

Diet and Exercise Tips

Excessive body weight contributes to snoring and obstructive sleep apnea, in addition to being a major influence on general health and well-being. Obstructive sleep apnea occurs in about 50-60% of those who are obese.

A recent report from the National Center for Health Statistics concludes that seven of 10 adults don't regularly exercise, and nearly four in 10 aren't physically active. Lack of exercise can increase the risk of diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. About 300,000 people in the U.S. die each year from diseases related to inactivity.

Proper diet and exercise are the mainstays for a healthy lifestyle, although many Americans turn to costly fad diets and exercise programs that fail to provide weight loss and a healthy lifestyle. The basic tenets to gradual weight loss and good health include developing healthy eating habits and increasing daily physical activity.

Self-Help Guidelines For Healthy Activity:

- Consult a physician – men over age 40; women over 50; people with (or at risk for) chronic health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, or obesity.
- Start out slowly and build up activity gradually over a period of months. This will help avoid soreness and injury.
- Try to accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity cardiovascular activity each day. You can do all 30 minutes together or through short bouts of intermittent activity (e.g. 10 minutes at a time).
- Add strength-developing exercises at least twice per week.
- Incorporate physical activity into your day (walk to the office or store, take the stairs instead of the elevator, walk or jog at lunch time, etc.).
- Make leisure time active – garden, walk, ride a bike with family and friends, participate in an exercise class, join in a sports activity.
- Select activities you enjoy, find satisfying, and give you a feeling of accomplishment. Success leads to increased motivation to be physically active.
- Be sure your activities are compatible with your age and physical condition.
- Make it convenient to be active. Choose activities that are readily accessible (right outside your door) like gardening, walking, or jogging.
- Try “active commuting.” Cycle, walk or in-line skate to work or to the store.
- Make your activity enjoyable – listen to music, include family and friends, etc.

For those who are already regularly moderately active, increase the duration and intensity for additional benefits.

Weight Loss Tips:

Take in fewer calories than you expend. Few people understand this basic, simple concept.

- Eat smaller meals 3-5 times per day.
- Eat nutrient dense foods such as whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, and vegetables.
- Eat slowly, and wait 10-15 minutes before taking second helpings.
- Don't eliminate everything you like from your diet. Eat those things in small amounts (pizza, candy, cookies, etc.)
- Prepare healthy snacks that are easily available (cut carrots, apples, etc.)
- Avoid buffets.
- Drink plenty of water, especially immediately prior to meals.

The Healthy Weight Approach To Dieting:

- Enjoy a variety of foods that will provide essential nutrients.
- Three-quarters of your lunch and dinner should be vegetables, fruits, cereals, breads, and other grain products. Snack on fruits and vegetables. Eat lots of dark green and orange vegetables. Choose whole-grain and enriched products more often.
- Choose lower fat dairy products, leaner meats and alternatives, and foods prepared with little or no fat. Shop for low fat (2% or less) or fat-free products such as milk, yogurt, and cottage cheese. Eat smaller portions of leaner meats, poultry, and fish; remove visible fat from meat and the skin from poultry. Limit the use of extra fat like butter, margarine, and oil. Choose more peas, beans, and lentils
- Limit salt, caffeine, and alcohol. Minimize the consumption of salt. Cut down on added sugar such as jams, etc. Limit beverages with a high caffeine content (tea, sodas, chocolate drinks) and caffeinated coffee to two cups per day. Minimize alcohol to 1-2 drinks per day.
- Limit consumption of snack foods such as cookies, donuts, pies, cakes, potato chips, etc. They are high in salt, sugar, fat, and calories, and low in nutritional value.
- Eat in moderation. If you are not hungry, don't eat.