



HEALTH ALERT

Controlling Your Weight and Improving Your Health

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As we walk contemplate our next meal while walking through the grocery store, we need to remain mindful of the choices we make in regards to our diet and exercise. While being comfortable with your body image is admirable, being overweight or obese is actually harmful to your health. In the United States, an estimated 129.6 million Americans, or 64 percent, are obese or overweight. Overweight means having a body mass index (BMI) of 25-29.9 kg /m² while being obese is maintaining BMI of 30kg/m² or greater. The concerns about these weight issues are that the health risk for cardiovascular disease (i.e. heart attacks and strokes), diabetes mellitus, gallbladder disease, and arthritis are greatly increased when one is overweight or obese. Furthermore, once someone meets the criteria for obesity, the risk of dying from one of these diseases is substantially increased. Taking steps to reduce excess body fat through monitoring food intake and exercise will reduce your chance of developing these disease risk factors.

Please know that obesity is not simply a problem of willpower or self control, but it is a complex disorder involving a balance between ones appetite regulation and energy metabolism. While some people do have a genetic or biological predisposition to gain weight, in most cases the prevalence of being overweight reflexes a change in lifestyle patterns that are consistent with persistent exposure to an overabundance of energy dense food choices, and a decrease opportunity or motivation for physical activity.

The goals of reducing weight when one is overweight or obese should be to lower weight safely, maintain this lower body weight for the long term and prevent future weight gain. **In six months, most health providers would like to see their weight challenged patients lose ten percent of their initial body weight or one to two pounds per week.** To accomplish this task and prevent future weight gain , one must commit to a lifestyle change that is simple and consistent in order to avoid health problems associated with dramatic variations in weight loss or weight gain.

Talk with your doctor about the meal plan and exercise program that is best for you. Here are some simple Health tips to eating healthy and reducing calorie intake,

1. Take your time when you eat. (20 minutes minimal)
2. Eat breakfast every day
3. Eat three meals per day
 - a. Serve your meals in courses (fruits, then salad, then entrée)
 - b. Drink low calorie , low sugar drinks
 - c. Try not to fry food
4. Have low fat/low sugar snacks available

Exercise (make sure you talk with your doctor)

- Dance, garden, walk in the mall, bicycle; (make it fun!)

Make a commitment today to put healthier foods in your body, exercise and see your doctor.