

# How To Maintain a Healthy Weight

By Joe Daniels

You are healthy now -- and you want to stay that way. One of the best ways to maintain good health is to maintain a healthy weight level.

Eating the right foods -- and the right amounts -- and incorporating some exercise into your daily activities can go a long way to fend off all manners of possible health problems down the road. If you are just finishing up a diet that helped you get to your target weight level, you may be scared that you'll be stuck dieting forever. Not so, says Amy Weld, a nutritionist at a Detroit area hospital. "Developing a new plan after the slimming down portion of the diet is over is just as important as the diet itself.

While some successful slimmers prefer to immediately increase their calorie intake, others prefer to do it in steps. In many ways, this is a good idea as it helps you to concentrate on getting your extra calories by gradually increasing the portion sizes of the foods you're already eating rather than suddenly adding in chocolate, crisps, booze and takeaways.

- Build a healthy base by eating vegetables, fruits, and grains (especially whole grains) with little added fat or sugar.
- Select sensible portion sizes.
- Get moving. Get regular physical activity to balance calories from the foods you eat.
- Set a good example for children by practicing healthy eating habits and enjoying regular physical activities together.

Keep in mind that even though heredity and the environment are important influences, your behaviors help determine your body weight.

Weld offers a possible five-step plan to maintain your new healthier weight.

**Step 1** - Once you reach target, add 250 calories a day to your existing daily calorie intake. This means if you've been having 1,250 calories each day, you should now have 1,500 calories a day.

**Step 2** - After a week, weigh yourself on your usual scales. You'll probably have lost a little more weight. If so, add another 250 calories to last week's daily allowance. So, if you were having 1,500 calories a day, now have 1,750 calories daily.

**Step 3** - After another week, weigh yourself again. If you've lost more weight, add an extra 250 calories to your daily intake, for example from 1,750 calories to 2,000 calories each day.

**Step 4** - After another week, if your weight has stabilized that's the amount of calories you need each day to keep your new slim shape. If you've gained a tiny amount, drop your daily calorie intake by 100 calories, for example, from 2,000 calories to 1,900 calories daily. After a week, weigh yourself again. If your weight has stayed the same, that's the amount of calories you need each day for weight maintenance. If your weight has gone up or down, juggle your daily calorie intake by 50 calories a day until your weight eventually stabilizes.

**Step 5** - Weigh yourself once a week on your usual scales until you are confident that you're maintaining your healthy weight.

Weld says as important as eating right is being active. While regular trips to the gym are part of daily life for some people, that doesn't match the lifestyle of others.

Copyright © 2005 Publishers-Edge

