

# Ways to Manage Your Weight

Being overweight puts you at greater risk for health problems such as high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease. Make healthy choices each day instead of going on and off of diets. A slow loss of ½-2 pounds per week is best. If you lose too much too fast, you often gain the weight back.

- **Do not skip meals.** Start the day with a healthy breakfast. Eating at least 3 meals each day helps your body have the energy it needs and prevents hunger.
- **Control your portion size.** Use a small plate and take small amounts of a variety of foods. Do not go back for seconds.
- **Eat when you are hungry.** Avoid eating to relax, or because you are bored or depressed. Take a walk or do something you enjoy instead.
- **Write down all of the food you eat.** Include the type of food, the amount and the time you ate. This helps you become more aware so that you can better manage your eating.
- **Exercise.** Check with your doctor before starting a new exercise routine. Be more active by taking the stairs or parking your car farther away. Aim to exercise 1 hour each day, at least 5 days a week by doing activities such as walking, bike riding, swimming, running and hiking. Exercise classes may be helpful.
- **Limit sugar and sweets.** Limit food that contains added sugars such as desserts, doughnuts, cookies and candies. These have many calories and few nutrients. Use an artificial sweetener in drinks instead of sugar or drink diet soda.
- **Drink water.** People who drink plenty of water are more likely to lose weight. Drink 6-8 glasses of water each day.
- **Be careful when eating out.** When you eat out, choose soup and salad or smaller dishes that are low in fat. Ask for sauces and dressings on the side. If portions are large, share a plate or take half home. Ask for healthy menu choices.
- **Snack for better health.** Enjoy fresh fruit, vegetables, or fat free light yogurt instead of packaged snacks. Low fat crackers, whole grain cereals and oatmeal also make great snacks.
- **Use less fat when cooking.** Bake, broil, grill, roast or steam food instead of frying. Trim fat and skin from meat. Drain fat.

- **Be a smart shopper.** Plan ahead for meals. Use a list and avoid shopping when you are hungry. Buy fruit, whole grains, vegetables, seafood, chicken and lean cuts of meat. If you eat dairy products, buy fat free or low fat versions.

Small changes can lead to good results. Talk to your doctor, nurse or dietitian if you have any questions or concerns.