

Tips for Weight Loss

1. Track, track, TRACK!!!!

-If it goes in your mouth, it needs to be logged.

-Use a verified database of foods for tracking→ even the best nutritionally-educated people tend to **MARKEDLY** underestimate how many calories they are actually eating!!!

-Livestrong.com (MyPlate), or MyPlate app

-MyFitnessPal app

-Weight Watchers Points system (will require membership)

2. Aim for _____ kcal/ day to start out

3. The 80/20 Rule

-Multiple studies have shown that weight loss is 80% diet, 20% exercise

4. Exercise goals: 225 min of exercise a week (almost 4 hours)

→ This is the recommendation of the Mayo clinic, Harvard, and the CDC

→ 150 min of moderate activity, 75 min of vigorous exercise, or combination of both

→ If this is too much health-wise or schedule-wise, then start with a consistent 30 min a day and work up to the goal in 15 minute increments over a few months.

→ Needs to be a variety of both cardio exercise AND weight/ resistance training

→ Muscle burns calories 6 times faster than fat!!!

→ If you are financially able, and can't seem to get motivated on your OWN, consider a personal trainer at a gym/ exercise facility

5. Accountability is HUGE

→ Accountability to others is one of the biggest factors in staying on track!!!

→ Weigh yourself on a regular basis on the same scale. Many studies show that those who **WEIGH THEMSELVES** regularly are more successful at their weight loss goals than those who go by clothes-fit or don't weigh regularly. Whether this is every day or every week, make it a routine.

→ Consider an online group/ message board for additional support

→ Commit to a friend/ relative and report in with them about your progress on a regular basis (i.e., "every Tuesday I will send you an email with my progress/ my calories/ my exercise log/ etc...")

→ Consider exercising with a friend/ group/ class

→ Weigh-ins/ reporting to your doctor at scheduled intervals

→ Accountability apps like DietBet and StickK.com

→ One 2008 reputable study showed those in which money was at stake lost more weight than those who did not put some cash on the line

6. Focus on eating a diet full of lower-fat proteins, lots of vegetables and fruits
→ “If it doesn’t come from the ground, or have a MOTHER, we probably shouldn’t be EATING IT!”-- Michael Pollan (paraphrased), author of Food Rules: An Eater’s Manual
→ Avoidance of highly processed foods, and of simple sugars

7. Cut out the soda/pop
→ Even DIET colas are not good, and multiple studies show that consumption of diet colas is a very strong predictor of obesity persistence.
→ Decrease reliance on artificial sweeteners
→ If you need the caffeine typically provided by the soda/pop, consider green tea instead-- it has been shown in several studies to increase weight loss.

8. SHOP the PERIMETER
→ ... of the grocery store (where the natural foods, meats, fish, and produce are)
→ avoid the MIDDLE (where the highly processed/ preservative/ packaged foods are)

9. PORTION CONTROL
→ Losing weight doesn’t mean you can’t eat the foods you like... you just have to eat smaller/ reasonable portions of most foods
→ actually MEASURE your portions, not just eyeball/ estimate
→ when out to eat, consider immediately asking for half your meal to be packaged to go

10. Baby Steps...
→ Break up your total amount of desired weight loss into achievable small goals, so the task is not overwhelming.
→ a good starting point is the first 5-10 pounds

11. Drink your WATER
→ Water itself doesn’t make you lose weight. However, staying hydrated with water means that 1) you won’t be drinking something else that’s BAD for you (like high calorie beverages or diet cola), and 2) You may be full enough from the water to avoid a false cue to eat when you don’t really need it.
→ Most people don’t realize that they are somewhat dehydrated, and adequate hydration plays a big role in keeping your metabolism running smoothly. Even being a few percent dehydrated can have a big effect on metabolism.
→ aim for about 64 oz of water a day (a half gallon)

12. Develop a “food routine”
→ Multiple studies show that people successful at KEEPING weight off actually eat a pretty persistent routine of foods, the same ones over and over.
→ This isn’t great news for those of us who are “foodies” and like a high variety of foods, but we can take a tip from them and try to come up with an acceptable rotation of healthy foods we love.

16. It’s not all about your hormones. Really.
→ Hormone balance can contribute to metabolic changes, but except in rare disorders, hormones cannot account for all of the weight gain. In fact, losing weight can help BALANCE your hormones and make you feel better!

→ In perimenopausal and postmenopausal patients, hormone treatment can sometimes help, but is really a small part of a much bigger picture.

13. Keep a journal

→...to identify triggers and patterns that lead you to eat WELL or NOT WELL.

→ Once you are armed with the knowledge, you can make better choices.

14. Plateaus are going to happen

→ If you hit a plateau that doesn't seem to budge after a few weeks, try shaking up your diet with a different approach, or try varying your exercise (try something different than what has become your routine)

15. Be PATIENT

→ It took a long time to become this weight, and it will take time to take it off.

→ Aim/ expect for no more than 1-2 pounds a week.

16. Manage your stress

→ If you are under persistent physical or emotional stress, our bodies make more cortisol, or stress hormone. In most cases, the cortisol is still in the normal range, but it may be affecting your metabolism to some degree. In simplified terms, this hormone "tricks" the brain into thinking the body is in danger, and needs to slow the metabolism and hang on to every calorie.

→ Consider yoga, meditation, self-hypnosis, getting more sleep, and other stress-reduction techniques (that don't involve food!)

17. Watch sodium intake

→ Sodium/ salt does not have calories, and it does not create or burn fat. It CAN, however, increase your amount of water weight, and contribute to puffiness/ swelling and raise blood pressure in some patients.

18. Lots of little changes add up to big results

→ You can't change everything all at once. Focus on a few small changes, and over time these start to add up! For example, the combination of portion control, drinking less colas, and moving just a little more (taking the stairs and parking further away, and 3 days of mild-moderate exercise a week) might add up to several pounds in 1 month!

→ Implement more changes as you start to see results

19. No one is perfect, we all slip up sometimes

→ Just because you make one mistake, don't throw in the towel

→ Don't let one slip-up turn into a landslide

→ Acknowledge the slip, try to make it useful by figuring out what triggered it, and get right back on the wagon. Right then.

-Avoid the "I'll start again tomorrow" mentality, throwing in the towel for the whole day and making the "mistake" a much bigger disaster!

Daily Checklist:

_____ I logged EVERYTHING that went into my mouth (_____ kcal today)

_____ I exercised for _____ today

_____ I drank my water (_____ oz)

_____ I was accountable to someone for my progress today

_____ I measured my portions

_____ I managed my stress level

_____ I got enough sleep