

6 Tips to Prevent or Reduce Obesity

Today, more than one-third of U.S. adults (34.9% or 78.6 million people) are obese. Obesity-related diseases—including heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and specific types of cancers—are among the leading causes of death in the U.S.

Benefits of weight loss

Losing excess weight can have numerous benefits. For those who are obese, losing just 5-7% of total body weight may:^{1,2}

- Decrease the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 58%
- Lower “bad” LDL cholesterol by 5 mg/dL
- Raise “good” HDL cholesterol by 2-3 mg/dL
- Reduce blood pressure

It can also reduce joint pain. One study found that losing just one pound reduced the load on the knee four-fold!³

Start young!



70% of obese kids become obese adults.⁹

It is important to teach healthy eating habits to your children while they are young!

Limit fast food

Those who eat fast food more than twice a week are at risk of significant weight gain over time (about 10 lbs. over 15 years).¹⁰ They also increase their risk of insulin resistance and diabetes.



Instead, learn to cook simple meals at home using fresh produce and other healthy ingredients.

Reduce sugar-sweetened beverages



Drinks, like sodas and juices, are packed with sugars. Drinking one can of soda each day can lead to a 15 lb. weight gain per year!⁴ Instead, drink water flavored with fruit or cucumbers.



Swap out the carbs

Limit your intake of carbohydrates like breads, rice, and pasta. Substitute these with lean chicken and fish, and fresh veggies. This will also help reduce belly fat, which is associated with cardiovascular disease.⁵

Reduce portion sizes

People who use larger bowls and wider cups may consume 31-76% more calories without being aware of it!¹¹ Avoid second helpings and stick with an average-sized plate.¹²

Eat vegetables and fruits

Choose foods that are high in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, but low in calories. Instead of high calorie foods loaded with sugar and/or fat, eat fresh veggies and fruits.^{6,7,8}



Reduce your calories

Interestingly, those who are obese can successfully lose weight on very different diets (low-carb, low-fat, Mediterranean, etc.) – most important, is finding a lower calorie diet (about 800 calories less/day) that you can stick with.¹³ See *Mediterranean Diet handout*.

ACTION PLAN



Which of the tips will you try? Circle them.



When will you start? _____



How confident are you that you will accomplish your goal (from 0-100%)? _____



Follow-up plan

References:

- ¹ Lancet. 2009;374(9702):1677-86.
- ² J Am Coll Cardiol. 2014;63(25 Part B):2985-3023.
- ³ Arthritis Rheum. 2005 Jul;52(7):2026-32.
- ⁴ Am J Clin Nutr. 2006 Aug;84(2):274-288.
- ⁵ NEJM 2008;359:229-241.
- ⁶ Nutr Rev (2004)62(1):1-17.
- ⁷ cdc.gov/nccdph/dnpa/nutrition/pdf/rtf_practitioner_10_07.pdf
- ⁸ Obes Rev. 2011 May;12(5):e143-50.
- ⁹ CA Dept of Education, DataQuest 2015.
- ¹⁰ Lancet 2005; 365:36-42.
- ¹¹ Am J Prev Med 2006;31(3):240-243.
- ¹² Internatl J Obesity (2014) 38, 51-58.
- ¹³ J Clin Endocrinol Metab. 2009 May; 94(5):1602-7.

Authors: S. Rashid, DO; W. Kohatsu, MD
Contributors: S. Chen, MD
Copy editor: M. Hayes
Designed by: E. Jimenez

