Healthy Weight Loss Plan For Women
Best Ways to Lose Weight While Eating Healthy Diet Foods to Maintain Weight Loss (Weight Loss Programs That Work)

By Dr. Lynn Kolton

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1. How This Book Can Help You Lose Weight

The secret to success in a diet is making changes and sticking with them. in this book you'll learn exactly how to develop a weight loss strategy that really get results. It is simple, it is easy and it produces fast results.

First of all, this diet plan works fast. It literally burns off fat by the hour. If you go on this diet in the morning you will lose weight before lunch. You lose weight faster on this diet than if you ran 7 miles every day. You'll be able to measure the difference in your waistline in 24 to 36 hours. I think this is the fastest safe diet in the world. If you find a diet that works faster I will buy it from you and gladly pay good money for it.

Healthy & Safe

This is not just a weight-loss diet. It's a healthy diet also. It is safe. It is probably much safer than the way you are right now. Don't ever take a chance with your health. It's not worth it. Besides it is not necessary. You can lose weight fast on this diet plus get healthier every day you stay on it.

Automatic Weight Loss

Right after you go on the diet you start to lose weight automatically. You don't have to think about it all the time. You would probably forget you're on a diet if you weren't losing weight so fast.

As you can tell by now I've come up with something pretty good. I think this diet is the best way to lose weight I have ever heard about. You lose weight very fast. You can eat out as often as you like. Your health will improve and your energy will increase. Except for when you weigh yourself you'll probably forget you're on a diet.

In short, this diet is fast, safe and simple.

This diet plan is different from any other. it has a different plan of attack. This diet forces you to form a very new habit. This new habit is pleasurable and fun. This habit makes it possible to stay on any diet for life without ever feeling deprived. This new habit makes everything easy. It is so simple you will wonder why you never thought of it yourself.

It is a simple to apply yet highly effective **Healthy Weight Loss Plan**. In addition to helping you feel and look better, reaching a healthier body weight is good for your overall health and well being. If you are overweight or obese, you have a greater risk of developing many diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer.

The secret to success is making changes and sticking with them. This plan is comprised of three essential components:

First - Find out What You Eat and Drink. This is a key step in managing your weight.

Next **-** Find out What to Eat and Drink. Get a personalized Daily Food Plan - just for you - to help guide your food choices.

Then - Make Better Choices. Everyone is different. Compare what you eat and drink to what you should eat and drink. The ideas and tips in this section can help you make better choices, which can have a lasting impact on your body weight over time.

2. Learn What You Currently Eat and Drink

Did you know that:

The #1 source of calories in the American diet is desserts - like cakes and cookies?

Americans get more calories from sugary drinks than any other beverage choice?

Identifying what you are eating and drinking now will help you see where you can make better choices in the future.

If you want to make changes to improve the way you eat and your body weight, the first step is to identify what you do now. This includes becoming more aware of:

What and how much you eat and drink

How physically active you are

Your body weight

People who are most successful at losing weight and keeping it off track their intake regularly. Tracking physical activity and body weight can also help you reach your weight goals.

Here's how to identify what you eat and drink:

Write down what and how much you eat and drink. Find a way that works for you. Use a journal, log your intake on your calendar, keep track on your phone, or use an online tool like the [SuperTracker](#).

Start by identifying what you've already eaten today. Be sure to include how much as well as what you ate. Don't forget to include drinks, sauces, spreads, and sides. It all counts.

In addition, write down the physical activities you do, and how long you spend doing each one. Log each activity that you do for at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up. Use the [SuperTracker](#), a journal, a [tracking form](#), or mark a calendar.

Once you've identified what you are doing now, keep it up! Tracking what and how much you eat and drink, your body weight, and your physical activity can help you manage your body weight over the long term.

Concerned about identifying what you eat and drink? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I'm interested in using an online tool, but I don't have internet access every day": If you don't have regular access to a computer, you can begin by simply writing down what, when, and how much you eat in a journal. Just writing down what you eat and drink helps you become more aware. When you are able to access a computer, you can enter several days of intake into the [SuperTracker](#) at once.

"It takes a lot of time to track my intake": The fact is that tracking works. Find a way that you can track your intake that works for you – whether it be writing what and how much you eat and drink in a journal, your day planner, or your calendar. With the [SuperTracker](#), you can develop lists of your favorite foods that can help you enter your intake more quickly.

"By the time I get to a computer, I've forgotten what I ate": For tracking to work, it needs to be complete. If necessary, carry a food journal or log your intake on your smart phone. Logging what you eat immediately will help your tracking to be more accurate.

"I can identify what I ate, but have no idea of how to figure out how much I ate": Measure out foods you regularly eat (such as a bowl of cereal) once or twice, to get a sense of how big your typical portion is. Also measure out what 1/2 or 1 cup portion size looks like to help you estimate how much you eat.

Check the serving size information on the [Nutrition Facts label](#) of packaged foods. It describes what the "standard" serving size is, and how many are in the package. Use the [grain](#), [vegetable](#), [fruit](#), [dairy](#), and [protein](#) food galleries to see what sample portion sizes look like, and compare them to how much you ate.

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3. What To Eat and Drink

Use the [Daily Food Plans](#) to help you choose foods and beverages that meet your nutrient needs while staying within your calorie limits. Think of your Food Plan as a roadmap to guide you on the path to a healthier weight. Learn how much you need to eat each day from the 5 food groups. You can also find out your total calorie limit and your limit for empty calories (calories from solid fats and added sugars) with your [Daily Food Plan](#).

Your Food Plan is not a quick weight loss program. It's a way to eat for health and well being. If you stick with the Plan over time, you should gradually move toward a healthier weight.

Here's How to Find Out What to Eat and Drink:

Enter your age, sex, height, weight, and activity level in the [Daily Food Plan entry box](#).

If you are not within your healthy weight range, the Plan lets you choose an option to gradually move to a healthier weight. This option provides 200 to 400 calories less per day than the average calorie needs to maintain your weight.

Once you've entered your information and picked the "move toward a healthier weight" option, you will get a plan with your calorie limits and the amounts to eat and drink from each food group every day. Following this plan can help you gradually lose weight. You can print your plan for future quick access.

Concerned about following a Food Plan? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I get frustrated because I don't see results fast enough": Most people gain weight slowly over time, even years. Chances are that you gained weight slowly over time, and it will take time to lose your excess body weight. You will be more successful at keeping weight off if you lose it gradually and not over a short period of time.

You don't have to reach a healthy body weight to start experiencing improvements in health. Losing 5% to 10% of your current body weight can have health benefits.

It's also important to track your success at making changes. For example, if your goal is to go on a 15-minute walk each day during your lunch break, then consider accomplishing this goal as a success. Results on the scale may be more gradual, but you are still making positive changes.

"I don't have the will power to stick to a plan": You don't have to change everything you do all at once. Try making one change at a time, like decreasing portion sizes, then after that has become routine, make more changes. It can also help if you have friends or family who are making changes with you. On the [SuperTracker](), you can also sign up for regular text messages to keep you motivated in "My Coach Center."

"Can't I just skip meals to lose weight?": It's important to eat enough, but not too much. Skipping meals isn't the answer for long term success at managing your weight. The goal is to pick the best food and beverage options in the right amounts. Your Daily Food Plan shows you what and how much to eat and drink from each food group. Stick to your Plan instead of skipping meals.

"The Daily Food Plan looks like too much food – I'll never lose weight if I eat all of this": An important part of the Plan is to make nutrient-dense choices in each food group. This means choosing foods and beverages with little or no solid fats and added sugars. Solid fats and added sugars make up about 35% of most Americans' calorie intake. If you choose foods without them, you can eat a lot, feel full, and still lose weight gradually.

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4. How to Construct Your Weight Loss Strategy

When you compare what you eat to your [Daily Food Plan](), is there room for improvement? For example, do you eat many sweets or fried foods? Do you drink sugary drinks regularly? Do you eat too few vegetables or whole grains? Does eating out make it difficult to stay on track?

Everyone is different. Think about what you eat and drink. How can you make better choices? How can you be more active? The [SuperTracker]() can help you identify changes you should make.

Now, you can construct your weight loss plan by utilizing the below strategies. Making these changes and sticking with them can help you manage your body weight.

* Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You

* Decrease Portion Sizes

* Eat Fewer Empty Calories

* Focus on Foods You Need

* When Eating Out, Make Better Choices

* Cook More Often at Home

* Increase Physical Activity

* Decrease Television and Computer Time

In the following chapter we will discuss each of these strategies.

5. Eat the Right Amount of Calories for You

Everyone has a personal calorie limit. Staying within yours can help you get to or maintain a healthy weight. Reaching a healthier weight is a balancing act. The secret is learning how to balance your "energy in" and "energy out" over the long run. "Energy in" is the calories from foods and beverages you have each day. "Energy out" is the calories you burn for basic body functions and physical activity.

A balancing act: Where is your energy balance?

Maintaining weight — Your weight will stay the same when the calories you eat and drink equal the calories you burn.

Losing weight — You will lose weight when the calories you eat and drink are less than the calories you burn.

Gaining weight — You will gain weight when the calories you eat and drink are greater than the calories you burn.

The current high rates of overweight and obesity in the United States mean that many people are taking in more calories than they burn.

Get started eating the right amount of calories for you:

Get your personal daily calorie limit. Enter your age, sex, height, weight, and activity level in the Daily Food Plan entry box. If you are not within your healthy weight range, pick the "move toward a healthier weight" option. This option provides 200 to 400 calories less per day than the average calorie needs to maintain your weight. Your Daily Food Plan will include a total calorie limit.

Keep your calorie limit in mind when deciding what to eat and drink. For example, if your calorie limit is 1,800 calories per day, think about how those calories can be split up among meals, snacks, and beverages over the course of a day.It doesn't have to be the same each day. If you eat a larger lunch, think about eating a smaller meal at dinner.

Compare food and beverage options and think about how they fit within your calorie limit. For example, a snack with 200 calories may be a better option than another with

500 calories. Use your daily calorie limit to help you decide which foods and drinks to choose.

For a healthier you, use the Nutrition Facts label to make smart food choices quickly and easily. Check the label of similar products for calories, and choose the food with fewer calories. Be sure to look at the serving size and how many servings you are actually consuming, as well. If you eat twice the serving size, you double the calories. When eating out, calorie information may be available on menus, in a pamphlet, or online. You can also find calorie information about a specific food using [Food-a-pedia](#).

Concerned about being able to eat the right amount of calories? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I don't understand calories": need while staying within your calorie limits. Use your Daily Food Plan to determine how much you should eat from each of the 5 food groups.

"I don't have time to count calories": People who are successful at managing their weight have found ways to keep track of how much they eat in a day, even if they don't count every calorie. Most people eat the same general types of food on a regular basis. Take some time up front to compare calorie labels, and over time, you will learn which options are the better choices.

Also, if you Focus on Foods You Need (see below) and Eat Fewer Empty Calories (see below) you will be a big step closer to eating the right amount of calories for you.

"I don't have time to count calories": People who are successful at managing their weight have found ways to keep track of how much they eat in a day, even if they don't count every calorie. Most people eat the same general types of food on a regular basis. Take some time up front to compare calorie labels, and over time, you will learn which options are the better choices.

"I have no idea how many calories I am supposed to eat to manage my weight": Your calorie needs depend on a number of factors including: your height, weight, and physical activity level. You can get your personal daily calorie limit with your [Daily Food Plan](#). Try to stay at (or a little below) this number each day. Taking in more calories (even just 100 calories more each day) can result in gradual weight gain over time.

The calories in your Daily Food Plan are averages. For best results, track your body weight over time. If you are gaining weight, or not losing at all, decrease your calorie intake (or increase your physical activity).

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6. Decrease Portion Sizes

The amount you eat or drink plays an important role in your energy balance strategy. Most people eat and drink more when served larger portions. Choosing smaller portions can help you lose weight and keep it off.

Portions have increased over time. You may be eating more than you realize. Some common food portions can equal the amount that is recommended for the whole day. For example, on a 1600 calorie Daily Food Plan, 5 ounces a day of grains are suggested. Some bagels weigh up to 5 ounces - the entire day's allotment of grains!

Your [Daily Food Plan](#) helps you manage your daily intake by recommending the amount of food you need from each food group.

Your portions at each meal do not need to be any specific amount-but to stay within your energy needs, the total amount you eat *each day* should match the total amount recommended for each group. For example, 1 regular slice of bread counts as 1 ounce of grains. This doesn't mean that you have to eat a sandwich with one piece of bread. It just means that if you eat two slices, you should count them both toward your total grain intake for the day.

Get started eating smaller portions:

Figure out how big your portions really are: Measure how much the bowls, glasses, cups, and plates you usually use hold. Pour your breakfast cereal into your regular bowl. Then, pour it into a measuring cup. How many cups of cereal do you eat each day?

Measure a fixed amount of some foods and drinks to see what they look like in your glasses and plates. For example, measure 1 cup of juice to see what 1 cup of liquid looks like in your favorite glass. To see what 1 cup, ½ cup, or 1 ounce of some different foods looks like, visit the [food gallery](#) and find some of the foods you eat in each group. Prepare, serve, and eat smaller portions of food. Start by portioning out small amounts to eat and drink. Only go back for more if you are still hungry.

Pay attention to feelings of hunger. Stop eating when you are satisfied, not full. If there is still food on your plate or on the table, put it away (or throw it out). Repeat the phrase "a moment on the lips, a year on the hips" as you do this.

A simple trick to help you eat less is to use a smaller plate, bowl, or glass. One cup of food on a small plate looks like more than the same cup of food on a large plate.

It is important to think about portion sizes when eating out. Order a smaller size option, when it's available. Manage larger portions by sharing or taking home part of your meal. When Eating Out, Make Better Choices (see below) has lots of tips to help you eat only the amount you need when eating out.

If you tend to overeat, be aware of the time of day, place, and your mood while eating so you can better control the amount you eat. Some people overeat when stressed or upset. Try walking instead of eating, or snack on a healthier option. For example, instead of eating a bag of chips, crunch on some celery, or instead of eating a bowl of ice cream, enjoy a low-fat yogurt with fresh blueberries. Making healthier choices is better for your weight and can also help you feel better.

Concerned about eating smaller portion sizes? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I don't have time to measure out my foods all the time": Being successful at decreasing portion sizes doesn't mean that you have to measure every meal or snack you eat. Once you've taken the time to measure out a few examples, you will be able to estimate portion sizes better. Plus, just eating or drinking less than you normally would means you are decreasing your portion sizes.

"My Daily Food Plan tells me to eat more of some things but also to decrease portion sizes. I don't understand if I should eat more or less": The recommendation to decrease portion sizes is particularly important for high calorie foods or for foods with a lot of empty calories, such as cakes, cookies, sugary drinks, and pizza. It is important to Focus on Foods You Need. For example, eat a large portion of steamed broccoli (but with only a very small amount of butter or cheese sauce, if any).

"I like to eat a big burger every once in a while. Are there other ways to eat less?": In general, it is a good rule to eat and drink smaller portions. You can occasionally eat or drink foods in larger portions, but not as part of your daily diet. Make that big burger a "once-in-a-while" special treat, and on most days choose the smaller options.

"I was always told to clean my plate.": Resign from the "clean your plate" club **now**. Stop eating when you are satisfied, not when your plate is empty. Start your meal by only eating half of what's on your plate. Stop for a moment and decide if you really want to eat more. Don't forget that you can save some leftovers for another meal or snack. Nothing has to go to waste, and the food will taste better when you are hungry again!

7. Eat Fewer Empty Calories

A great way to help you manage your body weight is to eat fewer empty calories. Empty calories are calories from solid fats, added sugars, or both.

Many empty calories that Americans eat come from foods and beverages that provide calories but few nutrients--such as desserts, sodas, and candies. Added sugars and fats load these choices with extra calories you don't need.

Some foods and beverages provide essential nutrients, but may also contain some empty calories. For example, a cup of whole milk contains about 150 calories, with over 60 of them empty calories from fat. Fat-free milk has the same amount of calcium and other nutrients as whole milk, but with less than 90 calories and no fat or empty calories.

Regardless of your weight status, empty calories should not be a major part of the diet. For most people, no more than 15% of calories should come from solid fats and added sugars. However, about 35% of the calories Americans typically eat and drink are empty

calories. This means that many people choose foods and drinks with TOO MUCH solid fats and added sugars.

Get Started Eating Fewer Empty Calories:

Here are three ways to cut back on empty calories:

Choose foods and drinks with little or no added sugars or solid fats.
For example, drink water instead of sugary drinks. There are about 10 packets of sugar in a 12-ounce can of soda, while water has no added sugars.
Select lean cuts of meats or poultry and fat-free or low-fat milk and cheese. Fatty meats, poultry skin, and whole milk or regular cheese have more solid fats.

Select products that contain added sugars and solid fats *less often*.
For example, eat sugary desserts only once in a while. Most days, select fruit for dessert instead of a sugary option.

Make major sources of solid fats – such as cakes, cookies, ice cream, pizza, regular cheese, sausages, and hot dogs – occasional choices, not every day foods.

When you have foods and drinks with added sugars and solid fats, choose a small portion*.*

For example, instead of eating three scoops of ice cream, order one scoop.

Concerned about eating fewer empty calories? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"Empty calories aren't listed on food labels. How do I know how many are in my foods and beverages?": While empty calories are not listed on the food label, you can use the label to see if there are solid fats and added sugars in the food. Check the [Nutrition Facts label](#) to choose foods with little or no saturated fat and no *trans* fat to choose foods with less solid fat. Use the ingredients list to help identify added sugars in the food.

"I don't understand if I should focus on total calories or empty calories": Foods that are high in empty calories tend to be high in total calories too. It is the total amount of calories consumed each day that can affect weight. If you currently eat too many empty calories, eating

"When I get the cravings for something sweet, I just can't help myself!": Replace foods high in empty calories with better choices. For example, try a yogurt parfait with low-fat or fat-free yogurt and sliced fruit or frozen grapes for a sweet treat. You can still get the sweet you want without the excess calories.

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8. Focus on Foods You Need

Building a healthier plate can help you meet your nutrient needs and maintain your weight. Foods like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods contain the nutrients you need without too many calories.

When making food choices, use your Daily Food Plan. Focus on the 5 food groups. Most of what you eat and drink each day should fit within one or more of the 5 food groups. To move to a healthier weight, you need to make **smart choices** from every food group. Smart choices are the foods with low amounts of solid fats or added sugars: such as, fat-free (skim) milk instead of whole milk, unsweetened applesauce instead of sweetened applesauce, and 95% lean ground beef instead of regular (75% lean) ground beef.

Also think about how the food was prepared. For example, choose skinless baked chicken instead of fried chicken and choose fresh fruit instead of a fruit pastry. You can learn more about making smart choices within the food groups by going to the Food Groups section. Focusing on the foods you need can help you eat a healthy diet and manage weight.

Does it matter how much carbohydrate, protein, and fat you eat? Carbohydrate, protein, and fat are components of foods and drinks that provide calories. "Calories" matter when it comes to body weight, not the calorie source. You should not select a diet that avoids or severely limits carbohydrates, protein, or fat. Similarly, you should not select a diet that avoids any of the 5 food groups. There are choices within each food group that provide the nutrients you need, without too many calories.

Get Started focusing on the foods you need:

Start with breakfast. Eat a breakfast that helps you meet your food group needs. People who skip breakfast often weigh more. Eating a nutrient-dense breakfast may help you lose weight and keep it off.

Have healthy snacks available at home and bring healthy snacks to eat when on-the-go, such as carrot and celery sticks with peanut butter or whole grain crackers and low-fat cheese.

When preparing meals, include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods. These foods provide nutrients with fewer calories. Check the sample meal patterns on SuperTracker for ideas about how to include all food groups throughout the day.

To feel satisfied with fewer calories, replace high-calorie foods with lower calorie foods. You can eat larger portions of these foods for fewer calories. For example, follow the advice to "*make half your plate fruits and vegetables.*"

Concerned about focusing on the foods you need? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I don't like many vegetables." or "I don't eat fruit": Explore the wide range of different vegetables that are available and choose some you're willing to try. If you're

not fond of cooked vegetables, experiment with salads and raw vegetables. Or, try mixed dishes that include vegetables, like stir-fries, chili con carne, vegetable soups, or pasta with marinara sauce. When eating out, choose a vegetable (other than french fries) as a side dish. For fruits, try adding fruit to salads, making fruit smoothies, or snacking on dried fruit.

"I don't/can't drink milk": You don't need to drink milk, but you do need the nutrients it provides. You can get these nutrients from yogurt, from fortified soymilk (soy beverage), or from low-fat cheese. Milk or other foods from the Dairy Group can also be incorporated into lots of foods and drinks including lattes, puddings, and soups. Try some new ways to include milk or other foods from the Dairy Group in your meals and snacks.

"My family members don't like these foods. I'm worried about spending the time and money preparing them if they don't get eaten": Be patient when introducing new foods to your family. It may take more than a few tries before the new food is accepted. Also, be a good role model. If you like the food and you show that you like it, your family is more likely to like it too. Also, encourage family members to pick out a new food to try. If you have leftovers, portion them out and freeze them for another day.

"Fruits and vegetables are too expensive": It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget. Buy fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season; they are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. You can also try canned or frozen. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label. And don't forget to check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs.

9. When Eating Out, Make Better Choices

How often do you eat out? Once a day? Once a week? Rarely? Almost every meal? People who eat out more often, particularly at fast food restaurants, are more likely to be overweight or obese. However, you can still manage your body weight when eating out by making better choices.

To eat out without blowing your calorie budget, there are three things to think about:

WHAT you are eating and drinking,

HOW MUCH you are eating and drinking, and

HOW your meal is prepared.

Get Started making better choices when eating out:

What are you eating and drinking?

Check posted calorie amounts, and choose lower calorie menu options. Many restaurants post calories on menus, in pamphlets, or on their websites. Compare food and beverage options and think about how they fit within your [daily calorie limit](). For example, if your daily calorie limit is 1600 calories, think twice before ordering a meal with 1300 calories. Also, don't forget about the calories from drinks, dressings, dips, appetizers, and desserts. They all count!

Choose dishes that include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, and lean protein foods. Focusing on smart food choices from each of the 5 food groups can help you stay on track at restaurants.

Think about what you drink. Ask for water or order fat-free or low-fat milk, unsweetened tea, or other drinks without added sugars. If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, select options with fewer calories. For example, a frozen pina colada or margarita can have over 400 calories! You can check the calorie content of other beverages by going to [Food-A-Pedia]().

Watch out for desserts. Some restaurants are serving small portions of desserts, which can help decrease calorie intake. However, as a good rule, eat dessert less often.

How much are you eating and drinking?

Avoid oversized portions. A major challenge for many people when they eat out is being served large portions. Most people eat and drink more when served larger portions. To overcome this challenge, choose a smaller size option, share your meal, or take home half of your meal. For example, hamburgers can range from as few as 250 calories to 800 calories or more. Choose a smaller option with fewer calories.

To help you eat less when eating out, order from the menu instead of heading for the all-you-can-eat buffet. Many people overeat at buffets. Getting a plate of food, instead of unlimited access to food, may help you eat less. Don't forget that you don't have to clean your plate!

How is your meal prepared?

Order steamed, grilled, or broiled dishes instead of those that are fried or sauteéd. Avoid choosing foods with the following words: creamy, breaded, battered, or buttered. These words indicate that the food is higher in calories.

Ask for dressings, sauces, and syrups "on the side" so you can add only as much as you want. These sides are often high in calories – so don't eat much of them.

Concerned about **making better choices when eating out**? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I feel that I have to eat everything on my plate since it is there in front of me or else I feel like I'm wasting food": To control how much you eat, ask for a take home box with your order, and box half of the food up as soon as it arrives. This way you

know that you will have saved on calories and also have a delicious lunch for the following day.

"I like to have a cocktail with dinner": Moderate alcohol consumption can be a part of a healthy diet. Limit alcohol to no more than 1 drink per day for women and 2 drinks per day for men. Don't forget that some drinks provide a lot of calories. Many alcoholic beverages range from 100 to 400 calories each.

"I have heard that salads can be worse for you than a big meal!": Salads can be high in calories if they have toppings like fried chicken, loads of cheese, and creamy dressing. To start a meal, choose a salad that is all vegetables, and ask for dressing on the side. For a main dish salad, choose one with topped with grilled or baked chicken, seafood, or lean beef.

"It's a tradition now to get dessert after our meals when we eat out.": Ask your friends or family to support your efforts to eat less by understanding that you won't be ordering dessert. While they eat dessert, have a cup of tea or coffee. Have one bite of someone's dessert if they offer to share. If fruit is available as a dessert option, order it without the whipped topping or sauce.

10. Cook More Often at Home

Over the last few decades, Americans have been eating out more and cooking at home less often. When you cook at home, you can often make better choices about what and how much you eat and drink than you do when eating out. Cooking can also be a fun activity and a way for you to spend time with family and friends.

When cooking remember to Focus on Foods You Need, Eat Fewer Empty Calories, and Decrease Portion Sizes. Many recipes include calorie content per serving. Compare calorie content and choose meals that fit within your daily calorie needs. If cooking for a family, you may each have different calorie needs. You can still cook the same nutritious foods, but vary the portion sizes. For example, an active adolescent male can still eat the same foods as his five-year-old sister, he will just eat more.

Get started cooking more often at home:

If you don't usually cook, start gradually. Make it a goal to cook once a week and work up to cooking more often.

A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don't forget dairy – make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate. You don't have to eat from every food group at each meal, but thinking about the food groups can help you build a healthy meal. Planning ahead can help you make better food choices. Keep

healthy staples on hand, such as dried fruit, whole wheat pasta, "no-salt-added" canned vegetables, and frozen seafood.

Look for ways to make your favorite recipes healthier. For example, use the low-fat or reduced-fat version of dairy products like cheese and milk or replace sour-cream with low-fat or fat-free yogurt. Also use spices and herbs to add more flavor instead of adding salt or fat.

To help manage how much you eat, start by putting a small portion of food on your plate, and only eat seconds if still hungry.

Concerned **about cooking more often at home?** Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I'm tired of being the only one that cooks": Make cooking a family event. Get your children involved with the prep work. This will help to teach them about healthy eating, and it also serves as a way for you to spend time with your children. Have an occasional potluck. Invite friends over and have everyone bring their favorite healthy dish.

"I don't have time to cook a big meal every night; it is easier to just order out": Cooking does take time, but there are several things that you can do to make it easier to cook at home. Try prepping dishes the night before, or the morning of; prepping the salad or the side dish can help save time after work. Also try cooking a big meal on Sunday and then eating it as leftovers and freezing extras. Buying frozen or canned fruits and vegetables can also save prep time.

"My family prefers to eat out; when I cook at home, they complain": Changing a family pattern is difficult at first. Start by eating one more meal at home each week than you normally do. You may save calories and money! To mix things up, try a new recipe.

11. Increase Physical Activity

Physical activity is an important part of managing body weight.

Being physically active can help you achieve a healthy weight and prevent excess weight gain. However, physical activity is also important to all other aspects of your health. Benefits include sleeping better at night, decreasing your chances of becoming depressed, and helping you look good. When you are not physically active, you are more likely to have health problems, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and high blood cholesterol.

The amount of physical activity needed to manage body weight depends on calorie intake and varies a lot from person to person. Some adults will need to do more physical activity than others to manage body weight.

How much physical activity do you need to help manage body weight?

To start, adults should do the equivalent of 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week.

If necessary, adults should increase their weekly minutes of aerobic physical activity gradually over time (while eating fewer calories) to meet weight loss goals.

Some adults who need to lose weight may need to do more than the equivalent of 300 minutes (5 hours) per week of moderate-intensity activity to meet weight loss goals.

This may sound like a lot. However, your weight is a balance of the number of calories you eat and drink and the physical activity you do. Weight loss can be achieved by eating and drinking fewer calories OR by burning more calories in physical activity. The people with the greatest long-term success are doing BOTH – eating less and being more active. For example, walking 30 minutes each day and drinking one less soda each day are two small steps you can take that can have a big impact on your weight over time.

Get started increasing physical activity:

Pick activities you like and that fit into your life.

Be active with family and friends. Having a support network can help you stay active.

Keep track of your physical activity and gradually increase how much you do over time. Use the SuperTracker, a journal, a log, or mark your activity on a calendar.

Concerned about increasing physical activity? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I dislike physical activity. Running just isn't my idea of fun": Pick activities that you like and start by doing what you can, at least 10 minutes at a time. Every bit adds up, and the health benefits increase as you spend more time being active. If one activity, like running, doesn't appeal to you, find something that does. There are lots of activities, such as: swimming, biking, walking, playing tennis, basketball, hiking, rollerblading, etc. The point is to get out there and move! Doing something is better than doing nothing.

"I don't have the energy to be active": Daily activities like walking, gardening, and climbing up the stairs all count. Start with what you can do, even if that's just 10 minutes. You may even find yourself more energized after being active!

"I don't know the first thing about being active": Physical activity simply means movement of the body that uses energy. You can choose moderate or vigorous intensity activities, or a mix of both, each week. Moderate physical activities include: walking briskly, bicycling, dancing, and golf. Vigorous physical activities include: running, jogging, swimming, basketball, and aerobics.

"How do I know when I have gotten enough exercise for the day?": For substantial health benefits, the Physical Activity Guidelines recommend that adults get at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) a week of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes (1 hour and 15 minutes) a week of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an

equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity aerobic activity. Aerobic activity should be performed in episodes of at least 10 minutes, and preferably, it should be spread throughout the week.

12. Decrease Television and Computer Time

To help manage your body weight, reduce the amount of time you spend being sedentary. This includes time spent in front of a screen - including watching television, playing video games, and using the computer.

People who spend more time being sedentary, particularly watching television, are more likely to be overweight or obese.

Most people can't change how much time they spend on the computer for work or school, but you can decrease your screen time during other times of the day and on the weekend.

Get started decreasing television and computer time:

Track how much time you spend in front of a screen. Log the number of hours you spend in a week (outside of work or school) watching television, playing video games, or using the computer.

Develop a screen time budget. Set a goal to reduce screen time. Plan to watch shows you'd like to see. Write down a few options of things you could do instead of watching television, like taking a walk around the block, gardening, or playing with your dog.

Use the time you watch television to be physically active in front of the television. Walk in place (or on a treadmill) while watching your favorite shows, or do jumping jacks during commercials.

Limit eating while watching television. Many people overeat when watching television because they aren't thinking about what they are eating - they stop eating when the bowl or bag is empty, instead of when they have had enough! If you choose to eat while watching television, portion out a small amount.

Concerned about decreasing Television and Computer time? Here are some common "stumbling blocks" and ideas to help you overcome these barriers:

"I'm exhausted after work and just want to sit on the sofa!": It can be difficult to break your routine. Start by making small changes. For example, do you watch three hours of television most nights? Try cutting out just one program, and use the time to take a walk or play with the kids. Find activities that you enjoy and will look forward to – anything that gets you moving. Being active with family or friends can help you create a healthy new routine.

"I like to play video games that have an active component, like yoga or tennis. Do those count as screen time?": Some active video games count as physical activity. Limit the amount of time you spend **inactive** in front of the television, including video games. Playing an active video game can be a fun way to get physical activity. The activity should make your heart beat faster and your breathing rate pick up for it to count as physical activity.

"I've logged my screen time, but I can't figure out how much TV time I should set as my goal. Are there recommendations that I can follow?": Try limiting your total screen time to 2 hours a day (outside of work or school). Start by picking your favorite shows that you want to watch. Find other activities, such as walking, or find a new hobby that you enjoy doing in place of watching television.

13. How to Build a Healthy Meal

A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains. Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don't forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

Make half your plate veggies and fruits Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.

Add lean protein

Choose protein foods, such aslean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

Include whole grains

Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words "100% whole grain" or "100% whole wheat" on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

Don't forget the dairy

Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don't drink milk? Try soymilk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include

Avoid extra fat

Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

Take your time

Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

Use a smaller plate

Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

Take control of your food

Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

Try new foods

Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you've never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.

Satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way

Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

14. How to Keep Eating Healthy Food While on a Budget

There are many ways to save money on the foods that you eat. The three main steps are planning before you shop, purchasing the items at the best price, and preparing meals that stretch your food dollars.

Plan, plan, plan!

Before you head to the grocery store, plan your meals for the week. Include meals like stews, casseroles, or sitr-fries, which "stretch" expensive items into more portions. Check to see what foods you already have and make a list for what you need to buy.

Get the best price

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales and coupons. Ask about a loyalty card for extra savings at stores where you shop. Look for specials or sales on meat and seafood—often the most expensive items on your list.

Compare and contrast

Locate the "Unit Price" on the shelf directly below the product. Use it to compare different brands and different sizes of the same brand to determine which is more economical.

Buy in bulk

It is almost always cheaper to buy foods in bulk. Smart choices are family packs of chicken, steak, or fish and larger bags of potatoes and frozen vegetables. Before you shop, remember to check if you have enough freezer space.

Buy in season

Buying fruits and vegetables in season can lower the cost and add to the freshness! If you are not going to use them all right away, buy some that still need time to ripen.

Convenience costs... go back to the basics

Convenience foods like frozen dinners, pre-cut vegetables, and instant rice, oatmeal, or grits will cost you more than if you were to make them from scratch yourself. Take the time to prepare your own—and save!

Easy on your wallet

Certain foods are typically low-cost options all year round. Try beans for a less expensive protein food. For vegetables, buy carrots, greens, or potatoes. As for fruits, apples and bananas are good choices.

Cook once...eat all week!

Prepare a large batch of favorite recipes on your day off (double or triple the recipe). Freeze in individual containers. Use them throughout the week and you won't have to spend money on take-out meals.

Get your creative juices flowing

Spice up your leftovers—use them in new ways. For example, try leftover chicken in a stir-fry or over a garden salad, or to make chicken chili. Remember,

Eating out

Restaurants can be expensive. Save money by getting the early bird special, going out for lunch instead of dinner, or looking for "2 for 1" deals. Stick to water instead of ordering other beverages, which add to the bill.

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