

Ready for Change? Take These Steps To Feel Fit!

HEALTH EDUCATION

Worried about weight gain? Going on and off diets is not the answer. Instead, start by making some of the changes listed below. You will decrease fat, increase muscle, and feel good.

Check 1 to 2 changes (enough to make a difference in energy balance) that you will start today. Add 1 more change every 2 to 3 weeks (mark your calendar) until these changes are routine for you. Make sure to exercise along with changes in food choices for best results.

Stop juice and soda.

½ cup of orange juice a day as a source of Vitamin C & A is fine. Stop drinking all other juices and soda. Water is best for thirst, or you can try diet sodas or diet drinks that are less than 10 calories per serving.

Before: 2 regular sodas or 16 oz. juice/day = enough calories to add 1 pound in 10 days.

After: Instead change to water, diet soda, or calorie-free drinks = 1 pound less in 10 days.

Change to 1% or skim milk and low fat or nonfat dairy products.

You need calcium and vitamin D for strong bones to prevent osteoporosis as you age. You need 3 servings of low fat/nonfat dairy or dairy alternatives daily. One serving is 1 cup of milk or yogurt, or 1.5 ounces of cheese. A change to nonfat milk makes a 50 to 90 calorie difference per cup compared to 2% or regular.

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables and then split the other half evenly between lean meat and whole grains.

Eat meals and snacks at the table.

Eat breakfast to boost your metabolism.

Eat 5 to 6 small meals/snacks daily.

Stop skipping meals. Do not go over 3 to 4 hours without a meal or snack.

Plan out weekly meals and prepare a shopping list. Cook large batches of food at one time and freeze for later. Stay on the outside aisles of the grocery store and choose a variety of foods from all food groups. Try new foods and recipes.

Plan snacks and set times for snacks (1 to 3 snacks/day depending on activity level)

Your body will like the routine and start to have a regular appropriate hunger cycle. Check labels and plan snacks that are about 100 to 200 calories each, total _____/day.

Read food labels.

Pay attention to serving size and the number of servings per package so you don't over-do it. Try to keep each food item to less than 3 grams of fat per 100 calories, less than 8 grams of sugar per serving, and greater than or equal to 3 grams of fiber per serving. Check the ingredient label for the word "whole" to know that it is truly whole grain.

Drastically reduce how often you eat out or have fast food meals and snacks.

Reducing your restaurant dining by ½ will make a big difference in fat and calorie intake. When eating out, choose items that are grilled, sides of fruits, vegetables, or salad with light/fat free dressing. Do not upgrade to a larger meal size when eating out. Choose water instead of soda or an alcoholic beverage. Think about packing your lunch or healthy snacks for your workday.

Become more active.

- If you are not active, you may need to add several 10 minute times of exercise to reach your initial goal of 30 minutes/day.
- If you are lightly active, continue to build your activity towards 45 to 60 minutes/day.
- If you are moderately or very active and already exercising 1 hour per day, increase either your intensity of exercise (intervals), add weight training, or add 20 to 30 more minutes of a different activity.

Add stress relief to your life.

Discover what your stress relief is and commit to it daily. Exercising, walking, dancing, laughing, reading, and writing, as well as bubble baths, pedicures, art, music, and yoga all count. Studies show television watching actually induces stress and it adds to an inactive lifestyle.

Aim for at least 7 hours of sleep each night.

My Goals

*Made your check marks, goals and plans? You are on your way to fitness!
Now, just do it, but don't talk about it. When people notice, just smile!*