

# The Basics of Weight Loss: When You're Ready

**When you're ready to lose weight, here's how to get started:**

**Keep track of your journey.** Weigh yourself once a week and write it down. Keep track of everything you eat and drink for one week. What about your feelings? Write those down too!



**Set realistic and specific goals.** A reasonable amount of weight to lose is ½ to 2 pounds a week—losing less is fine too. Remind yourself daily of **why** you want to lose weight. Write down the specific changes you are making. For example: “I will eat ice cream once a week instead of every day”. Reward yourself when you reach short-term goals – do something you like but don't usually do, that doesn't involve eating.

**Decrease the calories you eat.** Find the extra calories in your diet and cut back on them. Skip high calorie snacks like chips, cheese, and cookies. Snack on vegetables or fruit instead. Avoid soda or juice drinks (“juice drinks” all contain extra sugar, more than you'll find in just plain juice) and drink water instead. Cut back on high calorie foods at meals—such as meat or cheesy casseroles—and add more vegetables. Go easy on fast foods—eat food from home instead. Be consistent and you'll see results!

**Increase the calories you use.** Add extra physical activity to your day, most days of the week. Check with your provider about starting an exercise program. Keep track of your activity or exercise each day and write down what you do!

## More weight loss tips:

- ◆ Eat regularly—don't skip meals
- ◆ Increase activity a little each day
- ◆ Get support from family and friends
- ◆ If you splurge, don't give up—just start over
- ◆ If you need more help, ask your healthcare provider

