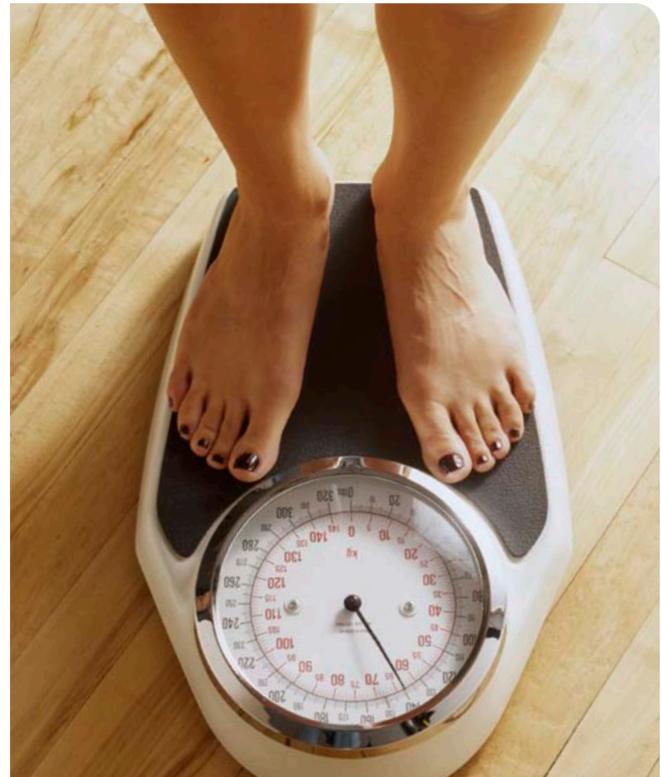




# How Can I Manage My Weight?

Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight can be a challenge. You may have tried to lose weight before without much long-term success. Be assured, you are not alone.

There is no magic weight-loss formula that works for everyone. The key is to find a plan that works for you and provides the right balance of calories and nutrition with the appropriate amounts of physical activity.



## What are the keys to healthy weight loss?

To lose weight, you must take in fewer calories than you use through normal metabolism and physical activity. It's a matter of:

- Watching what you eat.
- Choosing nutritious foods.
- Following an overall healthy diet pattern.
- Getting and staying physically active.

## How can I make better food choices?

Follow these guidelines to improve your overall diet pattern.

- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Eat poultry, fish, and nuts and limit red meat.
- Limit how much saturated and *trans* fats, added sugars, and sodium are in the food you eat.
- Select fat-free and low-fat (1%) dairy products.
- Limit beverages and foods high in calories and low in nutrition.

- Choose and prepare foods with little or no salt.

## What happens when I reach a healthy weight?

- After you reach a healthy weight, continue to balance the amounts of calories that you take in with the amount of energy you use each day to maintain your weight.
- After a week, if you're still losing weight, add a few hundred more calories.
- If you change the amount of physical activity you do, adjust what you eat.
- Keep a record of what you eat and how much physical activity you get so you'll know how to make adjustments.

## How can I stay at a healthy weight?

- Remember that eating smart means eating some foods in smaller amounts and eating high-calorie foods less often.

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- Always keep low-calorie, heart-healthy foods around. Chopped fruits and vegetables make an great quick snack.
- Use a shopping list, and don't shop when you're hungry.
- Plan all your meals. When you're going to a party or out to eat, decide ahead of time what you can do to make it easier to eat right.
- When you're hungry between meals, drink a glass of water or eat a small piece of fruit.
- When you really crave a high-calorie food, eat a small amount of it. Commit to stay active! Don't give up on your physical activity plan.

### What if I go back to old habits?

Old habits are hard to break. You might have a bad day and overeat or skip exercise. If that happens, remember that this is not a failure. Instead, recommit yourself to starting again and getting back on track. You can do it!



### HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- 1 Call **1-800-AHA-USA1** (1-800-242-8721), or visit **heart.org** to learn more about heart disease and stroke.
- 2 Sign up to get *Heart Insight*, a free magazine for heart patients and their families, at **heartinsight.org**.
- 3 Connect with others sharing similar journeys with heart disease and stroke by joining our Support Network at **heart.org/supportnetwork**.

### Do you have questions for the doctor or nurse?

Take a few minutes to write your questions for the next time you see your healthcare provider.

For example:

**What if I start gaining weight?**

**How can my family help me?**

### My Questions:

We have many other fact sheets to help you make healthier choices to reduce your risk, manage disease or care for a loved one. Visit **heart.org/answersbyheart** to learn more.