

Nutrition

fact sheet



With so many different messages about how to lose weight, consumers are most interested in the most successful solutions. The key to any successful, healthy weight loss strategy comes down to managing calories — making sure you eat fewer and/or burn more. But, since calorie counting can be challenging for some of us, some simple tips can make it a bit easier.

Clearing Up Calorie Confusion

It's all about calorie balance. That means if you eat more calories than your body uses, they will be stored as fat. One pound of body fat is equal to 3,500 calories. In theory, losing one pound requires a deficit of 3,500 calories. For example, eating 500 fewer calories per day would result in losing one pound per week. Of course, every "body" is different, so you may find that your weight loss can vary from week to week.

Portion Management

To keep calories in check, be mindful about the amount of food you eat on each occasion at breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks. You may still enjoy your favorite foods, just in moderation. To do this, you need to be aware of portion sizes and choose the amount that's right for you.

Research suggests that we eat in "units," such as a sandwich, a plate of food or a slice of pizza—but today's units come in varying sizes! Of course, the bigger the portion, the more calories you're eating—and this is where the nutrition label can be a useful tool. Use the label to

determine the amount of calories and nutrients per serving so you can keep track of how much you're eating. When dining out, some tips to managing portions are:

- Request a half order of an entrée. Have it served on a salad plate rather than a large dinner plate.
- Share an entrée with a friend.
- Ask about child-sized portions.
- Get a "to-go" box when you are served and put half the meal into it before you start to eat.
- Order an appetizer as an entrée.

Go Ahead and Snack

It's a smart strategy to incorporate your favorite "fun foods," just do so in moderation. Divide larger packages into smaller portions or choose foods in pre-portioned single-serving packages. Look for snacks such as fat-free yogurt, fruit cups, crackers, reduced fat cookies or cheese that provide about 100 to 150 calories per package.

Jot It Down

To get an idea of how much you're eating, try keeping a food diary for a

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Information

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few days. Jot down everything you eat and drink, including the portion size. This will help you spot those “hidden” calories that seem to sneak in.

People tend to underestimate how much they eat. To help you get a perspective on your portion sizes, read food labels to see what is listed as the serving size. To get an idea of what servings sizes look like, use measuring cups to portion out one serving. Do this a few times for foods you eat frequently and soon you’ll be able to gauge on your own how much you are eating by visual cues.

Portion Control is in Your Hands

Judging serving size is a learned skill. For a quick estimate of portion sizes, here are some helpful reminders:

Food	Serving Size	About the size of...
Meat, Poultry, Fish	2 to 3 ounces	Deck of cards or palm of your hand
Pasta, rice	½ cup	Small computer mouse or the size of your fist
Cooked vegetables	½ cup	Small computer mouse
Fruit	½ cup	Small computer mouse or a medium apple, pear or orange
Cheese	1 ½ ounces hard cheese	C battery or your thumb

Calorie Balance

Research suggests that subtracting 100 calories a day could go a long way in helping you manage your weight. There are many ways to burn 100 calories through physical activities. It can be as simple as walking your dog around the neighborhood, gardening or kicking around a soccer ball. Here are some tips to making fitness fun.

Easy Ways to Burn 100 Calories

Activity	Minutes Needed*
Gardening	20
Washing the Car	20
Walking the Dog	20
Pushing a Stroller	20
Bicycling	25
Aerobic Dance	15
Skating, Roller	15
Jogging	15

*Based on a 150 pound person

Bottom Line

Make all your calories count by choosing a wide variety of healthful foods each day. Be sure to get the nutrients you need by including whole grains; fruits and vegetables; lean meat; low-fat or fat-free dairy foods; and moderate portions of your favorite snacks. Add regular physical activity and you’re on your way to a healthy and balanced lifestyle.