

# Overweight & Obesity

Maybe you've been thinking about losing weight for some time now. Perhaps you have even tried to lose weight before. Reading this hand out shows that you have the motivation to get started again. Follow the steps below to help you form good habits to keep you going until you reach your goal weight.

## What causes a person to be overweight?

Two common reasons for being overweight are eating too much and not being active enough. If you eat more calories than your body burns up, the extra calories are stored as fat. Everyone has some stored fat. Too much fat results in being overweight.

## Why should an overweight person lose weight?

Losing weight helps you feel better and makes it easier to be more active. Losing weight is not easy but take the challenge. You can do it! If you are overweight, here are some other good reasons to lose weight.

- Your blood cholesterol levels may improve.
- Your blood pressure levels may go down.
- Your blood sugar level may be better controlled.

## Looking for a quick and easy way to lose weight?

**Don't be fooled.** Be wary of misleading programs that offer quick weight loss. Some famous phrases such as, "**Eat all you want and still lose weight,**" or "**Melt fat away - while you sleep,**" may come to mind. Some other phrases to be wary of are:

Guaranteed      Miracle Cure      New Discovery      Breakthrough      Quick  
Easy      Effortless      Fast      Magical

## Ready, set...lose!

You can make losing weight a family event or set your own personal goal. Pick a day to begin and focus on making simple changes on a daily basis. Make these changes slowly and stick to them. Try these tips:

## Choose lower fat, lower calorie foods

- Prepare food by broiling or baking more often instead of frying.
- Eat fewer breaded and fried foods. Breading and frying foods like fish, shrimp, chicken, and vegetables add fat and calories.
- Eat lean meat, fish and poultry without skin. Choose poultry breasts and drumsticks more often than the wings and thighs.
- Eat more fruits, whole grains and vegetables. If you are a nibbler, choose fruit and vegetables as snacks more often.
- Use the food label to choose lower calorie foods.
- Drink fewer alcoholic and high-calorie beverages.
- Drink six to eight glasses of water each day.

*(more on back)*

Be Active // Be Healthy

## How big is a serving?

ONE PORTION OF:	SERVING SIZE:	IS ABOUT THE SIZE OF:
Meat	3 ounces cooked	a deck of cards
Cheese	1 ounce	a pair of dice
Potato	1/2 cup	an ice cream scoop
Bread	1 slice	half a bagel, half an English muffin, half a hamburger or hotdog bun
Cereal	1 ounce	1/2 to 1 cup depending on type of cereal
Rice/Pasta	1/2 cup cooked	a small bowl that side dishes are served in at a cafeteria
Salad dressing/gravy	2 tablespoons	half a ladle of dressing at a salad bar
Fruits and vegetables	1/2 cup chopped, cooked, or canned	a small bowl that side dishes are served in at a cafeteria
	1 piece	a medium apple or orange
Juice (fruit or vegetable)	3/4 cup	a small juice glass

### Limit your portion size

- Eat smaller portions - do not go back for seconds.
- Try eating only one serving of high fat, high calorie foods such as pizza, ice cream, or chips. Slowly cut back on your portion size. Substitute with lower fat, lower calorie foods during the rest of the day.

### Keep moving:

- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes a day, or as much as you can. It really helps you to lose weight the more active you are. Try these steps to help you move more:
  - Park your car a block or two away and walk.
  - Get off one or two bus stops early and walk the rest of the way.
  - Use the stairs.
  - Dance. See if you still remember all the steps or learn some new ones. Add more moves for a personalized workout.

### Resources:

U.S. Department of Agriculture

[www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

American Heart Association

[www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org)

#### For More Information:

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Office of Women's and Men's Health

301 Centennial Mall South - P.O. Box 94817

Lincoln, NE 68509-4817

Phone: 800.532.2227 Fax: 402.471.0913

[www.dhhs.ne.gov/womenshealth](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/womenshealth) and [www.dhhs.ne.gov/menshealth](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/menshealth)