

Eating for a Healthy Weight

Want to lose weight and keep it off? Confused by all the conflicting claims, testimonials, and hype by so-called experts? These six simple steps can help you and your family move toward a healthy weight - and a fit future.

1. Forget the fads and skip the silly stuff

Fad diets and miracle products are a waste of your time and money. There are no foods or pills that magically burn fat. There is nothing that will melt fat while you sleep. Some supplements and herbal products can be dangerous - and even deadly - for some people.

2. Build a healthy base with the Pyramid

Eating for a healthy weight is not difficult. You don't have to count grams of this or weigh portions of that. Let the Food Guide Pyramid be your guide to eating right. Eat more from the base (whole grains, fruits and vegetables) and less from the tip (fats, sweets and oils).

3. Downsize your portion sizes

The portions in fast food and sit-down restaurants are ridiculous. Just say NO to super-size, biggie-size and combo meals (save your extra \$.49 for a piece of fruit). Eat half of your restaurant meals - and take the rest home for an easy lunch or dinner tomorrow.

4. Listen to your stomach (and your brain)

Return to childhood eating patterns - eat when you are hungry and stop when you are full. Learn to tell the difference between hunger and the things that food cannot fix, like boredom, loneliness, fear, anxiety and pain. Deal with feelings directly, not with food.

5. Snack smart and drink plenty of fluids

Snacks and drinks can fill your body with extra, empty calories. Make between-meal foods and beverages count with high-energy choices. Skip the pop and candy machines - and refuel and rehydrate with yogurt, string cheese, nuts, veggies, fruit, juice and water!

6. Enjoy all foods, just don't overdo it

Who wants a restrictive diet that takes away your favorite foods? How long will you be able to avoid all the things you love to eat? Eating for a healthy weight means a realistic, flexible eating style - which allows you to enjoy a lifetime of delicious nutrition.

