### Achieving a Healthy Weight Goal

Weight loss and exercise recommendations for individuals on dialysis

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### Introduction

Losing weight is one of the first steps you can take to a better and longer life. It takes dedication and a positive attitude to lose weight because you must make lifestyle changes. Once you achieve your weight-loss goal, you can expect to feel better, to have more energy, and to be more confident in reaching your other goals in life.

Several changes in behavior are needed for weight loss to occur. The way you plan meals, grocery shop, and prepare meals can go a long way to losing unwanted pounds.

You will also want to increase your activity to make sure the weight comes off and stays off.

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### Meal Planning

Try these meal-planning tips to help you change the way you eat your meals and snacks:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Try to eat 3 meals each day, no less. Eating one or two large meals a day may cause weight gain.</th>
<th>Avoid delaying or skipping meals. Spacing meals evenly throughout the day will help you to avoid overeating.</th>
<th>If you get hungry late at night, either plan a bedtime snack or go to bed earlier to resist the temptation to eat.</th>
<th>Keep foods only in the kitchen, out of sight. Avoid putting dishes filled with candy, nuts, and other snacks in other rooms in the house.</th>
<th>Try to dine out only 2-3 times each week. Researchers have found that those dining out more often gain weight more easily.</th>
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### Grocery Shopping

Many of the following tips for grocery shopping will help with your weight-loss goal:

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<tr>
<th>Never go to the grocery store when hungry! Always try to eat your scheduled meal or snack before heading to the store.</th>
<th>Always have a grocery list ready and avoid buying foods not on your list. You will not only stick to your diet better, but also spend less money!</th>
<th>Choose more fresh foods like meat, produce, and dairy products. Foods that are ready-to-eat such as lunch meats, casseroles, desserts, and snack items often have the most fat and calories.</th>
<th>Try to grocery shop once a week instead of more often.</th>
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Preparing Meals

Cut out extra calories when you prepare meals at home with these helpful hints. Try the following:

**Cut Down on Fat Calories**
- Use a non-stick oil spray instead of frying in oil.
- Try using crumb mixtures and baking meat in the oven instead of deep-fat frying.
- Trim the fat from meats, remove the skin from poultry, and drain the grease from hamburger.
- Use herbs, spices, and imitation butter flavoring to season foods.
- Use skim milk or non-fat dry milk for recipes that call for milk.
- Use fat-free or reduced-fat dairy products.

**Cut Down on Empty Calories**
- Instead of sugar, use sugar substitute in recipes and to sweeten foods. Many new sugar substitutes can be used measure for measure and cooked at a high temperature.
- Avoid alcohol. Alcohol such as wine, beer, and other liquors contain extra calories that are more easily stored as fat in the body.

Eating Meals

The following pointers will help you enjoy your food without overeating.

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<tr>
<th>Eat slowly. The brain needs about 20 minutes for the body to register that it has had enough food.</th>
<th>Take small bites and chew them well. Savor and enjoy every bite of food. This will help you eat slowly.</th>
<th>Always sit down to eat and eat only in one place, preferably at the kitchen table.</th>
<th>Serve meals from the kitchen, not family style at the table.</th>
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Exercise

There are many benefits to daily exercise. Walking, bicycling, water aerobics, yoga, or playing sports will help with both physical and mental health:

**Mental Health**
- Reduce levels of stress
- Improve your self-confidence
- Improve your ability to cope with personal problems
- Decrease feelings of depression and anxiety
  - Increase blood supply to the brain to help with memory and concentration

**Physical Health**
- Reduce body weight, especially fat
- Prevent constipation
- Help improve sleep
- Strengthen bones
- Improve blood pressure control
- Increase blood count (hematocrit)
- Reduce blood fat levels: cholesterol & triglycerides
- Improve blood sugar levels
- Improve the immune system so you can resist infections

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