

Weight Control Guidelines

This guide has been prepared for you by a registered dietitian. These guidelines will help you get started until you meet with a dietitian for a plan to meet your individual needs. Please ask your doctor for a written referral to a dietitian.

Guidelines for managing your weight

- **Include these three key steps:**
 1. **Control the number of calories you eat**
 2. **Increase your physical activity**
 3. **Make life-long changes in your habits**
- Include a variety of foods to get the nutrients you need. There is no one magic food that can speed weight loss.
- Eat a well-balance diet. Women need an average of 1200-1600 calories and men an average of 1600-2000 calories, per day, to lose weight.
- Plan on a slow, steady weight loss rather than a rapid weight loss. An average loss of 2 pounds per week is desirable. Remember, you may experience set backs or plateaus.
- Changing your habits will promote long-term success. Set reasonable goals, such as making healthy food choices and increasing activity.

Here's how you do it

- Eat a variety of foods every day. Include choices from all of the food groups.
- Include at least 8-10 cups of water or other beverages daily
- Eat high fiber foods such as fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and whole grains
- Use less added fat and sugar. Choose low-fat products and lean cuts of meat.
- Include your favorite foods, but control portions and make healthy choices more often
- Read food labels and check for the serving size. Using the serving sizes listed as a guide will help prevent overeating.
- Try not to skip meals. This may cause you to overeat at the next meal.
- Avoid crash or fad diets, as they are nutritionally unbalanced and often cause rebound weight gain.

- Increase physical activity by making exercise part of your daily routine. Physical activity burns calories, reduces stress and helps replace fat with muscle.
- Try to change unhealthy habits and behaviors that cause weight gain.

Behavior Modification Tips for Weight Management

Meal planning/preparation

- Plan healthy, satisfying meals and snacks to prevent binge eating.
- Avoid food shopping when you are hungry.
- Shop from a list to limit impulse buying.
- Try new foods to add variety.
- Use low-fat cooking methods, such as grilling, broiling, baking or microwaving.
- Use less added fat when preparing food.
- Stock your kitchen with healthy food choices.

Eating behaviors

- Control portions by using smaller plates, bowls and glasses and watching serving sizes.
- Eat slowly. Put your fork down between bites and chew food thoroughly.
- Stop eating before you feel full.
- Limit distractions while eating (e.g., reading, watching television).
- Keep a food diary; write down the foods you eat and the amount.
- Substitute other activities for snacking.

Social events and dining out

- Prepare and take healthy dishes to social events.
- Eat a low calorie snack before parties or dining out.
- Practice polite ways to decline food.

- Sit or stand away from the food table.
- Share a main meal or take leftovers home.
- Approach dining out as an opportunity to make healthy choices – not a time to eat high calorie foods.
- Drink low calorie beverages instead of alcohol.
- Plan ahead – choose a restaurant that you know offers some healthy choices.

Rewards

- Ask for support from family and friends and suggest how they can help you.
- Give yourself non-food rewards for making healthy changes, such as renting a movie, reading a book or buying flowers or candles.

Physical activity

- Move, move, move!
- Increase physical activity slowly.
- Choose activities you enjoy.
- Try to include a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise such as walking, swimming or biking daily.
- Park your car farther from the office, school or store.
- Use stairs instead of elevators.
- Keep an exercise diary to record your progress.
- Try new activities and vary your routine.

Think for success

- Make health, not appearance, your weight management goal.
- Keep a positive attitude.
- Focus on a healthy eating style, not “dieting.” Diets are usually short lived and rarely produce long-term success.

A registered dietitian can help

These guidelines are only meant to be used until you see a registered dietitian. An individualized diet instruction will:

- Help you identify and set behavior goals
- Help with label reading, shopping, food preparation, adjusting recipes and dining out
- Combine other diet restrictions if necessary

**For a list of Aurora facilities with a dietitian,
please call Aurora Health Care toll free at 1-888-863-5502.**

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.