

## Managing Weight

Healthy eating and physical activity are key lifestyle factors in managing weight. Many things can make managing weight a challenge including stress, low income levels, some medical conditions and certain medications.

A healthy lifestyle and a healthy weight can:

- Help you prevent or manage diabetes
- Improve blood glucose (sugar), blood pressure and blood lipids (fats)
- Reduce the risk of complications such as heart disease and stroke
- Improve general well-being and energy levels

There are many health-care providers (e.g. dietitian, doctor, diabetes educator, pharmacist) who can help you manage your weight. Check with them before taking any weight loss medications, supplements, starting intense exercise or changing your diet.

### Weight measurements

A healthy weight can be measured in many ways, including:

- **Body Mass Index (BMI)** compares a person's weight to their height. For most adults aged 18 to 64, a BMI of 25 or higher\* is overweight.
- **Waist circumference (WC)** is the measurement around the waist. Too much fat around the waist is linked to health risks. WC goals differ depending on ethnic background and gender. In general, a healthy WC for men is less than 40 inches (102 centimetres) and for women it is less than 35 inches (88 centimetres).
- If you are overweight, losing five to 10 per cent of your current body weight at a rate of two to four pounds (one to two kilograms) per month is a healthy goal. For someone who is 200 pounds (90 kilograms), five to 10 per cent is 10 to 20 pounds (4.5 to nine kilograms).

\*Not including pregnant or lactating women, very muscular adults, adults with a very lean build.

### Who can help me?

There are many health-care providers (e.g. dietitian, doctor, diabetes educator, pharmacist) who can help you. Check with them before taking any weight loss medications, supplements, starting intense exercise or changing your diet.

### Challenges and possible solutions

Planning ahead means having solutions to deal with weight management challenges.

#### Challenges I might face

- I don't know how to start.
- I don't feel ready to change.

- I get discouraged and give up.
- When I lose weight, I have trouble keeping it off.
- I think my health condition(s) prevents me from making lifestyle changes.
- My family and friends are not supportive of my weight loss plan.
- I make unhealthy choices when stressed, bored or for emotional reasons.
- I don't know what or how much to eat.
- I feel deprived when I follow a "diet."
- I don't have time to be active and/or to eat well.
- It's hard to eat healthy and/or keep active when away from home.
- Keeping active and eating well is too expensive.

### Possible solutions

- Meet with a health-care provider to:
  - Discuss your situation and readiness to change;
  - Set realistic goals and develop a personal plan; and,
  - Help you with your challenges.
- Discuss your goals with friends and family. Suggest how they can help.
- Look for support and/or resources in your community.
- Be a healthy role model.
- Plan ahead (e.g. make weekly menus and grocery lists, schedule time for exercise).
- Keep track of things that affect your choices.
- Learn about eating sensible portions and balanced meals and snacks. Avoid fad diets.
- Check out [Just the Basics](#), [Beyond the Basics](#) and Canada's Food and Activity Guides.
- Reward yourself with something other than food when you reach a goal with something other than food.

### Believe in yourself

Each person's body has its own size and shape. Feel good about yourself and the lifestyle changes you make. Remember to think long-term, but make changes gradually.

### Lifestyle tips for a healthy weight

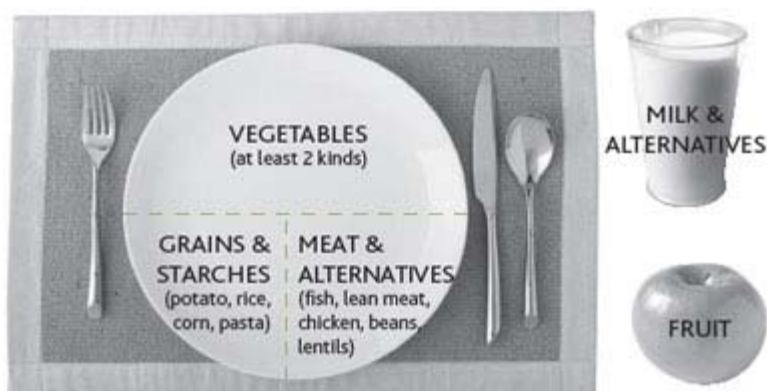
The key to reaching and staying at a healthy weight is to make lifestyle changes you can live with. Set realistic goals. Make one or two small changes at a time. When these changes are part of your daily routine, add new ones.

Goal	Tips
<b>Build exercise into your day</b>	Exercise helps muscles use glucose and burn calories. Do aerobic exercises such as brisk walking, skiing, or biking for at least 150 minutes each week (e.g. 30 minutes, five days a week). If you can, increase the amount of time and intensity gradually. Add resistance exercises like lifting weights three times a week. Check with your doctor before starting.
<b>Eat only when hungry</b>	Ask yourself if you are really hungry. Avoid eating out of habit, boredom or for emotional reasons. Eat slowly. It takes your brain about 20 minutes to realize that your stomach is full.

<b>Create a healthy eating environment</b>	Plate your food in the kitchen and bring your plate to the table. Keep extra servings in the kitchen to reduce the temptation to overeat. Eat at the table rather than in front of a screen (TV or computer).
<b>Eat regular balanced meals</b>	Eating three meals a day reduces overeating. Start with a healthy breakfast. Each food group is important. Meals should be spaced four to six hours apart.
<b>Choose appropriate portions</b>	Too much food, healthy or not, leads to weight gain. If you can, check your portions with measuring cups or scales. Talk to a dietitian about how much food is right for you. Follow the Plate Method below.
<b>Eat fibre-rich foods</b>	High-fibre foods may help to keep you feeling full longer. Whole grains, vegetables, fruits and legumes (dried beans and lentils) are high in fibre.
<b>Choose healthy beverages and snacks</b>	Satisfy thirst with water. Pop, sweetened hot or cold drinks, juice and alcohol can add many unwanted calories. Small snacks can help control hunger. Keep pre-cut vegetables and washed fruit handy for easy snacking. Avoid fried, salty and sugary snacks.

## The Plate Method

Using a standard dinner plate, follow this model to control your portion sizes.



## Special considerations for people with diabetes

People with diabetes must balance a healthy weight with the need to keep their blood glucose (sugar) levels within target range. Talk to your health-care team about what is right for you.

- Weight loss and lifestyle changes can affect blood glucose (sugar) control. Find out how by testing your blood glucose (sugar) level at recommended times and tracking your progress. Diabetes medications may need to be reviewed.
- Try not to let the fear of low blood glucose (sugar) prevent you from being physically active and/or eating smaller servings.
- Some diabetes medications may affect weight.
- Some complications such as high blood pressure, foot ulcers or eye damage may change the types of exercises you can do.

- If lifestyle changes do not lead to appropriate weight loss, talk to your health-care team about other options.

## Bottom line

Positive lifestyle changes, even small ones, can help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight and improve your overall health. Eat well, be active, be yourself!



*Content from:*

<http://www.diabetes.ca/diabetes-and-you/healthy-living-resources/weight-management/managing-weight-diabetes>