

Strategies for Weight Loss

Why is weight management important?

Proper diet and a good conditioning program play a vital role in athletic performance. Athletes who are not at their ideal playing weight will not perform as well as they might.

What about fad diets and crash diets?

Fad diets are popular because they promise rapid weight loss. However, fad diets and crash diets actually result in a loss of lean muscle mass, water, and stored energy, not a loss of excess body fat. As a result, most athletes on such diets become tired early in the day or game and have a hard time finding the energy they need.

How does weight loss occur?

How many calories you need depends on your age, sex, weight, and activity level. To maintain your weight, you have to take in the same number of calories you burn. It takes about 3,000 calories a day for the average 165-pound man who is 19 to 24 years old to maintain his weight. From ages 25 through 49, the daily calorie requirement for maintenance drops to 2,700. An average 127-pound woman, 19 through 24 years old, will have to consume 2,100 calories daily for weight maintenance. From ages 25 through 49, it takes 1,900 calories per day. Your body weight will change when there is a difference between calories in and calories out.

How can I lose weight?

To lose weight you must eat less, exercise more, or both. Combining diet with exercise is a healthier, more balanced, and more successful way of losing weight than by dieting alone.

One pound of body weight is equal to 3,500 calories. Eating 500 fewer calories per day will result in a weight loss of 1 pound per week. Eating 250 fewer calories per day combined with a 250-calorie deficit from exercise will also result in a weight loss of 1 pound per week. Athletes should lose no more than 2 to 3 pounds per week.

Exercise

You should exercise 3 to 6 times per week for 30 to 60 minutes at 60% to 80% maximum heart rate. The goal is to expend at least 300 calories per exercise session. This would be about a 3-mile jog, 12-mile bicycle ride, or a 1-mile swim. See the chart below for more examples of calories burned during different types of exercise.

You may also burn off calories simply by being more active during the day:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- Park farther away from the store and walk briskly through the parking lot.
- Do your errands on foot or on a bicycle instead of driving.

Diet

To lose weight safely, it is important to eat a wide variety of foods. You should eat enough carbohydrates to fuel your body for exercise. You should reduce your fat intake to reduce calories, rather than follow a very low calorie diet.

Because everyone is different, there are no general guidelines as to how much or how little you should eat or exercise. Use the charts below to help guide you in your food choices.

Calories Burned per Minute of Activity			
120-lb person	160-lb person	200-lb person	Activity
2.5	3.4	4.6	Walking 2 miles an hour Bicycling 5 miles an hour
3.3	4.4	5.9	Walking 3 miles an hour Bicycling 6 miles an hour Badminton
5.1	6.8	9.0	Walking 4 miles an hour Dancing Calisthenics Bicycling 10 miles an hour Roller skating
6	8	10.6	Tennis (singles) Water skiing Basketball (recreational) Swimming (35 yards/minute)
6.5	8.7	11.6	Walking briskly 5 miles an hour
7.3	9.7	12.9	Jogging 5 miles an hour Bicycling 12 miles an hour

7.8	10.5	14.1	Downhill skiing Basketball (vigorous competition) Mountain climbing
9.2	12.3	16.4	Jogging 7 miles an hour Cross-country skiing Squash and handball
12.9	17.3	23.2	Running 9 miles per hour

 From "The Ultimate Sports Nutrition Handbook" by Ellen Coleman and Suzanne Nelson Steen, Bull Publishing, 1996, Palo Alto, CA.

Good High-Carbohydrate Foods to Eat

Food	Calories	Carbohydrates (grams)
Potato	220	50
Bagel	165	31
Biscuit	103	13
White bread, 1 slice	61	12
Cereal, 1 cup	110	24
Oatmeal, 1/2 cup	66	12
Graham crackers, 2	60	11
Rice, 1 cup	223	50
Noodles, 1 cup	159	34
Pizza, cheese, 1 slice	290	39
Pretzels, 1 oz	106	21

Making Proper Food Choices

Food Type	Choose	Decrease
Meats	Fish, poultry without skin, lean cuts of beef, lamb, pork, shellfish	Fatty cuts of beef, lamb, pork; spare ribs, organ meats, regular cold cuts, sausage, hot dogs, bacon
Dairy	Skim or 1% milk, buttermilk	Whole or 2% milk, whipped toppings, cream

	Nonfat or low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese	Whole-milk yogurt or cottage cheese
	Low-fat cheeses, farmer or pot cheeses (no more than 2 to 6 grams of fat per ounce)	All natural cheeses (blue, cheddar, Swiss, Roquefort)
	Sherbet, sorbet	Ice cream
Eggs	Egg whites (2 whites = 1 whole egg in recipes)	Egg yolks
Fruits Vegetables	Fresh, frozen, canned, dried	Vegetables prepared in butter, cream, or other sauces
Breads Cereals	Homemade baked goods using unsaturated oils sparingly, angel food cake, low-fat crackers, low-fat cookies	Commercial baked goods: pies, cakes, doughnuts, croissants, muffins, biscuits, high-fat crackers, high-fat cookies