

Healthy weights

You make decisions every day about the foods you eat and how much physical activity you do. This handout gives you tips on how to make healthy decisions to help you lose weight and keep it off.



Dietitian/Dietetic Assistant: _____

Date: _____

Health benefits

Small changes in your weight can go a long way. A weight loss of 5 to 10% of your body weight* can give you these health benefits:

- lower blood pressure and cholesterol
- improved blood sugar control for those with diabetes
- improved sleep
- improved energy levels
- decreased joint pain

You can also measure your waistline or how your clothes fit to see your progress.



Keep track of your progress by regular visits with your dietitian or doctor.

* For example, if you weigh 160 lbs (73 kg), a 5 to 10% weight loss would be 8 to 16 lbs (3 ½ to 7 kg).

My weight loss plan

Your dietitian or dietetic assistant can help you create a weight loss plan that is right for you. This means including foods and activities you enjoy. Healthy eating and being active is a lifestyle – have fun and be creative!

Here are 3 key points to include in your weight loss plan:

1. **Eat a well-balanced and healthy diet** –The kind of foods you eat and how much you eat can affect your weight. Use some of the tips listed in this handout on page 11 and talk to your dietitian or dietetic assistant for more ideas about healthy eating.

Become aware of your habits. Ask yourself these questions:

- Has it been 2 hours since I have eaten?
- Am I eating because I'm bored, stressed, lonely, tired or angry?
- Do certain situations trigger me to eat?
- Am I skipping meals and then craving high-fat or high-sugar snacks?

Understanding the reasons why you eat when you are not hungry can be the first step towards a healthier weight.

2. **Move your body** – Being physically active is also important. Talk to your doctor about how you can be more active every day (see page 9 for more information).

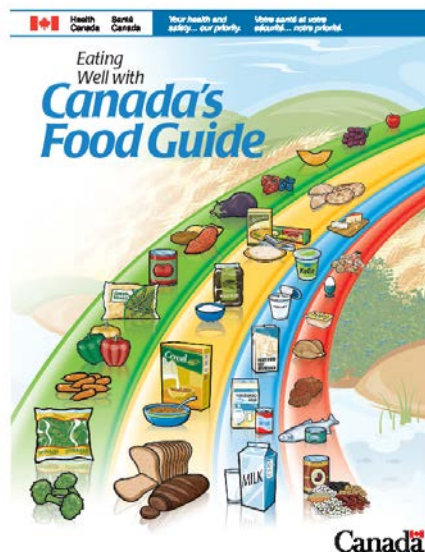


3. **Get support** – Involve your family or friends. Tell them about your weight loss plan and ask them to support you in your efforts to change your eating habits and physical activity.

Eat a well-balanced and healthy diet

Use Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide to help you choose what and how much to eat (see the foods groups and recommended servings a day on page.5):

- Include foods from at least 3 of the 4 food groups to make sure you are preparing a balanced meal. This will help you to get all the vitamins, minerals and other nutrients you need to keep your body healthy.
- Choose the lower number of servings a day for each food group to decrease the amount of calories you are eating. Examples of **one serving** are listed under each food group.
- Include foods with fibre (such as vegetables and legumes) and foods with lean protein (such as fish, poultry, lean meat, eggs, low-fat dairy products) in your meals and snacks to help you feel full longer.
- Limit the amount of fat or oil that you add to your food.



The food groups

Vegetables and Fruit (7 to 10 servings a day):

One serving equals:

- 1 piece of medium-sized fruit
- ½ cup sliced fruit
- ½ cup cooked vegetables
- 1 cup leafy vegetables
- ½ cup 100% fruit juice

Grain Products (6 to 8 servings a day):

One serving equals:

- ½ cup cooked whole grain pasta or rice
- 1 slice of whole grain bread
- ¾ cup hot cereal
- ½ bagel

Milk and Alternatives (2 to 3 servings a day):

One serving equals:

- 1 cup skim or 1% milk
- ¾ cup skim or 1% yogurt
- 1 cup soy milk
- 1 ½ ounces of cheese (less than 20% MF)

Meat and Alternatives (2 to 3 servings a day):

One serving equals:

- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons of peanut butter
- ¾ cup cooked beans or lentils
- 2 ½ ounces or ½ cup cooked fish, chicken or lean meat
- ¼ cup of shelled nuts or seeds

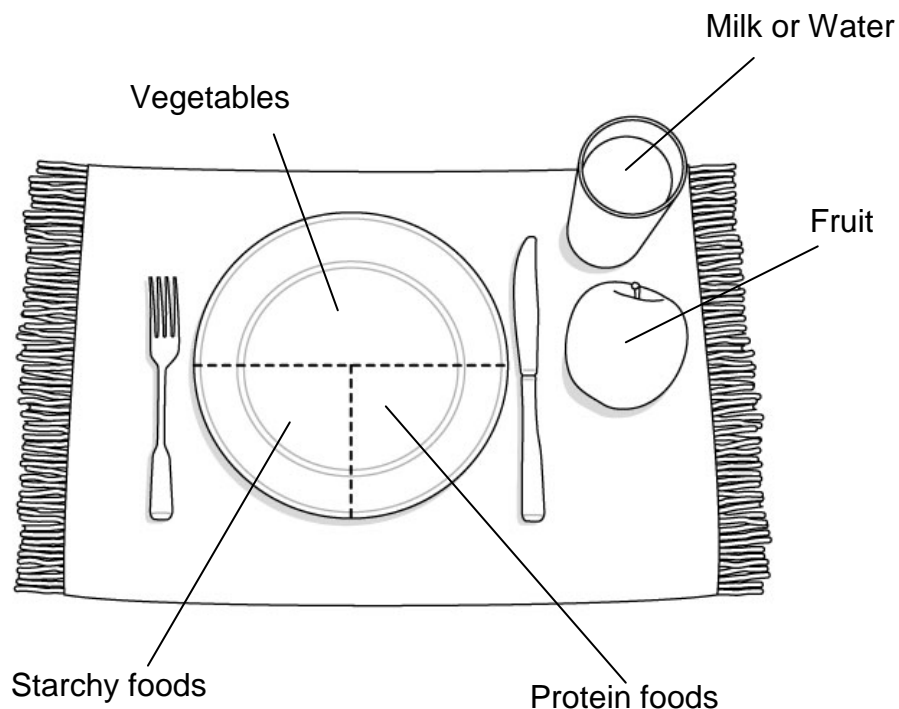
Also include up to 2 to 3 tablespoons a day of fats and oils such as a vegetable oil (canola, olive or soybean) or soft margarine (non-hydrogenated).

What do healthy servings look like?

Before you put food on your plate, in your mind divide your plate into 4 equal parts:

- Fill $\frac{1}{2}$ of your plate with vegetables. Vegetables contain fibre, plenty of vitamins and minerals, and are low in calories.
- Fill $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with starchy foods such as rice, noodles or potatoes.
- Fill the other $\frac{1}{4}$ of your plate with protein foods such as fish, lean meats, low fat cheeses, eggs or meatless protein choices like legumes, beans or tofu.
- Have a glass of milk or water and a piece of fruit to complete your meals.

Use this picture as a guideline to help you keep healthy servings on your plate.



How do I set my goals for weight loss?

Talk with your doctor or dietitian about setting a specific weight loss goal that is right for you.

A healthy and safe rate of weight loss is about 1 to 2 pounds (.5 to 1 kilogram) a week to avoid losing muscle.

To lose 1 pound (.5 kilogram) of weight, you need to “burn” 3500 calories. To do this over one week, you need to burn about 500 calories each day.

You can reach this goal by combining a healthy diet with daily exercise. For example, you can cut 350 calories out of your daily diet and burn 150 calories through daily exercise (see page 9 for more information on exercise).

Here are some simple ways to cut calories from your diet:

Meal time	Instead of ...	Try this ...	Calories cut
Breakfast	1 cup Cheerios 1 cup 2% milk 1 banana	• Replace 2% milk with 1% milk	20
Snack	1 coffee with 1 tbsp 18% cream 2 chocolate chip cookies	• Replace cream with 2% milk • Replace cookies with 1 pear	20 53
Lunch	2 slices whole wheat bread 1 breaded chicken breast 2 tsp margarine 2 oatmeal cookies 10 baby carrots ½ cup broccoli with ½ tbsp ranch dip	• Use skinless chicken breast • Eat vegetables without ranch dip	124 30
Snack	Crackers with 1 oz regular cheese 1 large orange	• Use partly-skimmed cheese instead	38
Dinner	1 cup pasta ½ cup tomato sauce with ground beef or soy 1 cup Caesar salad with 1 tbsp of regular dressing 1 cup water ½ cup ice cream	• Use Italian dressing • Replace ice cream with a piece of fresh fruit	40 40
Total calories cut			365

How do I find out how many calories are in food?

Reading the Nutrition Facts on a label can help you find out how many calories you eat. Look at the serving size and the calories for that serving.

Here is an example of a **Nutrition Facts** table for pasta:

Nutrition Facts	
Per 250 ml	
Amount	% Daily Value
Calories 200	
Fat 9 g	12%
Saturated 4.0 g	20%
+ Trans 0 g	
Cholesterol 5 mg	2%
Sodium 135 mg	6%
Carbohydrate 22 g	7%
Fibre 1 g	4%
Sugars 14 g	
Protein 2 g	

For this pasta, the serving size is 250 ml (1 cup).

There are 200 calories in one serving.

Reading the Nutrition Facts table can help you learn about and keep track of the foods and calories that you eat. Choose lower-calorie foods that are healthy and nutritious.

Be sure to read the ingredient list, especially if you have any food allergies or intolerances.

Move your body – get active!

Physical Activity can improve your heart health, your energy levels and even your mood. Eating a healthy diet and increasing your physical activity are both part of a successful weight loss plan.



How much time do I need?

Health Canada recommends 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

To burn 150 calories, try one of these activities for **30 minutes**:

- walk 2 miles (3.2 km)
- wheel yourself in a wheelchair
- cycle 3 miles (4.8 km)
- do water aerobics
- dance
- garden or rake the leaves

Not sure where to start?

Here are some simple tips to make your day more active:

- use the stairs instead of the elevator
 - take a walk during your coffee or lunch break
 - lift weights while you watch TV
 - park the car farther away from your destination
 - leave the car at home ... walk, bike or rollerblade instead
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Overcoming barriers to physical activity

Barrier	Solutions
I don't have enough time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Break up your exercise into small chunks throughout your day. - Use your lunch hour at work to go for a walk. - A short 10 to 20 minute workout is better than nothing at all!
I don't have energy to work out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wake up early (and go to bed early) so you can get the exercise in before you get tired from your day.
I'm busy with my kids.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exercise with your kids! Take them to the park to play tag, go on a walk, or teach them a new sport.
I'm out of shape and will find exercise too hard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start slow with walking and a light exercise band or 3 lbs dumbbells for resistance. If you don't start somewhere, you will never improve!
I don't have money for a gym membership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exercise at home, using your body weight (such as push ups and plank) or inexpensive equipment. - Use another space such as a park or indoor mall. - Invest in a work out video. Borrow one from the library or watch one on YouTube.
I have a hard time starting and keeping up with my plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make realistic short and long term goals. - Ask friends or family for support. - Share your goals with as many people as you can. - Give yourself non-food rewards when you reach a goal.
I don't feel like it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Do it now – feel like doing it later". Once you've exercised, you are really glad you did!



Tips for healthy weight loss

Here are some tips that have worked for other people who have successfully lost weight.

Choose tips that you can follow regularly:

1. **Keep track of your eating, activity and your mood** – Use the diary in this handout to keep track of the food you eat, your level of activity and the mood you are in. This can help you spot patterns that need change. Review your diary once a week to help you see patterns that could be changed and tackle them one at a time.

There are many health and fitness apps (some like MyFitnessPal are free) that can help track your diet and exercise. There are also fitness activity bands (such as Misfit, Fitbit, Garmin) that provide feedback on your activity and calories burned. These can help you achieve good health.

2. **Do not skip meals** – Skipping meals may lead to unplanned snacking. These snacks are often high in calories. Try to eat at the same time every day, and choose nutritious snack foods like fresh fruit.

3. **Always make a list before you go shopping** – Stick to your list and shop on a full stomach so you will be less tempted to buy high-fat, high-calorie foods.



4. **Choose higher fibre foods** – Choose whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans. Higher fibre foods will help you to feel full for longer. These foods also have lots of vitamins and minerals that your body needs. Be sure to drink more fluid when you increase your fibre intake to avoid constipation.

5. **Plan to eat “treat foods” in moderation** – Choose high-fat or high-calorie foods less often and in smaller portions. For example, try one scoop of ice cream instead of two.

6. **Put less nutritious foods in hard-to-reach places** – Store high-fat and high-calories foods in dark containers and put them out of reach. You will be less likely to eat these foods if they are hard to get or not in the house.

- 7. **Never eat from a package** – Always put food into another dish. This will help you to see how much food you are eating and help you manage portion sizes. Also use smaller spoons, plates (9 or 10 inch diameter) or bowls and tall, thin glasses.
- 8. **Be mindful of what you are eating** – Don't eat in front of the television, computer screen, or while reading or working. When you are distracted, you may not notice how much food you are eating. Try to eat in one place, like your kitchen or dining room and focus on enjoying your meal.
- 9. **Eat slowly and chew well** – It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to tell your brain that you are "full." Take time to enjoy the food.
- 10. **Caution with drinks** – Beverages like alcohol, juices, sodas, and sweetened drinks can quickly increase your calorie intake. Choose low calorie beverages and drink water most often.
- 11. **Brush your teeth after each meal** – This may help you to limit snacking between meals.



Want to learn more?

Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide

<http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide>

Canada's Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html>

Dietitians of Canada

<http://www.dietitians.ca/>

Suggestions from the dietitian/dietetic assistant:

Conversion:

1 cup = 250 ml, ¾ cup = 175 ml, ½ cup = 125 ml, ¼ cup = 6 ml, 1 tablespoon = 15 ml, 1 teaspoon = 5 ml

Weekly Diary

Monday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Tuesday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Wednesday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Thursday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Friday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Saturday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood

Sunday

Time	Food or Drink	Activity	Mood