



WINNING WEIGHT MAINTENANCE TIPS

REAL LIFE TIPS FROM WEIGHT LOSS WINNERS

The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) provides data from persons who have lost at least 30 pounds and maintained the weight loss for at least 1 year. The following strategies are approaches they have found to successfully help maintain their weight loss.

SET REALISTIC WEIGHT GOALS

A 5 to 10% weight loss can have significant health improvements. Establish achievable goals and add to them as they are reached. Reassess goals every 6 months.

MONITOR CALORIE INTAKE

Weight loss can be maintained at 1400 calories per day after the weight goal is achieved. Become familiar with portion sizes and the average calorie levels of food to help achieve a calorie eating plan that will maintain your body weight.

EAT A DIET LOW IN FAT AND HIGH IN UNREFINED CARBOHYDRATES

A low-fat, high-carbohydrate diet eating plan is the desired approach to maintaining weight loss. Select carbohydrates that are high in fiber and unrefined, for example, fresh fruit, vegetables, whole grain cereal and breads, brown rice, beans and legumes, and whole-wheat pasta.

AVOID SKIPPING MEALS

Consume 5 smaller meals and snacks per day. Keeping yourself nourished can help prevent over-eating at different points of the day.

SELF-MONITOR FOOD INTAKE AND ACTIVITY LEVEL

Consistently monitor food intake and activity level. Become familiar with what, how much and when you eat and are active. Regular assessment can coincide with weight loss changes and help you identify what may be triggering weight regain. Use journals, food records, and activity records regularly. Share them with your weight loss provider.

BE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE!

Spend 60 minutes per day doing moderate intensity physical activity, e.g., brisk walking, which will burn about 400 calories per day. Physical activity is identified to be one of the most important components of maintaining weight loss successfully. Lifestyle activity (doing those daily household chores like gardening, mowing, vacuuming, and chasing the kids) can be counted. Walking stairs for 10 minute intervals 3 times per day has the same calorie burning power as walking stairs continuously for 30 minutes. Picking activities you enjoy is most important.

CONSUME ENOUGH CALCIUM

High calcium diets (food versus calcium supplements) may reduce the amount of calcium in fat cells, which in turn increases fat breakdown and reduces fat storage. Consuming 1,000 mg/day (3½-cups of dairy in the form of low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt) has demonstrated these benefits.

References

Hill JO, Wing RR. Successful weight loss maintenance. *Annu Rev Nutr.* 2001; 21:323-341.

Teegarden D. Calcium intake and reduction in weight or fat mass. *J Nutr.* 2003; 133: 249S-251S.

American Obesity Association. *Maintaining Weight Loss.* Available at <http://obesity.org/prevention/maintaining.shtml> on 1/10/06.

