in stir-fries.
- Change it up. Make your sandwich on 100 percent whole-wheat or oatmeal bread.

Vary Your Veggies

What's in the vegetables group: Any vegetable or 100 percent vegetable juice. Vegetables may be raw or cooked, fresh, frozen, canned or dried/dehydrated.

- Add frozen chopped spinach, collard greens or turnip greens to a pot of soup.
- Swap your usual sandwich side for crunchy broccoli florets or red pepper strips.
- Microwave a sweet potato for a delicious side dish.

Focus on Fruits

What's in the fruits group: Any fruit or 100 percent fruit juice. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen or dried; whole, cut-up, pureed, raw or cooked.

- Bag some fruit for your morning commute. Toss in an apple to munch with lunch and some raisins to satisfy snack time.
- Buy fresh fruits in season, when they taste best and cost less.
- Never be fruitless! Stock up on peaches, pears and apricots canned in fruit juice or frozen so they're always on hand.

Go Lean with Protein

What's in the meat and beans group: All foods made from beef, pork, poultry, fish, dry beans or peas, eggs, nuts and seeds. Make your meat and poultry choices lean or low-fat.

- Trim visible fat from meat and remove skin from poultry.
- Broil, grill, roast or poach meat, poultry or fish instead of frying.
- Enjoy pinto or kidney beans on a salad or a hearty split pea or lentil soup for extra protein.

Get Your Calcium-Rich Foods

What's in the milk group: All fluid milk products and many foods made from milk. Examples include cheese and yogurt. Make your milk group choices fat-free or low-fat.

- Use fat-free or low-fat milk instead of water when you make oatmeal, hot cereals or condensed cream soups, such as cream of tomato.
- Snack on low-fat or fat-free yogurt. Try it as a dip for fruits and veggies and a topper for baked potatoes.
- Order your latte or hot chocolate with fat-free (skim) milk.

Special Tip: Although cream cheese, cream and butter are made from milk, they don't count in the milk group because they contain little or no calcium. Instead, if you eat these foods, count them as "extra" calories from solid fats.

Know Your Fats

What are oils: Oils are fats that are liquid at room temperature, such as canola, corn and olive oils. Mayonnaise and certain salad dressings are made with oils. Nuts, olives, avocados and some fish, such as salmon, are naturally rich in oils.

- Use some vegetable oil instead of butter for cooking and baking.
- Toss salad with salad oil and flavored vinegar.
- Try thin slices of avocado on a sandwich or sprinkle some nuts on a salad.

Special Tip: Solid fats are different from oils because they are higher in saturated and/or trans fats, so they are considered extras. Solid fats are found in whole milk, cheese, higher fat meats and other foods, such as butter, lard, chicken skin and shortening. Some oils, such as palm, palm kernel and coconut, are also higher in saturated fats.

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Additional tips for healthy eating

1. Drink eight glasses of water each day. This will lessen hunger and keep your body working well.
2. Avoid processed foods and fast foods. They are loaded with fat and sodium.
3. Eat slowly; it takes about 20 minutes for your brain to get the signal that you're full.
4. Rethink your drink. Cut down on sugary drinks and alcoholic beverages. They may seem harmless, but the calories add up.
5. Learn to cook healthy. Instead of flavoring foods with butter, use herbs, seasonings, condiments, salsa, low-fat cheese, jelly, fat-free sour cream, low-fat salad dressing, etc.
6. Plan your meals. It saves time, effort and calories. You're more likely to choose healthy foods if you plan to eat them.

Mediterranean Diet: Eating Healthy for Your Heart

If you're looking for a heart-healthy meal plan that allows some simple indulgences, the Mediterranean diet may be right for you.

The Mediterranean diet incorporates the basics of healthy eating along with indulgences like flavorful, heart-healthy olive oil and even a glass of red wine. Research has shown that the Mediterranean diet reduces your risk of heart disease and may also improve your cholesterol. This diet is also associated with reduced incidence of cancer and Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

Key components of the Mediterranean diet:

- Meals should consist primarily of plant-based foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and nuts.
- Replace butter with healthy fats like olive oil and canola oil.
- Use herbs, spices and lemon juice to flavor foods instead of salt.
- Limit red meat to no more than a few times a month.
- Eat fish and chicken at least twice a week.
- Enjoy the experience of eating meals with family and friends.
- Live an active lifestyle.

DASH Diet: Eating Healthy to Lower Your Blood Pressure

The Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet is a lifelong approach to eating healthy that's designed to lower your blood pressure. The DASH encourages you to limit the sodium in your diet and incorporate a variety of nutrient-rich foods to help lower your blood pressure.

The DASH diet limits sodium and high-fat foods while encouraging more fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy, whole grains, fish, poultry and nuts.

In addition to the standard DASH diet, there is a lower sodium version of the diet. Choose the version that best meets your health needs:

- Standard DASH diet: up to 2,300 milligrams (mg) of sodium a day.
- Lower sodium DASH diet: up to 1,500 milligrams (mg) of sodium a day.

Key components of the DASH diet:

- Grains, six to eight servings a day: This includes bread, cereal, rice and pasta. Opt for whole grains when you can.
- Vegetables, four to five servings a day: Both fresh and frozen are good choices. When buying canned, choose those labeled as low sodium or no added salt.
- Fruits, four to five servings a day: If you choose canned fruit, make sure to select fruit in it's own juice, with no sugar added.
- Dairy, two to three servings a day: Milk, yogurt, cheese and other dairy products are great sources of calcium, vitamin D and protein. Be sure to choose low-fat or fat-free options.
- Lean meat, chicken and fish, less than six servings a day: Trim away any skin and fat from poultry and meat. Opt for baking, broiling, roasting and grilling instead of frying.
- Nuts, seeds and legumes, four to five servings a week: Good sources of magnesium, potassium, protein and fiber. These foods are high in calories, so serving sizes should be small and limited to a few times a week.



- Fats and oils, two to three servings a day: Stick to heart-healthy fats like olive oil and canola oil. Saturated fat and trans fat increase your risk for heart disease. Be sure to check food labels to choose foods that are low in saturated and trans fats.
- Sweets, five or fewer servings a week: You don't have to banish sweets entirely while following the DASH diet — just go easy on them. Opt for low-fat or fat-free options when possible.

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Commercial diet plans

You may want to consider a commercial diet plan. These plans are different from fad diets because they focus on making healthy lifestyle changes to help you reach your weight-loss goals. Some examples are Jenny Craig, Weight Watchers and Nutrisystem. Before you choose a commercial weight-loss program, ask these questions.

1. Does the program have counseling to help you change your eating behavior and personal habits?
2. Does the staff consist of a variety of qualified counselors and health care professionals such as nutritionists, registered dietitians, doctors, nurses and exercise physiologists?
3. Is there training on how to cope when you may feel stressed and slip back into old habits?
4. Do they teach you ways to keep weight off?
5. Are there a lot of food choices?
6. Are weight goals set by the client and the health professional together?
7. How many people complete the program?
8. What is the average weight loss among people who finish the program?
9. How many people have problems or side effects? What kind of side effects?



The importance of physical activity

Regular physical activity is key for sustained weight loss, and it benefits your mind and body.

These benefits include:

- Helps with weight loss and helps to prevent weight regain
- Increases the fitness of your heart and lungs
- Decreases stomach fat
- Helps strengthen bones, muscles and joints
- Enhances flexibility and improves posture
- Lowers the risk of heart disease, colon cancer and Type 2 diabetes
- Helps control blood pressure
- Increases your HDL levels ("good" cholesterol) and lowers your LDL ("bad" cholesterol)
- Improves self-esteem and sense of well-being
- Reduces stress and feelings of depression and anxiety

Is it safe for me to be physically active?

Check with your doctor if any of these apply to you:

- You have heart trouble, diabetes or asthma.
- You have pains in your chest, neck, shoulder or arm when you are physically active.
- You often feel faint or have dizzy spells.
- You are very breathless after you have been physically active.
- You have high blood pressure.
- You have bone or joint problems.
- You are over 50 years old and are not used to doing moderate physical activity.
- You are pregnant.
- You have a health problem or physical reason not mentioned above that might keep you from being physically active.



How much physical activity do I need?

You may think of physical activity as using special equipment or playing competitive sports. But physical activity simply means moving your body. You may be surprised at what that includes, like yard work, washing your car, mopping the floor, etc.

For health benefits, physical activity should be moderate to vigorous in intensity.

- For good health, get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week or 150 minutes per week.
- To lose weight or prevent weight gain, get 60 to 90 minutes of physical activity on most days of the week or 300 minutes or more per week.

What's the difference between moderate and vigorous activity?

- **Moderate activities** get you moving at a comfortable pace. They speed up your heart rate without causing heavy breathing. During moderate-intensity activities, you should still be able to talk easily. Examples: brisk walking, gardening, stretching, bicycling 5 – 9 mph and recreational swimming.
- **Vigorous activities** are faster and more intense. They greatly increase your heart rate and breathing. Examples: speed walking, jogging, biking uphill or over 10 mph and swimming steady laps.

Types of activity

- **Aerobic Activities:** Speed up your heart and improve the fitness of your heart and lungs. This includes brisk walking, jogging and swimming.
- **Resistance:** This means strength-building and weight-bearing activities like carrying a child, lifting weights or walking uphill. These activities strengthen your muscles and bones.
- **Flexibility:** Balance and stretching activities improve your stability and reduce your risk of injury. Stretching, yoga, Pilates, martial arts and dancing enhance your balance and flexibility.

What are your preferences?

It's important to choose things that you enjoy and that you can do often so that you don't get burned out. Look for ways to mix physical activity into your day. As you are creating a plan that is best for you, consider these.

- **Your schedule:** Do you prefer to exercise in the morning, during your lunch break, after work or after dinner?
- **Your budget:** Can you afford a gym membership or equipment to keep in your home, or do you need to look for low-cost ways to get physically active?
- **Your ideal exercise environment:** Do you prefer to exercise in your home, in your yard, at a gym, at a park, etc.?



Activity log

Evaluate your exercise habits by tracking your physical activity in the log below for an entire week before you start your weight-loss program. This will help you set your weight-loss goals. Make copies of this log to track your physical activity throughout your weight-loss effort.

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Moderate							
Activity							
Minutes							
Vigorous							
Activity							
Minutes							
Total							
Minutes							

What activities do you already do?

What other activities would you like to try?

How do I stretch?

Before starting any type of physical activity, you should stretch. This will help protect you from injury. Stretch gently after you warm up your muscles with an easy five-minute walk, and again after you cool down. Do not bounce or hold your breath when you stretch. Stretch only as far as you feel comfortable. Hold stretches for about 10 – 15 seconds.

Side Reach

Reach one arm over your head and to the side. Keep your hips steady and your shoulders straight to the side. Hold and repeat on the other side.

Wall Push

Lean your hands on a wall with your feet about three to four feet away from the wall. Bend one knee and point it toward the wall. Keep your back leg straight with your foot flat and your toes pointed straight ahead. Hold and repeat with the other leg.

Knee Pull

Lean your back against a wall. Keep your head, hips and feet in a straight line. Pull one knee to your chest, hold, then repeat with the other leg.

Arm Reach

Raise your right arm straight up in the air beside your right ear. Bend your elbow so that your hand is touching your back, or is pointing in that direction. Put your left hand on your right elbow and gently pull your right arm down. Repeat with the other arm.

Leg Curl

Pull your right foot to your buttocks with your right hand. Stand straight and keep your knee pointing straight to the ground. Hold and repeat with your left foot and hand.

Hamstring

Stand up straight with your feet together and flat on the floor. Gently bend over as far as you can and let your arms hang down toward your toes. If you feel a stretch in the back of your thigh, hold for 10 seconds. (If you do not feel a stretch, lean down even farther, reaching toward your toes, until you feel a stretch.)

Walking program

Leave time in your busy schedule to follow a walking program that will work for you. Keep these points in mind as you plan your program:

- Choose a safe place to walk. Find a partner or group of people to walk with you. Your walking partner(s) should be able to walk with you on the same schedule and at the same speed.
- Wear shoes with proper arch support, a firm heel and thick flexible soles that will cushion your feet and absorb shock.
- Wear clothes that will keep you dry and comfortable.
- For extra warmth in winter, wear a knit cap. To stay cool in summer, wear a baseball cap or visor.
- Think of your walk in three parts. Warm up by walking slowly for five minutes. Then, increase your speed and do a fast walk. Finally, cool down by walking slowly again for five minutes.
- Do light stretching after your warmup and cooldown.
- Try to walk at least three times per week. Each week, add two or three minutes to your walk.
- To avoid stiff or sore muscles and joints, start gradually. Over several weeks, begin walking faster, going farther and walking for longer periods of time.
- Set goals and rewards.
- Keep track of your progress with a walking journal or log.

Experts recommend 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, if not all, days of the week. If you cannot do 30 minutes at a time, try walking for shorter amounts and gradually work up to 30 minutes.

Focus on life. Focus on health. ***Stay focused.***

A sample walking program

WARM UP TIME	FAST-WALK TIME	COOL DOWN TIME	TOTAL TIME
Week 1			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 5 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	15 minutes
Week 2			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 8 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	18 minutes
Week 3			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 11 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	21 minutes
Week 4			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 14 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	24 minutes
Week 5			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 17 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	27 minutes
Week 6			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 20 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	30 minutes
Week 7			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 23 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	33 minutes
Week 8			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 26 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	36 minutes
Week 9			
Walk slowly 5 minutes	Walk briskly 30 minutes	Walk slowly 5 minutes	40 minutes
If you walk less than three times per week, give yourself more than a week before increasing your pace and frequency.			

Safety tips

Keep safety in mind when you plan your route and the time of your walk:

- If you walk when it's dark, wear reflective gear.
- When possible, walk with others.
- Let your local police station know about your group's walking time and route.
- Do not wear jewelry or headphones.
- Stay aware of your surroundings.

Additional tips for getting active

If you ever feel like giving up, remind yourself of the health benefits you are experiencing through managing your stress.

1. If you haven't been active in a while, start with low-intensity activities for short periods of time and slowly build up to more strenuous activities for longer periods of time.
2. Use your time wisely to add physical activity to everyday activities. Stretch, lift weights, run or walk on a treadmill or pedal on a stationary bike while watching TV or talking on the phone.
3. Work out at work. Instead of taking a coffee break, take a 10-minute brisk walk.
4. Mix it up. Do different types of physical activity to prevent burnout.
5. Increase "everyday" activities, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator, parking farther away from the door to your building or doing yard work or housework, etc.
6. Set a routine. Schedule time into each day for physical activity. It will soon become a habit.
7. Have an exercise partner who will hold you accountable to your exercise plan.
8. If you join a gym, make sure you ask a manager or personal trainer to teach you how to use each piece of equipment to prevent injury.

Medications

Healthy eating and physical activity are the best ways to lose weight. However, there are some prescription medications that can help people who meet these guidelines: BMI of 27 or higher with obesity-related risk factors, BMI of 30 or higher, or if minimal weight loss has not occurred after six months of diet and exercise. If you meet any of these criteria, ask your doctor if any of these medications are an option for you.

DRUG	SIDE EFFECTS	DO NOT TAKE THIS DRUG ...
Orlistat (Xenical, also available over the counter as "Alli" in a 60 mg strength)	Decreased absorption of fat-soluble vitamins; oily, loose and more frequent bowel movements	If you have a chronic malabsorption disorder or gallbladder disease
Benzphetamine (Didrex)	Blurred vision, dizziness, dry mouth, irritability, sleeplessness, upset stomach or constipation may occur	If you are pregnant or think you may become pregnant, or while engaging in potentially hazardous activities such as operating machinery or driving a motor vehicle
Diethylpropion (Tenuate)	Restlessness, sleeplessness, nervousness, dry mouth	While using alcohol or when driving or engaging in any potentially hazardous activity
Phendimetrazine (Bontril)	Sleeplessness, allergic reaction, dry mouth, nervousness, diarrhea/constipation, and potential for causing dependence, hypertension, angina and myocardial infarction	If you have heart disease, high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), glaucoma, have taken a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) in the last 14 days or have a history of drug or alcohol abuse
Phentermine (Adipex-P)	Increase in blood pressure, hives, sleeplessness, nervousness, dry mouth, diarrhea/constipation, and potential for causing dependence, hypertension, angina and myocardial infarction	If you have atherosclerosis (thickening of the artery wall), heart disease, high blood pressure, thyroid problems or glaucoma

Weight-loss goals

Setting goals will help keep you on track. If you set goals, and commit to them, you will be more likely to succeed in your weight-loss effort. Your goals should focus on these areas: prevent further weight gain, reduce body weight by at least 5 percent to 10 percent and maintain weight loss over time. As you set your weight-loss goals, make sure they are SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-specific. Set your goals based on these guidelines:

- Lose weight gradually. Plan to lose no more than 1 – 2 pounds per week. To do this, you'll need to cut out about 500 – 1,000 calories per day from your diet.
- Don't try to alter your diet all at once. Make slow changes.
- Track your behavior. Use the food diary and activity log provided in this guide on pages 13 and 32, respectively. Additional copies are located in the Appendix.
- Don't weigh yourself more than once a week, as your weight may change from day to day. Try to weigh yourself at the same time each week, preferably the morning. Your weight may also vary depending on the time of day.
- Set goals on a daily, weekly and monthly basis so you can make progress step-by-step over time.

Before you start your weight-loss journey, make copies of the goal calendar on the next page so you have one for each month. Example goals are provided to help you get started.

My long-term weight-loss goal is to lose _____ lbs. in _____ months.
(Should be a 5 – 10 percent reduction of your current body weight.)

Goal calendar

MONTHLY GOAL	WEEKLY GOAL	DAILY GOAL
Month: _____ Monthly weight-loss goal: _____ lbs.	Week of: _____	Day 1: <i>Cut out all sugary drinks today.</i>
	Goal: _____	Day 2:
	_____	Day 3:
	_____	Day 4:
	_____	Day 5:
	_____	Day 6:
	_____	Day 7:
	_____	Day 1:
	Week of: _____	Day 2:
	Goal: _____	Day 3:
	_____	Day 4:
	_____	Day 5:
	_____	Day 6:
	_____	Day 7:
	_____	Day 1:
	Week of: _____	Day 2:
	Goal: _____	Day 3:
	_____	Day 4:
	_____	Day 5:
	_____	Day 6:
	_____	Day 7:
	_____	Day 1:
	Week of: _____	Day 2:
	Goal: _____	Day 3:
	_____	Day 4:
	_____	Day 5:
	_____	Day 6:
	_____	Day 7:



Visit your doctor

Before you start your weight-loss plan, you may want to see your regular doctor to discuss what weight-loss strategies might work best for you and most easily fit into your life. Bring a copy of your goals so your doctor can see if your goals are realistic and safe.

Prepare your environment

Often our habits are supported by our surroundings. That's why you should look at your environment and see what things would make it hard for you to lose weight. Think how you can alter your environment so that making the right choice is easier. Clean out your refrigerator and pantry before your start date. Go grocery shopping and fill your kitchen with healthy choices so that when you are hungry, you will not be tempted to choose unhealthy foods. Buy some hand weights, a mat or an exercise ball to keep in your living room.

Pick your allies

Consider your support system. To make this process of behavior change successful, find your allies. These people will be aware of your weight-loss effort, help and support you and hold you accountable to your weight-management goals. Let them know the details of your weight-loss effort, including your start date, your strategy, your support system and anything else you think they should know. When choosing your allies, ask yourself:

- Are they now physically active?
- Do they eat healthy?
- Are they kind?
- Are they supportive?
- Are they good listeners?
- Would they be willing to exercise or cook with you?

You may also want to pick an exercise partner. This can be the same person as your ally. Sometimes it's hard to get motivated. Having a workout partner will make exercise more enjoyable for you and make it easier for you to stick to your exercise plan.

Set a date

In preparing to lose weight, you will need to set a date. Look at your calendar and see what you will have going on in two to four weeks. Keep in mind there is no "perfect" time to start your weight-loss plan, but picking a low-stress time is best. After setting the date, you will have a better idea of when you need to start picking your allies and preparing your environment. When you are ready, fill out the weight-loss contract on the next page and give a copy to your ally.

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Weight-loss contract

I, _____, am committed to weight loss. I am making this commitment for the following reasons:

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.
4. _____.

I am making this commitment not only to myself, but to the following people:

_____, _____ and _____.

If I am tempted to give up on my commitment, I will contact one of the people listed above for support and encouragement.

Starting Measurements

Date: _____ Weight: _____ BMI: _____

Waist Circumference: _____

Goal Measurements

By (date): _____ Weight: _____ BMI: _____

Waist Circumference: _____

My official start date is _____. From this point on, I will be dedicated to managing my weight!

Your signature

Date

Weight loss ally signature

Date

Managing My Weight (Action)

Reward yourself

Congratulations on beginning your weight-loss plan. Plan to reward yourself after each goal you reach. Choose something that is special to you, something that will really motivate you to succeed. Here are some ideas: a new piece of clothing, tickets to a sporting event, concert or play, a new book or movie, a night out on the town with friends, a gym membership or a vacation. Keep a schedule of goals and rewards and stick with it to keep yourself motivated throughout your journey to weight management.

GOAL	DATE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT	REWARD FOR COMPLETION
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Tips for healthy eating

Learn to replace high-fat food choices with low-fat food choices.

HIGHER-FAT FOODS	LOWER-FAT FOODS
Dairy products	
Whole milk	1% milk or skim milk
Ice cream	Low-fat frozen yogurt, sherbet or sorbet
Sour cream	Fat-free sour cream
Cheese	Low-fat or fat-free cheese
Coffee creamer	Low-fat milk or nonfat powder creamer
Whipped cream	Imitation whipped cream (fat-free frozen whip)
Cereals, grains and pastas	
Ramen noodles	Brown rice or whole-grain pasta
Pasta with white sauce	Pasta with red sauce (marinara)
Pasta with cheese sauce	Pasta with vegetables, sprinkled with Parmesan cheese
Granola	Bran flakes, oatmeal or reduced-fat granola
White bread	Whole-wheat bread
Meat, fish and poultry	
Cold cuts or lunch meats	Low-fat cold cuts (at least 95% fat-free)
Hot dogs	Lower-fat hot dogs or turkey dogs
Bacon or sausage	Canadian bacon, lean ham, turkey sausage
Regular ground beef	Extra lean ground beef (ground round) or ground turkey
Chicken or turkey with skin	Chicken or turkey without skin
Beef (chuck, rib, brisket)	Beef (round loin) with fat trimmed off
Pork (ribs, untrimmed loin)	Pork tenderloin or trimmed, lean smoked ham
Whole eggs	Egg whites
Baked goods	
Croissants	Hard French rolls or soft whole-grain rolls
Donuts, muffins, scones	English muffins, whole-wheat bagels, reduced-fat muffins/scones
Party crackers	Low-fat, whole-wheat crackers
Cake	Angel food cake
Fats, oils and salad dressings	
Margarine or butter	Light butter spread, or cook with olive oil, canola oil, sunflower oil
Mayonnaise	Light mayonnaise
Regular salad dressing	Low-fat or fat-free dressing, lemon juice or wine vinegar
Oils, shortening, lard	Nonfat cooking spray

Using this chart, make a list of foods that you often eat, then list healthier choices you could eat instead.

Instead of that		Eat this
1. <i>whole milk</i>	➔	<i>1% or skim milk</i>
2. _____	➔	_____
3. _____	➔	_____
4. _____	➔	_____
5. _____	➔	_____

Healthy options for eating out

- **Sandwich Shops:** Ask for leaner cuts of meat, less meat, extra veggies, whole-wheat/oatmeal/rye bread or a wrap, and hold the mayonnaise-based condiments.
- **Pizza:** Ask for whole-wheat crust and half the cheese. Leave off the high-fat meats like pepperoni and sausage.
- **Chinese:** Ask for brown rice and extra veggies.
- **Fast Food:** Try smaller burgers with no cheese, grilled chicken sandwiches, wraps or salads with low-calorie dressing. Order a baked potato instead of french fries, but be careful with the high-fat toppings. For your burger, use mustard and ketchup instead of mayonnaise.



Size up your plate

½ Plate Vegetables: Fill half of your plate with a colorful mix of vegetables for good nutrition.

¼ Plate Meats: Low-fat meats, such as chicken, fish and turkey, are good for your heart and waistline. Bake, broil or grill meats for a delicious and healthy meal.

¼ Plate Starches: Starches include some vegetables like yams, potatoes and corn. Whole-wheat starches, such as brown rice, wheat bread, whole-grain pasta and oatmeal, are good for your heart and keep you full longer.

Tips for portion control

- The smaller your plate, the smaller your portion. Eat your meals at home on a smaller plate.
- Before going back for seconds, wait 10 or 15 minutes. You might not want seconds after all.
- When you order fast food, picture the food on a plate. Even better, take it home and put it on a plate. You may be surprised how full the plate looks. Order a smaller size next time.
- Portion out your snack on a plate or in a small bag instead of eating straight from the package. This will help you stay aware of how much you're actually eating.
- When dining out, order an appetizer instead of an entrée. If you order an entrée, take the leftovers home, refrigerate and enjoy as a meal or snack the next day.

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

How to conquer cravings

Even if you are making healthy choices, cravings can make you overeat. Here are some tips that will help you deal with those cravings.

- Drink a lot of water: Six to eight glasses every day, to be exact. It's easy to mistake thirst for hunger.
- Chew sugarless gum to distract your taste buds when you feel the urge to eat.
- Give in to your hunger with HEALTHY snacks.
- Eat plenty of fiber. Fiber will keep you full longer, preventing hunger throughout the day.
- Satisfy your sweet tooth with 100 percent fruit juice, low-fat pudding or low-fat yogurt, instead of eating desserts or snacks that are high in fat and sugar.

Websites for healthy recipes

Recipes and Sample Menus

ChooseMyPlate.gov

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/recipes-cookbooks-and-menus>

Delicious, Heart-Healthy Recipes

National Heart, Blood, and Lung Institute

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/other/syah/index.htm>

Planning Meals

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/meals.html

Healthy Eating on a Budget

ChooseMyPlate.gov

<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/budget>

These links lead to third party websites. Those companies are solely responsible for the contents and privacy policies on their sites.



Common excuses for not being active

Now that you have started your weight-loss plan, you will probably hit some barriers to staying physically active. Check out the common excuses below. If any of these apply to you, refer to the solution provided.

EXCUSE	SOLUTION
I don't have time.	All it takes is at least 30 minutes a day for most days of the week. You can even break that up into 10 or 15 minute intervals two or three times a day. You can easily add physical activity to your daily routine. Ride a stationary bike or lift hand weights while watching TV or take a brisk walk while talking on the phone.
Physical activity hurts. I don't enjoy it.	Many people have bad memories of sweating and panting while being forced to run laps or do situps in PE class or for a sports team. But physical activity does not have to be painful. Physical activity is anything that keeps your body moving. Do something you enjoy!
I don't have the energy to increase my level of activity.	You may have a lack of energy when you are first becoming physically active, but as you get more fit, you will soon have more energy. This increase in energy will also make it easier to handle day-to-day tasks and chores.

The FITT Principle

The FITT Principle is an easy way to set up a complete workout plan. Use each component to develop a program that fits you.

1. Frequency: how often you exercise
2. Intensity: how hard you work during exercise
3. Time: how long you exercise
4. Type: what type of activity you're doing

Throughout your weight-loss journey, and even when you are maintaining the weight you lost, you may see the need to adjust one or two components, or maybe all of them. For example, when you find that you are losing interest in your exercise routine, you can change the "type" of activity you are doing. You also might find that after a while you stop seeing positive results from your workouts. This is another chance to change a component or two to see what will give you the results you want.

Ideas for getting active

AT HOME	AT WORK	AT PLAY
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Join a walking group in your neighborhood• Push your baby in a stroller• Walk up and down the soccer, softball or football field while you watch your child play• Walk the dog• Clean the house or wash your car• Drive less — walk, skate or cycle more• Do yard work• Play with your kids	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brainstorm ideas with a coworker while taking a walk• Take the stairs instead of the elevator• Walk around your building during lunch• Participate in an exercise program at your workplace or nearby gym• Join a company or community intramural sport• Park farther away from the door to your building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Walk, jog, skate or cycle• Swim or do water aerobics• Take a class in martial arts, dance, yoga or Pilates• Golf (pull or carry clubs)• Canoe, row or kayak• Racquetball or tennis• Basketball, softball or soccer• Take a nature hike

Activities and the calories they burn

Take a look at the chart below to get an idea of how many calories you would burn by doing a certain activity for one hour. Note: The more a person weighs, the more calories he or she burns per hour.

MODERATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	APPROXIMATE CALORIES BURNED PER HOUR FOR A 154 LB. PERSON
Hiking	370
Light gardening/yard work	330
Dancing	330
Golf (walking and carrying clubs)	330
Bicycling (<10 mph)	290
Walking (3.5 mph)	280
Weight lifting (general light workout)	220
Stretching	180
VIGOROUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	APPROXIMATE CALORIES BURNED PER HOUR FOR A 154 LB. PERSON
Running/jogging (5 mph)	590
Bicycling (>10 mph)	590
Swimming (slow freestyle laps)	510
Aerobics	480
Walking (4.5 mph)	460
Heavy yard work (chopping wood)	440
Weight lifting (vigorous effort)	440
Basketball (vigorous)	440

Source: United States Department of Agriculture, www.choosemyplate.gov, 2015

For more tips on physical activity, refer to the section on Preparing for Weight Loss, starting on Page 10.



Keeping It Off! (Maintenance)

Congratulations! You've been successfully managing your weight for six months or more! Hopefully, you have already begun to experience many of the rewards and benefits of weight loss. Keep using the strategies that have worked best for you. Keep your guard up against tempting situations. Celebrate your success with people close to you, and reward yourself for all your hard work. Revisit your weight-loss contract frequently to stick with your commitment to weight management. Keep up the good work!

Track your goals and rewards

You may wonder whether you should continue to reward yourself as you maintain a healthy weight, and the answer is — you should! It's a great way to avoid relapse. Keep tracking your goals and your rewards for achieving those goals. Make copies of the tracker on Page 58.

Fight lapse and relapse

A lapse is a one-time slip-up. Relapse is many lapses over a short period of time. With any behavior change, lapse and relapse may happen. This is normal, so expect it and get ready. Many factors can trigger a lapse or relapse. Review your coping strategies for the barriers and triggers that you face. Remember why you decided to lose weight in the first place. Look at what factors caused the relapse and try to avoid the things that led to your slip. Remember, relapse is a natural part of this process. You can overcome it in time with preparation and the support of those who care.

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
Know your temptations	These may include holidays, feelings of sadness, walking past a bakery. Make a plan to avoid or resist these temptations.
Shopping cart method	Each time you go to the grocery store, replace one of your normal items with something healthy. For example, if you normally buy 2% milk, next time get 1% or skim milk. You may also want to try a new food item each time you shop. Pick a healthy food that you have never tried before. This will help to phase healthy foods into your diet slowly so that you don't get tired of eating the same foods.
Training variation	Do a variety of physical activities to prevent burnout. Try different classes at a local gym. Walk one day, swim the next day, bike the next and so on. Try to keep it interesting.
Thought stopping	When a lapse occurs, imagine yourself yelling "STOP!" Do not allow yourself to slip any further, and return to the good behaviors.
Deal with your emotions	Many times people engage in "emotional overeating" when they are stressed or worried. Recognize these feelings when they occur, and deal with them without using food as an escape. Being active is a great way to relieve stress without resorting to food for comfort.
Positive self-talk	Repeat positive statements to yourself to stay in control of your eating and exercising behaviors. Examples include: "I am in control," "I am making great progress," "Exercise makes me feel good."

What still tempts you and causes you to slip up? Make a list of your biggest temptations, along with a coping strategy that describes how you will overcome that temptation.

Temptation	→	Coping Strategy
1. _____	→	_____
2. _____	→	_____
3. _____	→	_____
4. _____	→	_____
5. _____	→	_____

Remember the benefits

If you ever feel like giving up, remind yourself of the short-term and long-term health benefits that you will gain through weight loss. Write a list of benefits that you have experienced already.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

You Make The Choice

Health coaching is completely voluntary and free.

Your decision to participate will not affect your health benefits in any way. If you decide that having a personal health coach is not for you, you can opt out of the program at any time by calling 855-838-5897. If you have a problem or complaint during your health coaching experience, you can call 855-838-5897 and ask to speak to the program manager. In an emergency, please contact your doctor or call 911.

Additional Resources

These resources can provide additional information about living well with weight management. These are independent organizations that provide health information that you may find helpful.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines

Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

www.health.gov/paguidelines

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Nutrition and Physical Activity

www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Nutrition Information

www.nutrition.gov

Building Blocks for a Healthy Diet

www.choosemyplate.gov/MyPlate

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

Aim for a Healthy Weight

www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/index.htm

Shape Up America

Healthy Weight for Life: contains assessment tools, meal planning guides, recipes, etc.

www.shapeup.org

These links lead to third party websites. Those companies are solely responsible for the contents and privacy policies on their sites.

The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only. It does not represent a standard of care. Your physician must determine the appropriateness of the information in light of all your circumstances. It is important to discuss options with your physician when deciding on the best treatment for you.

Appendix

Food diary

DATE AND TIME	WHAT KIND (Include preparation)	HOW MUCH?	WHERE?	WHAT AM I DOING? (Activity)	MOOD	DEGREE OF HUNGER (0–4)

Activity log

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Moderate							
Activity							
Minutes							
Vigorous							
Activity							
Minutes							
Total							
Minutes							

Goal calendar

MONTHLY GOAL	WEEKLY GOAL	DAILY GOAL
Month: _____ Monthly weight-loss goal: _____ lbs.	Week of: _____ Goal: _____ _____ _____ _____	Day 1: Day 2: Day 3: Day 4: Day 5: Day 6: Day 7:
	Week of: _____ Goal: _____ _____ _____ _____	Day 1: Day 2: Day 3: Day 4: Day 5: Day 6: Day 7:
	Week of: _____ Goal: _____ _____ _____ _____	Day 1: Day 2: Day 3: Day 4: Day 5: Day 6: Day 7:
	Week of: _____ Goal: _____ _____ _____ _____	Day 1: Day 2: Day 3: Day 4: Day 5: Day 6: Day 7:

Goal tracker

GOAL	DATE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT	REWARD FOR COMPLETION
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*



BlueChoice HealthPlan is an independent licensee
of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

BlueChoiceSC.com