

Online Resources

Your Disease Risk
siteman.washu.edu/YDR

8ight Ways to Prevent
Cancer Series
8ways.washu.edu

CDC—Healthy Weight
cdc.gov/healthyweight

NIH—Body Mass Index Calculator
nhlbi.nih.gov/calculate-your-bmi



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Atención: hay servicios de asistencia de idiomas disponibles a su disposicion sin costo. Llame al 314-747-5682 (TTY: 1-800-735-2966).

注意：免费提供语言协助服务，如有需要敬请致电 314-747-5682 (TTY: 1-800-735-2966)。

8IGHT WAYS[®]
TO A HEALTHIER WEIGHT
AND LOWER RISK OF CANCER



8IGHTWAYS[®]

TO A HEALTHIER WEIGHT AND LOWER RISK OF CANCER

When it comes to health, little matters more than weight. Maintaining a healthy weight can lower the risk of 13 different cancers – plus stroke, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and many other chronic conditions.

And some simple, doable weight goals can have important health benefits – for everyone. Just keeping your weight steady – no matter your current weight – has payoffs, as can losing as little as five to ten pounds if you're overweight. Getting down to a healthy weight and maintaining it has even bigger health benefits.

These eight ways can be your guide, whatever your goal. They highlight simple changes to how you eat and how you move. Start today with one or two. Then, build from there.

1 Eat healthy plant foods — and fewer animal products

You've heard this before – and for good reason. A largely plant-based diet filled with fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, and whole grains is not only good for overall health, but also good for keeping weight in check. Among other things, it can help you feel full longer, and with fewer calories.

2 Choose smaller portions

Portion sizes have ballooned over the years – and our waist sizes along with them. A single fast food meal can have more than a day's worth of calories, sodium, and unhealthy fats. But even at home, we're serving ourselves more food. Choosing smaller portions is a great way to keep calories and weight in check. Eating out less is best, and when you do eat out, pick an à la carte item rather than a full meal, or split a dish with a friend. At home, keep to recommended serving sizes and try smaller plates, which can make recommended portions feel bigger.

3 Avoid sugary drinks

Sugary drinks – such as sodas, energy drinks, juice drinks, and many coffee drinks – are a major source of extra calories and have been found to increase the risk of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Cutting back on sugary drinks is an easy way to shave calories from your day. And getting down to zero is best, even for 100% juice. Try no-calorie fizzy water and unsweetened coffee and tea instead.

4 Cut back on added calories

We add a lot of extra calories to our food, and often without even thinking about it. Things like butter, cheese, and bacon on a potato; sour cream on a burrito; and sugar, whole milk, and whipped cream in our coffee. These calories can really add up over time. Cut back on these extras or try some lower-calorie options instead, such as salsa, tomato, cheddar powder, and non-fat milk.

5 Start the day with a healthy breakfast

A healthy breakfast can give you energy for a busy morning – and keep hunger pangs away until lunchtime. Include a couple different types of healthy foods, such as fruit, whole-grain bread and cereal, low-fat plain yogurt, or an egg or two. Avoid foods such as sugary cereals, doughnuts, bacon, white bread, and whole milk.



6 Help kids develop healthy weight habits for life

The benefits of a healthy weight start early in life – and build from there. Help your kids develop healthy weight habits by: serving healthy foods at home; engaging them in cooking and food shopping; giving them a chance to be physically active every day; limiting their screen time and helping them get enough sleep.



You've got this!

Weight control is a journey, and there are likely to be rough patches along the way. So be kind to yourself, be patient, and keep working at it. It's important for your health. It's important for your family.

What is a healthy weight?

Body mass index (BMI) is a simple way to see how you're doing with your weight. It is a gauge of body fat that uses a special calculation of weight and height. A BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is generally considered healthy. Someone who is 5' 8" and weighs 145 pounds, for example, has a BMI of 22.0. BMI charts and calculators are easy to find online. Waist size is also an important measure, even in people who are a healthy weight. The general goal is a waist size of 35 inches or under for women and 40 inches or under for men.

Under 18.5	18.5 – 24.9	25.0 – 29.9	30 and over
Underweight	Healthy/normal weight	Overweight	Obese

7 Move your body

Being physically active is a great way to maintain or lose weight, especially when paired with healthy eating. Any amount of activity is better than none, but when it comes to weight control, the general rule is: the more, the better. Try to work up to around five hours of brisk activity a week. Choose something you like that gets you moving – and do it regularly. Cutting down on the amount of time you spend sitting is also good, even if you exercise. Stand as much as you can during the day. When you do sit, try to take a short walk once or twice an hour.

8 Hop on the scale

Hopping on your bathroom scale once a week or more is a great way to keep track of how you're doing with your weight. Weight gain often catches people by surprise. By weighing yourself regularly, you can keep surprises at bay and make any needed adjustments to what you're eating and how active you are. It's especially good for helping to keep off pounds that you've lost. For an added bonus, keep track of your waist size with a tape measure. Putting on inches around the middle, even if you're a healthy weight, can increase your disease risk.

Keep a food diary

When it comes to keeping weight in check, calories matter. So, it can be helpful to set a daily calorie goal and use a food and drink diary to track your calories throughout the day. Apps and online tools can make this pretty simple. Some days you'll be over your goal. Some days below. It's the overall trend, though, that is most important and lets you know if you should make any adjustments.



Weight loss medications

GLP-1 drugs and similar medications have great potential to help people with weight loss. Like any medication, though, they can have both benefits and risks. So, it's important to talk with a healthcare provider before deciding if they're right for you.

For those taking GLP-1 drugs, keeping up with healthy behaviors, like physical activity, is still key. It can boost the benefits of medication, improve quality of life, and help maintain weight loss.

Know Your Risk. Change Your Future.

Visit yourdiseaserisk.washu.edu to estimate your risk of cancer and other important diseases – and get personalized tips for prevention.

