

# Achieving and Maintaining a Healthy Weight

## Strategies that Work

- Set reasonable and achievable goals. Focus on losing ½ to 2 pounds per week for safe, long term weight loss.
- Choose to eat a well-balanced diet consisting of whole grains, plenty of fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats from foods like nuts and seeds.
- Don't skip meals and keep healthy snacks like fruits and vegetables handy.
- Start an exercise program. First review the American College of Sports Medicine guidelines for beginning an exercise program at: <http://www.acsm.org/docs/current-comments-whentoseeadoctortemp.pdf>. Use a pedometer to see how physically active you are during the day. Work to increase your daily steps.
- Ask for support from family and friends. They can help in overcoming barriers that have prevented success in the past.

## Maximize Success

- Have your calories determined by a Registered Dietitian
- Reduce calories by decreasing portions a little at each meal. Decrease higher calorie foods and increase lower calorie foods like non-starchy vegetables. Try eating on a 10-inch plate or smaller.
- Keep a food diary. Use a pen and paper or try one of the many excellent free websites or phone apps.
- Reduce the number of times you eat foods prepared away from home.
- Learn how to read and interpret food labels.

## Additional Healthy Tips

- Find easy ways to improve the quality of your diet (e.g, reduce or eliminate sugar-sweetened drinks, alcohol, high fat foods, and desserts).
- Drink 2 cups of water right before a meal. This may help reduce caloric intake.
- Listen to your body. Eat when feeling the first pangs of hunger. Stop as soon as you start to feel satisfied.
- Eat slowly. Eating slowly gives your "satiety signal" a chance to kick in.
- Weigh yourself regularly. Once per week is sufficient.

The key to optimal meal planning for health is individualization. For personalized nutrition plans, contact a SCAN dietitian by accessing "Find a SCAN Dietitian" at [www.scandpg.org](http://www.scandpg.org) | 800.249.2875.

