Many things affect adult body weight, such as:

- Your age.
- Your family background.
- Your eating and activity habits as a child.
- Your eating and activity habits now.

You can’t change your age or your family background. You can’t change your childhood. But you can change your current eating and activity habits now.

When you change your eating and activity, you change your “energy balance.” Energy balance works like a see-saw. The energy you take in by eating is on one side. The energy you use by being active is on the other. Both types of energy are measured in calories. If one or both changes, the see-saw may tip.

- What if you balance your eating or activity? Your weight will stay the same.
- What if you eat more calories than you use by being active? You will gain weight.
- What if you eat fewer calories than you use by being active? You will lose weight.

To lose weight, it’s best to change both sides of the balance. That is, eat fewer calories and be more active. Start by cutting calories. Then add more activity.

**How much weight should I try to lose?**

Aim to lose 7 percent of your starting weight. That amount has many health benefits. It is doable for most people. Do you want to lose more than that? Aim to lose 7 percent over the first 12 weeks. Then, if you’re still overweight, set a new weight goal for the next 12 weeks.
Use this chart to estimate your 12-week weight loss goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Current Weight</th>
<th>My Pounds to Lose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>150 or less</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>195</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>270</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>315 or above</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choose the weight you are closest to and fill in the numbers from the chart.

My current weight ____ minus my pounds to lose ____ = ____ my 12-week weight-loss goal.

Keep a log or graph of what you weigh. Weigh yourself on the same day of the week and at the same time of day. For example, weigh yourself every Monday at 8 a.m. Use the same scale each time you weigh.

Eating fewer calories

How many fewer calories should I eat?
Aim to eat 500 to 1,000 fewer calories per day. That should help you lose about 1 to 2 pounds per week. Slow, steady weight loss is safe and doable.

Focus on fat first. Fat contains more than twice as many calories as protein, sugar, or starch. Try cutting down on fat to save calories. But also keep in mind that all foods have calories, so you need to watch your portions of all foods.

At every meal and snack, eat low-fat foods that are rich in water and fiber. Examples are fruits and vegetables (not dried or fried), cooked whole grains, cooked dried beans/peas/lentils, and low-fat soups and stews. Water and fiber are filling and contain no calories.
Protein is also filling. Include foods that are rich in low-fat protein at every meal. Examples are cooked dried beans/peas/lentils, fish, chicken or turkey, low-fat milk or yogurt (no sugar-added), and low-fat cheese.

Do your best to stay at or under the goals below. Find your starting weight. Your goals are in the same row. Circle them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starting Weight</th>
<th>Daily Calorie* Goal</th>
<th>Daily Fat Gram** Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>174 pounds or less</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175-219 pounds</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220 pounds or more</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A calorie is a measure of energy.
** A gram is a unit of weight. A paperclip weighs about 1 gram.

Over time, adjust these goals based on how much weight you lose.

What if I lose less than 1-2 pounds per week on average?
- If this is a consistent pattern over several weeks or more, lower your daily calorie and fat gram goals a little. Don’t go below 1,000 calories per day unless you talk with your doctor.
- Add more minutes of walking or other physical activity.
- It is normal for your weight to go up and down from day to day. Look at trends over time, not individual weights.
- Many people experience “weight plateaus” at times, when their weight stays the same no matter how well they are following their plans for weight loss. Do not give up! With strong and consistent changes in your eating and activity, the scale will follow in time. Talk with your health coach if you need a motivational boost or a plan adjustment during a persistent weight plateau.

What if I lose more than 1-2 pounds per week on average?
- If this is a consistent problem over a month or more, raise your calorie and fat goals a little. Keep in mind that at times it is common to lose larger amounts of weight per week, especially at the beginning of a weight loss program. Always look at trends, not individual weights.

How can I stay at my calorie and fat gram goals?
Use one of the three methods below. All three have been proven to help people lose weight.
1. Keep track of the calories and fat grams in everything you eat and drink every day. Stop eating when you reach your goals.
2. Follow a healthy meal plan based on your goals.
3. Use meal replacements to replace one or two of your meals. For these and all food you eat, keep track of calories and fat grams. Stop eating each day when you reach your goals.

Talk to your UPMC Health Plan health coach for more information on meal plans and meal replacements.

(continued on next page)
Getting a handle on portions

What does a teaspoon of margarine look like? How about a half-cup of pasta? Health experts consider those amounts to be one “serving” of those foods. But most Americans don’t know what that much looks like. Most of us eat more than we think we do.

What’s the best way to know how much you really eat? Weigh and measure foods. See the section Keeping track is key for details. Over time, you will learn what different amounts look like.

Another way is to compare food servings to everyday items, as shown below.

Seven ways to size up your servings

Measure food portions so you know exactly how much food you’re eating. When a food scale or measuring cups aren’t handy, you can still estimate your portion by remembering the following.

Remember:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>🌶️</td>
<td>3 ounces of meat is about the size and thickness of a deck of playing cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍎</td>
<td>A medium apple or peach is about the size of a tennis ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍎</td>
<td>1 ounce of cheese is about the size of 4 stacked dice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍗</td>
<td>½ cup of ice cream is about the size of a racquetball or tennis ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍚</td>
<td>1 cup of mashed potatoes or broccoli is about the size of your fist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍂</td>
<td>1 teaspoon of butter or peanut butter is about the size of the tip of your thumb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🍒</td>
<td>1 ounce of nuts or small candies equals one handful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on next page)
Measuring portions using your hand

Another “handy” way to judge how much you eat is to use your hand.

1. Measure the foods below in the amounts given. Use measuring cups, measuring spoons, and a food scale.
   - 1 teaspoon of soft margarine
   - 1 tablespoon of salad dressing
   - 1 ounce of nuts
   - 1 ounce of chips or pretzels
   - ½ cup of chopped fresh fruit or vegetables
   - ½ cup of cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
   - 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal
   - 3 ounces of cooked fish, poultry, or meat (remove skin, bones, and visible fat)

2. Compare the amounts above with the parts of your hand below. Fill in the blanks.
   - My thumb tip (from the knuckle to the end) is the size of ___ teaspoon(s).
   - My entire thumb is the size of ___ tablespoon(s).
   - My cupped hand holds:
     - ___ ounce(s) of nuts
     - ___ ounce(s) of chips or pretzels
     - ___ cup(s) of chopped fruit or vegetables
     - ___ cup(s) of ready-to-eat cereal
   - My clenched fist is the size of ___ cup(s).
   - My palm (not including fingers) is the size of ___ ounces of cooked fish, poultry (no skin or bones), or meat (no bones).
Nutrition Facts labels can help you lose weight

Choose foods with less fat and fewer calories.

Here’s how to read a Nutrition Facts label:

Look at the **Serving Size.** This is considered **one serving.** This may or may not be how much you ate.

Look at the **Servings Per Container.** Did you eat the whole container? If so, you ate that many servings.

Look at the **Calories.** A calorie is a measure of energy. The label states the calories in one serving, not in the whole container.

Look at the **Total Fat.** The “g” means grams. A gram is a unit of weight. A paper clip weighs about 1 gram. The label states the fat grams in **one serving.**

How much did you eat?

Did you eat *more* than one serving? If so, you ate *more* calories and fat grams than the label shows are contained in one serving.

Did you eat *less* than one serving? If so, you ate *fewer* calories and fat grams than the label shows are contained in one serving.

![Nutrition Facts label](image-url)
See the Nutrition Facts label below. Use it to answer these questions.

1. If you ate 8 ounces of this food, how many calories did you eat? ________________

2. How many grams of fat? ________________

3. If you ate the whole container, how many calories did you eat? ________________

4. How many grams of fat? ____

See answers at the bottom of the page.

---

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 4 oz. (113g)
Servings Per Container 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Calories</strong></td>
<td>280</td>
<td>Calories from Fat</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fat</strong></td>
<td>14g</td>
<td>% Daily Value*</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturated Fat</td>
<td>3.5g</td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans Fat</td>
<td>2.5g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>12 mg</td>
<td></td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sodium</strong></td>
<td>640 mg</td>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Carbohydrate</strong></td>
<td>13g</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>1g</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein</strong></td>
<td>24g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answers: 1) 560 calories  2) 28 grams of fat  3) 1,120 calories  4) 56 grams of fat.
Keeping track is key
Keeping track of calories and fat grams is like using a checkbook. You write down the calories and fat grams you “spend” every time you eat. Your goals are like a budget.

Keeping track has been proven to help people lose weight.

Here’s how to keep track:
1. Make copies of the Daily Food and Activity Tracker and keep the original blank to make copies from in the future. You will use one copy each day. Start the day by writing in:
   • Your name.
   • The date.
   • Your daily goals for calories, fat grams, and activity minutes.

2. Write down everything you eat and drink that day. Do this as soon as you can after eating each item.
   • Use one line for each food or drink.
   • Spelling is not important. What is important is to:
     – Be correct about amounts. Use the “Seven Ways to Size Up Your Servings” guide to help you. Over time, you will learn what food amounts look like.
     – Be complete — include everything. Don’t forget what you add to foods.
       Examples: margarine on toast or sugar in your coffee.
     – Be honest.

3. Write down the calories and fat grams in each item.
   • Look up the foods in a counter. A counter lists the calories and fat grams in foods.
     Some counters are books. Others are found on the internet. Here are good examples:
     – Book: The Calorie King® Calorie, Fat, and Carbohydrate Counter
     – Internet: www.myfoodapedia.gov
   • Compare how much you ate with how much is in the counter. For example:
     – You ate 2 cups of cereal. The counter lists 1 cup of cereal.
       So, you ate twice as many calories and fat grams as listed in the counter.
     • Record the number of calories and fat grams you ate.

4. During the day, change the total for the calories and fat grams each time you eat.
   The total boxes are at the bottom of the chart. Use a pencil so you can change the total throughout the day. Adjust what you eat and drink the rest of the day to stay within your goals.

5. At the end of each day, check the calorie and fat gram totals. Did you stay at or under your goals? If not, look at your record. What could you have done differently to stay at your goals? Make healthier choices? Eat smaller portions? Plan to use tomorrow what you have learned today.

6. Copy your totals from the Daily Food and Activity Tracker to the Food and Activity Tracker Monthly Summary.
(continued on next page)
**Practice keeping track**

Look up each food below in a counter. Write down the calories and fat grams for the amounts given. Total the calories and fat grams. Compare your totals with the ones at the bottom of the page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fat Grams</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Fried eggs made with butter or oil</td>
<td>2 large</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td>2 thin slices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toast, white</td>
<td>2 slices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>2 pats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hash browns</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Orange juice</td>
<td>Small glass (4 oz)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have questions about keeping track? Talk with your health coach.

Totals: 964 calories, 54 fat grams. Note: Your answers may vary from ours, but they should be close. Totals will depend on the counter you use.
**Becoming More Active**

### What kind and amount of physical activity is best?

All ways of being active are good for your health. To lose weight and keep it off, it’s best to include **aerobic activities** that require **moderate effort**. These make your heart and lungs stronger. They also help you lose body fat. You should be able to talk while you do these activities. But you should not have enough wind to sing or whistle.

Below are some examples. Check off the ones you would like and that fit your life.

- Biking
- Rowing
- Dancing
- General gardening (such as raking)
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Using a manual wheelchair
- Walking briskly
- Aerobics classes

Slowly build up to **at least 150 minutes each week. Spread this over five or more days per week.** For example, do 30 minutes on five days of the week. Do **at least 10 minutes** at a time.

Start by doing what you can. Then add a little more over time.

Is it hard for you to find the time to be active? Try both of these methods:

- Use 10 minutes of free time during the day, at least five days a week. Find this time during your coffee break, lunch hour, or right after your children leave for school.
- Use one longer block of time — 30 to 40 minutes — on at least three days a week. Examples: Walk your dog before work. Ride a bike in the evening.

Here is an example of being active 150 minutes per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When and for how long</th>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Total minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brisk walking in courtyard or garage at work</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>Noon, 10 min 2 p.m., 10 min</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swim at gym</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 a.m., 20 min</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisk walking at mall or park</td>
<td>1 p.m., 30 min</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total minutes: 150

(continued on next page)
Every day, write down the kind of activity you do and for how long. Use the attached Food and Activity Tracker. Also, keep a log or graph of your activity totals each week. Use the attached Food and Activity Tracker Summary for this. It will help you see your progress over time.

Should I talk with my doctor before I become more active?

Yes. In general, being active is safe for everyone. The health rewards are far greater than the chances of getting hurt. But you may need to avoid some kinds of activity if you have a health condition. If you are very inactive, start low and slow. Add more time and pick up the pace over time.

How can I prevent sore muscles and cramps?

- Slowly build up the amount of time you are active and how often.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after being active.
- Wear shoes that fit well. They should not hurt your feet.
- Wear socks that fit well. They should be comfortable and keep your feet dry.
- Warm up before being active. Do the activity you plan to do, but more slowly, for a few minutes. Do you plan an activity more vigorous than brisk walking? If so, do a few minutes of light stretching first.
- Cool down after being active. Do the activity you’ve been doing, but more slowly, for a few minutes. Have you done an activity more vigorous than brisk walking? If so, do a few minutes of light stretching afterward.

What are the signs that I should stop exercising?

Being active is usually quite safe. But in rare cases, problems can occur. If you have any of the signs below, stop exercising.

- Pressure, pain, squeezing, or heaviness in the center of the chest, throughout the front of the chest, or spreading to the shoulder(s), arm(s), neck, or back
- Unusual shortness of breath, sweating, or feeling lightheaded or sick to your stomach

Call 9-1-1 within five minutes of the first signs. Do the signs go away but return each time you are active? If so, see your doctor. These may be signs of a heart problem.
Make a plan below for becoming more active

If you’ve been inactive, first aim to slowly build up to 150 minutes per week of moderately intense exercise. Begin this week. We suggest:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week beginning on Sunday (date)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Minutes per week</th>
<th>Days per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10 minutes on 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15 minutes on 3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15 minutes on 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15 minutes on 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20 minutes on 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20 minutes on 4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20 minutes on 5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20 minutes on 5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30 minutes on 5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brisk walk</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30 minutes on 5 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you are already active, your coach will help you plan how to progress. Fill in the columns below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week beginning on Sunday (date)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Minutes per week</th>
<th>Minutes per day, Days per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Take Action

### My SMART* Goal for This Week *(Check when completed)*

Do your best to reach the SMART goal you set with your health coach. Write it here. Check the box when you have completed it.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

### Staying on the Path to Wellness *(Check when completed)*

When you are ready, choose one or two ideas from this tip sheet that you would like to put into action. Set a weekly SMART goal for each one. Write your goals here. Check the boxes when you have completed them.

- **SMART Goal 1:**
  
  _________________________________________________________________
  
  _________________________________________________________________

- **SMART Goal 2:**
  
  _________________________________________________________________
  
  _________________________________________________________________

*SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, and Timely. For example, “I will take a 10-minute brisk walk on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday morning this week.”

SMART goals help you succeed! If you have any trouble setting your weekly SMART goals, ask your health coach for help.

The information in this tip sheet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Before making changes, always talk to your doctor about what is right for you.

Source: The University of Pittsburgh Obesity and Nutrition Research Center (grant DK046204 from the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases).
Daily Food and Activity Tracker
Make copies of this page before completing it. You will need one copy per day. Keep the original blank to make more copies in the future.

Name: _________________________ Date: ____/____/____

Daily Calorie and Fat Gram Goals: ____________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Fat Grams</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Small bagel</td>
<td>2 oz.</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>Hungry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Activity Goals: ____________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Type of Activity</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Walk around block</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nice break from desk work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on next page)
### Food and Activity Tracker Monthly Summary

Make copies of this page before completing it. You will need one copy per month. Keep the original blank to make more copies in the future.

**Name:** __________________________  **Month/Year:** ____/____

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weight (pounds)</th>
<th>Daily Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Calories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fat Grams</td>
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A healthier life is on the line for you!

UPMC Health Plan