

Dietary Guidelines for Americans

Maintain Desirable Weight

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From the Editor

This is one of a series of bulletins with tips to help you use the seven Dietary Guidelines in choosing and preparing the foods you eat and serve to others. Following the Dietary Guidelines is a balancing act: getting the variety of foods necessary to supply the nutrients you need, but not too much of other food components—calories, fat and cholesterol, sugar, sodium, and alcohol. This bulletin shows how to "Maintain Desirable Weight." But

remember, it's important to consider all seven guidelines in building a healthful diet:

- Eat a Variety of Foods
- Maintain Desirable Weight
- Avoid Too Much Fat, Saturated Fat, and Cholesterol
- Eat Foods with Adequate Starch and Fiber
- Avoid Too Much Sugar
- Avoid Too Much Sodium
- If You Drink Alcoholic Beverages, Do So in Moderation

Obesity and Your Health

Obesity is harmful to your health and may shorten your life. It increases risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and many other medical problems. Some overweight people may be at greater risk than others. For example, recent research shows that people who tend to have their fat concentrated in the waist and abdomen rather than the thighs and buttocks may be more prone to the illnesses that often go along with obesity.

Are You "Fit"?

You can't change your basic body structure. Face it—you may never have the build of a fashion model. But here's some *GOOD NEWS*—whatever the body type you have, you can be **FIT** and not **FAT**!

- Weight range charts (such as the one here) can help you decide whether you have a weight problem, but they don't relate weight to fitness. The best goal is to be **FIT**—to feel good and move well while maintaining desirable weight.
- Some people who weigh more than the chart shows are **FIT** because their excess weight is in muscle, not fat. Overweight is a problem only if those excess pounds are in fat.
- Some people who are within the weight range shown to be desirable for their height are not **FIT**. Exercise is the key here. (See pages 7 and 8.)
- Many people are both overweight and **FAT**. What about you?

Answer these questions to see if you're "FAT."

- Are you wider at the waist than at your chest?
- Does your middle interfere with sight of your toes?
- Pinch a fold of skin from the back of your upper arm. Is it more than an inch thick?

If so, read on for ideas to "shape up" and *get* "FIT." If you're already **FIT**, don't stop reading...Continue on to remind yourself how to *stay* that way!

Desirable Body Weight Ranges

Height without shoes	Weight without clothes	
	Men (pounds)	Women (pounds)
4'10"		92-121
4'11"		95-124
5'0"		98-127
5'1"	105-134	101-130
5'2"	108-137	104-134
5'3"	111-141	107-138
5'4"	114-145	110-142
5'5"	117-149	114-146
5'6"	121-154	118-150
5'7"	125-159	122-154
5'8"	129-163	126-159
5'9"	133-167	130-164
5'10"	137-172	134-169
5'11"	141-177	
6'0"	145-182	
6'1"	149-187	
6'2"	153-192	
6'3"	157-197	

NOTE: For women 18-25 years, subtract one pound for each year under 25.

SOURCE: Adapted from the 1959 Metropolitan Desirable Weight Table.

Read On For...

- Basic weight loss information, page 2
- Diet cautions, page 2
- Eating habits, page 3
- Saving calories, page 4
- Recipes, pages 5 and 6
- Exercise and weight loss, pages 7 and 8

The “Basics”

Have you decided to be “FIT” and not “FAT”? That’s the first step. Now develop a strategy to shed those

unwanted pounds. In tailoring a weight loss plan that’s right for you, keep the following “BASICS” in mind:

- Whether you have 5 pounds to lose or whether you have 20, there’s only one way to lose weight and that’s to use up more calories than you take in. This means that you must either select foods containing fewer calories than you normally eat or you must increase your activity—preferably both. Generally, to lose one pound a week, you must either decrease calorie intake by about 500 calories a day or burn up those 500 calories by increasing physical activity. A steady loss of 1 or 2 pounds a week is about right.
- All calories count—regardless of the food they come from. BUT, some foods have more calories than others. The fat in foods and alcohol in alcoholic beverages have about twice as many calories as carbohydrates and protein.
- Protein, vitamins, minerals, and some fat and carbohydrates too are essentials of a good diet, regardless of its calorie count. The healthy approach in losing weight is to choose a variety of foods providing the nutrients needed (see bulletin on variety), and to go easy on foods that supply mainly calories. Examples are sugars, sweets, fats and oils, foods that are high in sugars and fats and, of course, soft drinks and alcoholic beverages.
- Nutrition scientists recommend that everyone avoid too much fat, sugar, and alcohol. (See bulletins on fat, sugar, and alcoholic beverages.) However, when trying to lose weight it’s *especially* important to moderate intake of foods high in fat, sugar, and alcohol. They’re often the source of “extra” calories.

These “BASICS” are the same for everyone. But putting them to good use is a personal matter. You need to develop a weight loss strategy that’s right for

you. Check with your doctor if you plan to follow a low-calorie diet over a long period of time or a diet that is extremely low in calories even for a short time.

Diet Cautions

Diet Fads

Be suspicious of diet gimmicks and fad diets that promise wonders. They can be dangerous. Some are appealing because they promise quick and easy weight loss. But unless a diet is balanced nutritionally—as many fad diets are not—it could be harmful if followed over a long period of time. Diets that encourage little or no eating, diets that promote heavy eating of one kind of food, and very low-calorie diets can all cause health problems.

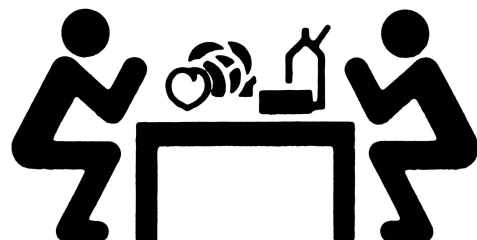
Don’t Be a “YO-YO”!

Many people who have a weight problem lose weight, regain it, lose, and regain—their weight goes up and down like a yo-yo. Repeatedly losing and regaining weight may increase your risk of heart disease. So once you’ve lost weight, put yourself on a maintenance program and keep that weight off for good!

You Can’t Be Too Thin...Or Can You?

Being overweight is not advisable—but neither is being much *below* the “desirable” weight listed for your height. Going *overboard* in trying to lose weight can cause health problems.

Anorexia nervosa and bulimia are serious eating disorders. Persons with these disorders usually think they look fat (even though they may be thin) and have an abnormal fear of being fat. Common traits of persons suffering from anorexia and/or bulimia are bizarre food habits, refusal to eat, bingeing or gorging followed by vomiting, abuse of laxatives and diuretics, and an extreme urge to exercise. Such practices can result in starvation and other chronic health problems.



Your Eating Habits and Extra Calories

Think about your eating patterns and habits: What, how much, when, where, and why do you eat? For each of these questions, check the answers that best describe your eating patterns and habits.

What do I usually eat?

- A varied and balanced diet that includes only moderate amounts of fat, sugar, and alcoholic beverages. (See other bulletins in this series.)
- Deep-fat fried and breaded foods.
- "Extras," such as salad dressings, potato toppings, spreads, sauces, and gravies.
- Sweets and rich desserts such as candies, cakes, pies.
- Snack foods high in fat and sodium, such as chips and other "munchies."
- Cocktails, wine, and beer.

How much do I usually eat?

- A single small serving.
- A large serving.
- Two servings or more.

When do I usually eat?

- At mealtime only.
- While preparing meals or clearing the table.
- While watching TV or participating in other activities.
- At coffee break.
- Anytime.

Where do I usually eat?

- At the kitchen or dining room table.
- At restaurants or fast food places.
- In front of the TV or while reading.
- Wherever I happen to be when I'm "hungry."

Why do I usually eat?

- It's time to eat.
- I'm "starved."
- Foods look tempting.
- Everyone else is eating.
- Food will get thrown away if I don't eat it.
- I'm bored or frustrated.

Look at the boxes you checked for "what" and "how much" you eat. Do they provide any clues to where your extra calories are coming from? Your answers to "when, where, and why" you eat are important too. They often affect *what* and *how much* you eat.

Can you identify some habits that may be due for a change? Try to think of ways to modify "problem" habits. If, for example, you often nibble while doing other things, make an effort to plan your meals and snacks ahead of time. For eating at home, make a rule to eat only while sitting at the kitchen or dining room table. If candy bars from the vending machine at your office coffee break are a problem, substitute a low-calorie snack brought from home. If you often eat because you're bored or frustrated, think of other activities to get your mind off food—jog, call a friend, or walk the dog.

Cutting Excess Calories What's Best For YOU?

What's the best way to change "what" and "how much" you eat? It depends on your eating habits. If rich desserts are a problem, you can opt for no dessert, a very small portion, or fresh fruit instead.

If topping on your baked potato is a source of extra calories, what's best for you—no topping, less topping, or plain yogurt instead of sour cream? (See recipe on page 5.)

If you're used to the flavor of whole milk but want less fat and fewer calories, what's best for you—directly switching from whole milk to skim or trying lowfat milk first?

You can see that it's up to you. The important thing is to make some changes that will make a difference over the long run.

What Can I Eat?

Food Group	Some Suggestions
Breads, cereals, and other grain products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breads, yes; but avoid spreads high in fat and sugar. ● Cereals with little or no sugar. ● Rice and pasta—but watch out for the sauces!
Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All except avocados and olives. But don't add sugar or whipped cream.
Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All kinds, but go easy on butter, margarine, and other sauces or toppings high in fat. ● Avoid vegetables that are fried.
Meat, poultry, fish, and alternates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lean parts of meat; poultry without skin; fish. ● Broil, roast, simmer. Avoid items that are breaded and fried. ● Eggs, dry beans and peas, and tofu are suitable alternates.
Milk, cheese, and yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Skim or lowfat milk and cheeses. ● Lowfat plain yogurt.
Fats, sweets, and alcoholic beverages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Watch out for these. They provide calories and little else—not what dieters want. ● For dessert, try fresh fruit or choose baked products made with less fat and sugar—angelfood cake, for example.

Saving Calories...Some Ideas to Get You Started

Check out the following calorie-saving ideas. Then think of other changes to help you cut calories.

Instead of:	Try:	Calories saved:
3 ounces well-marbled meat (prime rib)	3 ounces lean meat (eye of round)	140
1/2 chicken breast, batter-fried	1/2 chicken breast, Lemon-Baked Chicken*	175
1/2 cup beef stroganoff	3 ounces lean roast beef	210
1/2 cup home-fried potatoes	1 medium baked potato	65
1/2 cup green bean-mushroom casserole	1/2 cup cooked green beans	50
1/2 cup potato salad	1 cup raw vegetable salad	140
1/2 cup pineapple chunks in heavy syrup	1/2 cup pineapple chunks canned in juice	25
2 tablespoons bottled french dressing	2 tablespoons Low-Calorie French Dressing*	150
1/7 9-inch apple pie	1 baked apple	185
3 oatmeal-raisin cookies	1 oatmeal-raisin cookie	125
1/2 cup ice cream	1/2 cup ice milk	45
a danish pastry	half an english muffin	150
1 cup sugar-coated corn flakes	1 cup plain corn flakes	60
1 cup whole milk	1 cup 1% lowfat milk	45
7-fluid-ounce Tom Collins	6-fluid-ounce wine cooler made with sparkling water	150
1-ounce bag potato chips	1 cup plain popcorn	120
1/12 8-inch white layer cake with chocolate frosting	1/12 angelfood cake, 10-inch tube	185

*Recipes on pages 5 and 6.

Calorie-Cutting Tips

- Avoid seconds of higher calorie foods and gradually cut back on serving size.
- Use low-calorie versions of foods you like.
- Go easy on foods that are high in fat or sugar.
- Limit alcoholic beverages.
- Roast, broil, boil, steam, or poach foods rather than fry them.
- Select lean cuts of meat and trim visible fat.
- Eat poultry and fish without skin.
- Use spices and herbs instead of sauces, butter, or margarine.
- Use lowfat dairy products.
- Drink coffee or tea without cream or sugar or use lowfat milk instead of cream.

Lemon-Baked Chicken

4 servings, 1 chicken breast half each

Per serving:

Calories.....	135	Cholesterol.....	68 milligrams
Total fat.....	1 gram	Sodium.....	222 milligrams
Saturated fatty acids.	Trace		
Lemon juice.....	3 tablespoons		
Water.....	2 tablespoons		
Onion powder.....	1/4 teaspoon		
Marjoram leaves.....	1/4 teaspoon		
Salt.....	1/4 teaspoon		
Paprika.....	1/8 teaspoon		
Chicken breast halves, without skin.....	4		
Parsley.....	As desired		

1. *Preheat oven to 350°F (moderate).*
2. Mix all ingredients except chicken and parsley.
3. Place chicken pieces in shallow baking pan.
4. Pour lemon mixture over chicken pieces.
5. Bake until chicken is tender, about 50 minutes. Baste chicken several times with liquid in pan during baking.

Potato Topper

About 1 cup

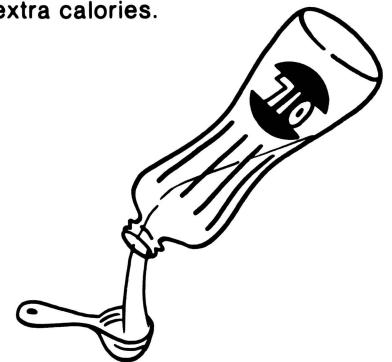
Per tablespoon:

Calories.....	10	Cholesterol.....	1 milligram
Total fat.....	Trace	Sodium.....	58 milligrams
Saturated fatty acids.	Trace		
Lowfat cottage cheese.....	1 cup		
Skim milk.....	1 tablespoon		
Lemon juice.....	2 teaspoons		

1. Mix ingredients in a blender, occasionally scraping sides of blender jar with a rubber scraper, until mixture is smooth and creamy. Chill.
2. Serve over baked potatoes; garnish with chopped green onion or parsley.

“Calorie Culprits”

To save calories, go easy on fats, sweets, and alcoholic beverages. They are often the source of extra calories.



1 teaspoon FAT/OIL = 40
Calories



1 teaspoon SUGAR = 15
Calories



1 fluid ounce ALCOHOL (80
proof) = 65 Calories

Low-Calorie French Dressing

About 1 cup

Per tablespoon:

Calories.....	10	Cholesterol.....	0
Total fat.....	Trace	Sodium.....	36 milligrams
Saturated fatty acids.	Trace		

Cornstarch	1-1/2 tablespoons
Sugar	2 tablespoons
Water	1 cup
Vinegar	1/4 cup
Salt	1/4 teaspoon
Dry mustard	1/2 teaspoon
Paprika.....	1/2 teaspoon
Onion powder	1/8 teaspoon
Garlic powder	Dash

1. Mix cornstarch and sugar in saucepan; stir in water.
2. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened.
3. Cool slightly.
4. Add remaining ingredients. Mix thoroughly. Chill.

Beef with Chinese-Style Vegetables

4 servings, 1/2 cup meat and 1/2 cup vegetables each

Per serving:

Calories.....	190	Cholesterol.....	66 milligrams
Total fat.....	7 grams	Sodium.....	358 milligrams
Saturated fatty acids.	3 grams		

Beef round steak, lean, boneless	1 pound
Green beans, cut in strips.....	2/3 cup
Carrots, thinly sliced	2/3 cup
Turnips, thinly sliced.....	2/3 cup
Cauliflower florets, thinly sliced.....	2/3 cup
Chinese cabbage, cut in strips.....	2/3 cup
Boiling water	2/3 cup
Oil	2 teaspoons
Cornstarch	4 teaspoons
Ground ginger.....	1/2 teaspoon
Garlic powder	1/8 teaspoon
Soy sauce.....	1 tablespoon
Water.....	2/3 cup

1. Trim fat from beef. Slice beef across the grain into thin strips, about 1/8 inch wide and 3 inches long. (It is easier to slice meat thinly if it is partially frozen.)
2. Add vegetables to boiling water. Simmer, covered, for 5 minutes or until vegetables are tender but still crisp. Drain.
3. While vegetables are cooking, heat oil in nonstick frypan. Add beef and stirfry over moderately high heat, turning pieces constantly until beef is no longer red, about 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Mix cornstarch, ginger, garlic powder, soy sauce, and water.
5. Stir cornstarch mixture into beef. Heat until sauce starts to boil.
6. Serve meat sauce over vegetables.

Don't Forget Exercise!

Cutting calorie intake is one way to shed pounds. Calorie output counts too! The best approach is to decrease calories AND increase physical activity.

Exercise burns calories and helps make you FIT as you become less FAT. It has other plusses too. For example, it can help relieve tensions that often lead to overeating. Exercise for a slimmer, trimmer you.

Activities like handball and jogging are fantastic calorie burners. They're great for people who enjoy them and who are fit enough to undertake a vigorous exercise program. But don't feel you have to be an athlete to make physical activity count for you. Moreover, don't *try* to become an athlete overnight! It's best to make slow, steady changes in your activity level. There are lots of little ways to burn calories during your daily routine. Walk or bicycle instead of drive, use the stairs instead of the elevator, stand rather than sit. Think ACTION—bend, stoop, stretch, squat, reach, move, lift, carry—all extra actions add up to burned calories!

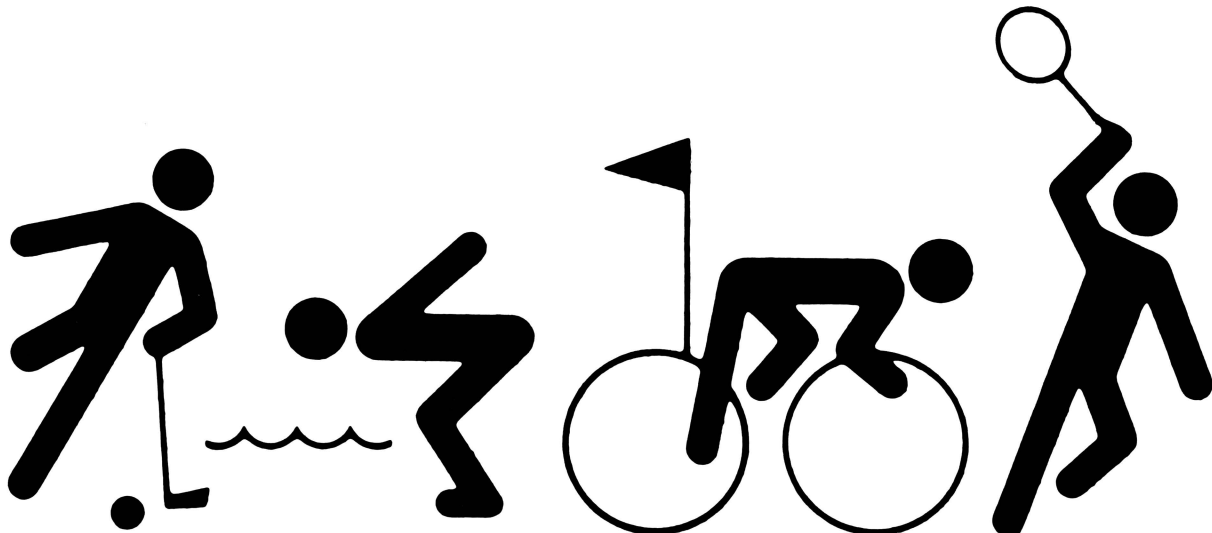
The number of calories burned depends on the degree of the activity (running burns more than walking), length of the activity (the longer the activity continues, the more calories burned), and your weight (a heavier person uses more energy than a lighter person for the same activity).

The suggestions here are ways you might increase your level of physical activity. Check those that are best for you and note those you can add. Think of others that are suited to your interests. Before you start an exercise or sports program, check with your doctor to help decide

what activity is best for your age and general physical condition.

- Use the stairs rather than the elevator.
- Put more vigor into everyday activities.
- Take several 1-minute stretch breaks during the day.
- Take a walk each day at lunchtime or after work.
- Attend an aerobics or slimnastics class.
- Develop a "do-it-yourself" home exercise program.
- Establish a regular weekly schedule for activities such as swimming or tennis.
- Set up a daily routine of walking, bicycling, or jogging.
- Play basketball in the community gym or your own backyard.
- Join an office, intramural, or community sports league.
- Go dancing or join a square dance club.

Look at your list to see how to best fit "fitness" into your schedule. Then TAKE ACTION. But remember, *keeping* FIT is an ongoing process. Once you've worked up to a new level of activity—stick with it! When you're ready, increase your activity level even more.



Watch Those Pounds Slide Off

Still not convinced of the weight loss merits of regular activity? As you can see from the table below, a leisurely walk burns more than twice as many calories as standing quietly. A brisk walk burns over *three* times as many. Increasing your regular activity by walking briskly for just half an hour each day can result in 17 POUNDS of body fat lost per year! (This assumes, of course, that you have not increased your level of calories from food!)

Approximate Energy Expenditure by a Healthy Adult Weighing About 150 Pounds

Activity	Calories per hour
Lying quietly _____	80-100
Sitting quietly _____	85-105
Standing quietly _____	100-120
Walking slowly, 2-1/2 mph _____	210-230
Walking quickly, 4 mph _____	315-345
Light work, such as ballroom dancing; cleaning house; office work; shopping _____	125-310
Moderate work, such as cycling, 9 mph; jogging, 6 mph; tennis; scrubbing floors; weeding garden _____	315-480
Hard work, such as aerobic dancing; basketball; chopping wood; cross-country skiing; running, 7 mph; shoveling snow; spading garden; swimming, "crawl" _____	480-625

Source: Based on material compiled by Robert E. Johnson, M.D., Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois.

One Last Word

You've probably thought of some good ways to put your eating and exercise plans into action. Start with the ones that are easiest for you or appeal to you most. Master one, then move on to those that are a little harder. Continue to make small, steady changes and make them permanent. They'll all add up.

Want More Information?

- Read the other bulletins in this series.
- Contact your local county Extension agent, public health nutritionist, or dietitian in hospitals or other community agencies.
- Look through cookbooks in your local library for other low-calorie recipes, and evaluate the recipes on the basis of what you have read here about weight control. Remember to keep all seven Dietary Guidelines in mind.
- Contact the Human Nutrition Information Service (HNIS) for a list of current publications on guidelines topics. The address is U.S. Department of Agriculture, HNIS, Room 360, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Maryland 20782.

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