



# Working TOWARD Wellness

LIVE BETTER. LIVE LONGER.

PROVIDED BY HEART HEALTH ACTION WINDSOR-ESSEX  
AND THE WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

## Losing Weight... the healthy weigh

If you think that you need to lose weight, you're not alone. About 50% of Canadian adults are either overweight or obese. Excess weight can have serious consequences for your health, not to mention your self-esteem. So, managing your weight is extremely important.

Not only is being overweight a serious problem for adults, more and more children in Canada are also becoming overweight.

There is no shortage of products, books and plans available on the market that

promise quick weight loss. One of the major problems with many of these products is that they do not help people develop the habits needed for long term weight loss. In addition, some of these products can be dangerous to your health.

Successful weight loss must include learning to change the way you eat AND adding more physical activity into your life. You can't do one without the other and expect to lose weight and keep it off for the long term.

It's also important to keep in mind that healthy bodies come in all shapes and sizes. Trying to live up to a media image of a "perfect" body is not only difficult, but it can be unhealthy and set you up for failure.

Having a healthy weight can help you take control of your health. Read on to find out what is a healthy weight for you, how to start changing the way you (and your family) eat and how to add more physical activity into your life. It's all about losing weight the healthy way!

### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

- |  | T                     | F                     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. To lose weight you have to eat less and be more active.                                 | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Skipping meals is a good way to lose weight.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Changing old eating and physical activity patterns do not take a long time.             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Being overweight can lead to chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Add strength or resistance training only once a week to lose weight.                    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Genetics and metabolic disorders play a large part for most people who are overweight.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Moderate physical activity means that you can sing while doing the activity.            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. To lose weight for the long term, a steady weight loss of 1-2 pounds per week is best.  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Eating frequent small meals is a good way to lose weight.                               | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. Get support from family and friends to help stay on track with your weight loss goals. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

### Reach and Keep A Healthy Weight

By reaching and keeping a healthy weight, you can:

- Improve your overall health.
- Reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.
- Reduce pressure on your joints and the risk for arthritis.
- Improve your appearance.
- Improve your sleep.
- Improve your self-confidence or how you feel about yourself.
- Increase your energy levels.
- Increase your agility and flexibility.
- Be a good role model for children and grandchildren.

*see answers on back panel*

# Why ARE SO MANY ADULTS OVERWEIGHT?

Genetics and metabolic disorders play a very small role for most people who are overweight. Most often, adults are overweight or obese because of an “energy imbalance”. In basic terms, this means that more calories (energy) are eaten than the amount of calories or energy that is burned off through physical activity and other metabolic activities.

There are several reasons for this energy

imbalance, many of which are related: We lead very busy (not active) lives. This can leave little time to be more active or to prepare and eat healthy meals.

We have less need to move our bodies as we go about our daily lives. We take elevators, have drive-through bank machines, spend too much time in front of the TV and computer, and we drive too much.

We eat portion sizes that are too large. Whether it's restaurant, take-out, or convenience foods, portion sizes are larger than those served in the home. On top of this, eating higher calorie foods (high fat and high sugar), in and away from home, is also on the rise.

When you put all of these factors together, it's not surprising that more and more of us are overweight.

# How CAN YOU LOSE WEIGHT

## Get Started

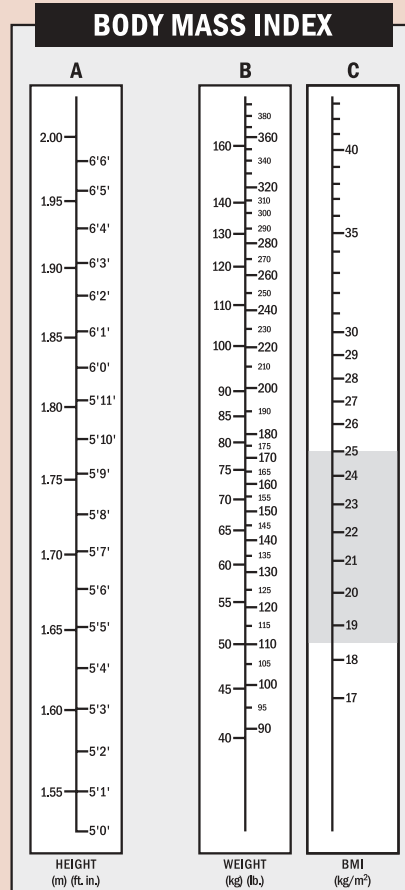
Find out how much weight you need to lose to be healthy. Your Body Mass Index (BMI) is a measure of your weight and height to determine a healthy weight range. Although the BMI should not be used as the only measurement of health risk, it can help set your weight loss goal. Other important factors include a measure of body fat distribution (ie. waist circumference measurement) and risk factors such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, smoking, etc.

To find your BMI:

1. Mark an X at your height on line A.
2. Mark an X at your weight on line B.
3. Take a ruler and join the two X's.
4. To find your BMI, extend the line to line C.

If your BMI equals:

- Less than 18.5, you are underweight and may develop anemia, depression or other health problems.
- 18.5-24.9, you are within a healthy weight range.



- 25-29.9, you are considered “overweight” and may develop health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and cancer.

- 30 or greater, you are considered “obese” with greater health risks

The BMI is not suitable for children, youth, pregnant women, athletes or adults over 65 years of age.

## Take Steps

1. Set realistic goals for yourself. Now that you have found your BMI, you need a plan. If you need to lose weight, choose a weight goal that is reasonable and will put you in a healthy weight range. Rapid weight loss means that you are losing mostly water and muscle. To lose body fat, a slow, steady weight loss (1 to 2 lbs/week) is best.

2. Make small changes to the way you eat and to what you do for physical activity. Setting and achieving small goals over time builds your self confidence to succeed and teaches you how to develop life-long habits.

3. Keep track of what you eat and what you do for physical activity. Writing this

# What IS SO TOUGH ABOUT LOSING WEIGHT AND KEEPING IT OFF?

A major barrier to long term, healthy weight loss is the desire to have "quick fix" solutions for something that takes long term efforts. Added to this is the flood of quick fix weight loss programs or "scams" out there that do not care about your health or long term weight loss. They are more interested in your wallet!

Losing weight the healthy way (and keeping it off) takes hard work and time - there are no quick and easy fixes. Remember that you did not become overweight overnight. So, learning how to eat better and adding more physical activity to your life will take time. Begin by asking yourself, "am I ready to take on this challenge of improving my health by losing weight the healthy way?"

# Go for it!

## RESOURCES

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit  
Talk to a Registered Dietitian about taking a weight loss class, a Shop Smart Supermarket tour or for a list of Dietitians in private practice.  
258-2146

Heart and Stroke Foundation  
Healthy Habits, Healthy Weight booklet  
254-4345

Nutrition guides or Cookbooks written by Registered Dietitians.

Certified Fitness Professionals. Look for certifications including Can-Fit-Pro, Canadian Personal Trainers Network (CPTN) or Ontario Fitness Council (OFC). Call the health unit for more information.

## WEBSITES

Mayo Clinic: search site for "weight loss"  
[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

Shape Up America  
[www.shapeup.org](http://www.shapeup.org)

Tools to assess health risks associated with weight and waist circumference  
<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>

WebMD: search site for "weight loss"  
[www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com)

Winning by Losing  
[www.caloriecontrol.org/winweigh.html](http://www.caloriecontrol.org/winweigh.html)

[www.wehealthunit.org](http://www.wehealthunit.org) and at  
[www.windsor-heart-health.com](http://www.windsor-heart-health.com)

## SAFELY AND KEEP IT OFF?

down will help build more self-awareness which is a key to successful weight loss, especially during the initial weeks.

4. Watch your portions. Use Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating to monitor your portion sizes throughout the day.

5. Listen to your hunger cues. The next time you reach for something to eat, ask yourself if you are eating because you want to feel good or because you are hungry. Try to eat when you're hungry and stop when you're full.

6. Don't Skip Meals. Skipping meals not only slows down your metabolism, but can also cause you to overeat at the next meal. You are actually better off to eat several small meals throughout the day.

7. Move your body everyday. To lose weight, you need 60 minutes of moderate physical activity everyday. Moderate means you can talk during the activity but you can't sing. Break it up into 10-minute blocks and work toward 60 minutes non-stop. Try walking, skating, roller blading, biking or swimming.

8. Add strength or resistance training 2-3 times a week. Use your own body weight like pushups and sit-ups or those exercises that use dumbbells, rubber tubing or weight machines. These exercises help build stronger muscles which burn more calories.

### Stick To It

Don't get upset if you have a bad day, if weight loss is slow or hits a plateau. You may be gaining muscle while losing fat and that doesn't show up on the scale. To stay on track, get support from family and friends. Remind yourself that changing old patterns takes time. Every time that you achieve small goals, you prove to yourself that you can do it. The best news is, as you begin to feel better and have more energy, you will discover how good it feels to move your body, as you learn the sheer pleasure of eating food that makes you healthy.

### Celebrate!

Reward yourself when you achieve small goals. This will help you stay on track.

# CLIP & KEEP THIS INFO!

## Tips to Help You Lose Weight the Healthy Way

### KEEP TRACK

- Write down what you eat and do everyday for physical activity.
- Include for food: how much, time of day and how hungry you were.
- Include for activity: what you did, how long and how you felt after you finished.

### GET SUPPORT

- Ask your family, friends and co-workers to support you in achieving your weight loss goals.

### EAT OFTEN DURING THE DAY

- Eat 3 balanced meals and 2-3 small snacks a day.
- Snack on fruit, vegetable sticks, yogurt, dry cereal, crackers, etc.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water throughout the day.

### EAT SMALLER PORTIONS

- Eat slowly and stop eating when you feel full.
- Fill up on vegetables and fruits and broth soups.
- Avoid “supersizing” at all cost.

### CUT BACK ON FAT

- Use less butter, margarine and oil.
- Ask for salad dressings, gravy and sauces on the side.
- Use lower-fat toppings on foods.

### BE ACTIVE EVERY DAY

- Choose activities you like to do.
- Include strength or resistance training 2-3 times a week.
- Park your car farther away in parking lots.
- Take the stairs instead of the elevators.
- Ride or walk to work.

## Pass it on!

Please feel free to copy any articles in this brochure as long as you acknowledge the source.

# Make it happen at your workplace!

Here are some suggestions to encourage and support healthy weight loss activities in your workplace:

## Employees Can:

- Park farther away and walk in.
- Start a walking club or buddy-up with a friend and go for walks before, during and after work.
- Schedule workout classes, yoga or Tai Chi before or after work.
- Pack your lunch and snacks to take to work to better manage your energy intake and portion sizes.
- Focus on bringing more vegetables and fruit to work for meals and snacks.
- Support each other to make healthy choices when eating out.
- Share healthy eating ideas and recipes with co-workers.

## Employers Can:

- Provide a bike rack to support active commuting to work.
- Promote using the stairs instead of elevators.
- Organize physical activity contests that reward participation in daily physical activity.
- Offer healthy food choices at reasonable prices in vending machines and cafeterias.
- Provide healthy food choices at meetings or work-related functions.
- Start a healthy eating or healthy weights group.
- Offer “Lunch & Learn” talks with a Registered Dietitian.

*“My doctor told me to stop having intimate dinners for four... unless there are three other people.”*

Orson Welles

Copyright © 2003 The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and Heart Health Action Windsor-Essex: 360 Fairview Avenue West, Suite 215, Essex, Ontario, N8M 3G4 Phone: 519-258-2146 x3100, Fax: 519-776-6102, [www.wehealthunit.org](http://www.wehealthunit.org). This brochure may be reproduced in its entirety without written permission. The Workplace Health Promotion Program is dedicated to providing current and accurate health information as it relates to Windsor-Essex County workplaces. Please keep in mind that this newsletter is not intended to diagnose or treat illnesses. Please consult your physician regarding personal health problems or major changes in diet or exercise.

Answers (from front page): 1:T, 2:F, 3:F, 4:T, 5:F, 6:F, 7:F, 8:T, 9:T, 10:T

For more information about the Workplace Health Promotion Program, contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 258-2146, Ext. 3100



This brochure and others in this series available online at:  
[www.wehealthunit.org](http://www.wehealthunit.org) and at [www.windsor-heart-health.com](http://www.windsor-heart-health.com)