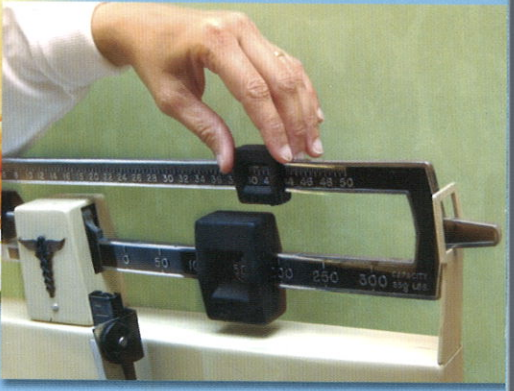
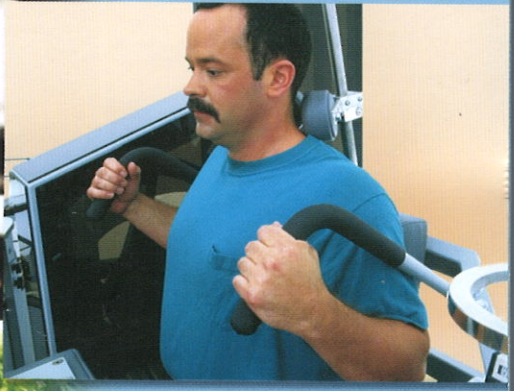


Taking Control of Your Weight





Weight management isn't about depriving yourself.

It's about giving yourself the gift of good health.

Building and maintaining healthy eating and exercise habits

are the most important parts of weight management. This handbook will help you work with your health-care team to make eating and exercise plans that are right for you. It will also give tips for sticking to these plans. You can take control of your weight!

Some people may also need medication

or medical procedures. Your health-care provider can tell you if you do. With the right combination of healthy lifestyle habits and any needed medical treatment, a healthier weight can be a reality for you.

Managing your weight can give you better health, more energy and a great sense of accomplishment.

Contents

Weight management

What it is.....	4
Why it's important.....	5
Causes of overweight and obesity	6
What's involved.....	7

Your weight

Ways to assess your weight	8
Questions you may want to ask	9
Setting your goal	10
The right mind-set	11

Healthy eating

Healthy food choices	12
Your eating plan	14
Reading nutrition labels	16
Your tastes and needs	17

Physical activity

Benefits	18
Your physical activity plan	19
Tips for success	20

Weight-loss medications.....

Weight-management programs.....

Fad diets.....

Your weight-management diary

Managing setbacks

Sources of more information.....



What is weight management?

It's taking steps to make sure you have a healthy amount of body fat. Weight management means losing excess fat—and keeping it off.

Too much body fat can harm your health.

Your body needs some fat to work properly. But too much fat puts you at risk for many serious health problems.

Assessing your weight is a way to see how much body fat you have.

In general, being:

- overweight means having moderately more body fat than is healthy
- obese means having much more body fat than is healthy.

(There can be exceptions. See page 8.)

Weight management is a long-term effort.

Successful weight management means:

- losing weight (if needed) in a steady, safe way
- maintaining a healthy weight for life.

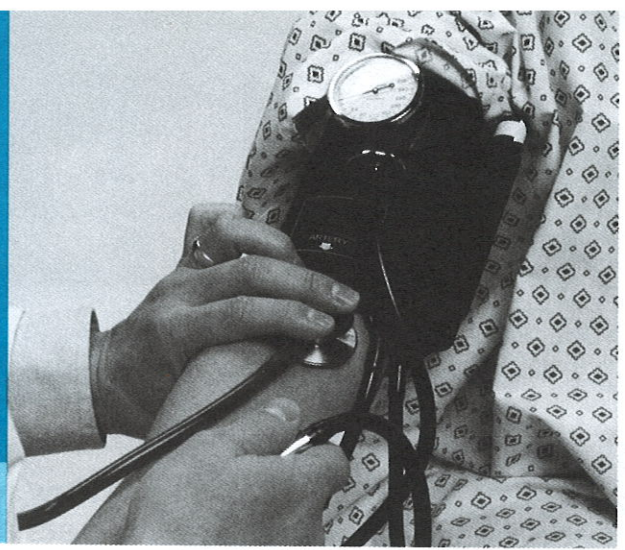
Some people may need to gain weight,

since being too thin can be a health risk, too. This booklet will not cover how to gain weight. If you think you may need to gain weight, talk with your health-care provider for advice.

With information, help and a can-do spirit, you can succeed in managing your weight!

Why is it important to manage your weight?

Because your health depends on it.



Overweight and obesity are related to many health problems.

These include:

- high blood pressure
- heart disease
- diabetes
- stroke (brain attack)
- certain cancers
- other problems—such as gallbladder disease, joint diseases and breathing disorders.

You are less likely to have these health problems if you maintain a healthy weight.

Even a modest weight loss can bring important benefits.

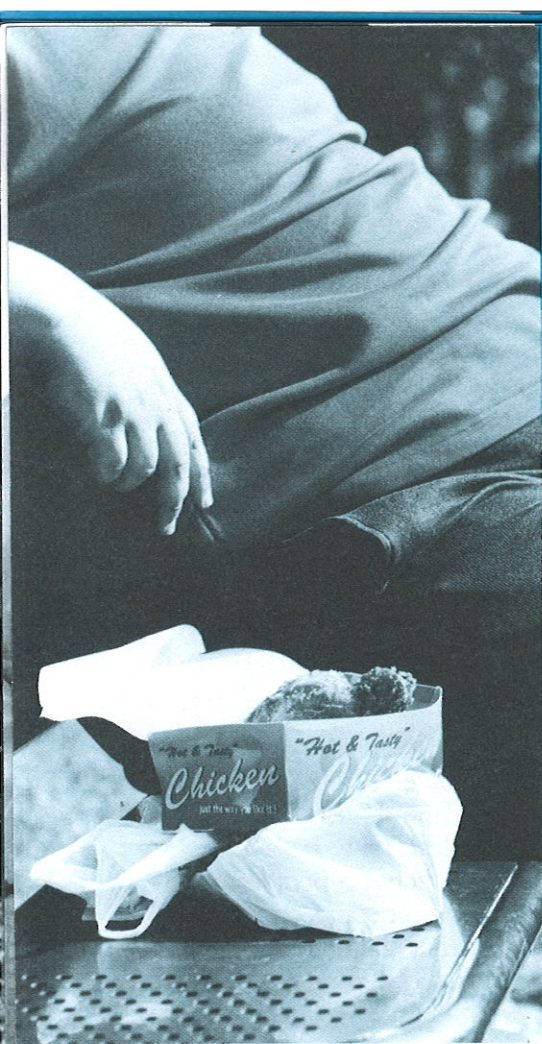
If you're overweight or obese, losing just 5-10 percent of your weight can make a big difference to your health. Most people can achieve—and maintain—this much weight loss. With effort and help, you can, too!

Focus on health—not body shape—as you manage your weight.

TV, movies, magazines, cultural beliefs and other influences may lead us to believe that to be attractive a person must have a certain body shape. But that shape may or may not be healthy. For example, being thin is not the same as being healthy.

It's natural to care about your appearance. But keep in mind that attractive bodies come in many shapes and sizes. Avoid aiming for a specific shape or size when managing your weight. Instead, focus on keeping your weight in a range that's healthy for you.





What causes overweight and obesity?

Often, several factors work together to cause a person's weight problem. These may include:

How much someone eats and drinks

Consuming more calories than the body needs means the extra calories are stored in the body as fat. The number of calories someone needs depends on how much physical activity he or she gets—as well as other factors, like his or her gender and age. (More on page 12.)

What someone eats and drinks

Foods and beverages that are high in fats or sugars are also generally high in calories. Having too much of them can add so many calories that it's hard for the body to use them up. Fats have about double the calories that protein and carbohydrates do!

Not enough exercise

Being physically active “burns” (uses up) calories. So not getting enough physical activity generally means you're taking in more calories than you're burning. And that means weight gain.

Other factors

These include:

- genetics—some people may inherit genes that make it easier for them to gain weight
- uncomfortable feelings—boredom, sadness, anger, stress, etc., can lead some people to eat too much
- certain illnesses—in a small number of cases, depression, thyroid problems, other illnesses or certain medications can lead to unhealthy weight gains.

Age makes a difference.

Keep in mind that as you age, your body generally needs fewer calories. If you continue to eat as much as when you were younger—and don't exercise more—you're likely to gain weight.

Most weight problems are caused by eating or exercise habits—often both.

What's involved in weight management?

A combination of methods usually works best. These include:



Healthy eating

Adopting and maintaining healthy eating habits is a must for weight management. This means eating a variety of healthy foods in healthy amounts. It does **not** mean forbidding yourself from enjoying food. (See pages 12-17 for more on healthy eating.)

Regular physical activity

Getting enough physical activity is also vital to weight management. You don't have to be an athlete. Even moderate levels of physical activity can make a big difference.

There are plenty of activities that might fit your interests and needs. Your health-care team can help you choose. (See pages 18-21 for more.)

Additional steps

These may include:

- counseling—for example, to help change attitudes and behaviors that may get in the way of successful weight management
- other treatments—such as weight-loss medications (see pages 22-23), very low-calorie diets (special liquid diets) and stomach surgery.

Ask your health-care team for details.

Finding a balance between food and physical activity is the key to a healthy weight. It's important even if genes or illnesses play a role in your weight problem.



How healthy is your weight?

To answer this, you and your health-care provider need to consider more than how much you weigh.



Body mass index (BMI)

The BMI formula estimates body fat using your weight and height:

$$\frac{(\text{weight in pounds}) \times 703}{(\text{height in inches}) \times (\text{height in inches})}$$

Ask your health-care provider how healthy your BMI is and what BMI you should aim for. For most adults, a BMI score of:

- less than 18.5 means underweight
- 18.5-24.9 means healthy weight
- 25.0-29.9 means overweight
- 30.0 and up means obese.

You can also figure your BMI by visiting the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Web site at www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/.

Other measurements

Your health-care provider may also want to consider other measurements, including:

- your waist size—excess fat in the waist area can add to your health risk
- the comparison of your waist size to your hip size.

Other health conditions, if any

A weight problem may be more risky to your health if you also have certain other health conditions—or if you have a family history of any of them. These conditions include:

- heart disease
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol
- diabetes.

BMI isn't right for everyone.

Consult your health-care provider about a healthy weight for you, especially if you:

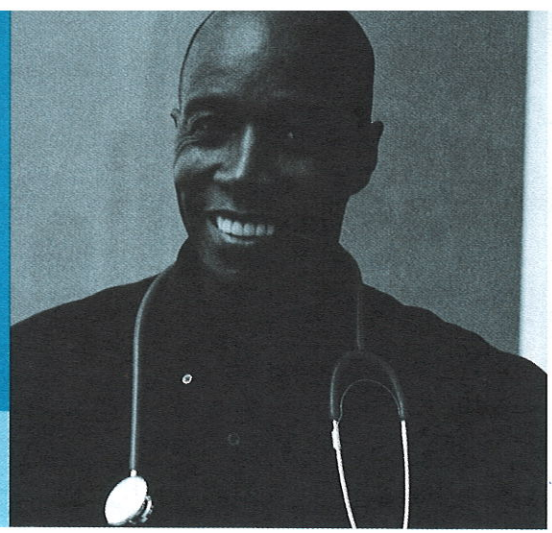
- are pregnant or breastfeeding
- are very muscular
- have lost muscle—for example, if you are an older adult.

A child's BMI must be compared to growth charts appropriate for that child's age and gender. Consult a health-care provider if you are concerned about your child's weight.

Even if your weight is healthy, it's important to take steps to maintain it. This handbook can help!

Common questions about weight

Ask your health-care provider the questions that apply to you. Write his or her answers in the spaces.



I've been overweight for years, but I feel fine. Do I need to lose weight?

I weigh a lot, but I also have a lot of muscle. Is my weight healthy for me?

I began gaining weight a few years ago. Is that normal for my age?

I keep repeating the cycle of gaining and losing weight. Is that better or worse than staying overweight?

Other questions I have:

Set a realistic weight-management goal.

Ask your health-care provider to help you complete this page.



A healthy weight range for me

is _____ to _____ pounds.

Current measures of my weight

- weight: _____ pounds
 - BMI: _____
 - other: _____
 - other: _____
- Today's date is _____.

I need to:

- maintain my current weight
- reduce my weight.

Weight log

Ask your health-care provider how often you should weigh yourself (once or twice a week at the same time of day is often recommended, though some people may benefit from weighing-in daily). Ask whether you should also record BMI or other measurements. Make extra copies of this page to continue your log—or use a notebook.

Date	Weight	Date	Weight	Date	Weight	Date	Weight

Weight-loss goals

My weight goal is _____ pounds.

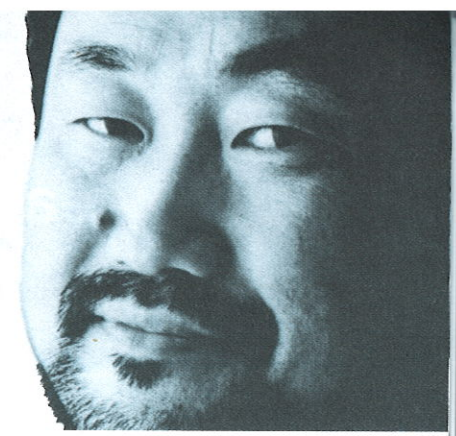
The number of pounds I plan to lose by:

	Date	Pounds
■ end of first week	_____	_____
■ end of first month	_____	_____
■ 3 months	_____	_____
■ 6 months	_____	_____

Aim to lose no more than 1-2 pounds a week unless your health-care provider recommends otherwise.

Start with the right mind-set.

Before tackling the details of how to reach your goal, it helps to know the overall keys to success in weight management.



Go for slow, steady progress.

- If you need to lose weight, it's best to do it little by little through healthy eating, regular physical activity and other healthy habits. Then, maintain your weight by sticking to a healthy lifestyle.
- Don't try to lose a lot of weight quickly or go on a special diet unless your health-care provider advises it. Drastic dieting can lead to health problems, frustration and weight gain in the long run.
- Work at setting and reaching a few small goals that are specific and realistic for you. Once you reach those, set others.

Make plans that fit into your life.

Try to make eating, exercise and other healthy lifestyle plans that fit your:

- likes and dislikes
- health (for example, plans should take into account any chronic health conditions or disabilities you may have)
- budget, schedule and family routine.

You're more likely to stick to your plans this way.

Don't give up if past attempts didn't work.

Think of them as practice. Why do you think those attempts didn't work? For example, did you:

- try making changes because others wanted you to—and not because you felt ready to?
- set too hard of a goal?
- lack support from family and friends?
- go back to unhealthy habits after losing weight?

You can learn from your past mistakes—and succeed this time!

Reward yourself when you stick to your eating and exercise plans! Go to a movie, get a new outfit or do something else special.



Healthy eating

is a major part of weight management. A healthy diet combines:

Variety

Choose from each of the food groups every day. Different foods provide different nutrients—the vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, fiber and other things you need.

Moderation

For example, limit fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), added sugars and calories with no nutritional value.*

*Do not restrict fat for children under age 2. Ask your health-care provider about other nutritional needs for young children.

Proportion

For example, have more grains, vegetables and fruits than meats and high-fat foods.

Activity

Find a healthy balance between what you eat and your physical activity.



Stay within your daily calorie needs.

Ask your health-care provider how many calories are right for you. (Record this on page 15.) This chart estimates calorie needs for maintaining weight. (These recommendations are general guidelines—your individual needs may be different.) The lower number of calories is for people who aren't active—the higher number for people who are active. Keep in mind that, in general, to lose weight, you should eat fewer calories than your body uses up.

	Age	Daily calories
Child	2-3	1,000-1,400
Female	4-8	1,200-1,800
	9-13	1,400-2,200
	14-30	1,800-2,400
	31-50	1,800-2,200
	51+	1,600-2,200
Male	4-8	1,200-2,000
	9-13	1,600-2,600
	14-18	2,000-3,200
	19-30	2,400-3,000
	31-50	2,200-3,000
	51+	2,000-2,800

Go to www.MyPyramid.gov or talk to your health-care provider for a personal nutrition plan.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture



Tips to limit calories:

- Have smaller portions at home and at restaurants. Servings are often bigger than people need.
- Eat more slowly so the feeling of fullness has time to catch up with you.
- Snack on fruits and vegetables. Not only are they good for you, but they have lots of fiber and water in them, making them more filling.
- Limit foods and drinks that are high in fats or sugars (such as sweets and soft drinks). Also limit alcoholic drinks.
- Instead of eating when you're bored or stressed, call a friend, work on a hobby, take a walk, etc.

Why limit fats?

Fats and oils are part of a healthy diet. But having too much—especially of certain kinds—can:

- make it hard for you to stay within your daily calorie needs—fats have more calories
- raise your risk of health problems, like heart disease.

It's especially important to limit saturated and trans fats.

Tips to limit fats:

- Eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Eat less meat. (Try fish and skinless chicken breast cooked in low-fat ways instead.)
- When you eat meat or poultry, choose lean cuts, and trim the fat. Remove the skin from poultry.
- Switch to fat-free or low-fat milk products.
- Choose fat-free or low-fat versions of your favorite foods.
- Broil, steam, bake, grill or stir-fry foods instead of frying them.
- Limit commercially prepared fried foods, baked goods, snacks and other processed foods.
- Limit salad dressings, cream, butter and margarine.
- Choose fats with the least amount of saturated and trans fats—like liquid vegetable oils (such as olive, canola, soybean, corn, safflower and sunflower oils) or cooking sprays. And use as little as possible.

To help prevent cravings and overeating:

- Be sure to eat breakfast and other meals regularly.
- Indulge once in a while in your favorite foods that are high in calories or fat—but just eat a small amount.

Check the Nutrition Facts label on foods and drinks to see what's in them—and how big a serving size is! (See page 16.)

Your healthy eating plan

Ask your dietitian or nutritionist or another member of your health-care team to help you fill in the amounts that are right for you.

Make smart choices

from each food group every day. Here are the suggested amounts for a daily diet of 2,000 calories and some examples of food amounts:

*Count beans, peas and soybean products (like tofu) for either the vegetable group or the meat and beans group.

My daily nutrition goals

Grains (6 ounces)

At least half should be whole grains. Count each as 1 ounce:

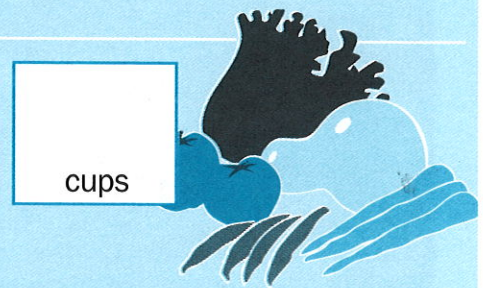
- 1 slice of bread or 1 small muffin
- 1 cup of ready-to-eat or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cooked cereal
- 1 ounce of dry or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cooked pasta or rice.



Vegetables (2½ cups)

Have plenty of dark-green and orange vegetables, as well as beans and peas.* Count each as 1 cup:

- 1 cup of raw, cooked or juiced vegetables
- 2 cups of leafy salad greens.



Fruits (2 cups)

Limit juices to no more than about half the daily amount. 1 cup of raw, cooked or juiced fruit counts as 1 cup.



Milk products (3 cups)

(Ages 9 and up need 3 cups. Ages 2–8 need 2 cups.) Get calcium from other sources if not from milk products. Count each as 1 cup:

- 1 cup of milk or yogurt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of natural cheese, like cheddar, or 2 ounces of processed cheese.

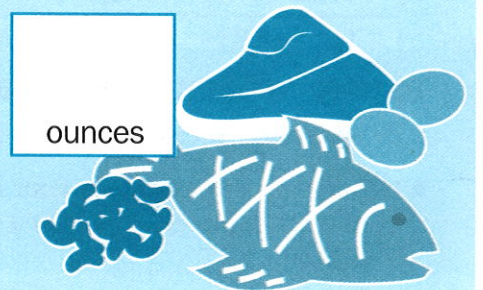
Note: Do not give cow's milk to children under age 1.



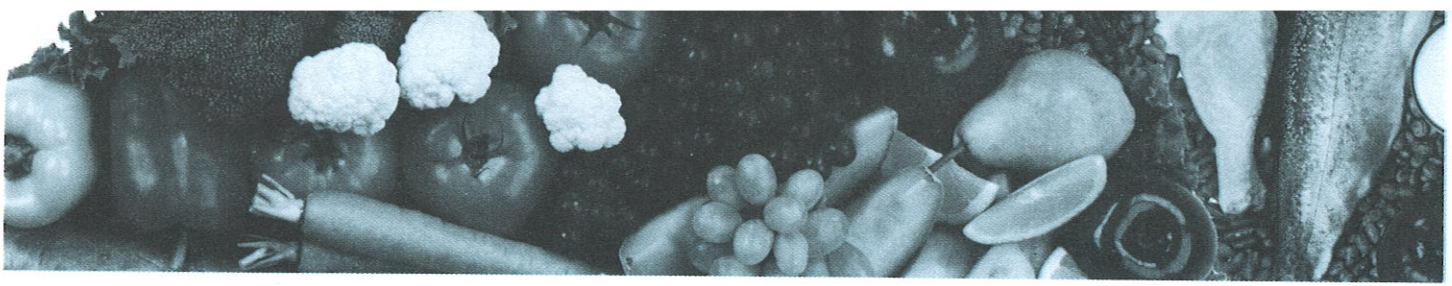
Meat and beans (5½ ounces)

Vary your protein sources. Count each as 1 ounce:

- 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry or fish
- 1 egg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cooked dry beans or tofu.*



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture



My daily nutrition goals, continued

General recommendations:

Calories	<input type="text"/>	See page 12.
Total fat	<input type="text"/>	20-35% of daily calories for adults
Saturated fat	<input type="text"/>	Less than 10% of daily calories
Cholesterol	<input type="text"/>	Less than 300 mg
Sodium (salt)	<input type="text"/>	Less than 2,300 mg
Fiber	<input type="text"/>	14 g per 1,000 calories consumed
Other: _____	<input type="text"/>	Other: <input type="text"/>
Other: _____	<input type="text"/>	Other: <input type="text"/>

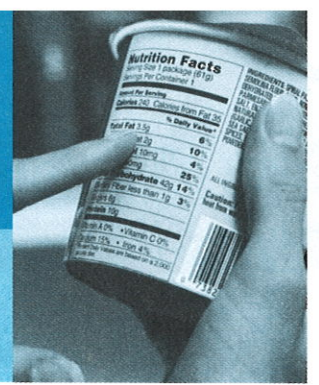
Keep a food diary

for at least 3-7 days. In it, record what you ate and drank, the amount, date, time and place, and any special circumstances. Afterward, review it. Do you see any patterns?

Other steps I should take:

The Nutrition Facts label

can help you choose foods that are within your daily nutrition goals for calories, fats and other items you need to limit. (See pages 14-15.) The format of labels may vary. In general, you can check labels for:



Serving size and number of servings per container

Size may differ from the food group amounts on page 14—and from what you would consider a serving.

The number of calories in a serving

Also, how many calories come from fat.

How much of certain items a food contains

For example, this food contains 30 milligrams of cholesterol.

Nutrition Facts			
Serving Size 1 cup (228g)			
Servings Per Container 2			
Amount Per Serving			
Calories 260	Calories from Fat 120		
% Daily Value*			
Total Fat 13g	20%		
Saturated Fat 5g	25%		
Trans Fat 2g			
Cholesterol 30mg	10%		
Sodium 660mg	28%		
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%		
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%		
Sugars 5g			
Protein 5g			
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%		
Calcium 15%	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
Calories per gram:			
Fat	9	Carbohydrate	4
		Protein	4

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Percent (%) Daily Value

This shows how the food fits into a diet of 2,000 calories a day. Here's a rough guide to % Daily Values:

- 5% or less is low
- 20% or more is high.

(There's no Daily Value for trans fats. Try to avoid them.)

Daily Values footnote

This gives the suggested daily intake for certain nutrients.*

Conversion information

For example, there are 4 calories in each gram of protein and 5 grams of protein in a serving of this food. So 20 calories per serving come from protein.

*The U.S. government's *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day.

Look for added sugars

in the ingredients list, including:

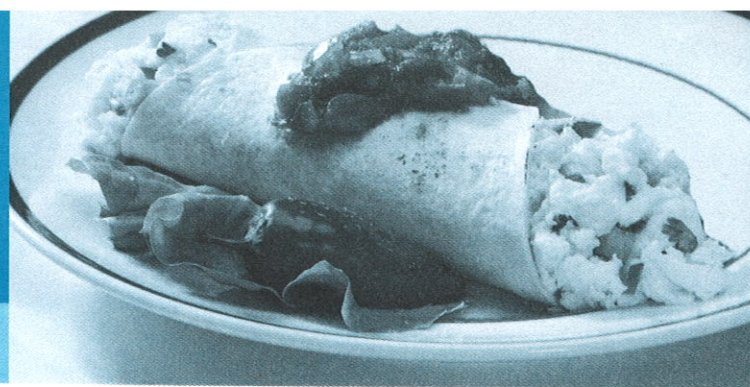
- fructose, sucrose, glucose, dextrose, lactose or maltose
- corn syrup or high-fructose corn syrup
- fruit juice concentrates
- syrup.

In general, the food has a lot of added sugars if they're listed among the first few ingredients (listed by order of weight).

Some restaurants provide nutritional information for their foods.

You can fit your tastes and needs

into your eating plan.



List special foods that you would like to eat,

such as foods that are traditional to your family or culture:

Ask your dietitian or nutritionist

or another member of your health-care team for ideas on including these in your eating plan. Write the ideas here:

List foods that you would like to avoid

because of allergies, religious or cultural traditions, personal taste, etc.:

Ask your dietitian or nutritionist

or another member of your health-care team how you can avoid these and still get all the nutrients you need. Write the suggestions here:



Physical activity

is also part of weight management.

Regular physical activity helps you succeed.

It makes it easier to control your weight—and keep off any weight you've lost. Exercise burns calories. It can also help you stay motivated to take care of your weight and general health.

Regular physical activity has many other benefits.

For example, it can:

- lower your risk of heart disease, stroke (brain attack), high blood pressure and diabetes (or help you stay healthier if you already have any of these)
- strengthen your muscles and bones
- help keep your body flexible
- reduce stress and lift your spirits.

Different kinds of activity help in different ways.

All physical activities help in weight management. But it may be best for you to do certain kinds—or a certain combination—of activities, depending on your other health needs. For example:

- Aerobic activities help strengthen your heart. They also use more calories than other activities. Examples are brisk walking, jogging, rowing, swimming and bicycling.
- Strength-training exercises (such as lifting weights) help you build stronger muscles and bones.
- Stretches help your body stay flexible.

How intense is your physical activity?

- **Light activity** is any activity that gets you moving—but still allows you to sing while doing it. Light stretching, gardening and dusting are some examples.
- **Moderate activity** is any activity that increases your heart and breathing rates—but still allows you to carry on a conversation without difficulty. Brisk walking, swimming and mowing the lawn are some examples.
- **Vigorous activity** is any activity that gets your breathing and heartbeat going hard and fast. Jogging and bicycling uphill are two examples.

Be sure to check with your health-care provider before starting or changing an exercise program.

My physical activity plan

Ask your health-care provider to help you create one. (See pages 20-21 for general information.)

	Minutes of exercise	Number of times a week	
I'll start by getting:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
After _____ week(s), if no problems, I'll increase my level to:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Time(s) of day when I'll exercise:	<input type="text"/>		
Activities I can do:	<input type="checkbox"/> walking	<input type="checkbox"/> gardening	<input type="checkbox"/> aerobics
	<input type="checkbox"/> jogging	<input type="checkbox"/> bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/> a team sport
	<input type="checkbox"/> dancing	<input type="checkbox"/> swimming	
	Others: <input style="width: 150px; height: 40px;" type="text"/>		
Other exercise instructions:	<input style="width: 100%; height: 60px;" type="text"/>		

Physical activity log

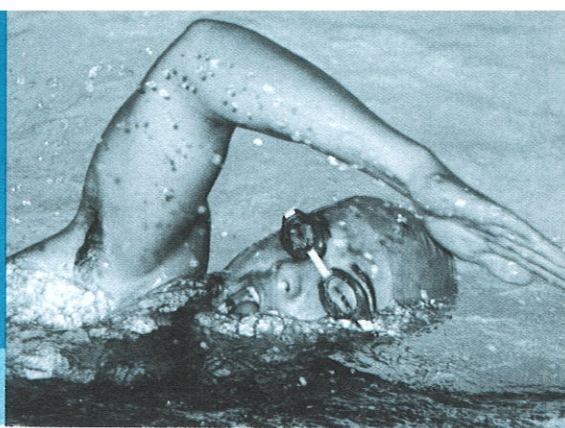
Keep track of all your physical activity. Your health-care provider may also want you to record how many steps you walked or other information. Make extra copies of this page to continue your log—or use a notebook.

Date	Activity/intensity	Time spent	Date	Activity/intensity	Time spent	Date	Activity/intensity	Time spent

Readers may copy this page for their own personal use. Pages that do not contain this notice may not be reproduced without written permission from Channing Bete Company, Inc. ©2006 Channing Bete Company, Inc. All rights reserved.

Some tips for success

with physical activity:



Exercise at the right level.

People generally need to stay within their daily calorie needs and get at least 150 minutes of **moderate**—or 75 minutes of **vigorous**—physical activity each week. You may need more activity to lose weight or keep off weight you've lost (up to 300 minutes or more of moderate—or 150 minutes or more of vigorous—activity each week).

You may need to build up to this slowly. Ask your health-care provider what's right for you. And keep in mind that you can spread your activity throughout the week, getting at least 10 minutes at a time.

Look for everyday chances to be active.

For example, you can:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk or bike, instead of driving, to do errands close by.
- Park a little distance away from where you're going. Walk the rest of the way. And pick up the pace when you're walking places.
- March in place while watching TV.

Consider any special needs.

Get advice from your health-care team. For example:

- If you have a disability, ask what mobility aids or other equipment can help you do the activities you're interested in.
- If you have any chronic health condition or injury (such as a knee injury), ask what special precautions you should take.

Exercise with others.

It can be more fun, and it's a good way to keep each other motivated. For example:

- Start a family tradition of walking before dinner.
- Ask a friend to be your exercise partner.
- Start an exercise group at work or in your neighborhood.
- Join an exercise class.

Make exercise enjoyable.

- Choose activities you like. Be sure to ask your health-care provider if they're appropriate for you. Vary them so you don't get bored.
- Don't overexert yourself. Exhaustion or pain can be discouraging and lead to injury.

Limit sedentary activities

—such as watching TV or using the computer for long periods of time.

Think safety when exercising.

- Always start by warming up and end by cooling down. (Ask your health-care provider for good warm-up and cool-down activities.)
- Wear appropriate shoes and any needed safety gear.
- Exercise in safe places.
- Stop exercising right away if you feel pain, can't catch your breath, feel dizzy or nauseated, or break out in a cold sweat. Report your symptoms to your health-care provider.
- Drink plenty of water.

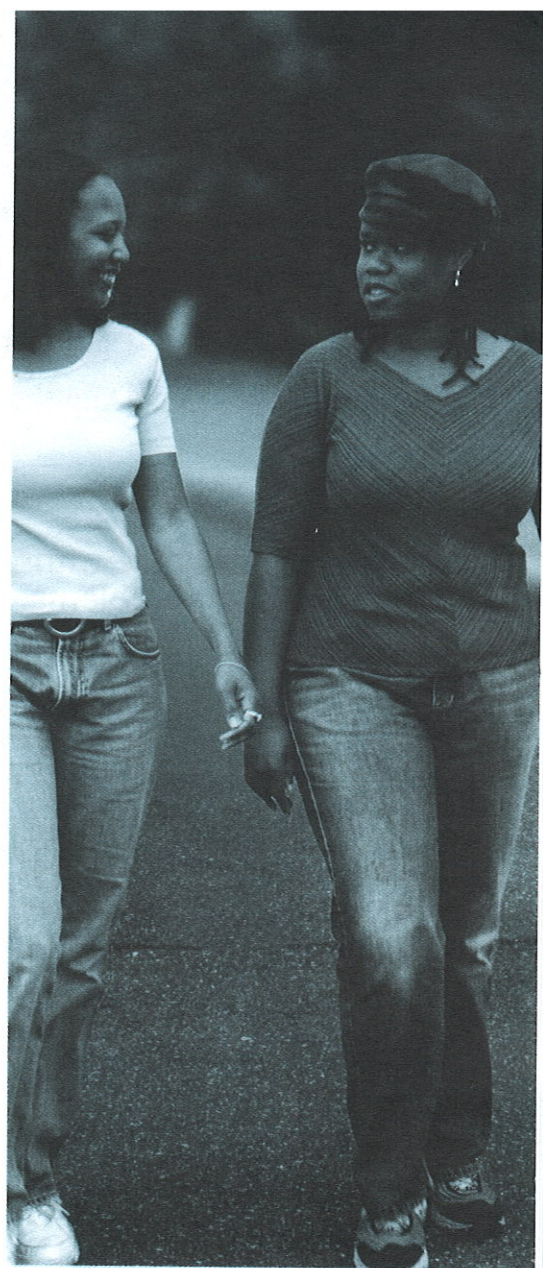
Overcome any obstacles.

For example:

- Do you feel too busy? Try doubling up on your activities. For example, ride an exercise bike while reading. Or put off a nonessential chore.
- Are you worried about a health condition? Talk to your health-care provider. Together, develop an exercise plan that's safe for you.
- Do your athletic skills discourage you? Focus on the health benefits, instead of things like being the fastest or scoring the most.

Other ideas

Talk to your health-care provider about other ways you can get more exercise or overcome obstacles.



Make plans that fit into your life.

Check the options that might work best for you. With your health-care provider, discuss how you can work them into your physical activity plan.

Your schedule

I prefer to exercise:

- in the morning
- at midday
- in the afternoon
- in the evening.

Your budget

- It's OK for me to spend money on equipment, health club fees, etc.
- It's important for me to find free or low-cost activities.

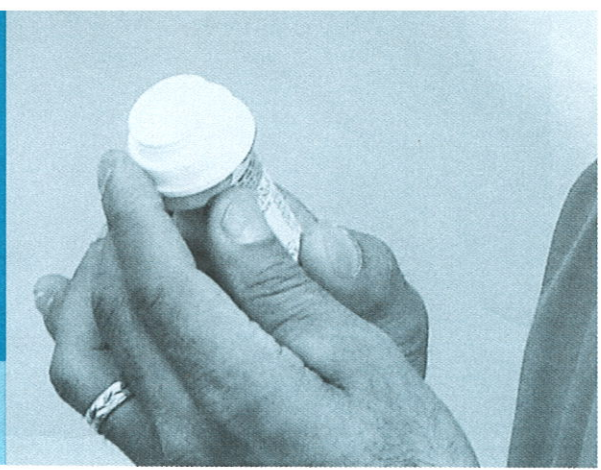
Your exercise environment

I prefer to exercise:

- at home
- at a health club
- outdoors
- at work (walks at lunch, exercise facilities, etc.)
- at the mall ("mall walking")
- other: _____

Prescription weight-loss medications

Most work by decreasing the desire to eat.
Know the facts:



They are for people with serious weight problems.

This may include people with BMIs of 30 or greater (or 27 or greater if they have other weight-related health problems). Weight-loss medications are generally **not** for people who:

- need to lose only a few pounds
- want to lose weight only for looks.

In general, diet and exercise changes should be tried first.

They require regular monitoring.

It's important that a person's health-care provider closely monitor the effects of the medication. People using weight-loss medications must see their health-care provider regularly.

They carry some risks.

If you're considering weight-loss medications, be sure to discuss any possible side effects with your health-care provider. For example, in some cases, weight-loss medications can:

- raise blood pressure
- cause an irregular heartbeat
- be addictive.

They should be used with caution.

When discussing weight-loss medications with your health-care provider, be sure to tell him or her if you:

- are pregnant or breastfeeding
- have a history of abusing alcohol or other drugs
- take any other prescription or over-the-counter medications or dietary supplements
- have any physical or mental health conditions.

And ask if the medication is approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for weight loss.

They may only bring short-term benefits.

In the short term, weight-loss medications may help reduce weight and control weight-related problems, such as high blood pressure and diabetes. But:

- It's not clear how well some of these medications work over the long term.
- People often regain weight after they stop using medication unless they stick to healthy eating and exercise habits.

If used, weight-loss drugs should be only one part of a complete weight-management plan that also includes healthy eating and physical activity.

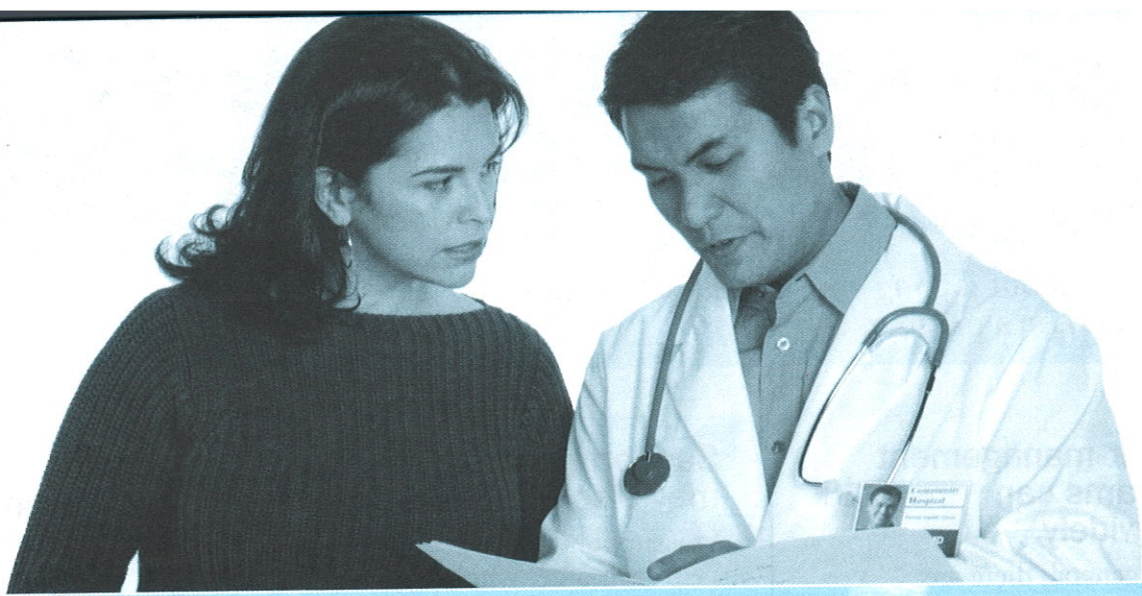
Special warnings:

Some over-the-counter (OTC) products

for "weight loss" or "weight control" may cause dangerous side effects—even if they claim to have only natural ingredients. Always check with your health-care provider **before** taking an OTC weight-loss/weight-control product.

Tell all your health-care providers

about **all** medications you're taking—even OTC products, including dietary supplements and "natural" products. Some of these can interact dangerously with one another. Don't assume that a health-care provider doesn't need to know—or already knows—what you're taking.



Record any weight-loss medications

your health-care provider prescribes on the wallet card located between pages 30 and 31.
Be sure to ask about:

- possible side effects to watch out for

- what to do if side effects occur

Other questions I have:

Visit www.fda.gov or call 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332) to check on the safety of a prescription or OTC medication, dietary supplement or herbal remedy.



Weight-management programs

Thinking about joining one? Check with your health-care provider first. Then, choose a program carefully.

Weight-management programs can vary widely.

But in general, there are:

- **Clinical programs**—These are provided by licensed professionals. Services may be offered by one health-care provider or a team of doctors, dietitians or nutritionists, exercise specialists and other professionals.
- **Nonclinical programs**—These are often commercial programs that use counselors (usually not health-care providers) to provide services to clients. They may use instructional materials prepared with help from health-care providers.

Note: Diets that severely restrict food should generally be under a health-care provider's supervision.

Support groups may also be available.

In a support group, people help each other with weight management by sharing their experiences. For example:

- You can look for an Overeaters Anonymous, Inc., group. (Visit www.aa.org. Or check your phone book, or contact the organization's World Service Office at 1-505-891-2664.)
- You can join other local support groups. Ask your health-care provider and local hospitals and clinics for information.

Many people successfully control their weight without joining a program. But others find joining a program helpful. Do what's right for you.



Judge a commercial program carefully before you join.

This chart can help.

Between the slanted lines, write the name of each program you're considering. For each program, check yes or no for the questions listed. The more yes answers, the safer and more effective the program is likely to be. If a program won't give you answers, avoid it.

Does the program:	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
promote slow, steady weight loss (unless your health-care provider says more rapid weight loss is right for you)?								
promote eating a variety of healthy foods from all the food groups?								
encourage eating foods that you can find easily and take into account your cultural or religious preferences?								
encourage regular exercise?								
help you maintain a healthy weight after you lose weight?								
teach weight-management methods that you can stick with for the long term (for example, how to create healthy meals when you're no longer buying pre-packaged ones)?								
have statistics (not just individual stories) showing its success?								
provide information on its safety and the possible risks of quick or drastic weight loss?								
have written details about fees and additional costs (such as for dietary supplements) that you can see before signing up?								
have written details about the training and experience of its counselors and other staff?								
follow the Voluntary Guidelines for Providers of Weight-Loss Products or Services (from the Partnership for Healthy Weight Management)?								



Beware of fad diets and “miracle” cures.

They can be ineffective—and dangerous! A diet, pill or other substance is probably a bad idea if it:

Claims to burn or melt away fat

No food, drug or other substance can get rid of fat. The only way to lose fat is to use up more calories than you take in—through regular exercise and healthy eating.

Involves unusual quantities or combinations of food

Be doubtful of advice to eat only one food or kind of food (such as those from a single food group)—or a combination of specific foods. There’s no evidence that these help in long-term weight management. And they can cause harmful nutritional imbalances.

Requires following a very strict menu

Some diets say you can only eat a few kinds of food, and you must eat them on specific days, at specific times. You don’t need to do this to manage your weight successfully. In fact, trying to stick to a very strict menu can harm your health. And it can be so frustrating that you may soon give up trying to manage your weight.

Says you don’t have to exercise

Weight-management plans that don’t include physical activity are incomplete. Regular physical activity can help prevent many health problems. And it helps burn calories! (See pages 18-21.)



Promises a big weight loss in a short time

In general, losing more than 1-2 pounds a week is unrealistic and can be dangerous. If you lose weight too fast, most of the loss will be water, not fat. You may also lose some muscle.

When you go off the diet, you'll likely gain all the weight you've lost—and possibly more.

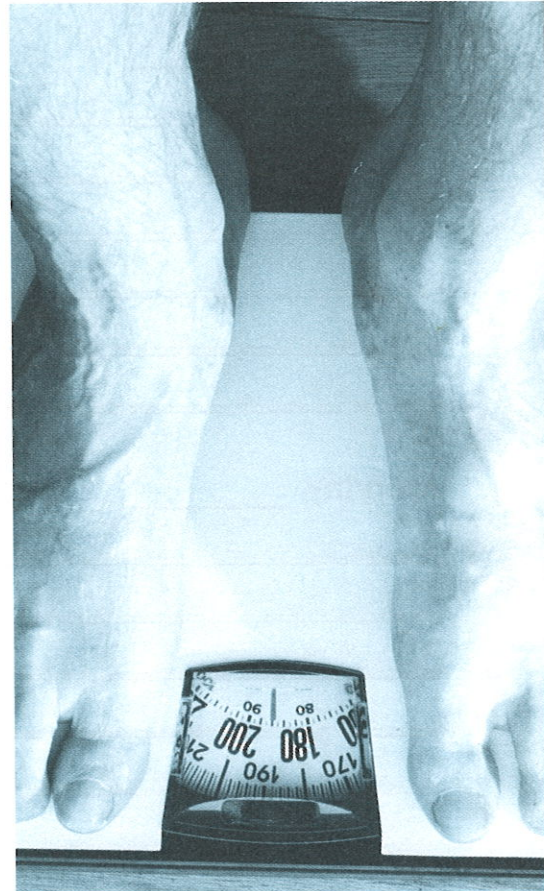
What's so bad about a fad?

Here are just a few of the problems that fad diets and "miracle" weight-loss substances can bring:

- weakened muscles and bones
- kidney damage
- an increased risk of heart disease
- dizziness, nausea and weakness
- food cravings, which can lead to overeating
- **more** body fat in the long run!

Ask your health-care provider beforehand

about any diets, pills, etc., that you're considering. Note your questions and the answers here:



When it comes to weight management, there's no substitute for healthy eating and regular exercise!



Keep a weight-management diary.

This can help you stay focused. Write how you felt, what helped you stick to your eating and exercise plans, or ideas for sticking with them in the next few days. Also note any setbacks (see page 30) or situations that tempted you to stray from your eating and exercise plans. Write down ideas for handling those situations next time. Make extra copies of these pages to continue your diary—or use a notebook.

Sunday, _____

Monday, _____

Tuesday, _____

Wednesday, _____

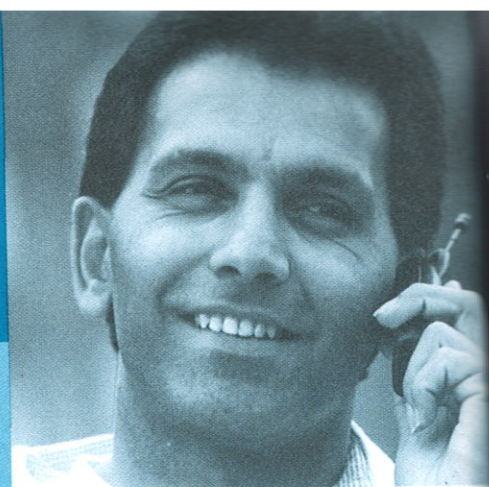
Thursday, _____

Friday, _____

Saturday, _____

Managing setbacks

Almost everyone slips off his or her weight-control plan once in a while. That's OK. A short setback is not a failure. What's important is getting back on track.



Know what can cause a setback.

For example, you may be most likely to slip when there's a change in your routine. This may include holidays, trips, eating out, being busy and being under stress. Review your weight-management diary to see what triggers your setbacks. (See pages 28-29.)

Plan ahead to help prevent setbacks.

For example:

- Before holidays, look for healthy recipes for holiday foods.
- Prepare for busy days by making healthy meals for reheating later.
- Decide before getting to a restaurant that you'll order low-fat, low-calorie foods.
- Make time for physical activities when you plan a trip.
- If a stressful time is coming up, make plans to help yourself avoid using food to deal with stress. For example, plan walks with friends or special outings.

If you have a setback, try to correct the problem.

For example:

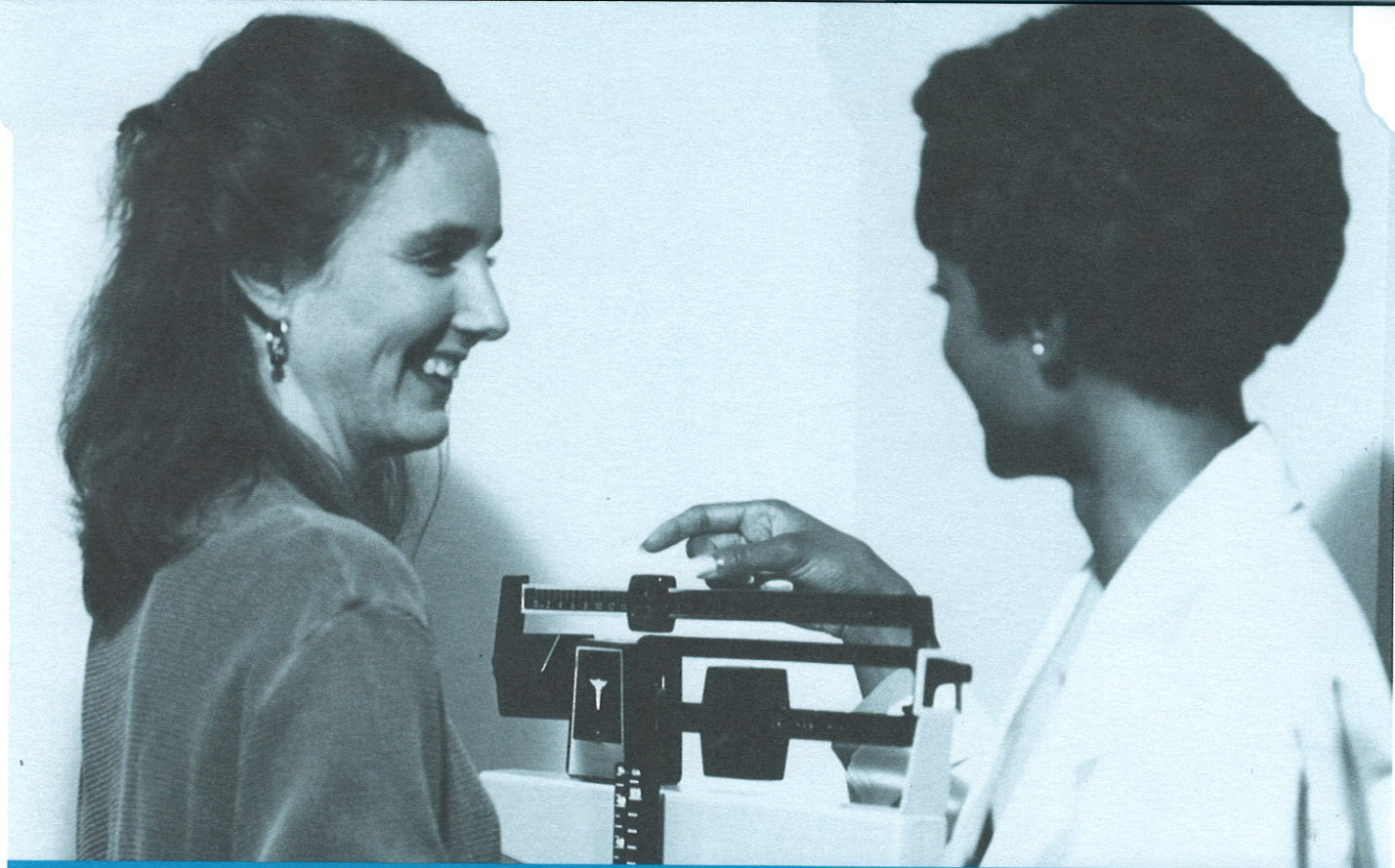
- If you're bored with certain foods, look for new low-fat, low-calorie recipes.
- In bad weather, find an indoor place to walk (such as a shopping mall) or join an indoor exercise class.

Other ideas

for dealing with setbacks:

For more information:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
www.MyPyramid.gov
- Food and Nutrition Information Center, USDA
<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
www.healthierus.gov
- Weight-control Information Network (WIN)
www.win.niddk.nih.gov
1-877-946-4627
- American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org
1-800-AHA-USA-1
(1-800-242-8721)
- Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.
www.aa.org
1-505-891-2664



You can manage your weight successfully.

Aim for better health.

Avoid aiming for a certain body shape. Remember, being thin is not the same as being healthy.

Set a realistic goal.

Work with your health-care provider to set a goal that's right for you.

Focus on healthy eating and regular exercise.

Avoid fad diets and "miracle" weight-loss pills or substances.

Reward yourself for sticking with your weight-management plan.

And don't lose heart if you have a setback. You can get back on track! If you're not losing as much weight as you'd like, ask your health-care provider if you should adjust your goals or methods.

A healthy weight helps you enjoy life to the fullest!

