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HEALTH EFFECTS OF OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY*

According to the Centers for Disease Control, research has shown that as weight increases to reach the levels referred to as "overweight" and "obesity,"* the risks for the following conditions also increases:

- Coronary heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon)
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol or high levels of triglycerides
- Stroke
- Liver and gallbladder disease
- Sleep apnea and respiratory problems
- Osteoarthritis
- Gynecological problems (abnormal menses, infertility)

*Overweight is defined as a body mass index (BMI) of 25 or higher; obesity is defined as a BMI of 30 or higher.

HEALTHY EATING FOR A HEALTHY WEIGHT

A healthy lifestyle involves many choices. Among them, choosing a balanced diet or eating plan. So how do you choose a healthy eating plan?
According to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans,* a healthy eating plan:

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat free or low fat milk and milk products
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars
- Stays within your daily calorie needs

The **MyPyramid.gov** eating plan is based upon the approximate number of calories your body needs according to your age, sex, height, weight, and activity level. The plan gives you the amounts of foods from the various food groups you should eat each day to meet the calorie goal.

Do I have to give up my favorite comfort food?
No! Healthy eating is all about balance. You can enjoy your favorite foods even if they are high in calories, fat, or added sugars. The key is eating them only once in a while and balance them out with healthier foods and more physical activity.
LOSING WEIGHT
What is healthy weight loss?
It is natural for anyone trying to lose weight to want to lose it very quickly. But evidence shows

that people who lose weight gradually and steadily (about 1-2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping weight off. Healthy weight loss isn't just about a "diet" or "program". It's about an ongoing lifestyle that includes long-term changes in daily eating and exercise habits. To lose weight, you must use up more calories than you take in. Since one pound equals 3,500 calories, you need to reduce your caloric intake by 500-1000 calories per day to lose about 1-2 pounds per week.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Regular physical activity is important for good health, and it's especially important if you're trying to lose weight or to maintain a healthy weight.

- When losing weight, more physical activity increases the number of calories your body uses for energy or "burns off." The burning of calories through physical activity, combined with reducing the number of calories you eat, creates a "calorie deficit" that results in weight loss.
- Most weight loss occurs because of decreased caloric intake. However, evidence shows the only way to maintain weight loss is to be engaged in regular physical activity.
- Most importantly, physical activity reduces risks of cardiovascular disease and diabetes beyond that produced by weight reduction alone.

Physical activity also helps to!!

- Maintain weight
- Reduce high blood pressure
- Reduce the risks for type 2 diabetes, heart attack, stroke, and several forms of cancer
- Reduce arthritis pain and associated disability
- Reduce risk for osteoporosis and falls
- Reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety