

Ditch the diet



Old way:

Go on a diet.

Better way:

Focus on eating better for-you foods.



The word “diet” is often viewed as something you “go on” to help you lose weight and “go off” once you met your goal or grew tired of waiting for results. Diets become rigid, short-term plans that don’t address the way we live or the challenges we face.

Give yourself permission to ditch the diet and focus on eating better-for-you foods instead.

How might this strategy help you manage your weight?

Take a bite in the right direction

Although there may be many “fad diets” that promise big results, there are proven strategies to help you lose weight.

Work for progress, not perfection

You don’t have to change everything at once. By working certain strategies into your lifestyle — one at a time, and in ways that work for you — you will increase your chances of losing weight and keeping it off for good.

Key Strategies

- 1. Track what you eat.** People that track lose more weight. By tracking, you will start to be more aware of what, how much, and when you eat. Track on paper or with an app.
- 2. Find what works for you.** Some people do better with eating frequently and snacking often. Other people prefer a few regular meals. What helps you feel satisfied? What helps you make better choices?
- 3. Eat when you are truly hungry.** Next time you get ready to eat, ask yourself, “Am I really hungry?” Use the hunger scale to assess how hungry you are:

Hunger scale identifiers:

- 1. Ravenous:** “I’ve waited too long to eat. Once I start eating, I might overeat because I’m so hungry.”
- 2. Really hungry:** “I’m definitely hungry. I have hunger pangs. I’m feeling irritable.”
- 3. Hungry:** “I’m starting to feel hungry. My stomach is starting to growl. It’s time to eat.”
- 4. Not hungry:** “I’m not physically hungry, even though I may have an urge to eat.”
- 5. Stuffed:** “I feel stuffed and uncomfortable. I can’t eat another bite.”

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4. Get the right mix of nutrients. Carbohydrates, proteins, and fats are the nutrients that contain calories. Each has its own function in the body and is essential for good health.

- Carbohydrates fuel your body with energy. Healthy sources of carbohydrates include fruits, vegetables, beans/legumes, low-fat dairy products, and whole grains. Limit processed or refined carbohydrates such as white bread, processed snacks, and sugary drinks.

What good-for-you carbohydrates do you like to eat?

What good-for-you carbohydrates would you like to try?

- Proteins are the building blocks for the body because they help maintain and repair body tissues. Lean sources of animal protein include chicken, turkey, fish, and low-fat dairy. Plant sources of protein include beans/legumes, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

What good-for-you protein sources do you like to eat?

What good-for-you protein sources would you like to try?

- Fats help your body absorb the fat-soluble vitamins A, E, D, and K. Healthy fats include olive oil, canola oil, nuts, seeds, and avocados. Limit saturated and trans fats. Saturated fats are found in animal products like butter and high-fat dairy foods. Trans fats are found in many fried foods and processed foods.

What good-for-you fats do you like to eat?

What good-for-you fats would you like to try?

5. Feel satisfied. Foods that are high in fiber but low in calories like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can fill you up for few calories. Lean meat and low-fat dairy products can give you the protein to feel full with fewer calories.

What foods are satisfying to you?

Next step

What good-for-you foods will you eat this week?

How will you fit good-for-you foods into your life?