Living

Health Topic: Healthy Eating for a Healthy Weight

Reaching a Healthy Weight for a Healthier You

For many people, weight is a challenging topic to talk about. If you find yourself struggling with losing weight, discussing it with your doctor can be just as difficult as getting on a scale. However, seeing your weight as a reflection of your health may help you have a more objective and productive conversation with your doctor.

Your partner in health: Your doctor

If you’re looking to lose weight, first speak with your doctor about what a healthy weight is for you. It’s important to understand how your weight affects your overall health. If you’re overweight or obese, you may have an elevated risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Once you’re ready...

If you’re ready to make some healthy changes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has some recommendations for healthy weight loss.

• **Look at the process as a lifestyle change, not a diet.** Once you commit to losing weight, understand that you will need to make long-term changes to your eating and exercise habits.

• **Slow and steady wins the race.** Once you’ve started eating healthier and getting more active, it’s natural to want to see immediate results. But evidence shows that people who lose weight gradually and steadily (1 to 2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping it off. This is about your health, so don’t get frustrated if the scale doesn’t immediately recognize the changes you’ve made.

• **Make the math work for you.** To lose weight, you must use more calories than you take in. Since one pound equals 3,500 calories, you need to reduce your daily caloric intake by 500 to 1,000 calories to lose about 1 to 2 pounds per week.

• **Fewer calories, not less food.** To cut calories without eating less and feeling hungry, replace some higher-calorie foods with lower-calorie ones that contain a lot of water and are high in fiber. They can fill you up.

• **Rethink your drink.** Another way to cut calories may be to change what you drink. Read labels, and consider replacing sugary beverages with water.

• **It’s the journey, not the destination.** Even modest weight loss can lead to health benefits, such as improvements in blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugars.

More resources available

If you’re looking for additional trackers and information to support you in your journey to good health, check out Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey’s My Health Manager tool. Visit [HorizonBlue.com/mhm](http://HorizonBlue.com/mhm) to learn more.

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Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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