

“Weight management is a long-term approach to a healthy lifestyle. It includes a balance of healthy eating and physical exercise to equate energy expenditure and energy intake. Developing healthy eating habits while using tips that will keep us fuller longer can be useful tools in weight management.”

(Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/weight_management, 12/2/2014)

Weight management is important for many reasons including your overall health and well being. It also helps to make you feel and look better. Other important reasons to manage your weight are that maintaining a healthy weight may: decrease the risk

of heart disease and stroke; help control blood glucose; reduce the risk of sleep apnea; decrease wear and tear on bones and joints; reduce some cancer risk; increase balance in older adults (thereby decreasing falls); and help decrease depression (obese have a 55% greater risk of depression; people with depression are 58% more likely to be obese) and anxiety.

Whether you are trying to gain or lose weight to be healthier, it is important to eat the right foods to ensure you are fueling your body with the proper nutrients.



How Much Should I Weigh?

A common tool that has been used for decades to help us determine our “ideal” weight is a height vs. weight chart. While this might be useful in helping us determine a very broad range of “ideal” weights, it is really not very accurate. There is more to consider than simply a person’s height when trying to determine how much they should weigh (whether they are “big boned” or “petite” framed, how much muscle mass they have, etc.). More recently, people have started looking at their Body Mass Index (BMI) to figure out if they are over or under-weight. BMI is probably a little more helpful than the height-weight charts, but it still doesn’t take things like muscle mass into account. Perhaps the best indicator of our ideal weight is, very simply, how we feel. If we are in the ballpark of what our height-weight chart and/or BMI say we should weigh, and we feel great - we’re not sick, have plenty of energy, etc. - we are probably at a good weight.

People tend to equate weight with health: overweight people are unhealthy and thin or underweight people are healthy. While it is true that being overweight (or significantly underweight) puts you at greater risk for some diseases, being thin by no means ensures that someone is healthy. People who are thin but who have poor nutrition and exercise habits are more likely to get diabetes, heart disease, or a host of other conditions commonly associated with being overweight. WebMD.com sums this up perfectly:

“It’s important to remember that your BMI is only one measure of your health. A person who is not at a “normal” weight according to BMI charts may be healthy if he or she has [healthy eating](#) habits and exercises regularly. People who are thin but don’t [exercise](#) or eat nutritious foods aren’t necessarily healthy just because they are thin.”

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, a healthy weight is “a body weight that is **appropriate for your height and benefits your health.**” [emphasis added]

Are You Really What You Eat?

We've all heard the expression, "You are what you eat", but what does that really mean? Well, if you think about it, when we eat anything, be it plant or animal, we are eating everything that went on or into that plant or animal. So, when we eat vegetables and fruits, we may also be eating fertilizers and pesticides. When we eat beef or chicken, we are also eating whatever that cow or chicken ate or had injected into them, such as antibiotics or growth hormones, which are often used to fatten animals quickly.

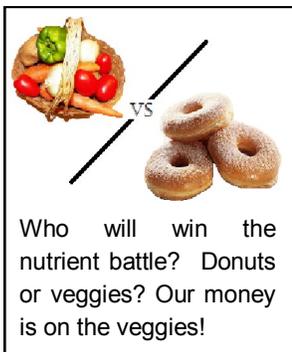
Some fruits and vegetables are more likely to be contaminated by pesticides and other toxins. You can find a list of 48 common produce items ranked from 'dirtiest' to 'cleanest', based on pesticide levels found on the product, at <http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/list.php>. The top 12 dirtiest ("The Dirty Dozen") are: apples, strawberries, grapes, celery, peaches, spinach, sweet bell peppers, imported nectarines, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, imported snap peas, and potatoes. If your food made the list try to buy organic versions of them when possible.

For meat and animal products, it's important to buy products from animals raised as close to nature as possible. Cows are biologically designed to eat grass and forage, not corn. Most commercial farms feed their cows corn, genetically-modified to fatten them up quickly. If you are eating a lot of commercially-raised beef, you are eating that same fattening corn.

Grass-fed cows are fed better food and generally have a better quality of life. Their meat is higher in omega-3 fatty acids, higher levels of many B vitamins (including B12), and trace minerals like calcium and magnesium. These cows are generally healthier than commercially-raised cows and their meat is healthier for us.

"All calories are NOT created equal. The same number of calories from different types of food can have very different biological effects."

~ Dr. Mark Hyman



Who Cares About Calories?

What's all the fuss about calories? It seems as though everyone is counting calories these days, but is it really necessary? Does it truly help one manage their weight for a lifetime?

You are probably aware that a calorie is the amount of energy needed to raise the temperature of 1 kilogram of water 1 degree Celsius. In terms of weight management, a popular theory is that it takes 3500 calories to effect a 1-pound change in the amount of fat we store. So if we take in 3500 calories more than we use, we gain one pound of fat, and conversely, if we burn 3500 calories more than we take in, we lose one pound of fat. Sounds pretty simple, doesn't it? But is it really?

Believe it or not, "all calories are not created equal. The same number of calories from different types of food can have very different biological effects". A 3500-calorie box of doughnuts is going to affect us differently than 3500 calories worth of broccoli. In fact, while it might not be difficult to consume 3500 of donuts or junk food, it would be virtually impossible to consume 3500 calories worth of broccoli (more than 100 cups!). Donuts and similar foods are basically made up of calories and not much else, whereas broccoli also has fiber and nutrients, which our bodies need to extract and distribute to various parts of our body. What this means is that our bodies have to work harder (i.e. burn calories) to process the nutrient-dense vegetables than the non-nutritive donuts, so if you eat the same amount of calories from veggies rather than donuts, you will lose weight. *(continued on page 3)*

Calories (continued from page 2)

It's also important to realize that food is information. It controls our genes, hormones, and metabolism. According to Dr. Mark Hyman, author of "The Blood Sugar Solution", "The source of the calories makes a gigantic difference in how your genes, hormones, enzymes, and metabolism respond. If you eat food that spikes your insulin level, you will gain weight. If you eat food that reduces your insulin level, you will lose weight. This is true even if it contains exactly the same number of calories or grams of protein, fat, carbohydrate, and fiber."

Another key component of weight management is the effect food has on your blood sugar, or its glycemic index (GI) and glycemic load (GL). Basically, a food's GI is a measure of how fast it raises your blood sugar. The GL is basically a measure of the amount of carbs per serving of that food. Foods with a GL of ten or lower are your best carbohydrate choices for weight loss - be sure to pay close attention to the serving sizes. Does this mean never eating potatoes or rice - or even cake! - again? No. If you are trying to lose weight, be sure to pair your higher GL foods with lower GL foods, such as broccoli, carrots, or lentils to create a low GL meal.

If you want to lose weight, try to choose low glycemic, nutrient dense foods more often; if you are trying to gain weight, aim for nutritious meals that have a higher GL. You can find a glycemic index/load chart, along with more information, here: www.elsearsmd.com/glycemic-index/ (2/4/2015)

How Important is Portion Size?

According to Dr. Hyman, portion size does matter. Keep in mind that just because a portion size may only be 1/2 cup of rice, that doesn't mean you can only have 1/2 cup of rice at any given meal; you just have to count every additional 1/2 cup as another serving. Some common suggested serving sizes include:

- ◇ Meat, chicken, or fish: 4 ounces
- ◇ Non-starchy vegetables: 3 cups salad greens; 1 cup raw or 1/2 cup cooked **
- ◇ Starchy vegetables: 1 cup winter squash; 1/2 sweet potato
- ◇ Fruit: 1 medium piece; 1 cup berries; 1/2 cup mixed fresh fruit; 1/4 cup dried fruit
- ◇ Whole grains: 1/3 cup cooked
- ◇ Beans: 1/3 cup cooked or canned
- ◇ Nuts or seeds: 1/4 cup or one small handful

** According to Dr. Hyman, non-starchy vegetables are "essentially free foods" - they are so full of nutrients and filling that it's virtually impossible to overeat them.

For a complete list of foods and their serving sizes, check out www.bloodsurgarsolution.com.

What About Water?

JJ Virgin, author of "The Sugar Impact Diet", has the following suggestions regarding water: drink 16 ounces within one hour of waking up; another 16 ounces 30 - 60 minutes before each meal (only 4 - 8 ounces with meals - if you must); wait one hour after meals to allow proper digestion before you resume drinking; and finally, drink 8 ounces prior to bedtime to reduce nighttime hunger pangs. Drink at least 64 ounces of water per day - more if you are extremely overweight (half your body weight in ounces recommended - about 100 ounces per day for a 200-pound person) or active outside during extremely high temperatures.

The Scoop on Sugar and Artificial Sweeteners

For years people have been endorsing low-fat diets as the best way to lose weight. Now many experts are saying it's not fat, but sugar that is the enemy. It's no wonder we're confused. Let's look at some facts:

Sugar, in any form, is essentially a carbohydrate. Technically, our bodies don't need carbohydrates for survival, but they do need fat. Fats make up the cell walls - the building blocks for healthy cell membranes.

Sugar comes in two forms: glucose and fructose. Glucose travels through the digestive system where it can raise blood sugar quickly if not slowed down by fiber, nutrients, and fat. Processed fructose, like that found in High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS), on the other hand, goes straight to our liver, which can lead to fatty liver disease. Also, any fructose that is not immediately used is turned into triglycerides (fats) in our blood stream.



It can be confusing, when you consider that most fruits contain fructose. However, naturally occurring fructose, such as found in fruits, is "part of a complex web of nutrients and fiber and doesn't exhibit the same biological effects as the high fructose found in corn sugar", according to Dr. Mark Hyman.

The topic of artificial sweeteners is controversial. Artificial sweeteners, such as aspartame (NutraSweet) and sucralose (Splenda), are just that: artificial. Despite claims to the contrary, there is nothing natural or nutritious about them. There is evidence that artificial sweeteners may actually slow our metabolism and cause us to consume more food. For an in-depth article on artificial sweeteners, visit: www.medicinenet.com/artificial_sweeteners/article.htm.

Fat: Bad News or Just Misunderstood?

There are three types of fat: saturated, unsaturated, and trans-fats. Trans-fats are not naturally occurring fats - they are made by putting hydrogen ions into polyunsaturated fats in order to make them more shelf-stable. You'll find them in many processed foods, especially cookies, cakes, crackers, chips, and microwave popcorn. Avoid them for your health's sake.



Unsaturated fat can be mono- or poly-unsaturated, and should be your primary source of fat. Polyunsaturated fats can be omega-3 or omega-6 fatty acids. Some of the healthier unsaturated fats include: olives and avocados; tree nuts, wild caught cold-water fish (salmon, sardines, herring) extra virgin olive oil (low to medium heat for cooking); walnut oil; sesame oil; and sunflower oil.

Saturated fat is solid at room temperature and is found primarily in animal meat and products, as well as in tropical oils, such as coconut and palm oils and cocoa butter. There is currently much debate about the health benefits of saturated fat. While generally regarded by mainstream medicine as less healthy than unsaturated fats, some saturated fats have been shown to have a positive effect on our health. Coconut oil, for example, contains inflammatory fat, and can be used for high temperature cooking. Many functional medicine practitioners recommend adding some grass-fed animal and plant-based saturated fats to our diet.



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Ten Habits That Can Help You Lose Weight

1. Evaluate your eating habits. Do you frequently taste food while preparing it? Eat late at night or while watching television? Finish your kids' meals? Pay attention to what and when you eat to identify eating triggers. Keeping a food journal, even for a few weeks, can be a big help in this area. Once you find your triggers, see step number two.
2. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Come up with a strategy for meals and snacks - and situations where you typically find yourself overeating. If you have a hard time avoiding fast food at lunchtime, try packing yourself a healthy lunch four days a week, or if you tend to munch on junk food or sodas while waiting for the kids at soccer practice, try taking along some celery with almond or cashew butter or carrots and hummus to snack on instead. Better yet, grab some water and take a walk while the kids practice.
3. Avoid shopping while hungry. It's more difficult to avoid impulse buying (like the candy bars at the register) when you're hungry. Also be sure to make a list ahead of time and stick to it. Shop the outer aisles of the store first, as this is generally where the healthier products are stocked.
4. Eat regular meals. For some this may mean three meals a day, for others, four or five smaller meals. Find what works best for you and stick to it as much as possible to help prevent binge eating.
5. Eat from a plate while sitting at a table. Make each meal a memorable experience.
6. Eat slowly, chew every bite, and savor the taste of the food. Digestion starts with chewing, so the better you chew, the more nutrients you will get from your food. It can take up to 20 minutes for your brain to realize you're full, so try setting your fork down between bites.
7. Serve food on individual plates, rather than bring the serving dishes to the table. If the food is in front of you, you're more likely to eat even after you're full. Using smaller plates and tall, narrow glasses can trick us into thinking we're eating or drinking more than we really are.
8. Don't eat after dinner. If you feel hungry after dinner, try drinking a large glass of water - sometimes we think we are hungry when we're really thirsty. If that doesn't satisfy your craving, try brushing your teeth. If all else fails, try munching on a few raw veggies.
9. If you snack during the day, treat it like a mini-meal. Opt for nutritious snacks full of complex carbs, protein, and healthy fat.
10. Eat breakfast, every day. Ideally, try to eat within one hour of waking up. Breakfast provides your body with the fuel necessary to get your metabolism going and provide you with energy all day. It's important to get protein and fiber in your breakfast to help keep you feeling full longer.

Speaking of Fiber...

Fiber, or roughage, is important not only for weight loss, but for health in general. Fiber is a carbohydrate - the only carbohydrate that our body doesn't turn into sugar. Fiber helps slow food down as it travels through our digestive tract, helping us feel full longer and keeping our blood sugar steady. It also helps keep things clean along the way.

Fiber also helps fat move smoothly through our digestive system so less is absorbed by our body, and it feeds the healthy bacteria in our gut, which promotes a strong immune system.

Most of us do not get nearly enough fiber in our diets, so choose high-fiber foods like veggies, beans, and whole grains when possible to slowly work up to at least 25 grams of fiber per day. Be sure to increase your fiber intake slowly and drink plenty of water to help keep it moving and avoid digestive issues.

Tips for Gaining Healthy Weight

With the high prevalence of overweight and obese people in the US today, there is a lot of focus on losing weight, but being more than a few pounds underweight can be just as dangerous as being overweight. Here are some tips from WebMD to help you gain weight in a healthy way.

- ◆ Calories count, but so does nutrition: focus on foods that are higher in calories and high in nutrients; start with nutritious foods and, when possible, enrich them with additional ingredients like full-fat yogurt, fruit, nuts, and healthy fats. Recommended foods: nuts, seeds, almond or cashew butter, avocados, olives, hummus, healthy oils (olive, coconut, etc.), grass-fed animal fats, and full-fat dairy products (i.e. butter).
- ◆ Eat often: eating meals or substantial snacks (mini-meals) more often; try to eat six times per day, with at least three of those meals containing protein, starch, vegetables, and fat; for example: a turkey sandwich on whole-grain bread with mayonnaise and tomatoes and a fruit smoothie.
- ◆ Gain muscle mass: athletes trying to bulk up should snack on protein-rich foods and beverages such as high-protein energy bars and chocolate milk or protein shake.
- ◆ To gain weight after an illness: drink smoothies or meal replacement drinks (i.e. Ensure), eat egg dishes, and choose bland, mild foods while transitioning back to a healthy diet; it's especially important to get enough protein after an illness, so aim for five ounces of lean meat, fish, or poultry and a few servings of dairy, whole grains (be mindful if gluten-sensitive), eggs, and legumes to make sure you get enough protein.

In a Nutshell

Whether trying to lose, gain, or maintain a healthy weight, it's important to eat high-quality, nutrient-rich foods, exercise, and practice stress management techniques (see our Stress Management home study training). See the ChooseMyPlate.gov place setting to the right for the government recommendations for a healthy diet. Don't forget to add a little healthy fat, too!

If trying to lose weight, choose foods that are low on the glycemic load scale more often (aim for 80 - 90% of the time), find ways to incorporate more movement into your daily routine, drink plenty of water (not sugary sodas, juices or sports drinks), include protein and healthy fat in every meal (including breakfast), and keep a food journal - at least for a while - to see where you might be able to make better choices. Many experts recommend avoiding artificial sweeteners completely; please do your own research and do what you feel is the right choice for you.

If trying to gain weight, choose nutritious foods that are higher on the glycemic load scale more often, concentrate on strength training and stretching exercises more than cardio, and avoid high-fat processed foods, which most likely contain unhealthy trans-fats.

Trying to maintain a healthy weight? Choose foods from anywhere on the glycemic load scale, taking care to balance foods from the high end with foods from the low end (or vice-versa) to create a balanced medium-load meal. It's also important that you continue to incorporate movement and exercise into your day: the older we get, the easier it is for those unwanted pounds to creep up on us, so stay active and stay ahead of them!

Regardless of whether you're trying to lose, gain, or maintain your weight, eating as close to nature as possible (i.e. real, whole foods) and being active will help you be in the best health possible.

To your health!



Weight Management Test

Name: _____

Role/Title: _____

Agency: _____

Date: _____

Please provide contact information (email address, fax number, or mailing address) where you would like your certificate to be sent:

You must submit your completed test, with at least a score of 80%, to receive **1 hour** of training credit for this course.

- * To submit via fax, please fax the test and evaluation to 814-728-8887. Please fax only the test and evaluation, not the entire training packet.
- * To submit via email, please send an email to training@northwesthc.org. Please put "Weight Management Test" in the subject line, and the numbers 1—10, along with your answers, in the body of the email, OR scan the test and evaluations pages and email as attachments.
- * To submit via mail, send the test and evaluation pages to Milestone HCQU NW, 247 Hospital Drive, Warren PA 16365.

Knowledge Assessment:

1. A low-calorie, low-fat diet is always the best choice for weight loss. **True** **False**
2. If you are thin, you are probably healthy, even if you don't eat healthy foods. **True** **False**
3. Meat from grass-fed cows is lower in omega-3 fat than meat from commercially-raised cows. **True** **False**
4. Calories from a carrot effects us the same as calories from carrot cake. **True** **False**
5. It's okay to eat as many non-starchy vegetables as you want. **True** **False**
6. Fiber and fat help slow digestion and keep sugar from raising blood sugar too quickly. **True** **False**
7. Many processed foods contain trans-fats. **True** **False**
8. Exercise is an important component of weight management. **True** **False**
9. It's important to plan healthy meals and snacks if you're trying to lose weight. **True** **False**
10. Including healthy fat and protein in your breakfast will help you stay full longer. **True** **False**

Sources:

Mark Hyman, M., 2012. *The Blood Sugar Solution: The UltraHealthy Program for Losing Weight, Preventing Disease, and Feeling Great Now!*. 1st ed. s.l.:Little, Brown and Company.

Virgin, J., 2014. *JJ Virgin's Sugar Impact Diet: Drop 7 Hidden Sugars, Lose Up to 10 Pounds in 2 Weeks*. 1st ed. s.l.:Grand Central Life & Style.

www.webmd.com, 12/1/2014, 2/9/2015

Home Study Evaluation

Training Title: Weight Management

Date: _____

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Support Professional | <input type="checkbox"/> Provider Administrator/Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Specialist | <input type="checkbox"/> Provider Clinical Staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer/Self-Advocate | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Support Coordinator | <input type="checkbox"/> Support Coordinator Supervisor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PCH Staff/Administrator | <input type="checkbox"/> County MH/MR/IDD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLP/LSP | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please list): _____ |

Please circle your PRIMARY reason for completing this home-study training:

- It's mandatory
 interested in subject matter
 need training hours
 convenience

Please circle the best response to each question.

5 = Strongly Agree 4 = Agree 3 = Undecided 2 = Disagree **1 = Strongly Disagree**

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. As a result of this training, I have increased my knowledge. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. I learned something I can use in my own situation. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. This training provided needed information. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. The training material was helpful and effective. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Overall, I am satisfied with this training. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. I am glad I completed this training. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

Suggestions for improvement: _____

Additional information I feel should have been included in this training: _____

I would like to see these topics/conditions developed into home-study trainings: _____
