

Tips on Keeping Weight Off: Successful Weight Loss Maintenance

What is successful weight loss maintenance?

Weight loss maintenance is considered successful if you lose at least 10 percent of your body weight and keep that weight off for at least one year.

What is the best way to do this?

It is not easy to maintain weight loss. You can help yourself lose weight and keep it off by:

- Limiting the amount of food you eat each day
- Keeping track of calories and fat grams
- Restricting foods that are high in fat and sugar
- Planning your meals ahead of time
- Eating breakfast every day
- Keeping your diet steady
 - Eating the same on weekdays and weekends
 - Keeping your healthy eating habits during vacations and special occasions
- Increasing the amount of exercise you get
 - Adding more activity to your daily tasks
 - Getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day

- Weighing yourself at least once per week
- Watching less than 10 hours of television per week

Should I take weight loss medicines?

When combined with healthy diet and exercise, the weight loss medicines sibutramine (brand: Meridia) and orlistat (brand: Xenical) can help maintain weight loss for up to two years. Taking these medicines may work better than diet and exercise alone for some people. However, for health and safety reasons, most people cannot keep taking weight loss medicines for longer than two years. Many people regain weight after they stop taking these medicines.

Should I have weight loss surgery?

Surgery to lose and maintain weight loss has become more common. Surgery can help with long-term weight loss maintenance, but people who make major lifestyle changes can get the same results. Ask your doctor if weight loss surgery is a good option for you.

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This handout is provided to you by your family doctor and the American Academy of Family Physicians. Other health-related information is available from the AAFP online at <http://familydoctor.org>.

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