

6 Strategies for Successful Weight Loss

The following recommendations are important for losing weight in a healthy, sustainable way. Weight loss can be challenging, but with these tips, you'll be able to successfully lose excess body fat and improve your health without crash dieting or exercising for hours every day.

1. KEEP FOOD SIMPLE

- Eating simpler foods leads to eating less naturally and may help reduce the body fat “set point”—the system that internally regulates our appetite, food intake, and metabolism.
- Decrease the number of ingredients, extra flavorings, seasonings, and added fats at each meal. It is easier to overeat highly palatable foods with a range of flavors.
- Increase your protein intake. Protein is the most satiating (i.e., satisfying) macronutrient, yet it is typically less rewarding/palatable than carbs or fat.
- Stick to plain, whole foods like poached fish, baked potato, or steamed veggies instead of highly palatable and rewarding foods like fried or grilled meats/fish, french fries/chips, bacon, etc.
- Save the highly palatable and rewarding food for special occasions.

2. EAT ENOUGH (BUT NOT TOO MUCH!)

- Going too low on calories can decrease metabolic rate and increase fat storage.
- Chronic undereating increases levels of stress hormones, which promote belly fat.
- Malnutrition reduces muscle growth and strengthening after exercise.
- Undereating leads to fatigue and feeling unwell over time.
- Ask your healthcare provider to help you determine an appropriate calorie amount that allows for weight loss without excess stress on the body.

3. CHOOSE A CARBOHYDRATE INTAKE THAT MATCHES YOUR ACTIVITY LEVELS

- A low-carbohydrate diet is not always required for weight loss and may be ineffective or harmful in some cases.
- The amount and intensity of the exercise you do is the key factor to determine your carbohydrate needs.
- If you are generally sedentary and do not or cannot exercise, a low-carb diet may help you lose weight without causing stress to your body.
- If you are active, especially if you do strength training or high-intensity exercise, a moderate- or even high-carbohydrate diet with lower fat intake may be a better fit.

- Ask your healthcare provider to help you determine an appropriate carbohydrate amount that supports your activity and allows for weight loss.

4. MOVE THROUGHOUT THE DAY

- Sitting too much reduces benefits of exercise and stalls weight loss.
- It's not enough to just work out at the gym and then sit all day.
- Standing and walking at work or at home can help increase the body's fat-burning capacity.
- Set up a standing desk at work to allow for more movement during the day.
- Use a pedometer or fitness tracker to increase your step count gradually.
- Add strength training, intervals, and additional cardiovascular exercise as necessary (two to five days per week) to encourage faster weight loss and improved muscle growth.

5. INCLUDE WHOLE LIFESTYLE MODIFICATIONS

- Diet and physical activity are the cornerstones of a successful weight loss program, but attention to other lifestyle factors is also crucial.
- Sleep, stress levels, and social support all have significant impact on the ability to lose weight and keep it off.
- Aim for seven to nine hours of sleep per night
- Practice regular stress management such as meditation, yoga, deep breathing, journaling, prayer, etc.
- Connect with friends and family who can help support your weight loss goals.

6. CONSIDER TRACKING YOUR DIET

- A simple, whole foods Paleo diet doesn't require calorie counting for weight loss, but tracking can be useful if weight loss is stalled.
- Losing the last 10 to 20 pounds often takes much more attention to calorie intake.
- Use an online tracking app like **MyFitnessPal** or **Cron-O-Meter** to track intake and make adjustments as necessary.
- Accountability of tracking your diet can help keep you consistently on plan.