

Losing Weight

Losing weight helps control risk factors like high cholesterol, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes, and helps prevent heart attacks.

Your BMI measures if you weigh too much for your height. A healthy BMI is usually between 18.5 and 24.9; this range might be lower for certain ethnic groups. It may sound obvious, but you need to weigh yourself to see if you're in the right zone - <https://bmiccalculatorcanada.com>

Your waist circumference (WC) is measured with a tape just above the hip bone and shows where fat is distributed in your body. Too much fat around the middle is healthier than fat in the thighs and hips. A woman's waist circumference should be below 88 cm, and a man's below 102 cm; again, these values vary for certain ethnic groups.

Don't try to lose too much weight too quickly. Fad diets may work initially but are usually not sustainable. Slow and steady is still the best way to lose weight.

In general, if you need to lose weight, you can start by trying to lose 5-10% of your body weight at a steady pace. Set a weight loss goal and aim to lose around 0.5 lbs per week.

Try to eat your meals earlier in the day instead of having late-night dinners. This can help regulate hunger hormones and give your body a chance to burn fat overnight.

Don't go back for seconds. Portion control is easy to overlook. You might feel frustrated about not losing weight even after making healthy changes, and this might be from eating too many servings of a particular food. In general, a palm-sized amount of lean meat, cupped hand amount of nuts and seeds, half a fist amount of pasta or rice is equal to one serving.

Late-night snacking can set you back. You might be having trouble breaking out of this habit. If you reach for chips, cookies, or chocolate, then you might be adding back calories that you avoided during the day. Try to choose healthier snacks with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, with low-fat cottage cheese or hummus. These have higher fiber and will keep you full. Remember to portion control during the night as well, and add these snacks to your food diary.

Don't give up if you cheat occasionally. Forgive yourself and get right back on track. You will get there!

Action Plan

- Set your weight loss goal.
- Write down your weight and waist circumference measurements every week.
- Discuss and plan your meals with your family for the week and stick to the menu you decide (See Diet).
- Learn how to estimate serving size of all the food you have put on your plate.
- Learn how to read food labels and count the serving size and calories per serving for foods that are hard to keep track of like ketchup, salad dressings, etc.
- Keep a food diary and track calories. A pen and paper are fine if that's what you are used to, but Apps like MyFitnessPal and Chronometers can automatically do the calorie counting for you. Don't forget to include your snacks.
- If you are not losing weight, then try to identify where you are getting excess calories and make changes.

Links

Obesity Canada Public Resources - <https://obesitycanada.ca/public-resources/>

How to Read a Food Label - <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/understanding-food-labels.html>

The Portfolio Diet - https://www.stmichaelshospital.com/media/hospital_news/2018/0706.php

Healthy Snacks - <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/healthy-snacks/>

Serving Size Guide - <https://www.unlockfood.ca/EatRightOntario/media/PDFs-new-website/Portions%20Toolkit/Handy-Servings-Guide-EN-v04-July-2018.pdf>