

# Ten Steps for a Healthier Weight

## ***1. Assess your readiness.***

You have to be committed before you begin. What is your stage of readiness?

- \* Not quite ready? Talk to people who have been successful.
- \* Thinking about it? Keep a food and activity diary to see where you might make small changes.
- \* Getting ready? Make some changes in your food and physical activity habits to see what appeals.
- \* Taking action? Develop a support network to reinforce your changes.
- \* Sticking with it? Make your small changes permanent.

## ***2. Planning.***

Make a food and physical activity plan that you can live with for the rest of your life. Include small changes such as eating smaller servings of favorite foods or taking the stairs instead of the elevator. Monitor progress by keeping a journal.

## ***3. Label Reading.***

Package labels tell you how many calories are in the food you're eating. Look for lower calorie choices. Check the serving size. Big muffins or beverage bottles may count as two servings.

## ***4. Eating out.***

If you're eating in a restaurant, look for these lower-calorie terms: grilled, stir-fried, poached, broiled, roasted, and steamed. When servings are too large, don't clean your plate. Avoid ordering more food than you need just because the price is right.

## ***5. Focusing.***

Pay attention to what you're eating. Turn off the television. Sit and eat slowly.

## ***6. Regular Meals.***

Skipping breakfast or other meals make you hungrier later. You may then be tempted to eat too much.

## ***7. Physical Activity.***

To maintain weight, you need at least 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as walking/jogging 4-5 miles/hour) most days of the week. Reduce sedentary activities like watching TV, using the computer, reading, and driving. Park further away from your destination and walk.

## ***8. Support.***

It's easier to stick with a lifestyle change if friends and/or family are supporting you. They can eat with you at restaurants with healthier options, do physical activities with you, and praise your progress.

## ***9. On track.***

To maintain your weight, you'll need to stick with your food and physical activity changes for the long term. Monitor yourself by keeping a food and weight journal. If you relapse, get right back on track.

## ***10. Rewards.***

Give yourself non-food rewards for maintaining your weight. Consider getting a massage or manicure, going to the park with your family, or going bowling or biking or skating.

***Taken from an article from American Dietetic Association  
Provided by AHEC of the Plains. For more information, please call (806) 291-0101.***