

Winning at Weight Loss

Does the idea of a diet make you think of boring food and misery? It does not have to be that way. If you change your lifestyle in small ways and set reasonable goals, you can succeed in losing weight without giving up good food or your happiness.

Small Loss — Big Gain

Being overweight can contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, some cancers, and diabetes. People who are overweight may become depressed or anxious. They can also have low self-esteem.

It does not take much to turn this trend around. If you lose as little as 5 to 10% of your body weight, you will greatly improve your health.

Reasonable Goals



If you and your doctor agree that you need to lose weight, the first step is to set a reasonable goal. If you try to lose too much weight too fast, you will probably gain the weight back in the long run.

“Yo-yo” dieting is bad for your health. Unless there is a medical reason for you to lose weight very fast, you have a much greater chance of success by losing gradually — no more than 1 to 2 pounds per week.

This rate is easy to maintain and is easiest on your body. It also means that you do not have to completely give up your favorite foods. You just adjust what and how you eat.

No Fad Diets

- The best diet is flexible and easy to stick to. The one you choose should be one you can maintain over time.
- Do not eat only one or two foods such as cabbage soup or grapefruit. You cannot eat like that forever.
- Do not waste your money on expensive weight-loss supplements that make wild claims. The only thing likely to get thinner is your pocketbook.

Tips for Losing Weight



Increase Your Physical Activity

Exercise is very important for successful weight loss. Activities such as gardening and housework count as exercise. Even small increases in physical activity can make a difference:

- During the day, get up every hour and walk around for a few minutes.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator, if you are able.
- Walk with a neighbor or walk your dog if you have one.
- While watching television, get up during every commercial break and walk around or march in place.

Join with Others

People who belong to groups such as Weight Watchers or online clubs such as eDiets have the best chance of maintaining their weight loss over the long term.

Before joining a program, think about what it will cost, how convenient it is for you, and how well the program has worked for other people.



Pay Attention to Quantity

If you grew up being told not to waste food, it is natural to eat what is put in front of you. So, do not put too much food on your plate. When losing weight, eating smaller portions is the easiest way to start.

When eating out, request child-size servings, share your entrée with a friend, or take half of the meal home. In this way you can sample a little of everything that is offered without overeating.

How Many Calories Do You Need?

You can use the Body Mass Index (BMI) as a guide for how many calories you need each day. The chart on the following page will help you see what your BMI should be.

You can use the formula to help you figure out how many calories you can take in and still lose the weight you want. As always, consult your doctor for guidance on diets.



Determining Your Body Mass Index

The BMI helps you determine if you are of an ideal weight. A BMI of between 20 and 24 (the shaded columns on the chart) is considered ideal. If your BMI is higher, look in BMI column 24 and trace down to your height. This number is considered your ideal weight.

For instance, if you are 65” tall and weigh 175 lbs., your BMI is 29. To find your ideal weight, look in BMI column 24 and trace down to your height. The ideal weight for you is approximately 144 lbs.

Calculating Your Daily Calories

To calculate the amount of calories per day needed to maintain your current weight, multiply your weight by 10. For example, if you weigh 175 lbs., the result is 1750.

If you need to lose weight, you need to determine your ideal weight and the number of calories you can take in to reach that weight.

One pound is equal to about 3500 calories. So, if you want to lose one pound a week, eat 500 calories less each day. (3500 calories divided by 7 days equals 500 calories per day). For example, if your daily calories are equal to 1750, you will have to reduce your intake to 1250 calories per day.

You can also lose weight by increasing your physical activity. For instance, a brisk 45-minute walk will burn 250 calories.

Determining Your BMI Score

Instructions

1. Find your height in the left-hand column. Move across that row to the number that is closest to your weight. Then move up that column to the BMI row. The number at the top of the column is your BMI Score. **Example:** If you are 65” tall and weigh 175 lbs., your BMI is 29.
2. If your BMI is not in the shaded area, go to the closest shaded BMI and move down to the row that has your height. The number is your ideal weight. **Example:** 24 is the closest shaded BMI to 29. If you move down to 65”, you find an ideal weight of 144.
3. Record your height, weight, BMI, and ideal weight at the top of the next page.

BMI (kg/m ²)	19	20	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	40
Height (inches)	Weight (pounds)														
58	91	96	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	167
59	94	99	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	198
60	97	102	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	204
61	100	106	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	211
62	104	109	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	218
63	107	113	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	225
64	110	116	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	232
65	114	120	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	240
66	118	124	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	247
67	121	127	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	255
68	125	131	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	262
69	128	135	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	270
70	132	139	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	278
71	136	143	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	286
72	140	147	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	294
73	144	151	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	302
74	148	155	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	311
75	152	160	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	319
76	156	164	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	328

Calculating Calories

Instructions

1. In box 1, record your height, weight, BMI score, and ideal weight in the first box.
2. In box 2, record your weight. Multiply it by 10 to get the number of calories you need each day to maintain that weight.
3. If you want to lose 1 to 2 pounds a week, in box 3 record the daily calories from box 2. Subtract 500 to determine the number of calories you can in take daily to achieve your goal.

1.

Your BMI Score

Height: _____ Weight: _____ BMI Score: _____ Ideal Weight: _____

2.

Your Daily Calories to Maintain Your Current Weight

_____ (Your Weight) X 10 = _____ Daily Calories

3.

Daily Calories to Lose 1 to 2 Pounds a Week

_____ Daily Calories – 500 Calories = _____ Daily Calories

Resources

Books

Beale, Lucy, Couvillon, Sandy G., Donnelly, Beverly, and Hutcheson, Katherine A. *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Weight Loss*. Alpha Books: October 2002

A guide to help you reach your ideal size by learning what to eat, how to exercise, and how to avoid common weight-loss pitfalls.

Rippe, James M. M.D., Weight Watchers. *Weight Loss That Lasts*. John Wiley & Sons Inc.: November 2005

A myth-busting guide that delivers just what is needed to get off the dieting roller coaster — combining state-of-the-art science, common-sense advice, inspirational stories, and action plans.

Organization

The Weight-Control Information Network (WIN)

1 WIN Way

Bethesda, MD 20892-3665

Phone: (202) 828-1025 or (877) 946-4627

Fax: (202) 828-1028

E-mail: win@info.niddk.nih.gov

Web site: www.win.niddk.nih.gov

WIN was established in 1994 to provide the general public, health professionals, the media, and Congress with up-to-date, science-based information on obesity, weight control, physical activity, and related nutritional issues.

Resources, continued

Web Sites

www.calorie-count.com

This site offers calorie and nutrient analysis of hundreds of common foods, including name brands.

www.consumer.gov/weightloss

A site for the Partnership for Healthy Weight Management. This site includes a BMI chart.

www.consumersearch.com

The site offers a comparison of the effectiveness of several weight loss programs based on research and consumer surveys.

www.eDiets.com

Information about several weight-loss programs. The site offers membership support and advice.

www.medlineplus.gov

Up-to-date, quality health care information. Go to Health Topics, "Weight Loss and Dieting."

www.win.niddk.gov/publications/myths.html

This site discusses common myths about weight loss.