

Weight-Loss Basics: Counting Calories

Of all the diet strategies out there, it still comes down to the calorie. Fad diets may promise you that counting carbohydrates or eating a mountain of grapefruit is key to weight loss, but when it comes to weight control, it's calories that count.

Calories: Fuel for Your Body

Calories are the energy in food. Your body has a constant demand for energy and uses the calories from food to keep you functioning. Energy from calories fuels your every action, much as gasoline powers your car.

Carbohydrates, fats and proteins are the types of nutrients that contain calories and thus are the main energy sources for your body. The amount of energy in each varies: Proteins and carbohydrates have about **4** calories a gram, and fats have about **9** calories a gram. Alcohol also is a source of calories, providing about **7** calories a gram. Regardless of where they come from, calories you eat are either converted to physical energy or stored within your body as fat. Unless you use these stored calories — either by reducing calorie intake so that your body must draw on reserves for energy, or by increasing physical activity so that you burn more calories — these calories will remain within your body as fat.



Tipping the Scale: Cutting Calories

Your weight is a balancing act, but the equation is simple: If you eat more calories than you burn, you gain weight.

Because 3,500 calories equals about 1 pound of fat, you need to burn 3,500 calories more than you take in to lose 1 pound. So if you cut 500 calories from your typical diet each day, you'd lose approximately 1 pound a week (500 calories x 7 days = 3,500 calories).

Cutting calories doesn't have to be difficult. In fact, it might be as simple as forgoing one extra item a day, swapping foods or trimming serving sizes. The number of calories you save is likely to translate into pounds lost.

Cut Out High-Calorie Foods

Skipping one or two high-calorie items that you might have otherwise eaten is a good place to start when cutting calories. For example, you could skip your morning latte or the bowl of ice cream you always have after dinner. Think about what you eat and drink each day and identify items you could cut out.

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Here are examples of high-calorie foods and beverages and the possible calorie savings:

Food	Calories
Starbucks Grande (16 ounces) caffe latte	190
1 bottle (16 ounces) lemon-lime soda	202
1 slice thick-crust pepperoni pizza (1/8 of a 12-inch fast-food pizza)	286
1 large glazed doughnut	299
4-inch cinnamon-raisin bagel with 2 tablespoons cream cheese	344
1 snack bag (3 ounces) nacho-flavored tortilla chips	424
2 cups chocolate ice cream	570

Sources: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference, 2007; www.starbucks.com, 2007. Actual calories may vary by brand.

Choose Lower Calorie Foods

Replace foods that are high in calories with ones that are lower in calories. For example, drink fat-free milk instead of whole milk and sparkling water or diet soda instead of regular soft drinks. Have an extra serving of vegetables at dinner instead of an extra serving of meat. Or snack on sliced fresh fruit instead of chips. You might find that these substitutions are easy to make and the number of saved calories quickly adds up.



Reduce Your Portion Sizes

The sizes of your portions affect how many calories you're getting: Twice the amount of food means twice the number of calories. To reduce how much food you eat, and therefore how many calories you consume, try these tips:

- **Serve Smaller Portions.** At the beginning of a meal, take slightly less than what you think you'll eat. You can always have seconds, if necessary.
- **See What You Eat.** Eating directly from a container gives you no sense of how much you're eating. Seeing food on a plate or in a bowl keeps you aware of how much you're eating. Consider measuring your food with a measuring cup or scale to see how much you are actually eating.
- **Check Food Labels.** Be sure to check food labels for the serving size and number of calories per serving. You may find that the small bag of chips you eat with lunch every day, for example, is two servings, doubling the calories listed on the label.

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- **Don't Feel Obligated to Clean Your Plate.** Stop eating as soon as you feel full. Those extra bites of food that you're trying not to waste add unneeded calories.

The Healthy-Weight Equation

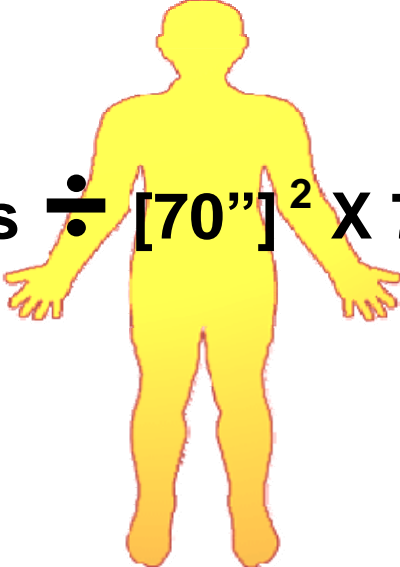
Managing your calorie intake is essential to weight control. Still, it's only part of the weight-loss and maintenance equation. For a successful — and sustainable — weight management plan, you need to increase your physical activity while decreasing the calories you take in. It's this combination of regular activity and healthy eating that will help you achieve a healthy weight.



Body Mass Index Discussion

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure of body fat based on height and weight that applies to both **adult** men and women. The BMI is used to assess weight relative to height and is calculated by dividing the body weight in kilograms by the height in meters squared ($\text{weight (kg)} / [\text{height (m)}]^2$). To calculate BMI using pound and inches divide weight in pounds (lbs) by height in inches (in) squared and multiply by a conversion factor of 703 ($\text{weight (lb)} / [\text{height (in)}]^2 \times 703$). Please see attached Appendix A for the complete BMI tables. You can also go to National Institutes of Health website (specifically <http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi>) to enter your height and weight and receive your BMI.

Example below:


$$195 \text{ Pounds} \div [70'']^2 \times 703 = 28 \text{ BMI}$$

Classification by BMI Categories:

Underweight = < 18.5
Normal weight = 18.5 – 24.9
Overweight = 25 – 29.9
Obesity = BMI of 30 or greater

BMI is a reliable indicator of total body fat, which is related to the risk of disease and death. Doctors often use BMI to determine if a person is underweight, at a healthy weight or is overweight. The score is valid for both men and women but it **does have some limits**. The **limits** are:

- It may **overestimate** body fat in athletes and others who have a muscular build.
- It may **underestimate** body fat in older persons and others who have lost muscle mass.
- You could have a normal BMI and have poor nutrition.
- It's important to talk to your doctor about weight-related health risks.

Body Mass Index Table

BMI (kg/m ²)	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	35	40 & Above
Height (inches)	Normal						Overweight					Obese		Extremely Obese
	Weight (pounds)													
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	167	191
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	173	198
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	179	204
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	185	211
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	191	218
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	197	225
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	204	232
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	210	240
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	216	247
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	223	255
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	230	262
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	236	270
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	207	243	278
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	250	286
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	258	294
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	265	302
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	272	311
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	279	319
76	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	287	328

Losing Weight Safely



If You're Overweight, Slim Down for Better Health – Overweight people have an increased risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, and other illnesses. Losing weight reduces the risk. This brochure tells you how to lose weight safely.

Ask Your Doctor About Sensible Goals – Your doctor or other health worker can help you set sensible goals based on a proper weight for your height, build and age. Men and very active women may need up to 2,500 calories daily. Other women

and inactive men need only about 2,000 calories daily. A safe plan is to eat 300 to 500 fewer calories a day to lose 1 to 2 pounds a week.

Exercise 30 Minutes – Do at least 30 minutes of exercise, like brisk walking, most days of the week. The idea is to use up more calories than you eat. You need to use up the day's calories and some of the calories stored in your body fat.

Eat Less Fat and Sugar – This will help you cut calories. Fried foods and fatty desserts can quickly use up a day's calories. And these foods may not provide the other nutrients you need. Make sure your other foods that day are low in fat and calories.

Eat a Wide Variety Of Foods – Variety in the diet helps you get all the vitamins and other nutrients you need.

Watch Out for Promises of Quick And Easy Weight Loss – Fad diets aren't good because they often call for too much or too little of one type of food. As a result, you may not get important nutrients you need daily. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably isn't true.

What about Diet Pills? – Diet pills you buy without a prescription won't make a big difference in how much you lose each week or how long you keep the weight off. If you do use them, read the label carefully. Because of possible side effects, like high blood pressure, never take more than the listed dose. Also, be careful about taking cough or cold medicines with diet pills you buy without a prescription. These medicines may contain the same drug used in diet pills, or a similar drug with the same effects. If you take both products together, you may get too much of the same type of drug. This can hurt you. Before taking a cough or cold medicine while using diet pills, ask your pharmacist if it's OK. Prescription diet pills may help some people. If you use them, follow the doctor's directions carefully.



Losing Weight Safely

Before Signing Up for a Weight-Loss Program, ask Questions – Does the Company:

- Explain possible health risks from weight loss?
- Explain all costs?
- Include weight control over a long time?
- Have proof of success, not just praise by other people?
- Give a clear, truthful statement of how you're going to lose weight, including how much and how fast?
- Teach how to eat healthfully and exercise more?

8 Sneaky Things That Could Be Making You Fat

Cues in Your Environment can Trigger Overeating, Experts say.

You're stuffed after a big restaurant dinner, but then the dessert cart rolls around, and you just *have* to order that gorgeous chocolate mousse. Or you're munching from a big bag of chips while checking emails, and when you look up, the bag is empty. Sound familiar?

Environmental Factors – like package size, portion size, the variety of food you're served, and the size of your plate -- can influence your eating more than you realize, experts say. Indeed, if we always ate only when we were really hungry and stopped when we were full, there would be no obesity epidemic.



The key, experts say, is to become more aware of these overeating triggers, which can help you resist the temptations and avoid weight gain.

"Once you become aware of the environmental cues that can sabotage your diet, you can react accordingly and make smart decisions," says Susan Moores, RD, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

Simple things such as bringing tempting snacks into your house, moving the candy jar at work out of sight, making fruits and vegetables more visible in your refrigerator, and eating more deliberately and slowly, can cut down on overeating and help you lose weight, Moores says.

Here are eight factors that can trigger overeating and weight gain:

1. Sights, Sounds, and Smells – Overeating can be triggered by the alluring smell of bacon cooking, the sound of popcorn popping, advertisements for junk food, and so on. "You are influenced by your surroundings, and our studies show these kinds of cues result in eating more food," says Cornell University researcher Brian Wansink, PhD, author of *Mindful Eating*.

2. Distracted Eating – "Eating amnesia" is the act of unknowingly putting hand to mouth, usually from a big bag or bowl while sitting in front of the television, reading a book, checking emails, or during happy hour. Multi-tasking can lead to overeating because you're not paying attention to what you are eating. When you eat more mindfully, you really taste the food -- and are more likely to feel satisfied sooner. "Food should touch more of your senses to be satisfying, instead of just filling in the hole," Moores says.

3. Food, Food Everywhere – Everywhere you turn, there are opportunities to eat - - at drive-through restaurants, vending machines, even gas stations. And when food is in front of us, we tend to eat more of it, experts say.

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Wansink and colleagues found that when candy was easily accessible on workers' desks, they ate an average of nine pieces a day, and didn't realize how many they ate. But when the candy was kept in their desk drawers, they ate about six pieces per day. And when they had to get up from their desks to reach the candy six feet away, they only ate four pieces.

Curb your instinct to overeat sweets and snacks by moving them out of sight -- and putting more healthful foods into plain view. Resist the urge to splurge on unhealthy foods by carrying your own healthy snacks.

4. Food that's Fast, Convenient, and Inexpensive –



Fast-food restaurants on every corner offering inexpensive food also encourage us to eat more and more often. Combo meal deals sound like a bargain, but they are loaded with fat, sodium, and calories.

Also, "when you eat lots of fast food, it all starts to taste the same, and you can become satisfied with a small range of flavors and sometimes it is hard to get enough," says Moores.

To help yourself resist the temptation, work on developing a taste for the subtle, natural flavors of food, suggests Moores.

Dietitians recommend limiting visits to fast-food restaurants to once a week. And, they say, choose the healthier menu options -- like salads and grilled chicken sandwiches -- even if they cost a little more.

5. Portion Distortion – Our idea of a normal portion has become skewed, in part because so many restaurants serve oversized portions. "Giant portions seem to have evolved into the norm, and many people have trouble understand how much they should eat," Moores says.

To understand what a portion should look like, pull out the measuring cups and see how your portions stack up against the standards from the U.S. government's mypyramid.com web site.

Another answer to the portion dilemma is to eat more foods that are less calorically dense. These are foods that contain lots of water and fiber, but not many calories -- like fruits, vegetables, and broth-based soups. Researcher Barbara Rolls, PhD, and colleagues at Penn State University found that it's possible to reduce calories without increasing hunger by eating more of these types of foods.

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Mindful eating can help here, too. "Eat slowly, taste the food and become more in touch with what you are eating and how it tastes so you can enjoy it more and start to appreciate satisfaction with smaller portions," Moores says.

6. Giant-Size Packages – You'll find plenty of bargains on mega-sized packages at super-discount stores like Costco or Sam's. But unfortunately, experts say, these giant containers can affect us on an unconscious level and cause us to eat more.

Researchers have found that when you eat from a large container, you are likely to consume 25% to 50% more than you would from a smaller package - especially when you're eating snacks and sweets.

"First, try to get out of the habit of always eating something while you are sitting, relaxing, or watching television," says Tara Gidus, MS, RD. "Try a cup of tea, glass of water, or chew a piece of sugarless gum. If you want a snack, portion it out of the bag or container or buy smaller packages like the 100-calorie snack packs."

7. Not-So-Dainty Dishware – Researchers have found that we tend to eat more when we're served from larger containers. Wansink and colleagues found that when students were given food in larger bowls, they served themselves 53% more and consumed 56% more than those who used smaller bowls.

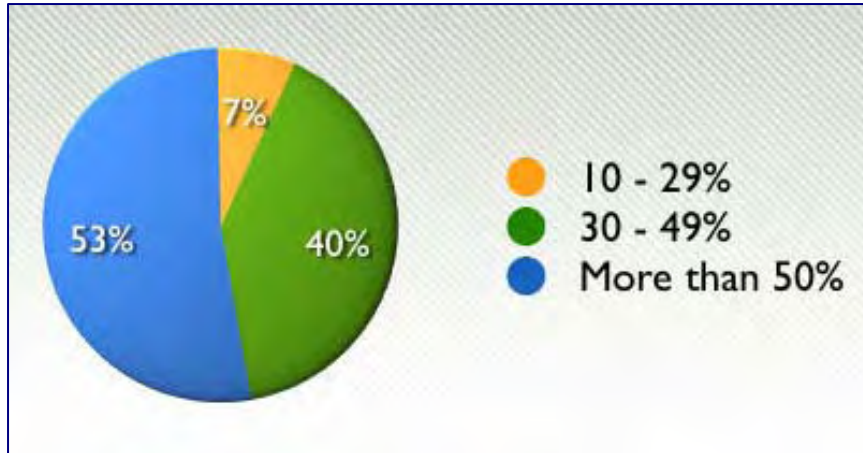
When you use smaller bowls, plates, and cups, you won't feel deprived because the food will look plentiful, Wansink says. Daintier dishware and smaller utensils can also help slow your eating.

8. Too Much Variety – A buffet restaurant can be a dieter's nightmare. Too many choices encourages having a taste (or more) of everything, and before you know it, your plate runneth over. "Too much variety on your plate at one meal can often mean too much food overall," says Connie Diekman, MEd, RD, director of nutrition at Washington University and president of the American Dietetic Association.



So use variety to help meet your nutritional needs, but concentrate on the right foods. Eating a variety of foods is great, as long as the foods are low in calories and rich in nutrients -- like fruits, beans, vegetables, broth soups, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.

America's Obesity Problem: What Are We Doing Right and Wrong?



With evidence of continued problems with obesity in this country, and latest estimates that more than half of American adults are overweight, a recent national survey has taken a look at why weight is such a problem.

Although the answer is complex, there is some evidence of what Americans are doing right — and wrong — regarding weight control, according to the Calorie Control Council, which conducted the survey.

What we're doing Right

We're NOT dieting. Americans continue to understand that traditional dieting (deprivation, short-term solutions) spells failure, the survey found. Instead, it takes permanent lifestyle changes to take and keep weight off. Only 27 percent of American adults (54 million people) are currently dieting. And, dieters are more likely to be practicing sensible dieting behaviors, Calorie Control Council found — for example, 95 percent are cutting down on high-fat foods and beverages, compared with 81 percent in 1986.



We're eating more healthfully — 71 percent of American adults said they are eating a healthier diet today than they were three years ago.

We're choosing low-calorie and reduced-fat foods and beverages. An overwhelming 90 percent of consumers eat or drink lighter versions of their favorite foods on a regular basis. And, 70 percent of light product consumers are NOT on a diet, the survey found.

We're paying attention to nutrition labels. A sizable majority (62 percent) said they always try to check nutrition labels to determine the fat content in foods and beverages they buy. In addition, 55 percent said they always try to check for calories.

America's Obesity Problem: What Are We Doing Right and Wrong?



What We're doing Wrong

We're not exercising enough. Although 39 percent of adults said they exercise at least five times a week, that still leaves almost two-thirds of American adults who get inadequate exercise, Calorie Control Council said. Regular exercise is the way to winning the weight war — and it doesn't have to be exhausting. The 1996 U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that adults get at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day, even if it is in short bouts, such as walking stairs, doing housework or playing actively with children.

We're still eating too much fat. The most recent government data indicate that Americans still get, on average, 34 percent of their daily calories from fat. Most nutritionists recommend limiting fat intake to 30 percent. The good news is, a decade ago the average American got 40 percent of calories from fat, Calorie Control Council noted.

We're eating too much, period. Our calorie intake keeps going up — currently at more than 2,000 calories a day compared with 1,800 in the 1970s — and health experts agree that excess calories from any source will contribute to obesity, and that "calories still count."

We're faced with powerful obstacles to weight loss. The survey asked people who said they needed to lose weight why they hadn't been successful maintaining their desired weight. The No. 1 answer: "don't exercise enough." This reason was followed by "snack too much," "eat too many high-fat foods," "too often binge on favorite foods," "often overeat at meal-times" and "often eat for emotional reasons."