

HEALTHY AND SIMPLE WEIGHT LOSS

TEN PATHWAYS TO BETTER HEALTH

- 1. Keep your weight within a healthy range.** Obesity contributes to a wide range of illnesses. Our contemporary lifestyle promotes more calorie consumption but less physical activity. The back of the card can help you change some fat-forming habits. Copy your choices and post them in the bathroom where you will see them daily. Should you lapse, just resume your effort without blame.
- 2. Eliminate tobacco from your life.** Although it's much easier said than done, tobacco use—along with obesity—are the leading causes of premature death and disability. Seek out some of the resources available to help you. You, your family, and all of society will benefit.
- 3. Practice relaxation techniques.** Research shows that meditation, yoga, prayer, reflection, and other restorative activities done regularly can reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and enhance the immune system.
- 4. Get enough quality sleep.** Many of us are sleep deprived. Regular hours and daily physical activity promote good sleep. Alcohol and many drugs may interfere. Solid sleep boosts leptin levels and reduces appetite.
- 5. Don't lie down on a full stomach.** Acid reflux disease (GERD) is on the increase due in large part to reclining with a full stomach. By eating less, waiting two hours before retiring, using extra pillows or raising of the head of the bed with blocks, symptoms will improve. Avoid carbonated drinks.
- 6. Sunlight sends a mixed message.** Damage to the skin caused by too much sun exposure can cause cancer. Have suspicious or fast-growing blemishes examined. However, sunlight produces vitamin D which helps prevent osteoporosis (weakened bones), on the increase in the U.S.
- 7. Liquids require some thought.** Many of us, especially the elderly, are partially dehydrated and need more water. Extra water is needed when exercising and during hot weather. Insufficient water may cause weight gain, headaches, fatigue, higher cholesterol, kidney stones, constipation and dry skin. Avoid soft drinks. Liquid calories add weight but they don't reduce appetite. Avoid artificial sweeteners since they may actually increase appetite.
- 8. Shop mindfully—We consume what we buy.** Here are ideas for your shopping list: high-fiber foods, fresh produce (try new varieties), whole-grain breads and cereals, oats, barley, and beans. Also purchase olive oil, non-fat dairy, eggs, fish, soy foods, and nuts (small servings only).
- 9. Closely examine your body every month.** Take note of any skin, breast, or testicle changes. If you have a prolonged or unexplained cough, fever, lumps, dizziness, weakness or pain, consult a medical professional. Prompt action may prevent a serious health problem.
- 10. Your mind has power.** The medical profession is becoming more aware of the mind/body connection. By obsessing on food, we are likely to eat even when we are not truly hungry. TV food commercials don't help. We can, however, learn to re-focus whenever tempted. Use such ads as reminders to become active. Hypnotherapy may help to reinforce this.

Your BMI (Body Mass Index) is a common indicator of healthy weight. Multiply your weight (in pounds) by 705. Divide that figure by your height in inches. Divide again by your height in inches. A result less than 19 may indicate a lower than optimal weight. Over 25 may signal excessive weight.

HOW MUCH WEIGHT DO YOU WANT TO LOSE? ...BY WHEN??

Simple lifestyle changes can have amazing results over time!

Desired Loss	In 2 Weeks	In 2 Months	In 4 Months	In 1 Year
5 lbs.	8	4 – 5	3 – 4	2
10 lbs.	—	7	6	4
15 lbs.	—	10	8	6
20 lbs.	—	—	11	8
30 lbs.	—	—	—	10
40 lbs.	—	—	—	12

Find the number in the box in which your Desired Loss and your time goal intersect. Check that many options from the list below (don't choose any you already do). Individual results will vary. See a health professional before significantly increasing your activity level.

- ☐ Walk for an extra 10 minutes every day.
- ☐ Drink a glass of water the first thing in the morning.
- ☐ Eat a small meal or snack containing some protein each 3 – 4 hours.
- ☐ Cut out soft drinks completely—artificially sweetened, too.
- ☐ Watch less TV. Stand up and move during commercials.
- ☐ Split a dessert or choose fruit, non-fat yogurt, or cheese.
- ☐ Buy non-fat dairy products. Tastes will adjust with time.
- ☐ Don't snack within 2 hours of bedtime.
- ☐ Work out at a gym at least 3 times a week.
- ☐ Eat out less often. Avoid French fries and other fried foods.
- ☐ Eat high-protein breakfasts: eggs/yogurt/cottage cheese/whole grains.
- ☐ Limit carbohydrate servings—always in combination with some protein.
- ☐ Prepare a bag of veggie snacks (carrots/broccoli/celery/peppers/etc.).
- ☐ Make tea, coffee, skim milk or water your mealtime beverage.
- ☐ Drink a glass of water 15 – 45 minutes before meals.
- ☐ Begin a daily meal with clear soup or salad with vinaigrette dressing.
- ☐ Eat more slowly, chewing well—with awareness, savoring each bite.
- ☐ Take up a new sport or activity. A partner or team helps consistency.
- ☐ Take a good daily vitamin/mineral supplement containing chromium.
- ☐ Shop mainly for fresh produce, low or non-fat dairy, and whole grains.
- ☐ Eat at least five different vegetables daily. They assist weight loss.
- ☐ Avoid or limit alcoholic beverages (2 per day maximum).
- ☐ When dining out, order a half-portion or take half home.
- ☐ Limit pizza, nachos, burgers, fries, etc. to a one-time-a-week treat.
- ☐ Reduce use of butter, margarine, mayo, peanut butter, salad dressing, etc.
- ☐ Subscribe to a healthy lifestyles/fitness/cooking magazine.
- ☐ Don't clean your plate at every meal. "Wasteful" trumps "waist-full."
- ☐ Be a vegetarian for a week. Include soy/eggs/dairy/fish and vit. B-12.
- ☐ Reduce juice! Drinking your calories is not helpful for losing weight.
- ☐ Eat grapefruit several times a week.

Join our campaign to bring affordable, accessible,
quality healthcare to **all** New Mexicans!

Health Action New Mexico

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