



HOW TO MANAGE YOUR WEIGHT: 9 STEP CHECKLIST FOR LASTING CHANGE

Managing your weight is not easy. To ensure success, you must make real change in the way you eat and consider it a lifelong commitment not a diet. The first step is an honest, objective assessment of where you are now. Next you need to set realistic goals. Ask yourself: Why do I want to reach this goal? What will I do when I reach this goal? Then make a plan to reach your goal keeping in mind what you enjoy doing.

Here's your "Making Personal Choices Checklist for Lasting Change"

1. *Design your plan for your needs.* Your plan must fit your personality, your priorities, and your work and recreation schedules.
2. *Plan for nutrient-dense foods.* Try to get the most out of the food you eat by choosing foods with high nutritional value.
3. *Balance food intake throughout the day.* Most research shows that we may burn calories more efficiently in small amounts rather than large amounts.
4. *Plan for plateaus.* If you prepare yourself mentally for plateaus, you will be less likely to get discouraged. Exercise is probably the most important thing to help you get over a plateau.
5. *Chart your progress.* You can do this by regularly weighing yourself, having your measurements taken, having a formal fitness appraisal and even by the way your clothes fit.
6. *Chart your setbacks.* Rather than thinking about failure and punishment, think of setback as temporary and how to accommodate them. By recording how you feel when you eat, your eating habits, and the times and places you eat, you may be able to figure out why you needed ice cream or chose pizza instead of salad. A food diary can help you become more aware of these things.
7. *Become aware of your feelings of hunger and fullness.* For many of us, eating is time-dependent and we stop only when the food is gone. Years of eating "when it is time" rather than when we are hungry have made it hard to tell when we really are hungry and when we are full. You will be able to change your eating habits if you become more aware of them and learn to recognize true hunger pangs and the signals of when you have eaten enough.
8. *Accept yourself.* For many of us, this is the most important part of successful weight management. It is important to keep your weight in perspective. Unless you feel good about yourself inside, exterior changes won't help.
9. *Exercise, exercise, exercise.* Different people benefit from different types of activities. You need to select an exercise program that is fun for you - not a daily punishment for over-eating. Variety is a key to staying interested. Including friends and family might also help.

Working with you for lasting change, Lynda Pedley

Adapted from *Physical Fitness & Wellness*, Greenberg, Dintiman, Oakes, Irwin, Morrow

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