



Weight Management: Exercise and Activity

Studies show that people who exercise are the most likely to lose weight and keep it off. Exercise burns calories. It helps build muscle to make your body stronger. Make exercise an important part of your weight-management plan.



Make activity part of your day

You may not think you have enough time to exercise. But you can work activity into your daily life—you just need to be committed. Take 10 minutes out of your lunch hour to take a walk. Walk to a nearby diner or pharmacy or library instead of driving. Make it a habit to take the stairs instead of the elevator. Park in a faraway parking spot instead of the closest. You'll be surprised at how fast these little changes can make a difference.

Some people really can't walk very far and tire out quickly with exercise. Instead of becoming discouraged, resolve to do what you can do and work to make that a regular habit.

The benefits of exercise

Exercise offers many benefits:

- Exercise increases how fast your body burns calories (your **metabolism**).

- Regular exercise can increase the amount of muscle in your body. Muscle burns calories faster than fat. The more muscle you have, the more calories you burn.
- Exercise gives you energy and curbs your appetite.
- Exercise reduces stress and helps you sleep better. Find out for yourself what time of day works best for you.

Make exercise fun

Exercise can be fun. Ask a friend to join you. Choose an activity you enjoy, like:

- Taking a resistance-training or aerobics class.
- Joining a team sport.
- Taking a dance class.
- Walking the dog.
- Riding a bike.

If you have health problems, always ask your doctor before you start an exercise program. Have a fitness professional help you develop a plan that's safe for you.

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