



# The World Around You

## Use What You Have to Stay Healthy and Fit

**N**o matter who you are or where you live, eating well and getting regular exercise are important ways to be healthy. These activities may help you maintain a healthy weight and prevent or delay certain health problems, such as diabetes.

Cities and suburbs usually offer large grocery stores and gyms. These facilities may make it easier to live healthfully. But if you live in a small community, you may not have easy access to a large grocery store or health club. **Do not let this stop you from following healthy behaviors! You can still find ways to eat better and be more active.**

This booklet will give you tips on how to use the world around you to stay healthy and fit.



**NIDDK** NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
DIABETES AND DIGESTIVE  
AND KIDNEY DISEASES

**WIN**

Weight-control Information Network

# How Weight Affects Your Health

A healthy weight may reduce your risk for diabetes, heart disease, strokes, and some cancers. When a person gains weight over time, risk for these health problems increases. Healthy eating and regular physical activity are good ways to help you reach a healthy weight and lower your risk for these health problems.

## What is a healthy weight?

You can find out if you are at a healthy weight for you by learning your body mass index (BMI). Your BMI is a number that results from measuring the relationship between your weight and height.

Body Mass Index

	NORMAL						OVERWEIGHT					OBESE						EXTREME OBESITY						
BMI	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Height (Foot-inches)	Weight (Pounds)																							
4' 10"	91	96	100	105	110	115	119	124	129	134	138	143	148	153	158	162	167	172	177	181	186	191	196	201
4' 11"	94	99	104	109	114	119	124	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198	203	208
5' 00"	97	102	107	112	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	153	158	163	168	174	179	184	189	194	199	204	209	215
5' 01"	100	106	111	116	122	127	132	137	143	148	153	158	164	169	174	180	185	190	195	201	206	211	217	222
5' 02"	104	109	115	120	126	131	136	142	147	153	158	164	169	175	180	186	191	196	202	207	213	218	224	229
5' 03"	107	112	118	124	130	135	141	146	152	158	163	169	174	180	186	191	197	203	208	214	220	225	231	237
5' 04"	110	116	122	128	134	140	145	151	157	163	169	175	180	186	191	197	204	209	215	221	227	232	238	244
5' 05"	114	120	126	132	138	144	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240	246	252
5' 06"	118	124	130	136	142	148	155	161	167	173	179	186	192	198	204	210	216	223	229	235	241	247	253	260
5' 07"	121	127	134	140	146	153	159	166	172	178	185	191	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	242	249	255	261	268
5' 08"	125	131	138	144	151	158	164	171	177	184	190	197	204	210	216	223	230	236	243	249	256	262	269	276
5' 09"	128	135	142	149	155	162	169	176	182	189	196	203	210	216	223	230	236	243	250	257	263	270	277	284
5' 10"	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	222	229	236	243	250	257	264	271	278	285	292
5' 11"	136	143	150	157	165	172	179	186	193	200	208	215	222	229	236	243	250	257	265	272	279	286	293	301
6' 00"	140	147	154	162	169	177	184	191	199	206	213	221	228	235	242	250	258	265	272	279	287	294	302	309
6' 01"	144	151	159	166	174	182	189	197	204	212	219	227	235	242	250	257	265	275	280	288	295	302	310	318
6' 02"	148	155	163	171	179	186	194	202	210	218	225	233	241	249	256	264	272	280	287	295	303	311	319	326
6' 03"	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240	248	256	264	272	279	287	295	303	311	319	327	335
6' 04"	156	164	172	180	189	197	205	213	221	230	238	246	254	263	271	279	287	295	304	312	320	328	336	344

Adapted from: George Bray, Pennington Biomedical Research Center; *Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults: The Evidence Report*, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, September 1998.



## BMI Results

- A person with a BMI between 18.5 and 24.9 is considered to be at a healthy weight.
- A person with a BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight.
- A person whose BMI is 30 or higher is considered obese.

Use the chart on page 2 to find your BMI.

In addition to learning your BMI, you should also measure your waist. A waist measurement does not tell if you are overweight, but it does show if you have extra fat in your stomach. Extra fat around your waist may harm your health even more than fat around your thighs or hips.

A waist measurement at or above 40 inches for men or 35 inches for women may mean that you have a higher chance of developing diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, and other problems.

If you are overweight or obese, talk with your doctor or other health care provider about losing weight. If you need to lose weight, you will need to take in fewer calories than you use. You take in calories by eating and drinking, and you use calories by being physically active. You may lose weight by following a plan for healthy eating and a plan for regular physical activity.



## Ways to Use the World Around You to Move More

**R**egular physical activity may help you

- stay at a healthy weight
- gain more energy
- lower your stress level
- reduce your risk of serious health problems

You do not need costly weights or treadmills or organized fitness classes to be physically active. Consider using everyday items or local resources to be active. In addition to getting exercise, you may have fun in ways that do not cost a lot of money.

The chart on page 4 lists several types of physical activity and provides examples of each type.



# Physical Activities to Help You Move More

ACTIVITY	EXAMPLES	USING WHAT YOU HAVE
AEROBIC ACTIVITIES	Walking, hiking, jogging, biking	 <p>Go for a hike around your home. Form a walking group with friends and use the track at the local high school.</p>
STRENGTH TRAINING ACTIVITIES	Exercises to build muscle	<p>You can build muscles by doing exercises such as arm curls or squats. In place of weights, use gallon-size water bottles, soup cans, or large books.</p>
EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES	Household chores, taking the stairs, mowing the lawn	 <p>Make chores fun by putting some energy into them! Washing the car, sweeping floors, raking leaves, and other chores all count as ways to be active.</p>



## Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

For more information about the benefits of physical activity, see the *2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, available online at <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>.



# Making Physical Activity Work for You

- Try different activities to find out what you like the most. For exercise to become a part of your life, it helps if you enjoy it.
- Be active with your family. At least once a week, plan an active outing, such as a family bike ride, or a walk through a local park. Also, ask friends and coworkers to be active with you. Having exercise “buddies” may help you stay interested in being active.
- Try to make activity a priority. You can fit in physical activity in the morning, on your lunch break, before dinner, or after the kids go to bed. If you are too flexible with your time, you may never get the exercise you need.
- Pick times when other activities will not get in the way. Start with a small goal of being active for 10 minutes a day, and then slowly build up to longer periods of time. As you build more physical activity into your life, set limits on the amount of time you and your family spend watching TV, playing video games, and using the computer.

# Ways to Use the Foods Around You to Eat Better

In addition to physical activity, eating healthier foods is important for your health. Healthy eating may help you

- lose weight
- feel better
- prevent weight gain

Making changes to your eating habits may seem hard or even impossible. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products are important parts of a healthy eating plan. Just remember that you do not have to change everything at once. Start small because **small changes** can make a **big difference**.

## Eating Better Can Save Time and Money

- Save time by buying foods that are easy to prepare. Consider fixing whole-wheat pasta and tomato sauce or rice and beans. Be sure to freeze or refrigerate leftovers right away to keep them safe to eat.
- Check out a farmers market or roadside stand if one is near you. You may find fresh fruits, vegetables, and other foods that are in season.
- Buy frozen or canned foods, like mixed vegetables (no salt added) and canned fruits packed in their own juices. You can add them to any pasta sauce or rice dish.

They are good for you, like fresh produce, and will save you time when cooking. Although they may not “spoil,” frozen and canned foods do not last forever. Check the “use-by” dates on canned and frozen foods. “Use-by” dates refer to the quality of a food.

- Try canned beans, like kidney and black beans, and rinse them to remove excess salt. These foods cost less than meat and are loaded with protein.



## Portion Size and Serving Size

An important part of healthy eating is being able to recognize the difference between a “portion” size and a “serving” size. A portion is how much food you choose to eat at one time. A serving is the amount of food listed on a product’s Nutrition Facts label. For more information about eating just enough for you and nutrition labels, see <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/NFLPM/ucm274593.htm>.

# Achieving Your Goals

**A**s you try to be more active and eat better, it is important to set goals you will be able to reach. For example, set a goal to eat one fruit or vegetable at every meal. Keep track of your new goals in a notebook. This way you will see what is working and what is not, and you can adjust your goals as needed.

There will be times when you have setbacks. If you expect them and think of ways to overcome them, you may be able to avoid being thrown off track for too long. Common setbacks are lack of time and loss of interest.

To stay on track

- ask your friends, family, or coworkers to join you for a walk, bike ride, or other activity
- break your activity into chunks when trying to find the time to be active
- exercise for 10 minutes, three times a day, which might be easier than setting aside one 30-minute block of time

## You can do it!

Being more active and eating better may seem tough without access to large grocery stores, expensive weights or treadmills, or paved walking trails. Remember, you can use what you have around you to be healthy.



## Additional Reading From the Weight-control Information Network

The following WIN publications offer more information on healthy eating and physical activity:

### Changing Your Habits: Steps to Better Health

guides readers through steps that can help them learn what “stage” they are in—how ready they are—to make healthy changes. Once that stage is known, tips on how to make healthy eating and physical activity changes are given.

Internet: <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/changing-habits.htm>

**Just Enough for You** describes the difference between a portion—the amount of food a person chooses to eat—and a serving. It offers tips for judging portion sizes and controlling portions at home and when eating out.

Internet: [http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/just\\_enough.htm](http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/just_enough.htm)

### Tips to Help You Get Active

offers ideas and suggestions for beating your roadblocks to make physical activity a part of your daily life.

Internet: <http://win.niddk.nih.gov/publications/tips.htm>

## For More Information

### American Heart Association

This website features a free online walking guide, physical activity and nutrition tracker, healthy recipes, and sample stretches.

Internet: <http://www.startwalkingnow.org/home.jsp>

### National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Aim for a Healthy Weight

The first website below includes a "Portion Distortion" quiz, BMI assessment tool, and menu planner; the second website has sample reduced-calorie menus based on different cuisines.

Internet: [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose\\_wt](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt)

Internet: [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose\\_wt/sampmenu.htm](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/lose_wt/sampmenu.htm)

Phone: 301-592-8573

### Rural Assistance Center

This website offers health information for those working with or living in rural communities.

Internet: <http://www.raconline.org>

Phone: 1-800-270-1898

### U.S. Department of Agriculture ChooseMyPlate

More information and interactive tools on healthy eating and physical activity are available on this website.

Internet: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>

Phone: 1-888-779-7264

### Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food: Strengthen Rural Communities

This website lists resources available to rural communities.

Internet: <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010

This website provides information about healthy eating to decrease your chances of developing health conditions and improve your overall health.

Internet: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines>

### 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

This website provides helpful information and recommendations for fitting physical activity into your life.

Internet: <http://www.health.gov/paguidelines>

Inclusion of resources is for information only and does not imply endorsement by NIDDK or WIN.

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The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) is a national information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) of the National Institutes of Health, which is the Federal Government's lead agency responsible for biomedical research on nutrition and obesity. Authorized by Congress (Public Law 103-43), WIN provides the general public, health professionals, the media, and Congress with up-to-date, science-based health information on weight control, obesity, physical activity, and related nutritional issues.

Publications produced by WIN are reviewed by both NIDDK scientists and outside experts. This publication was also reviewed by:

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