



Family Health Centers Nutrition Program

GUIDELINES TO PROMOTE WEIGHT LOSS

Select one or two of the following tips each week to incorporate into your lifestyle to help you lose weight.

- 1) Eat 3-5 small meals a day rather than 1-2 large ones. Skipping meals or starving yourself leads to binge eating later and increases the amount of food stored as fat.
- 2) Dinner plates should be 1/2 vegetable, 1/4 low fat protein and 1/4 high fiber starch.
- 3) Store food only in the kitchen or pantry; keep food out of other rooms and out of the car.
- 4) Plan meals and snacks ahead of time, otherwise when it's time to eat, it's tempting to grab whatever is most available and easy to fix.
- 5) At the grocery store shop from a list; don't shop when you are hungry.
- 6) There are no 'bad' foods. However, if there is a certain food that is too tempting and once you start eating it, you can't seem to stop, keep that food out of the house until you learn better control. If you have an irresistible craving for it, purchase it in a single serving size when you're out.
- 7) When you start reaching for food, stop and recognize if you are truly hungry (ie - stomach hunger); if you are, go ahead and eat. If it's mouth hunger or cravings, try to figure out what the trigger is (e.g.- stress, emotional or hormonal reasons, social situation...) and a sensible way to either diffuse the desire to eat or have a light, healthy snack.
- 8) Identify the type of food you use to counter stress (e.g. - sweet and creamy, salty and crunchy, or chewy). Keep low-fat versions of these foods available in case you are unable to overcome the urge to splurge.
- 9) If you have a craving, tell yourself to wait 20 minutes and if you still have the craving, you can have a snack. Then get busy doing something to take your mind off of it.
- 10) Drink plenty of water. Sometimes we think we're hungry when we are really thirsty. Drinking water also promotes weight loss. Drink at least 6-10 cups of water per day.
- 11) Eat high fiber foods. They are good for you and the fiber fills you up more quickly.

- 12) Eat an apple, a salad or soup (not cream soups) at the beginning of a meal and save fattier foods for the end of the meal when you are fuller.
- 13) Enjoy meals in a slow, relaxed manner. It takes about 20 minutes for the stomach to signal the brain that it's had enough.
- 14) Use portion control. Smaller sized plates will make your portions look larger.
- 15) Serve food from the stove. When dishes of food are left on the table, it's more tempting to have seconds or pick extra bites.
- 16) Select lean cuts of meats and limit fried and fatty foods. Prepare foods from scratch as much as possible without the extra calories from fat and sugar.
- 17) Concentrate on setting short term, realistic goals. Visualize yourself having met those goals and feel what that would be like. Do this at least once every day.
- 18) Elicit support from friends and family. Tell them specifically how they can help support you in this effort.
- 19) Keep busy. Boredom can increase eating as can other hot spots, such as watching television and attending social events. Plan ahead, don't go to parties hungry and don't allow yourself to be pressured into eating more than you want or need.
- 20) Get active, 4-5 x/week for *at least* 30 minutes a day. Find a few different activities you enjoy that are safe for you, especially outdoors. Most aerobic activities decrease the appetite. Weight training increases muscle mass, which increases the caloric expenditure, even after your strength training session is over.

If you would like personal instruction on how to incorporate nutritional guidelines into your life and improve your health, schedule an appointment with:

Karen Youket, Dietitian / Nutritionist
by calling The Family Health Centers at
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