

# Which weigh?

A ROAD MAP TO A  
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FOR  
YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



**PUBLISHED BY**

THE  
**WOMEN'S FUND**  
*for Health Education and Resiliency*

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FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY**

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# Preface

## A WORD FROM THE WOMEN'S FUND

Since 1979, The Women's Fund for Health Education and Research has funded medical research and provided health education for women. Our educational programs and health publications have reached hundreds of thousands of women and girls in the Houston area with free preventive health information in English and Spanish.

In 2007, we turned our attention to the growing concern over obesity in families. The Women's Fund decided that the key to changing this trend was to educate the members of the household about making healthy choices in food and activities for the family.

With this thought in mind, we decided to provide a free guide that would help women make healthy decisions in shopping, food preparation, and physical exercise for the entire family. This guide is written in a simple, easy-to-follow, step-by-step manner. It is designed to be an accurate and helpful resource for understanding why and how adults and children gain weight and for making good choices that will allow you and your family members to achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

We hope that mothers, fathers and the whole family will use this book as a guide when they begin to look at their current eating habits and weight concerns. Our goal is to encourage families to think about their current lifestyle and begin to make decisions that will lead to a healthier, happier, more active family.

# Acknowledgments

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# Introduction

## Which “weigh”?

Maintaining a healthy weight is a huge challenge today.

Busy lives, little time to cook, and the lure of fast food meals can derail even the best of intentions. Add stress, fatigue, and lack of exercise to the mix and you have a recipe for weight gain and the health problems that follow.

The good news is that you *can* overcome these and other obstacles to achieving a healthy weight. It doesn't matter if you have tried and failed more times than you can count. It doesn't matter if your budget is tight or your family is less than enthusiastic about making changes. **You can do it – for yourself and for them.**

Making healthy, lasting changes is what this book is all about. It doesn't promise to get you ready for bikini season or your high school reunion. It doesn't promise that you will lose 10 pounds in two weeks.

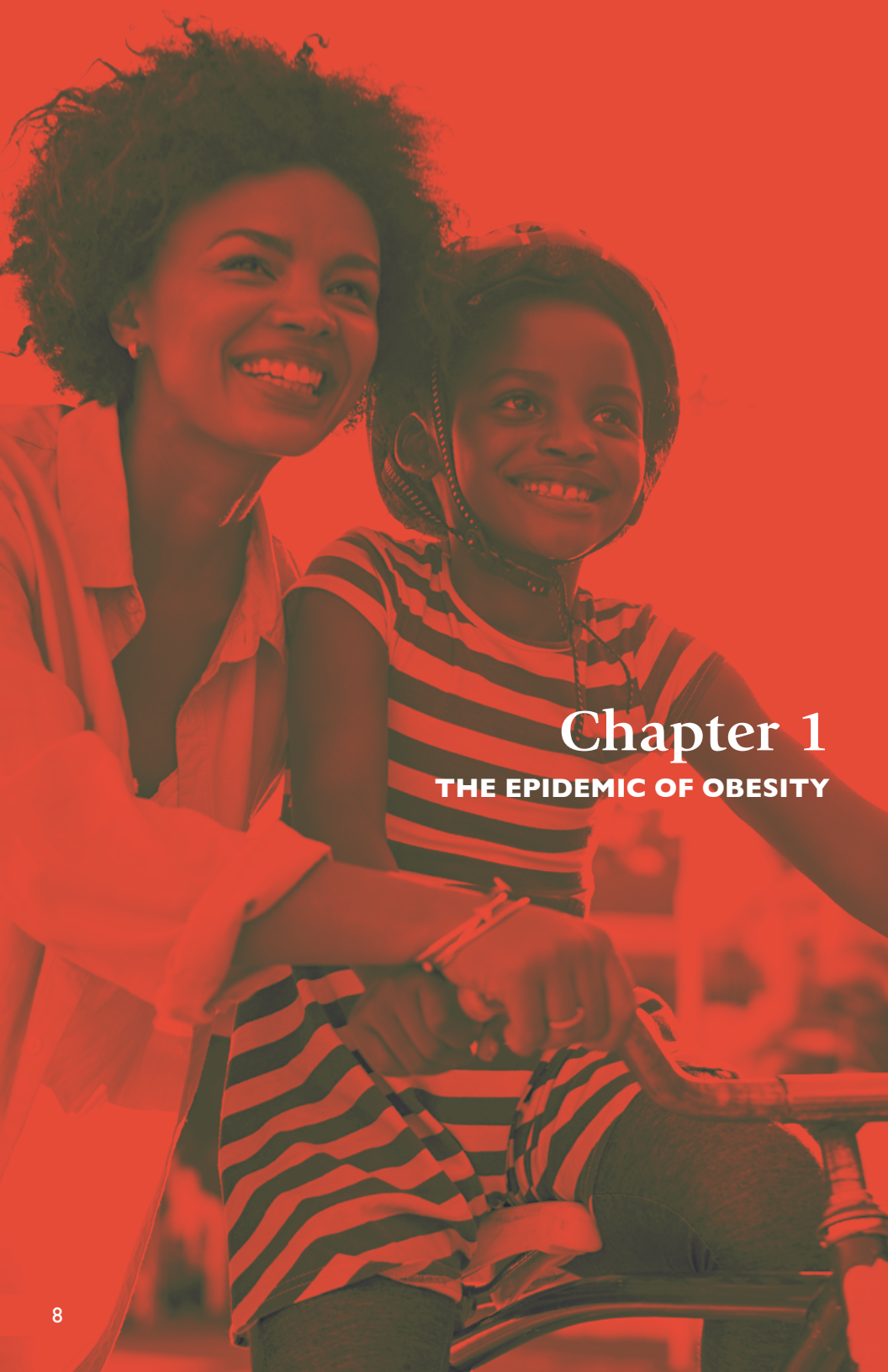
When you think about it, a relationship with food and lasting commitment to an active lifestyle are two of the most important gifts you can give yourself and your family. Learning some basic cooking and shopping strategies are also important skills to learn to save money and improve health.



What this book does offer is a new way of living that will help you gradually lose weight and keep it off, while improving your overall health. As importantly, this book will guide you in helping your children avoid or overcome obesity and establish lifelong family patterns of being physically active.







# Chapter 1

## THE EPIDEMIC OF OBESITY

**If** you are overweight, you are definitely not alone. Weight problems are epidemic in the U.S., and the number of overweight or obese people continues to climb. In 1960, less than half of the U.S. population was overweight. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, over 70% of adults are overweight or obese (2014). The prevalence of obesity was higher among women than among men overall and higher among non-Hispanic black and Hispanic adults compared with other racial and Hispanic origin groups.

The outlook for children and adolescents is equally alarming. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) “Childhood obesity is a serious problem in the United States putting children and adolescents at risk for poor health. Obesity prevalence among children and adolescents is still too high.

For children and adolescents aged 2-19 years<sup>1</sup>:

- The prevalence of obesity was 18.5% and affected about 13.7 million children and adolescents.
- Obesity prevalence was 13.9% among 2- to 5-year-olds, 18.4% among 6- to 11-year-olds, and 20.6% among 12- to 19-year-olds. Childhood obesity is also more common among certain populations.”

Of all high income countries, the United States has the highest rates of overweight and obesity, with fully a third of the population obese – a rate projected to rise to around 50 percent by 2030.

## IS YOUR FAMILY AT RISK?

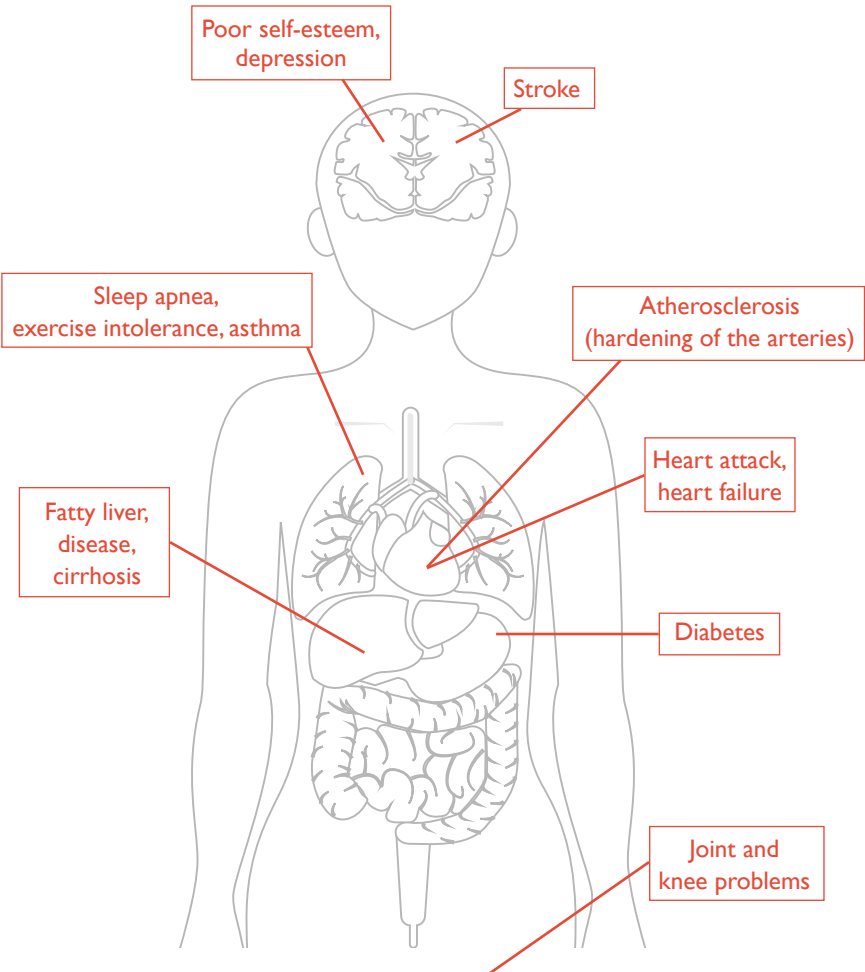
The following information will help you determine whether you or your family members need to slim down. Although there are several ways to assess a person’s weight status, the simplest and most widely used method is body mass index (BMI). BMI is a calculation based on the relationship between your height and weight.

To determine your BMI status, consult the BMI chart on pages 12-13. First, find your height in inches in the left-hand column. Then move across the row until you find your current approximate weight. The number at the top of that column is your BMI. Now find your BMI category below:

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>BMI</b>
Normal weight:	18–24
Overweight:	25–29
Obese:	30 or higher
Extreme obesity:	40 or higher

To determine your child or teen’s BMI, use the BMI calculator on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Most health experts agree that an adult’s risk of developing weight-related health problems begins to climb at a BMI of 25.

Measuring the size of your waist is another way to assess whether you need to lose weight. People whose excess fat is concentrated around their midsection are at risk of developing heart disease and other obesity-related health conditions. For women, a waist measurement of 35 inches or more indicates excess abdominal fat and elevated health risks; for men, it’s a waist measurement greater than 40 inches.



## TAKING A HARD LOOK AT HEALTH RISKS

Being overweight increases your risk of serious health conditions.

These include:

- Heart disease
- Stroke
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Elevated triglycerides
- Cancer
- Osteoarthritis
- Gallbladder disease
- Respiratory problems
- Fatty liver disease

Health risks rise as weight climbs, but even 10–20 excess pounds can increase a person's risk of dying early. People who gain 11–18 pounds above their healthy weight double their risk of developing Type 2 diabetes (poor blood sugar control), which itself leads to other health problems. Women who gain more than 20 pounds between early adulthood and midlife double their risk of developing breast cancer after menopause. Cancers of the colon, gallbladder, kidney, prostate, and uterine lining are also linked to excess weight. Overall, obesity is believed to contribute to 300,000 early deaths in the U.S. each year. (NIH)

Other conditions that can develop or worsen with weight gain include asthma, sleep apnea (disordered breathing during sleep), infertility, pregnancy complications, surgical risks, and depression. Being overweight also limits a person's mobility and endurance and places extreme stress on the joints. In fact, the risk of developing osteoarthritis of the knee increases 9–13% with every two pounds a person gains. Take a look at the drawing of the human body on page 10 to see how many different organs are affected when a person is overweight or obese.



BODY MASS INDEX (BMI) TABLE

BMI	Normal						Overweight					Obese						
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	
Height	Body Weight (pounds)																	
58	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	
59	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	
60	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	
61	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	
62	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	
63	107	113	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	
64	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	174	180	186	192	197	204	
65	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	
66	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	
67	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	
68	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	203	210	216	223	230	
69	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	209	216	223	230	236	
70	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	
71	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	
72	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	
73	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	
74	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	
75	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	

Source: Adapted from Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report.

Obesity-related health risks aren't limited to adults. Children who are overweight can develop type 2 diabetes, high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, asthma, sleep apnea, and a fatty liver. Overweight girls are more likely to experience early puberty, which can pose social challenges for a young girl and may increase her risk of developing breast cancer in adulthood. Overweight children also are far more likely to become obese adults than are normal-weight children. One study found that about 80% of children who were overweight between the ages of 10 and 15 were obese at age 25.

Obese				Extreme Obesity															
36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	
172	177	181	186	191	196	201	205	210	215	220	224	229	234	239	244	248	253	258	
<b>178</b>	183	188	193	198	203	208	212	217	222	227	232	237	242	247	252	257	262	267	
<b>184</b>	189	194	199	204	209	215	220	225	230	235	240	245	250	255	261	266	271	276	
190	195	201	206	211	217	222	227	232	238	243	248	254	259	264	269	275	280	285	
196	202	207	213	218	224	229	235	240	246	251	256	262	267	273	278	284	289	295	
203	208	214	220	225	231	237	242	248	254	259	265	270	278	282	287	293	299	304	
209	215	221	227	232	238	244	250	256	262	267	273	279	285	291	296	302	308	314	
216	222	228	234	240	246	252	258	264	270	276	282	288	294	300	306	312	318	324	
223	229	235	241	247	253	260	266	272	278	284	291	297	303	309	315	322	328	334	
230	236	242	249	255	261	268	274	280	287	293	299	306	<b>312</b>	319	325	331	338	344	
236	243	249	256	262	269	276	282	289	295	302	308	315	322	<b>328</b>	335	341	348	354	
243	250	257	263	270	277	284	291	297	304	311	318	324	331	<b>338</b>	345	351	358	365	
250	257	264	271	278	285	292	299	306	313	320	327	<b>334</b>	341	348	355	362	369	376	
257	265	272	279	286	293	301	308	315	322	329	338	343	351	358	365	372	379	386	
265	272	279	287	294	302	309	316	324	331	338	346	353	361	<b>368</b>	375	383	390	397	
272	280	288	294	302	310	318	325	333	340	348	355	363	371	<b>378</b>	386	393	401	408	
280	287	295	303	311	319	326	334	342	350	358	365	373	381	389	396	404	412	420	
287	295	303	311	319	327	335	343	351	359	367	375	383	<b>391</b>	399	407	415	423	431	

Other research indicates that if children are overweight before age 8, their weight problems in adulthood are more severe.

The good news is that even a modest, sustained weight loss can improve many of these health conditions. In fact, losing even 5–10% of your weight can lower blood pressure and improve your overall health.

## THE EMOTIONAL TOLL

As troubling as the obesity statistics are, they don't begin to describe the social

and emotional burdens of being overweight. People who are overweight face bias and a variety of negative stereotypes.

The Obesity Society points to research showing that people often perceive overweight individuals to be lazy, sloppy, lacking in self-discipline, unpleasant, and less competent. These attitudes and assumptions lead to discrimination in the workplace, educational institutions, social settings, and even in health care.

Experiments suggest that overweight people who have the same qualifications as normal-weight job candidates are less likely to be hired. On the job, an overweight person may be paid less than a thin person who performs the same duties, and heavy people are less likely to be promoted or given raises.

Bias against overweight people doesn't stop at the office. Even some people in the helping professions – including doctors, nurses, and psychologists – hold negative stereotypes of people who are overweight. Their weight bias includes assumptions that overweight individuals are lazy, less intelligent, self-indulgent, and weak-willed. Some overweight people avoid going to the doctor out of embarrassment or shame. That's a real problem because not receiving preventive health care or early treatment for health conditions places these individuals at high risk of serious medical problems.

The emotional damage caused by being overweight is especially heartbreaking for children, who often bear life-long psychological scars from being teased, rejected, or bullied in school. Research suggests that many students consider their overweight classmates to be lazy, mean, unattractive, and unhappy – and these negative stereotypes can develop as early as pre-school.

Children and teens who experience this type of social rejection develop low self-esteem and poor body image. They are also at risk of developing depression and eating disorders in adolescence and are more likely to attempt suicide than normal-weight children.

We have all had a bad day. We have experienced a hard day at work, bad traffic and stressful family relationships. All of a sudden you are in front of the TV with a bag of chips or a carton of ice cream. When it comes to food, most of us know some healthy options but stress and anxiety cause us not only to eat the less healthy choice but to overeat. A few days like this in the middle of an otherwise successful healthy eating plan can limit weight loss or even contribute to weight gain despite healthy eating most of the week.

Why does this happen and why do we crave sweet or savory foods when we are stressed. It is brain chemistry. The unhealthy snacks are mostly carbohydrate based. When you are eating sweet or savory snacks, your blood sugar rises and it can change brain chemistry and you get a sense of calm. Even the act of chewing can have a calming effect on your brain. Think of how you feel when you are really hungry- usually irritated or crabby. Eating makes you feel better and so we have learned that food is calming. So when it is a stressful time, you are vulnerable to stress or emotional eating.

So what is the solution? There are many strategies to try. First, try chewing sugar free gum. This serves two purposes. The physical act of chewing can be helpful in reducing anxiety and secondly you can't eat another food with gum in your mouth. So if you are tempted to eat those chips, the gum has to come out. Gives you a split second to think about it. You can also choose a low calorie starchy food such as a low fat popcorn. It gives the crunch but not the calories.

Distraction is also an effective tool to reduce emotional eating. Science has demonstrated that watching funny videos—even just short clips on You Tube can take our mind off the stressful day. Videos of animals or babies are especially helpful. Going for a 10 minute walk, calling a friend, on line window shopping, watching a meditation video on line and prayer are also helpful. Anything to break the cycle of stress eating.

You can also decide if what you are experiencing is a craving or hunger. Simply, a craving will go away but hunger does not. A delicious slice of chocolate cake is tempting but ask yourself if you are hungry or you just want it. This is where distraction helps. Hunger on the other hand, gets worse over time and you are at risk of overeating if you get too hungry. So when in doubt, distract yourself, wait awhile and if you are still hungry grab a great snack such as fruit and yogurt.

Obese adults also suffer emotional fallout from their weight problems, including low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, and social isolation. For both children and adults, the emotional pain related to being overweight can lead to more weight gain if they turn to food for comfort (see “Emotional Eating: Are You Really Hungry?” on page 16 and “Eating Disorders” on page 17).



## Emotional Eating: Are You Really Hungry?

The startling fact is that many people who are overweight rarely experience true physical hunger. That's because they eat throughout the day in response to stress, boredom, and negative emotions. The signs of true hunger include a gnawing feeling in the stomach or feeling light-headed after not eating for several hours.

One of the keys to losing weight and keeping it off is learning to recognize the difference between true hunger and a psychological craving for food. Loneliness, rejection, anger, anxiety, disappointment, insecurity, self-blame, and a host of other difficult feelings can send people to the pantry or refrigerator looking for emotional comfort. By eating only when you are truly physically hungry – and stopping when you begin to feel full – you will have won at least half of the weight loss battle!

To conquer your psychological cravings, first try to identify what you are feeling and why. Then attempt to “ride out” the craving by distracting yourself with another activity. Make a list of activities you can turn to at these times. These might include taking a walk, doing some yoga or stretching exercises, watering the garden, reading a chapter in a novel, calling a friend, organizing family photos, or any other 10- or 15-minute activity that can help you get your mind off food until the craving subsides. Research also suggests that watching a funny video for a few minutes on line can reduce the cravings.

As you begin to confront and overcome these psychological cravings, you will be eating less food, losing weight, and learning to distinguish emotional hunger from real hunger. Understanding this difference is one of the keys to long-term weight maintenance and freedom from emotional eating.

## Eating Disorders: Professional Help Required

Eating disorders like anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa are much more serious than experiencing psychological food cravings. These disorders arise from deep-seated emotional problems and require professional help.

**Anorexia.** People with anorexia have an extremely distorted body image. They are obsessed with being thin – and no matter how thin they get, when they look in the mirror they see themselves as disgustingly overweight. Most people who have anorexia are girls and women, although a small percentage is male. Anorexic individuals often starve themselves and may exercise for hours each day. Some use laxatives and may vomit up their food to lose more weight. Anorexia is a serious medical problem that can lead to heart problems and even death. Rapid weight loss should not be praised but rather evaluated medically.

**Bulimia.** Unlike people with anorexia, those with bulimia are difficult to spot. Most are not significantly overweight or underweight, which makes it easier to keep their disorder a secret. Women and girls with bulimia (again, it primarily affects females but can affect males) are obsessed with food and terrified of getting fat. They typically binge (eat huge amounts of food at one time) and then purge (force themselves to vomit up the food).

To keep from gaining weight, girls and women with bulimia often fast, exercise to extremes, or use laxatives and diuretics (“water pills”) after they binge. Frequent purging damages teeth and can cause inflammation of the throat. People with bulimia are often depressed and feel intense shame and guilt over their disordered eating. But they feel powerless to stop it. Like anorexia, bulimia is a serious medical problem that can have fatal consequences.

**Binge-eating disorder.** This eating disorder is similar to bulimia: Individuals eat large amounts of food at one time and then feel guilty, disgusted with themselves, and depressed afterward. The difference is that they don’t purge or make other attempts to prevent weight gain. As a result, many people who binge are overweight or obese.

If you or any of your family members show signs of an eating disorder, contact your physician for a referral to a professional who is experienced in treating these serious conditions.

## WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME OVERWEIGHT?

Weight gain is both simple and complex. At the most basic level, people become overweight because they routinely consume more calories than they burn. Each person requires a certain amount of energy (calories) to fuel normal body functions and to support physical activities. This energy is obtained through food and beverages. When someone consumes too many calories, the excess energy is stored in the body as fat. The solution to weight gain seems simple enough – consume fewer calories and increase physical activity.

But the reality of achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is more complex. Genetic factors – having overweight parents, for example – may make some people more susceptible to weight gain (although a family's eating habits also influence a child's weight). Some medications can increase appetite, raise insulin levels, or alter how the body stores fat.

Hypothyroidism (inadequate levels of thyroid hormone) can slow a person's metabolism (how the body uses the energy taken in). Aging-related changes in metabolism also can make it more difficult for people to maintain a healthy weight as they grow older.

But these influences do not mean that a person is doomed to becoming or remaining overweight. They do suggest that achieving and maintaining a healthy weight may be more challenging for some individuals.

The most important risk factors for weight gain are the environment people live in and their individual behaviors. In the U.S., both of these factors have changed dramatically over the last 50 years. These differences go a long way in explaining why obesity rates have skyrocketed during that time. Compared to the 1960s, families today:

- Eat fewer meals at home
- Eat more fast foods, take-out meals, and packaged foods
- Consume more snack foods and other “empty calories”
- Drink more sodas and other sweet drinks such as lemonade, fruit punch, sweet tea, and sports drinks
- Eat few fruits and vegetables
- Get less physical activity (sedentary jobs, labor-saving devices)

Childhood also has changed. In addition to the risk factors listed above, most of today's children and adolescents:

- Spend less time in active play outdoors

## Test Your Drive-Through I.Q.

In a Brady Bunch world, we'd all have a cook who puts nutritious home-cooked meals in front of us every night. But in the real world, we're more likely to grab at least some of our meals at a fast-food restaurant. That can make weight control more challenging.

Before we take a look at good choices in fast-food restaurants, let's test your "Drive-Through I.Q."

### Questions:

**1. If you're watching your dietary fat and calories, which of the following selections is the smartest choice?**

- a. regular hamburger
- b. chicken nuggets
- c. fried fish sandwich

**2. Which has more fat?**

- a. grilled chicken salad with ranch dressing
- b. large taco
- c. grilled chicken sandwich

**3. A value-priced meal with a bacon cheeseburger, large French fries, and a large soda is:**

- a. a lot of food for the money
- b. a heart attack in a sack
- c. nearly a day's worth of calories and almost two days' worth of fat
- d. all of the above

### Answers:

- 1. a. A plain hamburger has about 300 calories and 12 grams of fat, compared to 400 calories and 25 grams of fat for 9 chicken nuggets and about 700 calories and 40 grams of fat for a fish sandwich.
- 2. a. The salad WOULD HAVE BEEN a good choice, but ONE package of dressing contains about 20 grams of fat. The large taco has about 17 grams of fat, and a grilled chicken sandwich (without mayo) has about 5 grams of fat. To make the salad healthy, use a reduced-fat dressing.
- 3. d. All of the above. Your value-priced meal totaled 1,750 calories and 109 grams of fat!

**How'd you do? If you didn't do so well, don't feel bad. Fast-food restaurants are tricky. Some of the foods that sound healthiest – like fish, salad, or chicken – can be real heart-stoppers and hip-expanders if they're fried or covered with dressing. See "Tips for Eating Out" on page 24 for advice on eating healthy in restaurants.**

- Don't walk or ride bikes to school
- Take fewer P.E. classes
- Engage in more “screen time” (TV, computers, video games)

According to the CDC, about 21% of Americans meet the guidelines of 2.5 hours per week of moderate exercise. New to the guidelines is to include muscle strengthening exercise in addition to aerobic exercise. Similar statistics are true for adolescents. Approximately 25% of teens get the recommended 60 minutes of exercise per day.

The Obesity society's statistics indicate that the average child watches two hours of TV per day, and 1 in 4 spends at least four hours per day in front of the TV.

The Obesity Society also reports that children's consumption of soda has increased 300% in the last 20 years – and that the risk of obesity increases by 60% for every daily soda a child consumes. Moreover, 1 out of every 5 overweight children is believed to have become overweight because of excess calories from beverages. (See the Helping Your Children chapter on page 59.)

## ADDITIONAL RISK FACTORS

### **Lack of sleep**

Getting too little sleep also contributes to weight gain in both children and adults. That's a concern because in our fast-paced society many people are chronically sleep-deprived. In one study, 6th graders who slept fewer than the recommended 9–11 hours per day were more likely to be overweight. For every additional hour of sleep (toward meeting the recommended amount), a child's risk of becoming overweight dropped by 20%. For 3rd graders (who need 10–12 hours of sleep per day), each additional hour of sleep reduced the risk of becoming overweight by 40%.

How does lost sleep lead to weight gain? Several hormones that regulate appetite, glucose (blood sugar), and body fat are secreted at night. Scientists suspect that getting too little sleep interferes with these processes and may increase hunger and food cravings the next day. Inadequate sleep is also associated with the development of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes. To sleep better, avoid beverages high in caffeine, such as coffee, tea, and “energy drinks,” late in the day. This is especially important for children and teens.

With increasing weight both adolescents and adults are more likely to have sleep apnea which further accelerates the sleep deprivation and hormonal alterations.

## Managing Your Stress

Everyone experiences stress, but how effectively people deal with their daily stress has a significant impact on their mental and physical well-being.

Ineffective stress management can lead to substance abuse (dependence on alcohol, tobacco, or drugs), damaged relationships, and overeating. Here are some ways to get a handle on the stress in your life:

- **Exercise.** Exercise releases natural chemicals called endorphins that have a calming effect. It also gives you a general feeling of well-being.
- **Get plenty of sleep.** Being rested helps you cope better with all types of stress. Fatigue makes you irritable and more easily upset.
- **Eat healthful foods.** Eating nutritious foods provides important stress-busting vitamins and minerals.
- **Limit caffeine.** Colas, tea, coffee, “energy drinks,” and other beverages with caffeine can leave you jittery.
- **Problem-solve.** Take a calm look at the stressful situation and figure out what the real problem is. List the steps you can take to solve the problem.
- **Share your worries.** Talking about your situation with a friend often brings instant relief.
- **Laugh.** Laughter is a great stress reliever. If possible, find something funny about the situation or find something else to laugh about.
- **Go ahead and cry.** Stress often melts away after a good cry.
- **Get some sunshine.** Sunlight has positive effects on mood.
- **Listen to music.** Quiet music has a powerful calming effect.
- **Pray or meditate.** Find inner peace through spiritual values or quiet contemplation.
- **Take slow, deep breaths.** Deep breathing relaxes mind and body.
- **Stretch or do yoga.** Long, slow stretches relieve tension.
- **Visualize a peaceful scene.** Close your eyes and picture a quiet lake, a mountain meadow, or a beautiful sunset. Imagine that you are there.
- **Pick a “worry time.”** If you simply have to worry, pick one time each day and do all of your worrying (and problem-solving) then.
- **Don’t run from your problems.** Most big problems don’t go away unless you have the courage to face them.
- **Learn to accept what you can’t change.** Some things are simply out of your control (like the death of a loved one, an illness, or a divorce). Work to accept these changes (with help from a counselor, if necessary).
- **Remember what’s good in your life.** Make a list of all the positive things that are happening right now. Update it regularly.
- **Remember that things change.** What worries you today may seem unimportant next month. Remember, life can bring surprises.

## **Stress**

Everyone experiences stress, even young children. There are healthful, effective ways to deal with stress (see “Managing Your Stress” on page 21). But many people use food instead. They eat in an attempt to unwind or calm down, much as another person might rely on alcohol or cigarettes. Individuals with depression or anxiety may also turn to food for comfort. The problem is that the calming effect of food is temporary, and people keep coming back to it to stuff down their unpleasant feelings.

## **Too Much TV**

The risk of becoming overweight increases with the amount of time spent watching TV. The obvious problem with too much TV (and video viewing) is that it takes the place of physical activity and deprives you of the many benefits of exercise, which include burning excess calories (see the Lifelong Exercise chapter on page 54). In addition to the obvious lack of exercise prolonged sitting for hours at a time is associated with weight gain. Even during a favorite show, you can do push ups, jumping jacks or marching steps during commercials to avoid prolonged sitting.

What many people don’t realize, however, is that TV viewing is also linked to increased consumption of snack foods and sugar-sweetened drinks. This is true for every age range, from young children through adults. Plus, being bombarded with food advertisements for several hours a day influences a person’s overall food choices – and most of the foods advertised on TV are convenience foods, snack foods, desserts, sugary cereals, juices, and soft drinks, especially during children’s programming.

## **Supersized meals and drinks**

Fast foods (especially “value meals”) and huge portions in restaurants are another significant factor in the obesity crisis in America. In this “portion distortion,” today’s restaurant entrée may contain two to three times more food than would have been served in the 1960s, and yet many diners still routinely clean their plates when dining out.

Regular consumption of soft drinks (and, more recently, high-calorie “energy drinks”) is a major culprit in rising obesity rates. Consumers are often confused about sports drinks assuming because they are consumed by fit athletes these beverages are a healthy substitute for soft drinks. Those exercising for more than an hour should consider using a sports drink; these beverages are a source of unwanted calorie for those not exercising. Traditional soft drinks are full of sugar

and have no nutritional value – and a “supersized” drink may have 400 calories or more! Because soft drinks don’t provide a feeling of fullness, people continue to eat their normal amount of food plus the excess calories provided by the soft drink. For an adult, drinking one can of soda a day can increase the risk of becoming overweight by about 30%. In addition to sports drinks and soft drinks, sweet tea, lemonade, and fruit punch also have an excessive amount of sugar. Coffee drinks with added flavoring and whipped cream can be as much as 600 calories. It is important not to drink your calories.

## Portion Distortion



**20 years ago, a typical bagel (above, left) was 3-inches in diameter and had 140 calories. Looking at the illustration above, how many calories would you say that today’s bagel (above, right) contains?**

- a.** 350                      **b.** 250                      **c.** 150

**Answer:** a. Today’s 6-inch bagel has 350 calories!



## Tips for Eating Out

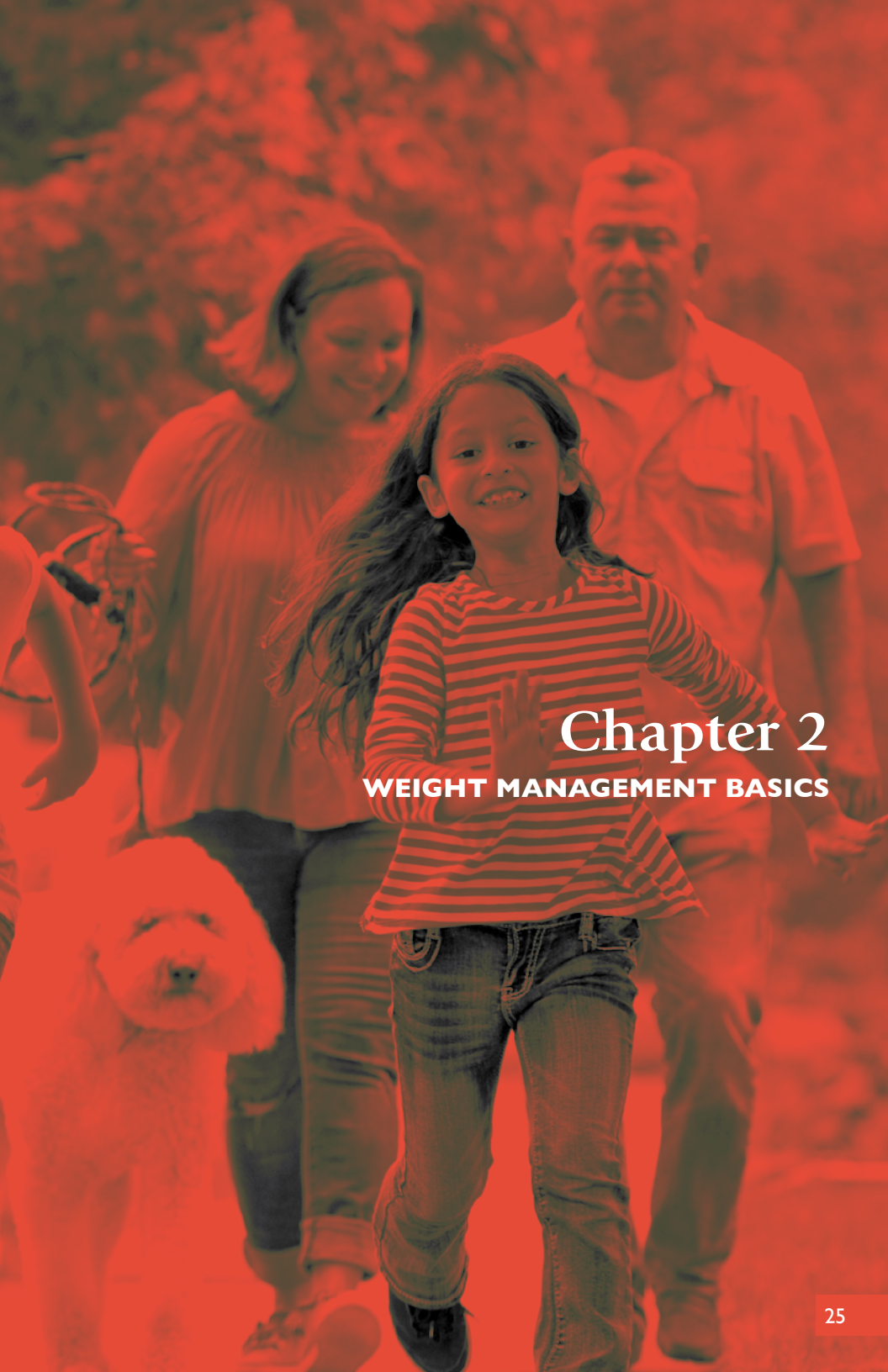
Eating a typical restaurant meal can wipe out all the good you have done all week. Here are some tips to keep one night out from sabotaging your healthful diet:

- Choose an appetizer or small salad (with dressing on the side)
- Order à la carte
- Share an entrée with a friend
- Place half of an entrée in a to-go box immediately
- Request no sauce, sour cream, or mayonnaise or ask for them on the side
- Request fruit, steamed vegetables, or a small salad instead of fries
- Cut a large baked potato in half
- Choose grilled, baked, or broiled chicken
- Avoid butter, bacon, cream sauces, and foods served au gratin, alfredo, battered, or fried
- Forego value meals, supersized selections, and anything labeled jumbo, deluxe, or biggie-sized
- Ask for extra vegetables on sandwiches instead of cheese
- Avoid buffets or fill half of your plate with vegetables
- Leave the tortilla chips, bread, biscuit, croissant, or large muffin in the bread basket
- Go easy on toppings at salad bars (especially cheese, bacon, croutons, olives, nuts and creamy dressings). Load up on vegetables
- Don't feel compelled to clean your plate
- Request fruit or fat-free yogurt for dessert if desired
- Ask the server to remove the bread or chips from the table

### NOW WHAT?

Now that you know why people gain weight – and understand the many health consequences of obesity – it's time to take action. The remaining pages of this book will show you how to make the diet and lifestyle changes necessary to reach and maintain a healthy weight. There are no quick fixes. But with the right mindset and the right tools, you and your family can be successful. Along the way, you will likely discover many unexpected benefits from reaching a healthy weight, including renewed energy, increased self-confidence, and a more active and exciting life.

Ready to get started?



## Chapter 2

### **WEIGHT MANAGEMENT BASICS**

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT BASICS

Congratulations on making an important commitment to changing your eating patterns and lifestyle!

The remainder of *Which “weigh”?* will give you the keys to successful weight loss and long-term weight maintenance. In the coming sections, you will learn:

- Why popular diets don’t work
- What calories are and why they matter
- Why people overeat
- How to prepare for change
- Which tools are necessary for success
- Why good nutrition is essential
- How to maintain your healthy weight
- How to help your children reach a healthy weight

The first step to successful weight management is to focus on the big picture. Your goal is to develop lifelong healthy eating and exercise habits for yourself and your family. This requires approaching weight loss in an entirely new way, as a new lifestyle instead of a temporary period of self-denial.

### Fad Diets Don’t Work

It’s tempting to go on a strict diet that promises you will lose a pound a day. But there are several problems with this approach. First, most of the “weight” you lose on a short-term fad diet is water, not fat.

Second, a “diet” mindset relies on depriving yourself and exercising extreme willpower, which are nearly impossible to sustain over the long term. Many people can severely restrict their food intake for a short period of time, especially if they are focused on losing weight for an upcoming event. But as the big event comes and goes, so do the willpower and the motivation to eat sensibly.

The diet mindset also sets up an all-or-nothing situation, in which a person is either *on* a diet or *off* a diet. In this rigid approach to losing weight, even slight slipups, such as eating a forbidden food, can lead some people to abandon the diet. Self-blame and shame often follow and only reinforce a person’s belief that she is too weak-willed to lose weight and is doomed to be overweight forever.

Even more demoralizing is when a person loses a significant amount of weight and then gains it all back. Sadly, most people who go on typical diets do regain the lost weight. In fact, about 95% of people who lose weight will gain

it all back within 3 to 5 years. Repeated bouts of weight loss and weight gain – known as yo-yo dieting or weight cycling – can take a toll on your mental and physical health.

The good news is that by making gradual, permanent lifestyle changes, including a commitment to increased physical activity, you can beat the odds.

### **Balance Is The Key**

At its simplest level, maintaining a healthy weight involves balancing food intake with energy expenditure. Expressed another way, to stay at your current weight you must burn as many calories as you take in.

To lose weight, you must take in fewer calories than your body requires. When this happens, your body must use some of its stored fat to fuel its activities. Over time, pound after pound of body fat will be used in this way, leading to a slimmer, healthier you.

You can promote this fat-burning process by eating less, increasing your physical activity, or – by far the best approach – doing both. Studies show that people who eat less and become more physically active are more likely to maintain their weight loss over time.

Increased physical activity, especially brisk walking or another type of aerobic exercise, also helps people lose weight because it:

- Burns additional fat
- Suppresses appetite
- Relieves stress
- Improves mood

## **What is a calorie?**

A calorie is a unit of energy.

Various foods provide different amounts of energy (calories) to fuel body functions and physical activities. If a person consumes too much food or too many high-calorie foods, the excess energy is stored as body fat.

Each of these benefits makes it easier to follow a healthful eating program. For more information on exercise, see the Lifelong Exercise chapter on page 54.

### **Find Your Healthy Weight**

Remember that your weight goal is a healthy weight. This goal will differ for

individuals according to their height and frame. Rapid and extreme weight loss is unhealthy and can lead to serious health conditions, or even death.

Look at the BMI chart on pages 12-13 again. Find your height in inches in the left-hand column and move across columns 19–24.

The weights listed for your height in these columns provide a general range for a healthy weight. For example, a “normal” weight for a woman who is 5 feet 4 inches (64 inches) tall ranges between 110 and 140 pounds.

Be realistic when you select a goal weight. Consider choosing a weight somewhere in the middle of your range. For a woman who is 5 feet 4 inches tall, a goal of 125 pounds would be reasonable. You can also set your initial weight loss goal at the lowest weight you have been in your adult life. If you are 5’4” and currently weigh 220 pounds and your lowest weight in your adult life is 180 pounds that would be your initial goal weight!

## **The Mathematics of Weight Loss**

To lose one pound of fat, you must consume 3,500 fewer calories than your body requires so that it will have to dip into your stored fat. To lose about one pound per week, you would need to consume 500 fewer calories per day (7 days  $\times$  500 calories = 3,500 calories). The exact number of calories your body requires depends on your metabolic rate (some people burn calories more quickly than others) and how physically active you are. However, calculating exactly how many calories a person requires each day is difficult.

As a result, most weight loss plans rely on a general daily calorie guideline for weight loss: 1,200 - 1400 calories per day for women and 1,500 - 1800 calories per day for men. Most people will lose weight at these daily calorie levels. A slow weight loss of 1/2 – 1 pound per week (or slightly more for men) is safe and is more likely to be kept off than weight lost very quickly on a very low calorie diet. Increasing your physical activity both walking and strength training will burn more calories each day and can help rev up a sluggish metabolism (see “Calories Burned by 20 Minutes of Exercise” on page 29). It could be wall push-ups with your body weight, sit ups or bicep curls using gallon jugs of water. Muscle doesn’t weigh more than fat, but it does burn more calories than fat. Strength training or lifting weights helps build muscle and having more muscle can increase the amount of calories you burn. Consider your muscle mass like the engine of your car. The bigger the motor, the more gas you burn. The same is true with your body. The more muscle you have the more calories you burn even when you are at rest.

A 1,200-calorie per day eating plan (1,500 calories for men) also can supply the nutrients you need to stay healthy. But these calorie levels provide no margin for error – that is, there is no room in your diet for foods with “empty” calories (such as sugary sodas or unhealthy snack foods). Every calorie must count toward satisfying your body’s nutritional needs!

To make sure that you and your family members are getting the nutrients you need, follow the nutrition guidelines in the Good Nutrition chapter beginning on page 40.

## Calories Burned by 20 Minutes of Exercise\*

Activity	Calories Used
Volleyball	70
Walking, moderate pace	81
Walking, brisk pace	94
Table Tennis	94
Raking leaves	94
Dancing	103
Lawn mowing	103
Jogging	167
Running	231

*\*by a 150-pound person*

## Are You Ready To Lose Weight?

The fact that you are reading this book indicates that you recognize the importance of reaching a healthy weight. But a successful weight loss program requires some mental preparation and self-examination.

First you need to define your goals and motivation. Ask yourself if you are embarking on a weight loss program because someone else wants you to – like your doctor or your husband – or because you have come to a point where you really want to be healthier and more active. If your motivation is external (coming from others) instead of internal (your own desire to change), sticking with a program may be more difficult, but not impossible. It is important to define your “why” and write it down.

It’s helpful to spend some time thinking about the personal benefits you would receive from reaching a healthy weight. Write them down in the “Weight Loss Benefits” box on page 32.

## Developing Good Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a fancy word for how much you like yourself. A person with high self-esteem feels good about who she is and what she has to offer to her family, friends, and society. She believes that her life matters – and that the world is a better place with her in it. Good self-esteem makes us confident in our abilities and optimistic that we will be successful in life.

### **Here are some ways to improve your self-esteem:**

**Listen to how you talk to yourself.** Many of us say things to ourselves that we would never say to a good friend – or even to someone we didn't like! The next time you get down on yourself, listen to your internal "self-talk." Then try to turn negative comments into neutral statements (just the facts) or even positive comments.

**Know who you really are.** Women have a bad habit of thinking that how they look is who they are. Our physical self is definitely part of our identity. But it's not the most important part. The real you is what's in your heart and head. It's your thoughts, your feelings, your memories, your talents, and your moral and spiritual values. Don't confuse the wrapping with the gift inside.

**Try not to compare yourself with others.** Each one of us is unique, with special gifts and special challenges. Trying to measure yourself against another person is as pointless as trying to compare two snowflakes. Both are beautiful in their own way. In today's world through the internet and social media we are exposed to body images that are no longer real. Consider limiting your time on social media.

**Don't worry so much about what other people think.** Most of the time, other people don't even notice those things we're so worried about – they're too busy thinking about themselves!

**Quit trying to be perfect.** Real people aren't perfect. They make mistakes, and sometimes they fail. That's OK. That's how we learn.

**Think positive thoughts about yourself everyday.** Write down five things you like about yourself and review your list every morning. At the end of every day, jot down five things you achieved that day. These don't have to be great achievements, just simple things – little successes that you're proud of.

**Give and receive compliments.** Sometimes it's hard to recognize our own best qualities. Why not sit down with a good friend and share the things you like about each other.

**Self-esteem isn't something we're born with.** It has to be nurtured and cared for. Self-esteem is like a garden. Negative thoughts are the weeds that choke our self-esteem. Positive thoughts are the fertilizer that makes our self-esteem grow and flower. Be sure to tend to your self-esteem every day. The effort will pay off in happiness and success in life.

In addition to better health, these benefits might include:

- More energy
- Better sleep
- Improved self-esteem
- Enhanced social life
- Fashionable clothes
- Better job opportunities
- Less depression
- More active play with kids

On the flip side, it's also a good idea to think about possible difficulties or challenges you might face while losing weight. Write them down in the "Challenges and Solutions" box on page 32. Your Challenges list might include such things as:

- No donuts at work
- Cut back on café lattes
- Less fast food, more cooking
- Feeling deprived at restaurants
- Getting sweaty while exercising
- Craving ice cream every night
- Fear of failing

Carefully consider the benefits and challenges of losing weight and try to think of ways to cope with the challenges you have listed.

Now add them to the "Challenges and Solutions" box. Think of the long-term benefits of weight loss and ask yourself if donuts and ice cream are really more important than feeling great and looking better.

## **Set Realistic Goals**

Another important ingredient in successful weight loss is setting achievable goals. Remember that you will probably lose about 1/2 – 2 pounds per week. (The rate of weight loss is related to age, gender, and the amount of excess weight you need to lose.) If you expect a more rapid weight loss, you will be disappointed and may become discouraged.

Let's say you lose 1 pound per week. That may not sound like much, but it translates into about a 50-pound weight loss in 1 year. A helpful visual aid is to look at a 1-pound tub of margarine and visualize that amount of fat coming off your waist or thighs. Then visualize what losing 10, 20, 30, or more pounds of fat would look



like. Imagine how light your body will feel – and how good it will look – and how much energy you will have. Keep in mind that increasing your physical activity level will help keep those pounds coming off.

**Weight Loss Benefits**

*On the lines below, write some benefits that you will enjoy by losing weight.*

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**Weight Loss Challenges and Solutions**

*On the lines below, record some challenges you may face while losing weight and possible solutions to these challenges.*

**Challenge:**

**Solution:**

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## **Get Your Family Members Involved**

The support of your family members is important. Let them know what you are trying to do and why. Ask for their help, giving specific suggestions. For example, you may want to ask family members to respect your decision and to request that they not try to tempt you with extra servings of food or with foods you have chosen not to eat.

Obesity usually affects the entire family. If that's the situation in your family, have a family meeting and talk about the many benefits of eating more healthfully and getting more exercise. Even if no one struggles with weight, eating better and moving more has many health benefits.

Allow everyone to voice their concerns and their suggestions. Make lists of benefits and challenges, just like you did for yourself. Brainstorm about how the family can become more active and how family members can make small changes to improve their health. Meet again after everyone has had some time to think about the benefits and challenges of losing weight.

Start with small changes in your family's eating patterns. It helps to involve your family members, especially children, in planning, shopping, and preparing meals, snacks, and school lunches. Even if some family members aren't "on board" with the healthful eating program, everyone will benefit from more nutritious foods.

Unfortunately, it's not uncommon for one or more family members to gripe about or reject your healthful eating program. Some may even attempt to sabotage your efforts at losing weight. But your role is not to force anyone to eat more healthfully. It's to make nutritious foods available, control the amount of junk food that comes into the house, and set a good example with your own eating behavior.

Chances are good that when your family sees what nutritious eating and weight loss have done for you, they will be more willing to get with the program.

## **Before You Start...**

If you have any type of chronic health problem or you have a significant amount of weight to lose, see your doctor first for a complete physical.

Although all of the principles discussed here are compatible with a healthful, sensible eating program, your physician may need to recommend a specific plan for you.



## Chapter 3

**A PROGRAM THAT REALLY WORKS**

## A PROGRAM THAT REALLY WORKS

People who have been on and off diets much of their lives usually approach the first day of a new program with a mixture of hope and dread. They are excited and optimistic, believing they may have finally found the one magic diet that will make them thin. But they may also be anxious and maybe even a little resentful or depressed about the idea of having to give up so many favorite foods for many weeks or months. In typical fashion, they can't wait to get the diet over with and get back to "normal." Unfortunately, this approach is doomed to fail over the long term.

It's true that you will be eating less food in the weight loss phase. But as you reach your goal weight, you will be adding back more healthful foods. By continuing to monitor your calorie intake and weighing once a week, you will learn how many calories you can consume each day and still maintain your new, healthy weight.

Long-term weight maintenance works like a scale: The calories consumed from food must be balanced by the calories your body uses to fuel its many functions and your physical activities. This means that the number of daily calories necessary to maintain your weight will depend in large part on how well you have managed to work physical activity into your daily life.

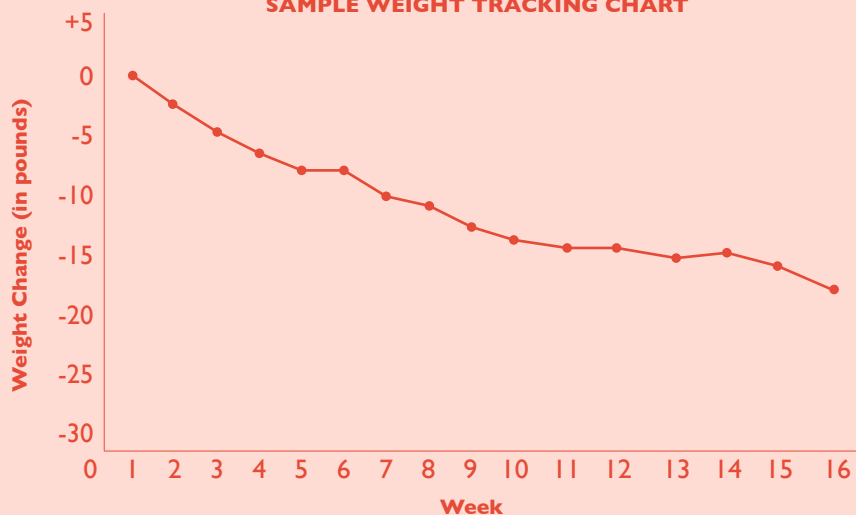
This program is different. First, there is nothing magical about it – and it's not something you go on or off. It's a lifetime approach to healthy eating and exercise that focuses on abundance, not deprivation. Most importantly, this approach works not just in the short term but for the rest of your life.

### Write Everything Down

Keeping track of your food choices, calories, exercise, and weight loss is the key to success. (See pages 36-37 for a sample Weight Tracking Chart, Food Diary, and Exercise Log). Creating your own forms allows you to personalize them. For example, you may want to add the time of day when you ate each meal or snack, your mood at the time, your level of hunger, and anything that may have triggered your desire to eat or overeat at the time.

Good record-keeping will help you stay on course by pointing out patterns in your eating behavior (vulnerable times of day, emotional triggers, etc.) It will also keep you honest about how much food you eat each day. (Many of us have a

### SAMPLE WEIGHT TRACKING CHART



## Sample Food Diary

Food Diary Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Food	Amount	Calories
Breakfast	Cheerios	1 cup	89
	Skim Milk	1 cup	86
	Toast	1 slice	64
			Total: 239
Lunch	Apple	1	81
	Ritz Crackers	5	70
	Vegetable Soup	5	144
	Diet Pepsi	12 oz.	1
	Chicken Salad	2 oz.	332
			Total: 628
Dinner	Sirloin Steak	3.5 oz.	280
	Green Beans	1 cup	26
	Wheat Bread	1 slice	61
			Total: 367
Snacks	Yogurt	8 oz.	144
			Total for the day: 1,378

## Exercise Log

In the table below, write the physical activities you engage in and details of each:

Date	Activity	Time Spent
9/8/18	Running 2 miles	25 minutes
9/9/18	Mowing Lawn	15 minutes
9/11/18	Swimming	45 minutes
9/12/18	Weight Training	60 minutes
9/14/18	Weight Training	60 minutes

## Weight Training Log

Date	Exercise/Weight	Set/Reps
9/12/18	Bicep Curls/15 pounds	3/8
	Leg Squats/55 pounds	3/8
	Shoulder Press/25 pounds	3/8
	Crunches	6/10
9/14/18	Bicep Curls/15 pounds	3/8
	Leg Squats/60 pounds	3/8
	Shoulder Press/25 pounds	3/8
	Crunches	7/10

selective memory when it comes to remembering everything that we ate during the course of a day!)

Your records can also point out what you have done right – such as exercising every day – and how that boosted your weight loss for the week. On the other hand, it can also explain a disappointing weekly weight loss by revealing that you consumed too many calories that week or slacked off on physical activity.

Start by weighing yourself in the morning (before eating or drinking anything) and recording your weight on your Weight Tracking Chart. Weigh only once a week – at the same time of day, wearing the same type of clothing, and on the same scale. Today there are many options that make it easy to keep track of your success. Various wearable devices like Fitbits or tracking applications can be used on your smart phone; such as Lose It, My Fitness Pal, or Nudge.

## More Essential Tools

In addition to your Weight Tracking Chart, Food Diary, and Exercise Log, you will need a:

- Bathroom scale
- Calorie book or a tracking application
- Food scale
- Set of measuring cups
- Set of measuring spoons
- Shopping list

Any reliable scale will work, but some people prefer a digital scale because the display is easy to see and takes away the guesswork by clearly stating your weight.

Several good calorie guides are available.

Look for one that is up to date, includes brand name products, and provides calories for popular foods at national restaurant chains. *The Calorie King*<sup>®</sup>

*Calorie, Fat, & Carbohydrate Counter* is an excellent resource that is often recommended by dietitians and health organizations (see Resources on page 67). For a sample Shopping List, see page 39. By creating your own, you can personalize the list to reflect your family's food preferences. A shopping list also encourages you to plan your meals ahead.

Knowing what you are going to make for dinner and having all the ingredients on hand can prevent a last-minute detour through a fast-food drive-through.

Optional weight management tools include:

- Low-fat or low-calorie cookbook
- Exercise guide
- Walking shoes
- Dumbbells for strength training
- Exercise DVD

A low-fat or low-calorie cookbook is a good idea if most of the dishes you normally prepare are fried or come from traditional recipes that include lots of butter, margarine, vegetable shortening, lard, cream, sour cream, bacon, or sugar. (See Resources for some suggestions.) The Good Nutrition chapter that follows will also show you how to make healthful substitutions to your favorite traditional recipes.

## Designing Your Food Program

You will design your own weight loss program around the general nutrition principles presented in the next chapter. The only “rules” are that you find a calorie level that allows you to lose weight steadily, week after week, until you are at your goal weight. For most women, this will be about 1,200 calories per day.

This approach will provide the nutrients you need to stay healthy. Plus, it teaches you the nutrition principles that should guide you for the rest of your life.

### Sample shopping list

#### FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

6 apples  
1 bunch of grapes  
Spinach  
Broccoli

#### BEEF/POULTRY

1 pack of chicken  
1 pack of lean beef  
6 filets - sole  
Tofu  
Beans

#### CANNED VEGETABLES/SOUP

4 cans soup

#### BAKING/OILS/NUTS/PEANUT BUTTER

1 bottle olive oil

#### FROZEN FOODS

2 boxes peas  
1 box whole grain waffles

#### MILK/CHEESE/YOGURT/PUDDING

6 lowfat yogurts  
2 gallons skim milk

#### BEVERAGES

2 diet cokes  
Sparkling water



A close-up photograph of a white bowl filled with a salad. The salad contains cubed white cheese, sliced olives, and a hard-boiled egg cut in half. A silver knife and fork are placed in the bowl. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

# Chapter 4

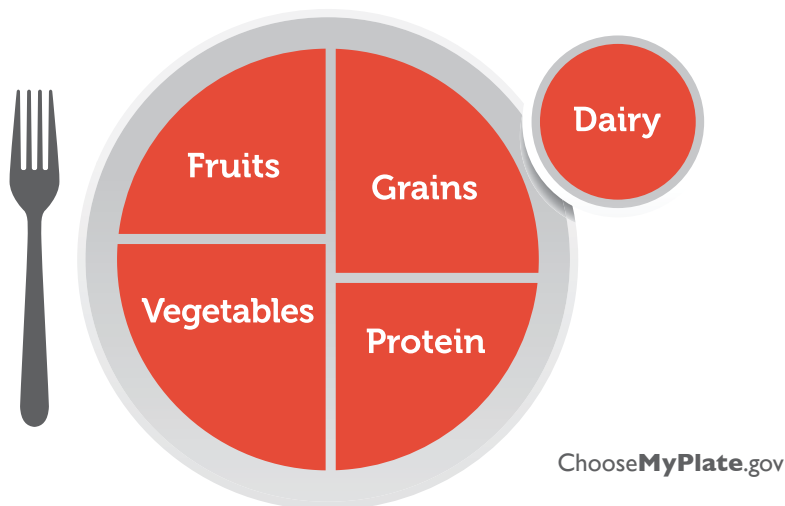
**GOOD NUTRITION**

Keep in mind that these dietary recommendations are for healthy people. If you have diabetes, cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, or another chronic medical condition, follow your doctor's advice.

**When** most people hear the terms “weight loss” or “diet” they immediately imagine a dreary, strict program with limited food choices. But you won't find that here. Instead, you will find abundant food choices that enable you to adapt your old recipes and try new ones. This approach also gives you the freedom to eat regular food while you lose weight, including dining out at restaurants.

## GET TO KNOW

The ChooseMyPlate program, created by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, provides excellent nutritional guidance (see the Choose**MyPlate** graphic below). Choose**MyPlate** is a lifetime approach to healthy eating that will benefit your entire family. The plate graphic illustrates the five food groups that are building blocks for a healthy diet that you and your family should include in your meals every day.



## Carbohydrate, Protein, and Fat

The three categories of food are:

- **Carbohydrate.** Carbohydrate should account for 40-60% of daily calories. The type of carbohydrate is important: “healthy” carbs are high in fiber and packed with important nutrients. These include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and legumes (beans, lentils, soy nuts). “less healthy” carbs are simple sugars (table sugar, fructose) and refined grains (white bread, white rolls). Always focus on good carbohydrates.

- **Protein.** Protein is needed to repair and rebuild muscle tissue and should account for 10–15% of daily calories. Egg whites, lean poultry, skim milk, soy, or a mixture of grains and legumes, such as beans and rice cooked with little to no fat, are healthful protein choices. Red meats, pork and regular cheese are high in protein but also high in fat. Recent research suggests that having a source of protein at breakfast can help you feel less hungry later in the day. So consider having scrambled eggs or an egg white omelet as a breakfast choice.

- **Fat.** Fat is a very concentrated source of energy and should be limited to 10–30% of daily calories. Good sources of fat include fish oils, olive oil, and monounsaturated fats like peanut oil. See also “Good Fats, Bad Fats” on page 49. Good fats and bad fats all have the same amount of calories.

The ChooseMyPlate website ([www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)) contains a wealth of helpful information. It provides details on the many food choices within each food group (including serving sizes and age-specific number of daily servings); personalized menu planner and progress tracker; helpful information and learning games for kids; tips for healthy eating on a budget; recommendations for physical activity; and many other resources that can help you and your family meet your health and weight loss goals.

The site also has interactive features that help you analyze your nutrition and physical activity needs and keep track of your progress daily and over time.

### Looking Closer at Food Groups

Below are the food groups you will choose from each day. The servings listed are for women and men and vary by gender, age, and activity level. (Recommended servings at every age – including children – are available on the ChooseMyPlate website.)

Often when we feel like we are craving a food, we are actually needing more fluid. Research shows drinking two glasses of water right before the meal curbed appetite and reduced the amount of calories eaten.

Please note that the number of daily servings is based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet. To lose weight, you will likely need to eat fewer servings in some categories (such as grains or meat) unless you are very physically active. But be sure to include foods from each food category every day.

## Grains

Whole grains are an important source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. A high-fiber diet can reduce the risk of heart disease and some forms of cancer. Fiber also aids in weight control by filling you up and helping to suppress hunger. Grains include wheat, rice, oats, barley, cornmeal, and other cereal grains. Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples of grain products.

Whole grains are more healthful than refined grains. Whole grains retain the entire kernel of grain and are an excellent source of “healthy” carbohydrates (see “Carbohydrate, Protein, and Fat” on page 42). Refined grains, in contrast, have been milled to give them a finer texture and a longer shelf life. Milling removes the bran and “germ” of the grain, magnesium and strips much of its valuable fiber.

### Recommended daily servings of grains:

Women: 5–6

Men: 6–8



## Portion Control

### Grain Product

- 1 cup of cereal flakes
- 1 pancake
- ½ cup of cooked rice, pasta, or potato
- 1 slice of bread

### Fruits and Veggies

- 1 cup of salad greens
- 1 medium fruit
- ½ cup of raisins

### Dairy and Cheese

- 1 ½ oz. cheese
- ½ cup of ice cream
- 1 cup serving of milk, yogurt, or fresh greens

### Meats and Alternatives

- 3 oz. meat, fish, and poultry
- 3 oz. grilled/baked fish
- 2 Tbsp. peanut butter

### Fats

- 1 teaspoon of oil

### What One Serving Looks Like

- The size of a fist
- A compact disc
- ½ of a baseball
- A cassette tape

### What One Serving Looks Like

- A baseball
- A baseball
- A large egg

### What One Serving Looks Like

- 4 stacked dice
- ½ baseball
- The size of a fist

### What One Serving Looks Like

- Deck of cards
- Checkbook
- Ping pong ball

### What One Serving Looks Like

- The size of your thumb tip

Refined grains include white flour, white rice, and refined cornmeal. These less nutritious grains are found in white bread and in traditional rolls and buns, cornbread, corn and flour tortillas, grits, crackers, noodles, spaghetti, macaroni, pitas, and most ready-to-eat breakfast cereals. Unless the product label says “100% whole-grain” or “100% whole wheat,” it’s probably based on a refined grain. It’s important to remember just because a product is brown in color it does not mean it is a whole grain. You have to read the label.

It is recommended that 50% or more of your daily grains be whole grains. Choose whole-grain products whenever possible. Whole grains include:

- whole-wheat flour
- oatmeal (not instant)
- brown rice
- buckwheat
- whole rye
- whole-grain barley
- whole-grain cornmeal

Shop for whole-grain breads, buns, rolls, tortillas, crackers, pasta, and cereals.

## Vegetables

Vegetables are packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and disease-fighting compounds like beta-carotene, lycopene, and lutein. These pigments give fruits and vegetables their bright colors. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and several types of cancer.

- Dark green (dark green leafy lettuce, romaine lettuce, broccoli, spinach)
- Red and orange (carrots, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, pumpkin, red peppers, tomatoes)
- Beans and peas (black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, lentils, black-eyed peas, split peas, soybeans)
- Starchy (green peas, lima beans, corn, potatoes)
- Other vegetables (green beans, cabbage, zucchini, tomatoes, green or red peppers, iceberg lettuce, celery, beets)

Be sure to include several servings from each group every week.

## Recommended daily servings of vegetables:

Women: 2–2.5 cups

Men: 3.5–3 cups



## Fruits

Fruits are also full of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and disease-fighting substances. Any type of fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of your daily fruit allotment.

Fruits can be fresh, frozen or canned, and may be eaten whole, sliced, juiced, or blended to make a smoothie. Try to vary your fruit selections during the week and choose whole fruits more often than fruit juices. Although 100% fruit juice is nutritious it is lacking fiber and can be easy to over consume. A serving of fruit juice is only  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup. Choose from among:

- Berries (blueberries, strawberries, raspberries, cherries)
- Citrus (lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit, tangerines)
- Apples, pears, bananas, grapes, pineapple, plums, papaya, mangoes, and all other varieties of fruit
- Melons (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon)

## Recommended daily servings of fruit:

Women: 1.5 cups

Men: 2 cups



## Lower-Fat, Lower-Calorie Substitutions

Trick your taste buds with these healthful substitutions for common foods and condiments.

### **Instead of...**

Whipping cream

Sour cream

Cream cheese

Ground beef

Nuts

Hard cheese

Butter or margarine  
to coat pans

### **Try these instead...**

Half and Half, evaporated low-fat or skim milk

Reduced-fat or fat-free sour cream or plain yogurt

Low-fat or fat-free cream cheese

Lean ground beef or ground turkey breast  
(Choose those that are 93% lean)

One-half the amount of toasted nuts

Reduced-fat cheeses or Parmesan cheese

Cooking spray

## Milk and milk products

These foods contain calcium, potassium, and vitamin D (in fortified products). Milk products are important for building and maintaining healthy bones and teeth, and they are good sources of protein. Be sure to select low-fat or fat-free products. Choose from among:

- Milk
- Yogurt
- Cottage or ricotta cheese
- Hard cheese (cheddar, Swiss, mozzarella, parmesan)
- Processed cheese (American)
- Milk based desserts (pudding, ice milk, frozen yogurt, ice cream) These desserts are an occasional treat and should not be the primary dairy product.

\* The equivalent of 1 cup of milk or yogurt is 1.5 ounces of natural cheese or 2 ounces of processed cheese.

## Recommended daily servings of milk products:

Women: 3 cups

Men: 3 cups





## Protein foods

This food group includes meat, poultry, seafood, beans and peas, eggs, and nuts, seeds and processed soy products. Proteins also help to keep you full so try to have a source of lean protein at breakfast, lunch, and dinner. All choices are good sources of protein and provide a range of nutrients, depending on the choice. Choose low-fat or lean cuts of meat and poultry. Lean choices can be identified by the word “loin”. Meats should be 93% lean, such as ground beef, pork or turkey. Be sure to remove visible fat and prepare by baking, broiling, or grilling.

Select a variety of protein choices each week, emphasizing fish, beans, peas, nuts, and seeds. Good choices include (but are not limited to):

- Meats (beef, veal, pork, lamb, game meats)
- Poultry (chicken, turkey)
- Dry beans and peas (black beans, black-eyed peas, pinto beans, navy beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, falafel, soybeans, tofu)
- Nuts and seeds (almonds, walnuts, peanuts, peanut butter, pecans, cashews, pistachios, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds)
- Eggs
- Fish (catfish, cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, salmon, snapper, trout, tuna, and shellfish such as crab, shrimp, lobster, clams, oysters, scallops).

Bake, broil, grill, or steam fish instead of frying.

*\*The equivalent of one ounce of meat, poultry, or fish is 1/2-cup of cooked dry beans, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon of peanut butter, or 3-ounces of nuts or seeds.*

## Recommended daily servings of meat and beans:

Women: 5 oz.\*

Men: 5.5-6 oz.\*

(or equivalent)



## Good Fats, Bad Fats

Dietary fat has a bad reputation, but not all fats are unhealthy. The four main types of fat are saturated, polyunsaturated, monounsaturated, and trans fatty acids (trans fats). Saturated fats and trans fats are the troublemakers, whereas polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats are more neutral or, in some instances, beneficial. It is important to note that ALL fats are about 50 calories per teaspoon. The recommendation is to limit saturated fat to less than 10% of your daily calorie intake.

**Saturated fats.** Saturated fats are found primarily in animal products like meats, whole milk, butter, and full-fat cheeses and in palm oil and coconut oil. These fats raise levels of LDL (“bad”) cholesterol in the blood. High LDL levels increase the risk of heart disease and have been linked to the development of several types of cancer. Bakery products and snack foods are major sources of saturated fat in the diet. Although the media portrays coconut oil as a healthy fat, The American Heart Association recommends against ingesting coconut oil.

**Trans fats.** Trans fats are a type of polyunsaturated fat that has been chemically altered to be more stable at room temperature. These fats behave like saturated fats in the body and may be even worse for your health. They are found in many packaged foods like cookies, crackers, and snacks because they extend the products’ shelf life. Trans fats also may be found in French fries and other fast foods, and they are used in some margarine to keep it solid at room temperature.

**Polyunsaturated fats.** These fats are found primarily in plants and plant oils, such as common cooking oils. They tend to be easier on the heart than saturated or trans fats. Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fat found in fish and fish oil, canola oil, flaxseeds, walnuts, and soybeans.

Omega-3 fatty acids are beneficial fats that have positive effects on the heart, brain, and eyes.

**Monounsaturated fats.** Monounsaturated fats are healthful fats found in olives, olive oil, canola oil, avocados, almonds, peanuts, peanut butter, sesame seeds, and macadamia nuts. They help protect the heart and may reduce the risk of some cancers.

The advice on fats: Choose healthy fats whenever possible and limit your intake of saturated and trans fats. Keep in mind that all fats are high in calories and should be used sparingly, especially when you are trying to lose weight.

## Oils, Sodium, Sugars

***The Dietary Guidelines 2015-2020 states the following recommendations for oils, sodium, and sugars.***

**Oils** are high in calories (about 120 calories per tablespoon), and they are not included as one of the five food groups in ChooseMyPlate. However, oils can be consumed very sparingly, making sure to count them as part of your daily calorie allotment. In addition to cooking oils, these liquid fats are found in mayonnaise, salad dressings, and tub or squeeze margarine.

Use the least amount of oil possible in your cooking and choose olive oil or canola oil for sautéing foods. Look for oils and oil-based products with minimal saturated fat and no trans fats (see “Good Fats, Bad Fats” on page 49). Try “lite” salad dressings and use spray or tub margarine instead of solid fats like butter, stick margarine, lard, or shortening.

**The recommendation of the FDA is that sodium consumption** should be no more than 2,300 mgs per day, lower is better; shoot for 1,500 mgs per day. Buy food products that state low or no sodium. If this option is not available rinse the food product to reduce the sodium content before eating.

**Added sugar** should be less than 10% of your daily calories. The new nutrition labels make it easy to see how much added sugar a product contains. (see page 52 on how to read a nutrition label).



## Strategies for Success

Now that you have your blueprint for healthy eating, here are some suggestions that can help you succeed:

### Eating and Drinking:

- Eat off smaller plates
- Don't take seconds
- Eat only half of your dessert
- Share an entrée with a friend
- Choose an appetizer or side dish over an entrée
- Ask for salad dressing on the side
- Drink water or club soda with lemon or lime
- Sit down to eat meals. Eat slowly and savor the flavors
- Don't skip breakfast. Try to include some protein.
- Snack on low-fat or fat-free yogurt
- Drink water before a meal
- Limit alcoholic beverages
- Eat leaner red meat and poultry
- Remove the skin a from poultry
- Trim fat from meats
- Switch to low-fat or fat-free dairy products
- Try eating smaller meals throughout the day
- Keep washed fruits and cut-up vegetables handy for snacks
- Use low-fat or reduced fat salad dressings (also try low-fat spray products)
- Serve modest portions; leave remaining food on the stove
- Experiment with new seasonings to replace butter or margarine
- Use plain low-fat yogurt as a base for dips
- Top baked potatoes with fat-free sour cream
- Order lattes with fat-free or skim milk
- Keep frozen fruits and fruits canned in natural juice on hand
- Choose reduced-sodium products when possible
- Grill, steam, or bake meats, poultry, and fish
- Grill vegetable kabobs for a barbecue meal
- Serve baked apples or pears for dessert
- Pass up "break rooms," concession stands, and vending machines

## Planning, Shopping, Organizing:

- Plan your weekly meals
- Grocery shop on weekends
- Eat before you go shopping
- Always shop from a list
- Shop at farmers' markets
- Vary your meal selections to avoid boredom
- Try new recipes and adapt old favorites
- Try to have at least 4 or 5 family dinners each week
- Weigh and measure everything whenever possible
- Record all your daily foods and beverages
- Reorganize your refrigerator to showcase healthful foods
- Learn to read and understand the Nutrition Facts Label

### Start with:

- Serving size
- Servings per container
- Consider the calories
- 100 calories per serving is considered a moderate amount
- 400 calories or more is considered high

### As a general guide:

- 5% Daily Value (DV) low
- 20% Daily Value (DV) is high
- Choose nutrients wisely

### Nutrients to get more of:

- Vitamin D, calcium, and iron - aim high.

### Nutrients to get less of:

- Saturated fat, sodium, added sugars - aim low.

Nutrition Facts	
2 servings per container	
Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)	
Amount per serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>240</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g	<b>5%</b>
Saturated Fat 1.5g	<b>8%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 5mg	<b>2%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 430mg	<b>19%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 46g	<b>17%</b>
Dietary Fiber 7g	<b>25%</b>
Total Sugars 4g	
Includes 2g Added Sugars	<b>4%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 11g	
<b>Vitamin D</b> 2mcg	<b>10%</b>
<b>Calcium</b> 260mg	<b>20%</b>
<b>Iron</b> 6mg	<b>35%</b>
<b>Potassium</b> 240mg	<b>6%</b>
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	



## Rethink Your Refrigerator

Now that you are eating more healthfully, your refrigerator probably needs a makeover. Here are some tips:

### **Switch out unhealthy products. Replace...**

- whole milk with skim or 1% milk
- butter (preferably a healthful blend or spray product with no trans fats)
- full-fat cheese with reduced-fat products
- regular soda with diet soda (plain water is better), another alternative is sparkling water with fruit flavors
- sugary juice blends with fresh fruit
- full-fat dressings and condiments with low-fat products

**Hide the desserts.** If you have to have desserts on hand, at least hide them in the crisper or at the back of the shelf.

**Showcase fruits and veggies.** Place fruits and vegetables where they can be seen when the refrigerator door is opened. Pre-wash grapes, apples, and other hardy fruits and vegetables for a quick snack.

**Store (or freeze) foods in healthy portions.** That way you won't be tempted to overeat.



# Chapter 5

**LIFELONG EXERCISE**

## LIFELONG EXERCISE

Exercise is a critical component of weight management and good health. Increasing your activity level makes it easier to lose weight, and it's just about the only way to keep the weight off over the long term. Without a commitment to lifelong exercise, all your hard work at weight loss might be wasted.

The good news is that you don't have to join a gym or buy expensive equipment to get fit and stay fit.

### ***Aerobic Exercise Is Essential***

Aerobic exercise is any activity that increases your heart rate and makes you breathe harder. This includes brisk walking, jogging, running, cycling, and lap swimming. Walking on a treadmill, riding a stationary bike, using a stair climber or elliptical trainer, and doing circuit training at a gym are other alternatives.

Brisk walking is an excellent aerobic activity that nearly everyone can do. Most people walk in their neighborhood, on a high school track, or in the mall. Other options include taking a jazzercise class, using an exercise DVD, or enrolling in an aerobics class at a local gym or community center.

*Your goal is to gradually achieve a moderate-intensity workout for 30 to 60 minutes per day on five or more days of the week.*

Aerobic exercise has many health benefits. It's best known for strengthening the cardiovascular system and improving risk factors for heart disease and stroke. But aerobic exercise also plays an important role in weight loss and weight management.

The most obvious benefit for people trying to manage their weight is that it burns calories and speeds weight loss. (Remember that the most efficient way to lose weight is to eat less and exercise more.)

*If you are significantly overweight or have any chronic health conditions, see your doctor before beginning an exercise program.*



But aerobic exercise also:

- Suppresses appetite
- Reduces stress
- Eases mild depression
- Promotes feelings of well being
- Boosts self-confidence
- Increases energy and stamina
- Improves sleep
- Increases flexibility and agility
- Eases anxiety
- Firms and tones the body
- Revs up the metabolism

### **Daily Activities Count**

Becoming more physically active also involves finding ways to work movement into your daily activities. Here are a few suggestions:

- Park your car farther away at work
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Take a 10-minute walk on your lunch break
- Walk your dog every evening
- Vacuum and dust more often
- Mow the lawn
- Pull weeds
- Plant and maintain a vegetable garden
- Wash the car or your windows
- Play with your kids (jump rope, shoot hoops, play kickball)
- Push the baby in a stroller
- Join a bowling league
- Go dancing
- Take up a new sport
- Learn yoga
- Join a dance class
- Walk instead of drive whenever possible

Many people are motivated to move more by wearing a pedometer and challenging themselves to walk farther – or take more steps – during the

course of each day. The Kaiser Permanente 10,000 Steps<sup>®</sup> program popularized this approach (see Resources). Consider this: It takes a little more than 2,000 steps for the average person to walk 1 mile. If you work up to 10,000 steps per day, you will be walking nearly 5 miles a day! Don't use exercise as a weight loss tool but rather as a passport to health.

Even small movements can make a difference. Recent research suggests that people who take frequent breaks during sedentary times – when working at a desk, for example, or reading a book – have better triglyceride and glucose levels and a smaller waist circumference than similar people who sit for prolonged periods of time without getting up. So keep moving! Consider getting up every hour and walk at least 250 steps.

### **Strong Muscles Fight Fat**

Strength training – lifting weights or working out on weight machines – is an important part of your weight loss and exercise program. That's because, despite its other important benefits, aerobic exercise doesn't make your muscles strong. Only strength training can do that.

Why are strong muscles so important to weight loss and weight maintenance? Muscle is an active tissue and requires energy (calories) to maintain; stored body fat, in contrast, requires very few calories.

People with more muscle mass have a higher metabolic rate and therefore burn more calories.

In fact, strength training can increase your metabolic rate by up to 15%. That's especially important during long-term weight loss because people lose a small amount of muscle along with the lost fat – and that can drag down your metabolism. Building muscle with strength training helps counteract this problem and can help prevent weight loss plateaus.

In addition to aiding in weight loss, strength training also:

- Strengthens bones
- Improves balance
- Reduces depression
- Improves sleep
- Relieves back pain
- Eases arthritis symptoms
- Improves glucose control

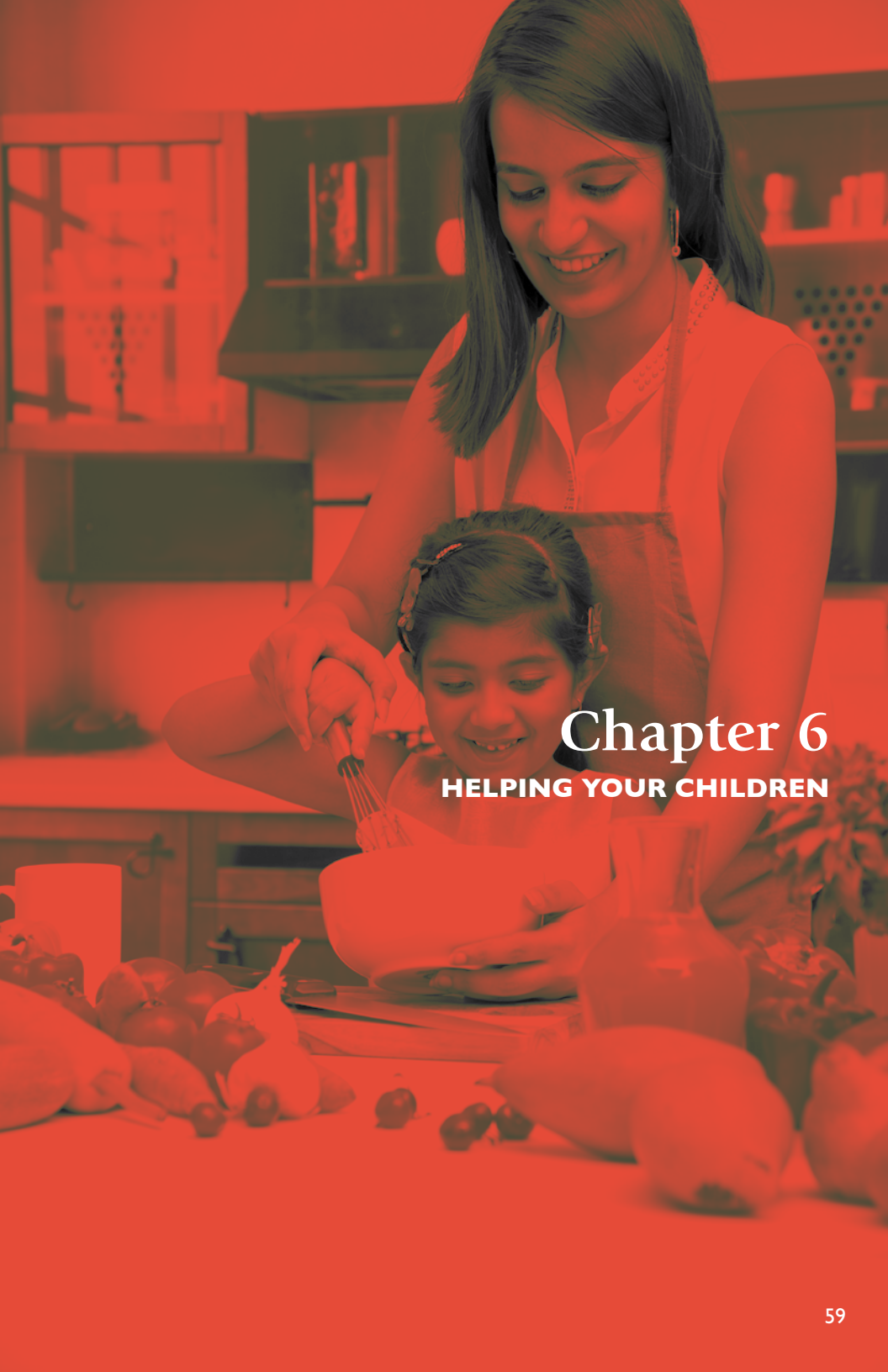
To start an at-home strength-training program, you will need some dumbbells in different weights and an instruction guide. Two excellent resources are the book *Strong Women Stay Slim* by Miriam E. Nelson, Ph.D., and *Exercise: A Guide From the National Institute on Aging*. The National Institute on Aging publication can be downloaded free and also contains information on aerobic and flexibility exercises. The CDC has a resource on strength training called *Strength Training for Older Adults* that can also be used for those who have never trained. (See Resources for purchasing/ordering information.)

### **Don't Forget Flexibility**

To round out your physical activity, be sure to include some stretching exercises (see *Exercise: A Guide From the National Institute on Aging*). You might also consider taking a yoga, tai chi, or Pilates class to improve your flexibility.

Flexibility exercises provide greater freedom of movement, improve posture, release muscle tension, increase physical and mental relaxation, and reduce the risk of injury during other activities.





## Chapter 6

### HELPING YOUR CHILDREN

# Watching

your child struggle with weight issues is painful. As a parent you walk a fine line between wanting to help and not wanting to make your child feel worse by calling attention to the problem. It can be even more difficult if you were overweight as a child. You struggle with your own memories of teasing and rejection and desperately don't want your child to go through what you did.

*Childhood obesity experts insist that the best thing a parent can do is to be a good role model for healthy eating, make healthy foods available, keep junk foods out of the house, and encourage the entire family to become more active.*

Try to view your child's weight as a health issue, not an appearance problem. Be alert to signs of depression and low self-esteem in your child and seek counseling services when necessary.

### **The U.S. Surgeon General suggests that parents:**

- Let their children know they are loved and appreciated no matter what their weight
- Give children encouragement, acceptance, and support
- Concentrate on a child's overall health and positive qualities, not weight
- Focus on gradually changing the family's physical activity and eating habits
- Be a good role model for their children
- Plan family activities that offer exercise and enjoyment
- Encourage swimming, biking, skating, ball sports, and other fun activities
- Reduce the amount of time the family spends in sedentary activities
- Limit TV viewing and video games to less than two hours per day

### **Here are the Surgeon General's recommendations for healthy eating:**

- Guide – don't dictate – your family's food choices but only have food choices in your home that you would want them to eat
- Encourage children to eat only when hungry and to eat slowly
- Eat meals together as a family as often as possible
- Cut back on fat and calories in your family's meals
- Don't put your child on a restricted diet
- Don't use food as a reward or withhold food as punishment
- Encourage drinking water instead of sugary drinks and fruit juices

- Plan for healthy snacks
- Stock the refrigerator with fat-free or low-fat milk, fresh fruits, and vegetables
- Aim for at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- Discourage eating meals or snacks in front of the TV
- Start the day with a healthy breakfast
- Remember, children won't choose nutritious foods if their favorite unhealthy foods are in the house
- You are not a "bad parent" by telling your child "no"

Other important points: A growing child may not need to lose weight, only maintain his or her current weight and "grow into it." Also, a child's diet should follow the nutrition principles of ChooseMyPlate. Weight loss, if necessary, should be gradual. Children should never be placed on a crash diet or given diet pills.

## Keep Healthy Snacks on Hand

Here are some ideas for healthy snacks:

- Low-fat yogurt and fruit
- Whole wheat unsalted pretzels
- Unbuttered and unsalted popcorn
- Broccoli, carrots, or cherry tomatoes with low-fat dip or plain yogurt
- Grapes
- Apple slices with a small amount of peanut butter
- Graham crackers
- Gingersnap cookies
- Reduced-fat string cheese
- Baked whole-grain tortilla chips with salsa
- Whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk

It's also important for parents to understand that well-intended comments like, "Maybe this new diet will help" or "I hated my body, too, when I was your age," or even "You look great! Have you lost weight?" can do more harm than good. For an adolescent or teen, these comments are often interpreted as hurtful and critical, and they can damage the parent-child relationship.

Pre-teens and teens who have been successful at long-term, sustained weight loss usually:

- Took the initiative themselves
- Became more physically active
- Reduced portion sizes
- Reduced or eliminated sugar sweetened drinks
- Found an approach that worked best for them
- Were not overly concerned about how long it took
- Measured success in ways other than the scale and
- Relied on their family's support

Finally, weight management in a child who is significantly overweight should be supervised by a physician. Don't hesitate to speak privately with your child's doctor or nurse if you are concerned about your child's weight. If your child has a significant weight problem you should ask for a referral to a registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN). The Alliance for a Healthier Generation (sponsored by the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association) recommends that you ask your child's doctor the following questions:

- How is my child's weight?
- Will you track my child's body mass index (BMI)?
- Does my child's diet need to improve?
- What type and amount of exercise do you recommend?
- Are there any health screenings that should be done?
- What kind of support and encouragement do you recommend?
- What lifestyle changes can we make other than diet and exercise?
- Where do you recommend that we go to get more information and assistance?
- When should my child come in for another checkup?

Always remember that you are the most important role model for your children – and that your love and support are the essential ingredients that will help them achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

A person wearing a light-colored tank top and holding a clear plastic water bottle in their right hand. They are also wearing a white earphone cord. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The person's left hand is on their hip.

# Chapter 7

**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER...  
AND KEEPING IT ALL OFF**



**If** you and your family have started making positive changes to your diet and exercise habits, you are well on your way to achieving a healthier weight and better overall health. You are also laying the groundwork for lifetime weight management. As many successful “losers” have come to realize, keeping the weight off is a challenge. But it is doable with the right attitude and tools.

Some of the keys to long-term success include:

- Replacing a diet mentality with permanent healthy eating habits
- Finding physical activities you enjoy and can continue for a lifetime
- Learning to manage stress and other eating triggers
- Finding ways to deal with diet and exercise setbacks
- Identifying sources of support – e.g., exercise partners, support groups

The largest on-going study of successful weight loss and maintenance – the National Weight Control Registry – has identified several characteristics of people who have maintained a significant weight loss. Members of the registry have lost from 30 to 300 pounds and maintained their losses from 1 year to more than 66 years! About half of the registrants lost the weight on their own and half participated in a formalized weight loss program. Most of the participants continue to maintain a low-calorie, low-fat diet accompanied by high levels of physical activity. In fact 94% exercise regularly.

**Other habits of those who were highly successful at weight loss include:**

- 78% eat breakfast everyday
- 75% weigh themselves at least once a week
- 62% watch less than 10 hours of TV per week
- 94% exercise, on average, about 1 hour per day

The registry findings also indicate that maintaining a weight loss for 2–5 years greatly increases the chances of longer-term success.

## LOOKING FORWARD

With determination and the diet and exercise principles outlined in this book, you and your family members now know *Which “weigh”* to develop a healthy lifestyle.

We wish you the very best as you pursue such a worthwhile, life-enhancing goal!

### **Weight Loss Surgery Is an Option – But Only for the Severely Obese**

Weight loss surgery is not something to be taken lightly. Known medically as bariatric surgery (from the Greek word *baros*, or weight), weight loss surgery works by restricting the size of the stomach or by altering the anatomy of the gastrointestinal tract. These procedures should never be an initial treatment for obesity. They should be considered only if all other attempts at weight loss have failed.

The most commonly performed weight loss surgeries are gastric banding and gastric bypass. Both require general anesthesia.

- **Gastric banding:** This procedure restricts the size of the stomach by placing an adjustable band on it. (Staples may also be used.) Gastric banding allows the stomach to hold only a few ounces of food compared to its usual capacity of several pints. The surgery can be performed through tiny incisions, using a laparoscope (a lighted viewing instrument) and special surgical tools. The band can be adjusted as needed or removed if necessary. The procedure is commonly known as Lap Band<sup>®</sup> surgery.
- **Gastric bypass:** This procedure reduces the size of the stomach but also bypasses part of the small intestine. The bypass aspect of the procedure reduces the number of calories and nutrients that the body absorbs. Gastric bypass permanently alters the digestive system and, though generally safe, has the potential for more complications. Weight loss is more dramatic with gastric bypass surgery and may be better maintained over time.

These procedures have been performed successfully in both adults and teens. But they do carry potential risks, including infection, bleeding, blood clots, leaking from stomach staples, and rarely death. They also may be associated with some unpleasant symptoms after surgery: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and constipation. A condition called dumping syndrome can occur after gastric bypass.

This occurs when food passes too quickly through the stomach and intestines. Its symptoms include shakiness, sweating, dizziness, and diarrhea.

It's important to understand that people who undergo weight loss surgery still have to make healthful lifestyle changes to sustain their weight loss. Other changes include continuing to eat only very small amounts of food and taking a nutritional supplement when necessary to replace lost nutrients.

Weight loss surgery can improve or reverse obesity-related health conditions like obstructive sleep apnea, type 2 diabetes, gastrointestinal reflux disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol. In general, it is recommended only for people with a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or more or for people who are experiencing serious health problems because of their obesity.



## RESOURCES

### Books

*The Calorie King<sup>®</sup> Calorie, Fat, & Carbohydrate Counter.* Available at bookstores or online at [www.CalorieKing.com](http://www.CalorieKing.com)

*The LEARN<sup>®</sup> Program for Weight Management.* 10th Edition. Offers a comprehensive approach to weight management through lifestyle, exercise, attitudes, relationships, and nutrition. Available at [www.thelifestylecompany.com](http://www.thelifestylecompany.com)

Weight Watchers<sup>®</sup> cookbooks

*Cooking Light* cookbooks

*Strong Women Stay Slim* by Miriam Nelson, Sarah Wernick, and Steven Raichlen. Bantam, 1999. Available in bookstores.

*Exercise: A Guide from the National Institute on Aging.* To order, go to [www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/ExerciseGuide/](http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/ExerciseGuide/)

*365 Ways to Lose Weight: Only 1 Way to Keep It Off!* by Jeni Ellis Halliday, Ph.D. Available at [jenihalliday@aol.com](mailto:jenihalliday@aol.com)

### Websites

**[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)**

Detailed information on the ChooseMyPlate approach to good nutrition

**[www.choosemyplate.gov/KIDS](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/KIDS)**

Special nutrition information and activities for kids

**[www.dashdiet.org](http://www.dashdiet.org)**

Information on the DASH diet, a nutrition program designed to reduce high blood pressure

**[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)**

Information on all aspects of health, including diet and exercise

**<https://www.nih.gov/health-information>**

Kaiser Permanente's 10,000 Steps<sup>®</sup> Program

**[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)**

More information on meal planning and recipes

**[www.kidseatright.org](http://www.kidseatright.org)**

More information on childhood nutrition including healthy kid friendly receipes  
***[www.scandpg.org](http://www.scandpg.org)***

More information on cardiovascular health and wellness

### **Organizations**

American Cancer Society

***[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)***

American Diabetes Association

***[www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org)***

American Dietetic Association

***[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)***

American Heart Association

***[www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org)***

U. S. Food and Drug Administration

***[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)***

## KELSEY-SEYBOLD CLINIC FAMILY MEDICINE AND PEDIATRICS SUPPORT THE HEALTH OF THE ENTIRE FAMILY

Two Kelsey-Seybold Clinic specialists share advice on staying healthy.



### ***Take Responsibility for Your Own Health***

“Women are often the caregivers for their families but they forget to make their own health a priority. The fact is, many of the leading threats to women’s health can be prevented. According to statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the top causes of death among adult women in the

U.S. include heart disease, stroke, cancer and chronic lower respiratory disease. You can take the first step to protect yourself by talking with your doctor about your risk factors for these conditions. Then work on lowering your risk by leading a healthy lifestyle — eating healthy, staying physically active, quitting smoking and getting regular checkups. Simple preventive measures can go a long way toward reducing your health risks. What types of screenings should you get? This depends on your age and risk factors — which is why it’s so important to talk with a primary care doctor about which screening tests you should have.”

**Tahirih Baker, M.D.**, is a board-certified Family Medicine physician at Kelsey- Seybold’s Tanglewood Clinic near Memorial and the Galleria. Her interests include women’s health, preventive medicine and patient education. Dr. Baker is a member of The Women’s Fund and a past member of The Women’s Fund’s Board of Trustees.

**[www.kelsey-seybold.com](http://www.kelsey-seybold.com)**

24-Hour Appointment Scheduling 713-442-0000

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## What does The Women's Fund for Health Education and Resiliency do?

The Women's Fund is a non-profit organization that has been active in women's health since 1979, and we provide health education to the community free of charge. Our services include curriculum-based health classes, publications, health education events and one time educational sessions. We want all the Greater Houston area women and girls to have the tools they need to be advocates for their health, so we can be a community of healthy and resilient women.

**WHAT ABOUT ME?** The What about me? book is intended for girls 10 to 16. It is a resource with accurate information that girls can use to answer specific questions and refer to as needed about issues they may be going through. We hope that mothers and daughters will sit down and talk about the issues addressed in this book.

**WHAT ARE THE FACTS?** It is vital that woman remain aware of the ongoing changes occurring in medicine. We hope readers find What are the facts? to be a source of timely information and inspiration for healthier lifestyles.

**HOW'S MY HEALTH?** This booklet is designed to be a simple, effective way to take charge of your health history and the history of your family members. You will have the information you need readily available and so will your family.

**For more information about our programs or publications, or if you are interested in becoming a member, please contact:**



Phone: 713-623-6543

[www.thewomensfund.org](http://www.thewomensfund.org)

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