

Practice Healthy-Weight Habits



CHALLENGE

Adopt healthy habits to control your weight

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Practice Healthy-Weight Habits."
2. Create a plan to maintain your weight, or lose weight if you need to.
3. Keep a record of your completed health challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



How much do you weigh? It's sometimes a taboo question. If you're at a healthy weight, that's great. But if you dread stepping on the scale, or simply avoid it, you're not alone. When Massachusetts resident and busy mom Monique Tello finally stepped on the scale, she was 50 pounds overweight.¹

It happened a little at a time. You know...wake up, get ready for work, fight rush-hour traffic, and grab a quick bite to eat. Then do it in reverse in the afternoon.

After the day is done, crash on the couch with some sweet treats or salty snacks, and binge-watch shows.

Sound familiar?

Monique wasn't making the best food choices. She didn't make time for exercise. And she knew it. She's a medical doctor and communications specialist for a biotechnology company.

If you've gained a few pounds, you've got company. An estimated 74 percent of all adults in the United States are overweight or obese.²

But it doesn't have to be that way. So how do you maintain a healthy weight or lose weight and keep it off?

Here's a hint. Extreme dieting and exercise aren't the answer. Instead, adopting healthy lifestyle habits can improve your health and tip the scale in the right direction.

Ready to get started? Take the month-long health challenge and Practice Healthy-Weight Habits.

Weight-Management Makeover

How much do you know about healthy-weight habits? Take the Weight-Management Makeover Quiz to find out.



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1. Lack of sleep can slow your metabolism and increase hormones linked to weight gain.
2. Whether you eat fast, or eat slow, it doesn't really have an impact on your weight.
3. Drinking water before meals can help fill you up, eat less, and control your weight.
4. Stepping on the scale at least once a week can help you avoid gaining weight.
5. Studies show that people who keep a food diary lose more weight than people who don't.

Check your answers. How did you do? There really are no special diets, magic pills, or workout plans that will help you lose weight or maintain your weight. The best actions to lose weight and keep it off are pretty simple. Eat healthy foods. Be more active. Get enough sleep. And make smart lifestyle choices.

Answers: 1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. True, 5. True.

Health Risks of Being Overweight or Obese

"It's fine. I'm fine. Everything is fine." It's a popular meme you might be familiar with. If you're overweight or obese, you might feel OK packing around extra pounds.

But being overweight or obese takes a toll on your health and puts you at risk for things like:³

- Sleep disorders
- COVID-19 complications⁴
- Joint pain
- Heart disease⁵
- Gallbladder, kidney, and liver disease
- Stroke
- Mental health disorders
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure, and more.
- Certain types of cancer
- Breathing problems

If you're already a few pounds heavier than you should be, now is always the best time to take action to improve your health.

Healthy-Weight Habits: 7 Ways to Manage Your Weight

Looking for some easy ways to manage your weight? Adopt these healthy-weight habits.

1 Eat more fruits and veggies

They're lower in calories than processed foods and sugary snacks. They're also high in vitamins and nutrients your body needs for best health. But most people don't eat enough.⁶

- Only 12 percent of adults eat enough fruit (1.5 to 2 cups per day).
- Only 9 percent of adults eat enough vegetables per day (2 to 3 cups per day).

2 Drink more water

How much water do you drink per day? If you don't know, there's a good chance you're not drinking enough. Drinking water can help control calories, curb hunger, and manage your weight. Aim for at least 64 ounces a day.

3 Eat fiber-rich foods

If you're looking for a simple way to lose weight, eat more fiber-rich foods.⁷ Most adults eat 15 grams of fiber per day. But the Institute of Medicine recommends 25 grams of fiber per day for women; 38 grams for men. Foods high in fiber include:

- Salads
- Soups
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Whole-grain breads and cereals

4 Chew your food

That's a nice way of saying, "Slow down at meal time." Take a bite. Put your fork down. And chew slowly. In one recent study, researchers found that people who ate slower at meal time, ate 25% less calories from snacking in between meals.⁸

5 Track your weight

Weigh yourself every day, or at least once a week, and keep track.

Write it down in a journal, put it on your calendar, or record it with a mobile app. Research shows tracking your weight can help you make better food choices to support weight management.⁹

6 Get your ZZZs

Aim for 7 to 8 hours a night. People who cut sleep short are more likely to gain weight. Why? Lack of sleep alters levels of hormones (ghrelin and leptin) linked to hunger and cravings. And if you stay up late, you'll have more time for snacking.

7 Be more active

If you want to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, exercise needs to be part of your plan. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity per day.

If you want to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, focus on healthy-weight habits you can practice every day. If something happens that throws your diet or exercise routine off track (work, family, stress, vacation, etc.), it's not that big of a deal. Just pick up where you left off, and keep going. That's how Monique lost 50-plus pounds and kept it off.



Weight loss and nutrition myths
<https://tinyurl.com/2p936kdc>

Practice portion control
<https://tinyurl.com/p3xc7ph>

10 behaviors for healthy weight loss
<https://tinyurl.com/2p96xb26>

References

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Practice Healthy-Weight Habits

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, or add to your digital calendar).
2. Create a plan to practice healthy-weight habits daily.
3. Use the calendar to record your actions and choices to manage your weight.
4. Review your progress at the end of each day, week, and at the end of the month. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH: _____							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
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_____ Number of days this month I practiced healthy-weight habits

_____ Number of days this month I exercised at least 30 minutes

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____