

WEIGHT CONTROL AND HEART DISEASE

HOW TO CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT **AND** REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE

Name: _____

Check where applicable

- Plan to be active 30 minutes or more every day.**
- Change how you eat.**
 - Eat 3 healthy meals a day.
 - Plan your meals around high-fibre foods:
 - vegetables and fruit
 - legumes such as dried peas, dried beans, and lentils
 - whole grain products such as brown rice, whole grain bread, whole grain cereals
 - Change your eating habits (e.g., take time to eat, eat slowly, take smaller bites).
- Cut down on fat.**
 - Reduce amount of fat you add to your food.
 - Cook with little or no fat.
 - Choose low-fat meat.
 - Choose chicken and fish.
 - Choose nonfat or low-fat dairy products.
 - Avoid high-fat desserts and snack foods.
 - Eat smaller portions of foods that contain fat.
 - When you are eating out, choose low-fat foods.
- Cut down on calories.**
- Keep a Food and Activity Record.**

SOME IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT OBESITY AND HEART DISEASE

If you are overweight, you are more likely to have heart disease.

Extra weight can raise blood pressure and blood cholesterol and lead to diabetes.

It matters where your body stores its excess fat. People who carry most of their fat around their stomachs have a higher risk of having heart disease and diabetes than those who carry it around their hips.

THE GOOD NEWS IS: YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASE.

Work with your doctor:

To control your weight.

To control the other factors that can lead to heart disease.

CONTROLLING YOUR WEIGHT

WHAT IS A HEALTHY WEIGHT?

Healthy bodies come in all different shapes and sizes. The Body Mass Index (BMI) is a scale that shows you if your weight is in a healthy range. A healthy body weight is a BMI between 20 and 25. Watch your weight if your BMI is between 25 and 27. The higher your BMI goes above 25, the greater is your risk of having health problems. Discuss your BMI with your doctor.

If you have a healthy weight but carry fat around your stomach, aim to lose that excess fat.

If your BMI is over 25, aim to reduce it. With your doctor, decide on a realistic weight loss goal.

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT

If you have ever tried dieting, you know how difficult it can be. Like many people, you may have been on one diet after another. You may have lost weight, then gained it back. Most diets don't work because they don't focus on permanent changes in how we eat and how active we are. They don't look at the habits that made us gain weight in the first place.

To control your weight, change how you eat and become more active. The best way to make these changes is one step at a time.

FIVE WAYS TO CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT

*If you have **any** questions about this information, ask your doctor.*

I. BE MORE ACTIVE - EVERY DAY

Being active is essential for losing weight and keeping it off.

It burns calories so they won't be stored as fat.

It helps you lose the fat *and* tone up your muscles.

It helps to decrease your appetite. When you become more active, you may be *less* hungry rather than more.

It can speed up your metabolism so that your body will use more calories even while you're resting.

- Before you start an activity program, talk with your doctor about which activities are best for you.
- Plan to be active 30 minutes or more every day. Activities should be moderate in intensity. These activities make you breathe faster than normal, like when you're walking quickly or dancing.
But don't overdo it. Make sure that you can still talk easily.
- You don't have to do 30 minutes of activity all at once. You can work up to this by doing small amounts several times a day. Try to do at least 10 minutes of activity each time. But remember, the farther you walk or cycle, the more calories and fat you will burn.
- Choose activities that you enjoy and that are right for you. The best ones are those that use the large muscles, especially those in the legs.

When these muscles are working, they require more oxygen, so the heart has to beat faster.

This way your heart becomes a stronger, more efficient pump.

Here is a sample of types of activities that are best: fast walking, biking, running, swimming, and aerobics.

These activities are great, but they are not the only way to be more active. Enjoy physical activities as part of your daily routine.

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Walk or ride your bike, instead of taking the car.
- Park your car or get off the bus a few blocks early, and walk the rest of the way.
- Cut the grass or rake the leaves.
- Go dancing.
- Play ball with your kids.
- Vacuum the house or sweep the patio more often.
- Walk around the block on your breaks at work.



2. CHANGE HOW YOU EAT

You won't need to deprive yourself or go hungry when you change how you eat. Healthy eating can look and taste good. Add colour to your plate with vegetables and fruit such as raw carrots, green peppers, and slices of apple. Add flavour with herbs and spices instead of with fat.

PLAN YOUR MEALS AROUND HIGH-FIBRE FOODS

You'll feel less hungry if you plan your meals around high-fibre foods. Eat more vegetables, fruit, legumes and whole grains. Choose foods that have been processed as little as possible.

According to Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating, we need:

- ✗ 5 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruit per day, and
- ✗ 5 to 12 servings of grains (oats, barley, brown rice, buckwheat, whole wheat) per day.

For the fruit and vegetable servings, you should have both fruit and vegetables. Have 5 or more servings of vegetables a day. Eat a variety of vegetables but limit starchy vegetables like potatoes. Have 2-3 servings of fruit a day. Try fruit for snacks.

Make sure that your grain servings are from whole grains, because these foods contain more fibre.

- Try oatmeal for breakfast.
- Try soup made with barley.
- Use brown rice instead of white.
- Eat bread made from whole rye or other whole grains.
- Try whole grain pasta.

Dried peas and beans are also very high in fibre and are an excellent substitute for meat. Use them in soups and chili. Add beans or chick peas to rice or salads.

Here are some examples of typical servings:

Vegetables and Fruit

- ✗ 1 cup of raw vegetables
- ✗ 1/2 cup of cooked vegetables
- ✗ 1/2 cup of orange juice
- ✗ 1 apple, banana, or orange
- ✗ 1/2 cup of berries

Grains and Legumes

- ✗ 1 slice of whole grain bread
- ✗ 1/2 cup of oatmeal
- ✗ 1/2 cup of cooked brown rice
- ✗ 1/2 cup of pasta
- ✗ 1/2 cup of legumes

CHANGE YOUR EATING HABITS

- Take time to eat. Eat three meals a day. When you fast or skip meals, you often eat more at your next meal or "nibble" until your next meal.
- Only eat at the table. Don't eat while you're doing other things, such as watching TV, because you may eat more than you need.
- Eat slowly. Take smaller bites, and chew thoroughly.
- Have soup, salad, or grapefruit at the start of a meal. It will fill you up and you won't feel like eating as much.
- Stop eating as soon as you start to feel full. Either remove the extra food or leave the table.
- Think about your eating habits. If you usually eat while watching TV, do something else, or eat something else (such as fruit, raw vegetables, and unbuttered airpopped popcorn), or drink a glass of water.
- Make a list of things that are fun and easy to do that don't involve eating. For example, go for a walk or bicycle ride, take a bath or a shower, get involved in a hobby, or call a friend.



3. CUT DOWN ON FAT

Everyone needs some fat in their diet, but most people eat too much fat.

An important part of healthy eating is to cut back on fat and to eat smaller portions of foods that contain fat. Fat is very high in calories; 1 gram of fat has 9 calories compared to 1 gram of sugar that has 4 calories.

CUT DOWN ON THE FAT YOU ADD TO YOUR FOOD

- Butter, margarine and oil all contain the same number of calories. Cut the amount of fat you add to your food **at least** in half. Either use half the amount, or eat it half as often. For example, use half as much butter on your bread or half as much oil in your salad dressing. Or, continue to eat the same amounts but only every second day.
- Ask for sauces and low-fat dressings on the side so you can add a small amount.
- Add herbs and spices to fresh vegetables instead of butter or margarine.

CUT DOWN ON FAT IN COOKING

- Don't fry or deep-fry your food.
- Broil or roast on a rack so the fat drains away. (Beware of casseroles and pan-cooked dishes that keep all the fat in the pan.)
- Skim fat off stews and soups. (This is easiest when they are chilled.)
- Cook your vegetables lightly: steam, pressure cook, bake, or microwave.

CUT BACK ON MEAT

- Cut back on your meat portions. One portion is only the size of a deck of cards.
- Don't make meat the centre of every meal. Centre your meals around high-fibre foods, especially vegetables.
- Try meat substitutes more often like lentils and pea beans.

CHOOSE LOW-FAT MEAT

- When you buy meat, buy leaner cuts: round steak, rump roast, sirloin tip, lean stewing beef, and pork tenderloin that are not heavily "marbled" with fat
meat with the fat outside so you can trim it off
hamburger that is extra lean or lean

CHOOSE CHICKEN AND FISH

- Most of a chicken's fat is in the skin. Take the skin off before you eat it.
- Choose fish unless it is breaded, fried, deep-fried, or served with a rich sauce.

CHOOSE NONFAT OR LOW-FAT DAIRY PRODUCTS

- Drink skim milk or 1% instead of whole milk or 2%.
- Cut down on regular cheese and cream cheese because they are very high in fat. One slice of hard cheese may have as much fat as two teaspoons of butter! Read the labels and look for cheese with 15% milk fat (15 % M.F.) or less, such as partially skimmed mozzarella.
- Use cottage cheese with 1% M.F. on the label and yogurt with less than 1% M.F. on the label.
- Try low-fat yogurt on baked potatoes instead of butter or margarine. You can also use it as a topping for a fresh fruit dessert.

BUY LOW-FAT FOODS

- Don't shop when you're hungry.
- Make a list of the ingredients you need for low-fat meals and "stick" to that list.
- Learn the layout of your supermarket, and avoid aisles with those tempting high-fat foods.
- Compare the fat content of products and choose the one that is lower in fat.
- Beware of claims on food labels such as "light" or "lite." They do not necessarily mean that food is lower in calories or fat. Foods may be light in texture or taste and not reduced in calories or fat at all.

AVOID HIGH-FAT DESSERTS AND SNACK FOODS

- Avoid store-bought baked goods such as donuts, sweet rolls, and brownies.
- Avoid snack foods such as chips, candy bars, and buttered popcorn.

4. CUT DOWN ON CALORIES

Since fat is very high in calories, cutting down on fat is a good way to cut down on calories.

Cutting down on sugar and other “empty” calories is also important.

In looking for empty calories to cut out, don't forget about alcohol. It is high in calories and can also be fattening.

5. KEEP A FOOD AND ACTIVITY RECORD

A Food and Activity Record is very useful if you are learning to control your weight. It gives you a picture of what, when, why, and how much you are eating. It also shows you how active you are. A Food and Activity Record will help you decide what changes you need to make to lose weight. You can discuss this with your doctor.

- Complete the Food and Activity Record in this pamphlet for at least three days; one of these days should be a Saturday or a Sunday. If you can, complete the record for one week.
- Complete the record right after you eat. Be honest with yourself. Include *everything* you eat.
- Don't make any changes in your food and activity habits when you're completing the record for the first time.
- Check your Food and Activity Record against recommendations for controlling your weight. You may already be doing some of the things you need to do.
- Ask your family and friends for support. Changes are easier with the support of others.
- Plan to lose weight slowly (so it will stay off). A realistic goal is less than 1 kilogram (2 pounds) per week (since some weeks you may not lose any weight and this is OK).
- If you have trouble losing weight, see a dietitian.
- You may want to complete the Food and Activity Record a month later to see how much you have improved.



FOOD AND ACTIVITY RECORD

Date: _____ Name: _____

Time	Food	Hungry 0=least to 5=most	Where You Eat and What You're Doing While Eating	Minutes Taken to Eat	Mood*	Type of Physical Activity	Minutes Spent on Physical Activity

***Mood** - describe with one word such as bored, sad, mad, happy, tired, worried, etc.

CONTROLLING THE OTHER FACTORS THAT CAN LEAD TO HEART DISEASE

Besides putting a strain on your heart, being overweight can raise your blood pressure and your blood cholesterol. It can also lead to diabetes. Along with smoking and being inactive, all these factors can lead to heart disease.

You can make a difference. The more risk factors you control, the lower your risk of heart disease. If you want to lower your risk of heart disease:

- Don't smoke.
- Control your blood pressure if it is high. Losing as little as 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds) can help lower high blood pressure. Check with your doctor.
- Ask your doctor if you need your blood cholesterol checked. Losing extra weight can improve your blood cholesterol.
- Be active every day.
- Ask your doctor if you need your blood glucose checked. Losing extra weight can lower your chance of having diabetes, and it can help control diabetes if you have it.

Your doctor may suggest other pamphlets on each of these topics. Ask for the ones that interest you.

There are resources in your community to help you control your weight and other risk factors for heart disease. For more information, contact the organizations below (at no charge):

- Dietitians of Canada: www.dietitians.ca
- Heart and Stroke Foundation: 1-888-HSF-INFO (473-4636) or www.hsf.ca
- HUGS International: 1-800-565-4847 or www.hugs.com
- TOPS: 1-800-932-8677 or www.tops.org
- Weight Watchers: 1-800-651-6000 or www.weight-watchers.com

Other useful resources:

- "Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating" is available from Health Canada (check the "blue pages" of your phone book) or www.hc-sc.ca/nutrition
- Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living: 1-888-334-9769 or www.paguide.com

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