

# How to Lose Weight

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See Handout —  
Canada's Food  
Guide to Healthy  
Eating.

## **Eat a variety of foods**

- Follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

## **Eat three regular small meals each day**

- Eat regular meals, but eat smaller portions.
- You could also include small, low-calorie snacks such as raw vegetables, a piece of fruit, soda crackers, popcorn made without added fat or a small glass of low-fat milk.

## **Drink water**

- Try to drink 6-8 cups of water every day.
- Feel free to also have diet soft drinks, diet fruit crystal drinks (for example, diet Kool-Aid or Crystal Light) and a couple of cups of tea or coffee with less sugar.

See Handout —  
Helpful Hints for  
Active Living.

## **Go for a walk**

Walking and other exercise can make you feel better and help you to lose weight.



### Choose:

- skim or 1% milk, buttermilk, yogourt or cottage cheese
- hard cheese with 20% or less M.F. (milk fat)
- fat-free or light sour cream
- lean meats (cut off the fat) and skinless chicken
- low-fat luncheon meats with less than 15% fat
- water-packed tuna, salmon or sardines
- plain crackers such as soda crackers or melba toast
- less-rich desserts: diet jello, diet popsicles, fruit, a baked apple (instead of apple pie), plain cookies (such as digestives, arrowroot biscuits and ginger snaps), low-fat yogourt, sherbet, low-fat ice cream or light ice cream bars, light pudding or angel food cake.

### Fill up on vegetables and fruit

These foods are naturally low in fat and are full of fibre, vitamins and minerals. If you eat more of these foods you will find it easier to cut back on meats, fats, desserts and high-fat snack foods.

### Eat lots of fibre

As well as the fruits and vegetables, choose brown breads, whole grain cereals and bran. If you use dried peas and beans instead of meat in soups and stews, you will get lots of fibre and less fat.

### Eat less meat, fish and chicken

For your main meal choose a small piece, about the size of your palm.

### Eat slowly

Drink water with your meals and chew your food slowly. Don't go back for seconds.

## Eat less fat

**Margarine, butter, lard and oil are all pure fats. They are all high in calories.**

- Do not fry foods in fat. You can broil, roast on a rack, barbecue, boil, steam or microwave. If you want to fry, cook your food in a bit of broth instead of fat. Add herbs and spices for extra flavour.
- Use less fat in muffins and other baked goods.
- Non-stick frying pans and baking pans make low-fat cooking easier.
- Chill soups and stews and then remove hardened fat.
- Place meat drippings in your fridge overnight. Take off the hardened fat. Make gravy from the fat-free drippings.
- Put less butter or margarine on your bread, sandwiches and vegetables. Try instead a small amount of salsa, mustard, relish or light mayonnaise, or try a sprinkle of herbs or lemon on your vegetables.
- Add broth to your vegetables or potatoes to keep them moist.
- Cut back on fatty foods: potato chips, nuts, french fries, hash browns, bologna, sausages, bacon, cheese, whole milk and cream, gravies, rich sauces, ice cream, cakes and donuts.
- In restaurants, ask for dressings and sauces “on the side”. Ask for bread or toast unbuttered, and limit fatty foods such as french fries.

### Limit sweet foods

- **Count all these as sugar:** brown and white sugars, syrup, honey and molasses.
- **These foods are high in sugar:** jams, jellies, marmalade, candies, chocolate, regular soft drinks, iced tea and fruit beverage crystals (such as Tang, and Kool-Aid made with sugar), condensed milk, pastries, iced cakes, ice cream and donuts.
- **Limit fruit juice.** Even “unsweetened” juice has natural sugar. Fresh fruit is a better choice than juice as it has more fibre. Drink water if you are thirsty.
- Use less sugar when making puddings, muffins or cookies.
- Instead of sugar you may want to try using a low-calorie sweetener in your coffee, tea or on your cereal. Some common brand names are Equal (NutraSweet), Splenda, Sugar Twin and Sweet N’Low.
- You can choose diet syrups and diet jams.
- The small amount of sugar that has been added to foods such as unsweetened cereals (for example, bran flakes or rice crispies) is okay.

## Limit hard liquor, beer, wine and liqueurs

- They all have unwanted calories.
- Ask your doctor if drinking alcohol is safe for you.
- If you do choose to drink, have a light beer instead of a regular beer, and dry wine instead of sweet wine or liqueurs. Use a diet soft drink as a mix. Try to limit yourself to one drink. Try mixing a light beer or glass of dry wine with a diet ginger ale.

## Choose “diet foods” carefully

- Some diet foods are **poor choices** such as diet chocolate bars or diet candies that can have a lot of fat or sugar (often as sorbitol).
- **Good choices** are low-fat, calorie-reduced, or sugar-free foods such as diet soft drinks, diet jello, sugar-free popsicles, sugar-free gum and fat-free salad dressings.

## A slow weight loss is best

Weighing yourself once a month will give you a chance to see a gradual weight loss. If you lose one or two pounds a month, you will be doing great.

## Low Calorie Meal Plan

(this is a sample 1,300 calorie meal plan)

### Breakfast

- 1 cup hot cereal topped with 2 tablespoons of raisins and 2 teaspoons of brown sugar. Add 1/2 cup of skim or 1% milk.
- glass of water; tea or coffee optional (limit cream and sugar)

### Mid-morning snack

- 6 soda crackers with 1/2 ounce of low-fat cheese
- glass of water

### Lunch

- 1 roast beef sandwich (made with 2 slices of bread, 1 ounce of roast beef, 2 teaspoons of light mayonnaise and lettuce)
- 3 radishes
- 1 cup of skim or 1% milk
- a piece of cantaloupe
- glass of water

### Mid-afternoon snack

- 1 orange and a glass of water

### Dinner

- 3 ounce piece of broiled steak (or other meat, chicken or fish)
- 1/2 cup mashed potato made with skim milk
- 1/2 cup mushrooms (cooked in broth)
- 3/4 cup of broccoli (or other vegetables)
- salad with 1 tablespoon of oil-free salad dressing
- sugar-free popsicle
- glass of water

### Evening Snack

- 1 slice of raisin toast with 1 teaspoon of margarine and 1 teaspoon of honey or jam
- 1 stalk of celery
- glass of water