



Weigh to Go: *Weight Control for Amputees*

Weight control means maintaining weight at a healthy level and is important for amputees:

- To reduce the energy used when wearing a prosthesis

- To maintain proper fit of the socket
- To reduce or prevent secondary conditions, such as back pain
- To control diseases, such as diabetes and high blood pressure.

The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) is a national information service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). WIN was established in 1994 to provide information on obesity, weight control and nutrition. WIN produces and collects materials and disseminates them to consumers and healthcare professionals. According to the WIN, you should ask your healthcare provider what a healthy weight is for you. If you begin to lose or gain weight and do not know why, your healthcare provider should be able to tell you if this change is healthy or not.

Health Risks of Being Underweight

- Poor memory
- Decreased immunity

- Osteoporosis (bone loss)
- Decreased muscle strength
- Hypothermia (lowered body temperature).

Health Risks of Being Overweight:

- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- High blood cholesterol
- Heart disease and stroke
- Some types of cancer
- Sleep apnea (breathing stops for short periods during sleep)
- Osteoarthritis (wearing away of the joints)
- Gallbladder diseases.

Eating Tips for Older Adults From WIN

- Eat breakfast every day.
- Select high-fiber foods like whole grain breads and cereals, beans, vegetables and fruits. These can lower your risk for chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.
- Choose lean meat, poultry and seafood with the skin removed. As your body ages, you need fewer calories, especially if you are not very active.
- Have three servings of low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese a day.
- Keep nutrient-rich snacks on hand. These include dried apricots, whole-wheat crackers, peanut butter, low-fat

cheese, and low-sodium soup.

- Drink plenty of water.

Evaluating Weight-Loss Programs

Experts agree that the best way to reach a healthy weight is to follow a sensible eating plan and engage in regular physical activity. Weight-loss programs should encourage healthful behaviors that help you lose weight and that you can maintain over time. WIN emphasizes that safe and effective weight-loss programs should include:

- Healthful eating plans that reduce calories but do not rule out specific foods or food groups
- Regular physical activity and/or exercise instruction
- Tips on healthful behavior changes that also consider your cultural needs
- Slow and steady weight loss of about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pound to 2 pounds per week and not more than 3 pounds per week (weight loss may be faster at the start of a program)
- A plan to keep the weight off after you have lost it.

Portion Control

According to the experts at WIN, you do not need to measure and count everything you eat for the rest of your life — just long enough to recognize standard serving sizes. Try these other ideas to help you control portions at home:

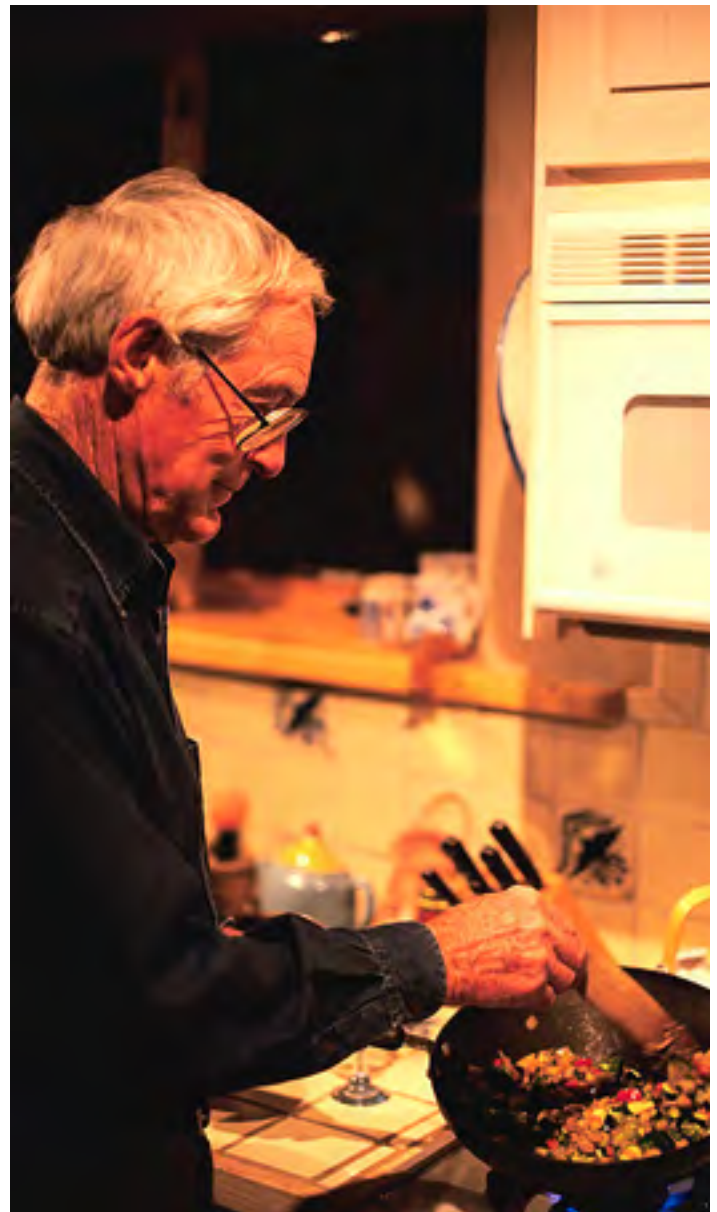
- Take a standard serving out of the package and eat it off of a plate instead of eating straight out of a large box or bag.
- Avoid eating in front of the TV or while busy with other activities. Pay attention to what you are eating and fully enjoy the smell and taste of your foods.
- Eat slowly so your brain can get the message that your stomach is full.
- Take seconds of vegetables or salads instead of higher-fat, higher-calorie parts of a meal such as meats or desserts.
- When cooking in large batches, freeze food that you will not serve right away. This way, you won't be tempted to finish eating the whole batch before the food goes bad. And you'll have ready-made food for another day. Freeze in meal-sized containers.
- Try to eat three sensible meals at regular times throughout the day. Skipping meals may lead you to eat larger portions of high-calorie, high-fat foods at your next meal or snack.
- Eat breakfast every day.

- Keep snacking to a minimum. Eating many snacks throughout the day may lead to weight gain.
- When you do have a treat like chips, cookies, or ice cream, eat only one serving, eat it slowly, and enjoy it!

For additional information, go to www.niddk.nih.gov/health/nutrition.htm

Overcoming the Myth

One of the most popular myths about weight loss is that everyone who loses weight will eventually gain it back. The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) is a research study founded in 1993, which has surveyed more than 3,000 individuals who have lost significant amounts of weight and kept the weight off for long periods of time.



Research conducted by the NWCR has shown that successful weight loss and weight maintenance is indeed possible. It is related to the following points:

- Successful weight control is a long-term process. It requires commitment, patience, and the practice of healthful eating.
- Weight control is about more than healthful eating. It also must include a change in shopping habits, cooking and dining out, and attitudes about food.
- Walking was cited as the most frequent physical activity.
- About 50 percent of participants lost weight on their own without any type of formal program.
- About 42 percent of participants reported that losing the weight was harder than maintaining the loss.
- No matter which program or diet was used to lose weight, weight control consisted of eating low-fat foods and engaging in regular physical activity.
- Over time, it takes less effort to maintain weight loss.
- People who lose weight successfully do not allow themselves to go hungry.
- People are more inclined to eat if they are thirsty because they confuse thirst for hunger.

The NWCR has published a number of articles describing

- The eating and exercise habits of successful weight losers
- The behavioral strategies they use to maintain their weight
- The effect of successful weight loss maintenance on other areas of their lives. ❖

For additional information, visit the NWCR Web site at www.nwcr.us

