

Lose Weight

Why Lose Weight?

If you have too much fat — especially if a lot of it is at your waist — you're at higher risk for such health problems as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and diabetes. And you're not alone! More than 2/3 of our American adult population is overweight, with 1/3 of us in the obese category. These statistics are especially concerning since obesity is now recognized as a major, independent risk factor for heart disease.

Your BMI: Body mass index (BMI) assesses your body weight relative to height. It's a useful, indirect measure of body composition because it correlates highly with body fat in most people. If your body mass index is 25.0 or higher, you will benefit by bringing your number down below 25. If your BMI is 30.0 or higher, you are at significant risk for heart health problems. [Calculate your BMI now.](#)

Why is Losing Weight Important For My Health?

Imagine carrying around a 30-pound backpack all day, every day! It would be a strain, just like extra body weight. When you shed extra fat and unnecessary pounds, you reduce the burden on your heart, lungs, blood vessels and skeleton. You give yourself the gift of active living, you lower your blood pressure and you help yourself feel better, too.

What Can I Do to Lose Weight?

If you're overweight or obese, you can reduce your risk for heart disease by successfully losing weight and keeping it off. Even losing as few as five or ten pounds can produce a dramatic blood pressure reduction.

Know your calorie needs: When planning for weight loss, it's crucial to understand what your recommended calorie intake should be for your age, sex and level of physical activity.

Track your calories: Even if you only track what you eat for a few days, you'll learn a lot about your habits. Find out the amount of food calories you're eating compared to the energy calories you're burning off at your level of physical activity. It's a matter of balancing calories in with calories out, and learning to plan accordingly.