



Proven Weight Loss Methods

WHAT CAN WEIGHT LOSS DO FOR YOU?

Losing weight can improve your health in a number of ways. It can lower your risk for type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease. Losing weight can also help you feel better.

There are proven ways to lose weight. You can find what works for you. Research has proven that **changing eating habits** and **increasing physical activity (exercising)** help people lose weight. Other strategies also can help. For example, you might find that rewarding yourself for exercising every day helps keep you motivated. Choose a non-food reward.

DID YOU KNOW?

Once you start eating, it takes 20 minutes for digestive hormones to tell your brain that you are full. For many people, eating slowly can help them eat less and still feel full.

THE DIABETES PREVENTION PROGRAM (DPP)

In this large study, researchers looked at what worked best for preventing type 2 diabetes. All of the people in the study were overweight. Results showed that people who lost a modest amount of weight through diet and exercise sharply lowered their risk for developing type 2 diabetes.

WHAT CHANGES IN EATING HABITS CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT?

Most people need to change **what** they eat and **how much** they eat in order to lose weight. Your health care provider can help you decide how to change your eating habits. Choices include

- Eating fewer calories than usual. This strategy helped people in the DPP study lose weight.
- Eating a low-carbohydrate diet.
- Eating less fat. People in the DPP study cut down on fat.
- Choosing more foods that aren't high in calories and low in nutrients. Eating foods such as non-starchy vegetables, some fruits, and broth soups help you feel full, even though you're eating fewer calories.
- Using meal replacements, such as shakes or bars. They control serving sizes, eliminate decisions about food choices, and are easy to keep on hand.

Other healthy diets, such as the low-sodium DASH diet, also can help. The DASH diet is designed to lower blood pressure but you can also use it to lose weight. It includes fruits, vegetables, whole grain foods, low-fat or non-fat dairy foods, nuts, seeds, and lean meats, poultry, and fish.

WHAT KINDS OF EXERCISE CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT?

In general, many kinds of exercise will help you lose weight, especially when you exercise daily or most days of the week. Walking briskly (for about 30 minutes a day) is a good way to exercise. To help you stick with your plan, you should choose a type of exercise you enjoy. People in the DPP study exercised a total of 150 minutes each week, or about 20 minutes each day.

However, exercise alone (without limiting calories) usually isn't enough to cause weight loss. But exercise plays an important part in helping people who have lost weight keep that weight off.

WHAT OTHER STRATEGIES CAN HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT?

These actions also help:

- Weighing yourself every day
- Keeping daily food records of everything you eat and drink
- Eating breakfast every day
- Keeping the same eating patterns weekdays and weekends

Many people find that having support from other people helps them lose weight. You can get support by attending weekly group meetings or from weekly visits with a health care provider, such as a registered dietitian.

CAN MEDICINES HELP WITH WEIGHT LOSS?

Studies show that anti-obesity medicines can help people lose more weight when combined with lifestyle changes (diet, exercise, and behavior change) than they can with lifestyle changes alone.

IS WEIGHT LOSS HARDER FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES?

Some studies show that weight loss is harder for people who have diabetes than for people who don't. But you can still lose weight, even if you have diabetes.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU WANT TO LOSE WEIGHT?

Tell your doctor, dietitian, or diabetes educator that you'd like to lose weight. Work with your provider to make a plan. Make sure you've included a way to change what you eat **and** a way to exercise. To get ready, choose a date to start. Decide how you'll reward yourself for doing what you've said you'll do.

Most importantly, focus on what you **can** control. You can control what you eat and whether you go for a walk. But you can't control how fast you lose weight. If you find that your plan isn't working, it doesn't mean you've failed. Instead, it means you should change your plan. Find a plan that works for you.

Questions to ask your doctor

- What is a healthy weight for me?
- Can you recommend a diet plan for me?
- Should I see a registered dietitian?
- Should I see a diabetes educator?
- What kind of exercise is best for me?
- How long will it take to reach my weight goal?

RESOURCES

- Find-an-Endocrinologist: www.hormone.org or call 1-800-HORMONE (1-800-467-6663)
- Find a registered dietitian (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics): www.eatright.org/programs/rdfinder
- Find a diabetes educator (American Association of Diabetes Educators): www.diabeteseducator.org/DiabetesEducation/Find.html
- Hormone Health Network information about hormones and obesity: www.hormone.org/Other/upload/hormones-and-obesity-bilingual-042010.pdf
- Mayo Clinic: www.mayoclinic.com/health/weight-loss/NU00616
- National Institutes of Health:
 - Weight-control Information Network: www.win.niddk.nih.gov or call (toll-free) 1-877-946-4627
 - Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP): diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/preventionprogram
 - DASH Diet: www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/hbp/dash/new_dash.pdf

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The Hormone Health Network offers free, online resources based on the most advanced clinical and scientific knowledge from The Endocrine Society (www.endo-society.org). The Network's goal is to move patients from educated to engaged, from informed to active partners in their health care. This fact sheet is also available in Spanish at www.hormone.org/Spanish.

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www.hormone.org