



MOVE! WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
FOR VETERANS

Maintenance Booklet



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

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MODULE ONE:

Welcome to MOVE! Maintenance



Congratulations on the healthy changes you've made and welcome to MOVE! Maintenance.

In this module, you will be introduced to four important skills for maintaining weight. You will practice each skill in modules two, three, and four. Then you will reflect on how you are using the skills during check-ins at the start of other modules, which cover topics like physical activity and addressing weight bias. Finally, the program will conclude with a deeper review of the four skills for weight maintenance.



Skills for Weight Maintenance

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring weight

In This Module You Will:

1. Identify four important skills for weight maintenance
2. Practice using weight maintenance skills

Why Does Weight Regain Happen

Many people stop losing weight or begin to regain weight about 6 months after starting a weight management program. This is because of changes in the body that cannot be controlled and challenges sustaining weight loss behaviors. Weight regain should not be viewed as a personal failure. For most people, weight management is a life-long journey.

Change	Effect on Weight
Energy conservation	As the body loses weight, it slows down how it uses calories.
Body changes	Bodies that weigh less require less energy (calories).
Hormone changes	Hormones are chemical signals in the body. With weight loss, there is a decline in the amount of the fullness hormone (leptin) and an increase in the amount of the hunger hormone (ghrelin).
Fuel source shifts	Rather than using stored fat for energy, the body tries to store more of it.
Feeling deprived	People who have been overly restrictive with food choices may have a desire for high-calorie foods.
Decreased motivation	Motivation is usually highest at the start of a weight loss program. As time goes on, weight loss becomes routine and motivation declines. Some people may find that maintaining weight is not as exciting as seeing the number on the scale change.
Decreased positive feedback	Positive feedback from others may decline with the transition from losing weight to maintaining weight since there is less visual change.



Reflecting on Positive Results

People who reflect on the good things that have happened because they made healthy lifestyle changes are more likely to maintain those changes. There are a lot of benefits not measured on a weight scale. Recognize how far you’ve come!

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep	More energy	Fewer medicines
Better check-up	Less pain	Better blood pressure
Improved memory	Better mood	Better blood sugar
Clothes fit better	Healthier cooking	Better body image
Less stress	Greater confidence	Better relationship with food
More endurance	More organized	Better social life

Other:

I am happy that I made healthy eating and activity changes because:

I will continue making healthy choices because:



Planning for High-Risk Situations

Anyone that has tried to make lifestyle changes has experienced a slip. Slips happen when you don't stick to your eating, activity, or weighing plans. Slips often occur because of interruptions to your daily routine. These are called high-risk situations. They can include things like travel, holidays, or eating at restaurants. It is important to learn how to handle these situations. When you know which situations are challenging for you, you can avoid them or make a plan for them. When you have a plan for one type of event, you may be able to apply the plan to another similar event.

Types of High-Risk Situations

Recurring: These are situations that happen daily or weekly. For example, food is always available in the break room at work.

Events: These are occasions outside of your regular routine, such as holidays or vacations.

Examples of High-Risk Situations:

- Dealing with a change in your routine
- Celebrating an occasion like a graduation, wedding, or birthday
- Going to a restaurant
- Receiving a gift of food or drink
- Watching a sporting event
- Taking a vacation
- Feeling angry, upset, or frustrated
- Having bad weather when you planned to be active outside
- Driving past fast-food restaurants

Brainstorming High-Risk Situations

Type	High-Risk Situation	Solution
Recurring	Weekly Sunday dinner at a relative's house	Bring a healthy dish to share
Event	Holiday meal	Use a salad plate to keep portions small

Asking for Support

When you are making lifestyle changes it helps to have support from others. They can provide encouragement. They may also help with activities like grocery shopping, meal preparation, or physical activity. Support may come from family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, your local or religious communities, or VA and MOVE! team members.

Example: The person who can support me most in this journey right now is my spouse.

To be supportive, they can take walks with me, buy snacks in single-serving packages, and tell me I'm doing a good job.



My Support:

My support person or team:

How they help:

How I can ask for their help:



Monitoring Weight

Weighing yourself regularly is important because it can help you notice if your weight begins to change. It is easier to recover from a small amount of weight gain than a larger amount.

Set a Threshold

A threshold weight is a number you choose that signals that your weight may be increasing beyond expected fluctuations. The threshold weight is usually 5 pounds or more than your current weight. This range accounts for normal fluid and body weight changes.

If you reach your threshold weight, start with an assessment. Without judgment, ask yourself, “What is different about my activity or eating habits?” Consider making SMART goals to address areas to change. You may decide to use some tools that worked for you before. These could include measuring food portions or recording in the Food and Physical Activity Tracker or another tracking method.



“After completing [MOVE!] I continued using what I had learned...tracking my eating and working out. Overall, I am a happier and healthier person.”

– Wendy, lost 30 pounds and swims 3-4 times a week

A monitoring plan has four parts:

1. Measuring Method
2. Frequency
3. Recording Method
4. Threshold Weight

Example: I will keep track of my weight with the following plan.

Measuring Method:	I will use my bathroom scale.
Frequency:	I will measure on Monday and Friday mornings before breakfast.
Recording Method:	I will record my weight in my app.
Threshold Weight:	My current weight is 210 lbs. If I reach 215 lbs., then I will set new nutrition and physical activity goals.

My Weight Monitoring Plan

Make a plan for how often you want to weigh. MOVE! recommends weighing at least once a week.

Measuring
Method

Frequency

Recording
Method

Threshold
Weight

Make Your Goals **SMART**

If you reach your threshold weight and need to set new goals, remember to make them **SMART**.

Specific: What will you do?

Measurable: How will you know you are making progress?

Action-Oriented: What actions will you take to reach the goal?

Realistic: Is the goal doable for you?

Time-based: When will you start? When will you review your goal to see if it still makes sense for you?

Example: I will drink no more than three cans of sweetened soda per week.

Example: I will walk briskly for at least 15 minutes every day this week.



“The nuts and bolts [of MOVE!] provide a strong method to successfully lose weight and keep it off. It also sharpens my focus on other issues in developing habits that apply to life challenges. Losing weight has allowed me to live life to the fullest.”

– Thomas, lost 50 pounds and has more energy and flexibility

Module Summary

Losing Weight vs. Maintaining Weight

Changes in the body and challenges sustaining healthy behaviors may make it hard to maintain long-term weight loss. There are four important skills to help you continue to make healthy food and activity choices. These skills are important for people who want to focus on weight maintenance and those who want to lose more weight.

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring weight

Reflecting on Positive Results

There will be times when life presents challenges that make it hard to make healthy choices. During these times, reflect on the positive outcomes you've experienced and what motivates you. Remember all that you have already accomplished.

High-Risk Situations & Support

High-risk situations may interrupt your routine. They can cause you to slip in your eating, activity, or weighing patterns. It is important to learn how to handle these situations. Start with identifying which situations are challenging for you. Create a plan for how to handle them, or to avoid them. Then make a plan to get support and encouragement from the people in your life to help you continue making healthy food and activity choices.

Monitoring Weight

Weighing yourself regularly is important because it can help you notice when your weight increases. Set a plan for how often you want to weigh yourself. Set a threshold weight so you know when you may need to set new SMART goals for healthy eating and physical activity.

Module To-Do

1. Reflect on your reasons and motivation for maintaining your healthy lifestyle choices.
2. Set your weight monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE TWO:

Making a Comeback



What should I do when I have a slip or setback?

You have been practicing healthy eating and activity plans for a while now. You have probably had times when you did not stick to your plans. These are called slips. Slips are a normal part of making long-term lifestyle changes and are to be expected. It is important to think of a slip as temporary and to learn from it.

Guilt from a slip can lead to more slips and a loss of confidence. A series of slips can be harmful if they lead to a setback. A setback is a series of slips that cause you to fall back into patterns of unhealthy eating and inactivity. You can prepare to manage slips and setbacks so that you can make a comeback.



Slips don't hurt your overall progress. How you respond to a slip is most important.

In This Module You Will:

1. Understand slips and setbacks
2. Identify ways to prevent a setback
3. Develop a comeback plan

Recognizing a Slip

Slips are a common experience. Everyone working on weight management will experience a slip from time to time.

A **slip** is a moment or short period when you make a choice that does not fit into your healthy eating or physical activity plan or support your health goals. It is a natural part of long-term weight management.

A **setback** is a longer return to previous eating and inactivity habits. It may lead to gaining some weight back.

The goal is to recognize a slip and respond in a way that prevents it from turning into a setback.

What situations cause you to slip from healthy eating?

What situations cause you to slip from being active?

Can you avoid those situations in the future? If so, how?

Catch yourself when you slip or are about to slip. Stop what you are doing and take a look at the situation.

- What is happening?
- Why is the slip starting?

Try to take yourself out of the situation so you won't be tempted.



Handling Slips

You have learned that slips are a normal part of making lifestyle changes. Most people who are trying to maintain their weight experience slips. How you respond to slips is most important.

There are several strategies for handling a slip. Try these the next time you have a slip.

Strategy	Explanation
Remember you are not alone	Almost everyone who is trying to lose or maintain weight experiences slips.
Rethink negative thoughts	A slip is not a failure.
Reflect and learn from the slip	Ask yourself what happened. Review the situation without judgement.
Create a plan	Based on your reflection, make a plan for dealing with a similar situation in the future.
Talk to someone supportive	Tell them about your new plan for handling slips.
Remember the good	You are making life-long changes. Weight management is a journey with lots of choices every day that add up over time. Focus on all the positive changes you have made.

How can planning to handle slips help you reach your long-term health goals?

How can friends and family members help you deal with slips and prevent setbacks?

How will you respond to slips?

Slip to Setback Chain

Let's look at how a slip can occur in a high-risk situation and begin the setback chain of events.

For this example, Pat made healthy eating and activity choices that led to gradually losing 19 pounds over 7 months. Then...

Setback Chain and Scenarios

High-risk situation	Pat went on a vacation.
No plans for the situation	Pat did not plan for how to maintain healthy eating and physical activity while on vacation.
Small slip occurs	When Pat got home and weighed, Pat was six pounds heavier than before the trip.
Negative thinking and no plan for the slip	Pat was upset at the weight gain, felt unmotivated, and was not sure how to get back on track.
Another slip and no comeback plan	Pat became more frustrated and did not resume a healthy eating plan or an activity routine.
Setback	A week later, Pat had gained a total of eight pounds and decided not to attend that week's scheduled MOVE! Maintenance group.

Breaking the Setback Chain

You can stop the setback chain at any point in the process. Learning from past slips can help you deal with them the next time.

Breaking the Chain and Scenarios

High-risk situation	Pat went on a vacation.
Plan for the situation	Pat planned to enjoy vacation by having two special meals.
Small slip occurs	When Pat got home and weighed, Pat had gained four pounds.
Objective thinking	Pat was annoyed but recognized that this was not a defeat.
Build a comeback plan	Pat decided to try pre-logging meals into a food log to help keep track of choices.
Prevent a setback	Pat went out to dinner again with friends. Before the meal, Pat looked at the menu, pre-logged the meal, and felt confident about the choice.

Preventing a Setback

You may feel discouraged after a slip. It is important to acknowledge your feelings and get back on track to prevent more slips. A series of slips can lead to a setback or falling back into old eating and activity habits more consistently, which can result in weight gain. You can develop a comeback plan after a slip to avoid a setback.

It is important to think of a slip as **temporary** and to **learn from it**. Don't let a slip lead to guilt or despair.

Develop a Comeback Plan Toolbox

- **Evaluate your routine.** Check if your current grocery shopping, meal prep, and activity routines align with your goals.
- **Restart using food and activity trackers daily.** Record everything that you eat and drink. Be as accurate with portion size as possible.
- **Plan meals.** Start planning what you will eat at your next meal. Include your favorite lower-calorie, easy meals.
- **Seek support.** Call a friend or family member to discuss starting your comeback plan and recall what strategies worked for you in the past.
- **Return to weighing yourself regularly.** Weighing regularly is recommended for weight maintenance and weight loss. MOVE! recommends weighing at least once per week and perhaps more often if you are focusing on weight loss.

My Comeback Plan

What two steps can I take right away after a slip to get back on track?

What negative thinking might get in the way of putting my comeback plan in action?

What positive thoughts will I use to keep myself going with my plan?

How will I reward myself when I get back on track?

Module Summary

Recognizing a Slip

You are making positive lifelong changes! Slipping from your healthy lifestyle plans is a normal part of the process. Catch yourself when you slip or are about to slip. Stop what you are doing and take a look at the situation. What is happening? Why is the slip starting? Try to take yourself out of the situation so you won't be tempted.

Handling Slips

It is important to make a plan to get back to your healthy routine after a slip. Ignoring slips or not addressing them can cause you to have a setback, or to fall back into your old eating and inactivity behaviors.

Preventing a Setback

The good news is that a slip does not have to lead to a full setback. Use your Comeback Plan Toolbox to prevent a slip from becoming a setback.

- Evaluate your routine
- Restart using food and activity trackers daily
- Plan meals
- Seek support
- Return to weighing yourself regularly

“If I got off-track with my eating, I would ensure that I got back on track with my next meal.”

– Carolyn, lost 100 pounds, improved her health, and loves the way she looks and feels

Module To-Do

1. Consider how you can plan for slips and respond in a productive way to get back on track.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE THREE:

Getting Support



Who is part of my support system?

It helps to have a team of supportive people when you are trying to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. Your support team does not need to have the same nutrition and fitness goals as you.

People learn from and support one another as they pursue goals by sharing successes, struggles, and lessons learned. Not everyone has someone that can support them on this journey, and that is okay. Your MOVE! team can support you as well.



In This Module You Will:

1. Understand the importance of a support system
2. Identify people who influence your food and activity choices
3. Create a social support plan

What Helps Support You

You likely interact with people as you go about your day in the community, at VA, or online. The people you interact with may be considered part of your support team. Think about who currently supports you or who you can get to know better so you can support one another. Select the people and resources that support your healthy living goals:

Wearable trackers (like Fitbit®) with virtual challenge group

Social media group

Veteran Service Organization

MOVE! group member

Neighbor

Coworker

Friend

Family member

Professional counselor

Home health aide

Team Red, White, and Blue® (<https://teamrwb.org>)

Other:

Types of Social Support

There are three primary types of social support.

Emotional Support

Expressions of understanding, love, trust, and empathy

- Listen to frustrations
- Encourage you
- Recognize your efforts

Tangible Support

Acts of service or physical help

- Help with meal prep
- Shop for groceries
- Exercise or be active together

Informational Support

Advice, suggestions, information

- Share recipes
- Offer reminders and accountability
- Share experiences



Asking for Support

Everyone needs support. Asking for help can feel hard and uncomfortable. Remember that asking for support is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of strength and a natural part of life.

How to Ask for Help

1. **Take the risk of asking.** People generally like to see themselves as useful and often want to assist others when asked.
2. **Clarify what kind of support you need.** Think about what you need to help you decide who to ask and what you will ask for.
3. **Be thoughtful about who you ask.** Keep in mind you may need to speak to a few different people before you get the help you need.
4. **Be thoughtful about how you ask.** Be considerate of timing by asking them when a good time to talk will be. Avoid making your request sound like a demand. Show trust and respect.
5. **Be specific.** Explain the type of support needed and how their actions will help you. Provide details like when or where you need help.
6. **Help others.** Offer your time and talents to others. Be generous with your support. Supporting others can help you feel more connected.



“It is more than just a weight loss program. It is a great way to be part of a community. . .focused on healthy living goals with a dedicated MOVE! team to rely on.”

– David, lost 40 pounds and enjoys playing with his grandson

Barriers

What prevents you from asking for support?

Examples:

- Fear of being judged
- Perception that the other person is too busy
- Don't want them to provide too many reminders, like nagging
- They make upsetting or unhelpful comments
- Don't want to bother them

Write down your barriers:

Solutions

What are some ways to get past those barriers?

Examples:

- Find in-person or virtual support groups
- Ask if there is a good time to talk
- Be specific about what you are asking for
- Don't take anything personally, you can choose to follow advice or not
- Seek help from a professional

Write down your solutions:

My Support Plan

Now that you have thought about the type of support you would like and how you can ask, write down who can help you and what they can specifically do to support you.

My support person	How they can support me

Module Summary

Types of Social Support

It helps to have a team of supportive people when you are trying to maintain healthy lifestyle changes. There are three primary types of social support. Emotional support includes expressions of empathy, love, trust, and caring. Tangible support includes acts of service. Informational support consists of advice, suggestions, and facts.

Asking for Support

Asking for support is a natural part of life. Being thoughtful about who you ask and what you ask for can help the conversation be more purposeful. People have preferences when it comes to the support they like and don't like to receive. Identify the things that you find helpful and then discuss those with your support person or team.



Module To-Do

1. Consider who you can ask for support and how they can support you.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE FOUR:

Victories Beyond the Scale



Reflecting on Positive Changes

It can be motivating and uplifting to reflect on things that you have accomplished rather than feeling discouraged about what is left to work on. This is especially useful during times when it is hard to stick with healthier habits. As you maintain your weight, the excitement of seeing a lower number on the scale wears off. By thinking of positive outcomes that are not measured by a weight scale, you can find motivation within you to stay on your health and weight maintenance journey.



In This Module You Will:

1. Reflect on past positive changes and accomplishments
2. Learn eight tips for staying motivated
3. Be proud of maintaining healthy changes

10 Health Gains from Weight Loss

1. Helps you feel better
2. Reduces blood pressure
3. Reduces the risk of diabetes
4. Improves ability to move and be active
5. Lower the risk of heart disease, heart attacks, and stroke
6. Reduces stress on bones and joints
7. Reduces the risk of some types of cancer
8. Lowers the risk of heart failure
9. Lowers the risk of sleep apnea
10. Lowers the risk of gallbladder disease

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep

More energy

Fewer medicines

Better check-up

Less pain

Better blood pressure

Improved memory

Better mood

Better blood sugar

Clothes fit better

Healthier cooking

Better body image

Less stress

Greater confidence

Better relationship with food

More endurance

More organized

Better social life

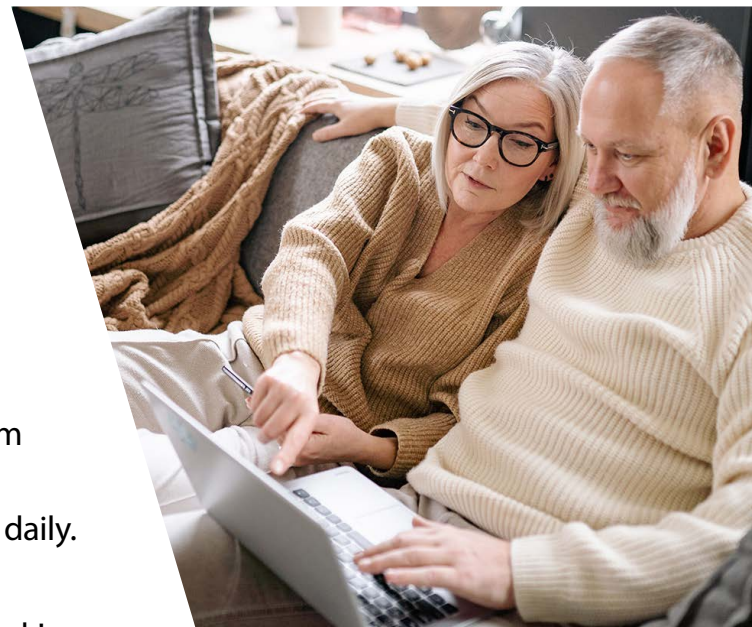
Other:

Staying Positive

There might be times when your health journey is more challenging. This is a good time to reach out to your support team and people who influence your choices. They may be able to provide encouragement and help you think of all that you have accomplished.

Strategies for Remembering the Good

- Talk to someone about the changes you have made.
- Write down positive experiences and reflect on them when you are not feeling motivated.
- Post your accomplishments where you will see them daily.
- Repeat positive affirmations to yourself daily.
- Give yourself permission to be proud of your hard work!



Staying Motivated

Use these eight tips to stay motivated.

1 Remember the benefits you have achieved and hope to achieve

- What did you hope to achieve when you first joined this program?
- What would you like to continue to work on?
- What benefits have you experienced up to this point?

2 Recognize your success

- What changes are you most proud of making?
- What changes most helped you reach your goals?

3 Keep visible signs of your progress

- Keep all the tools that you have learned close at hand.
- Post your progress where you will see it.
- Mark your milestones toward a certain goal.

4 Keep track

- Weigh yourself and record your weight at least once per week.
- Use your weight monitoring plan and threshold weight to know when to increase monitoring efforts.

5 Continue your eating and activity routine

- Write down meals and planned routines that will be good to continue.

6 Reward yourself. Develop ways to reward yourself when you meet each goal.

- Write down some rewards for reaching goals that are not food related.

7 Create some friendly competition.

- Set up a competition with friends or family to see who can meet their goal.

8 Lean on your MOVE! team and other Veterans to help you stay motivated.

- Talk about your experiences and give and receive support.

Module Summary

Reflecting on Positive Changes

Reflecting on the benefits and accomplishments from healthy choices can be motivating. Think about new and recent benefits that are not measured by a weight scale and what continues to motivate you. Post reminders or use other strategies to prompt positive thoughts while working through challenges. There are ways to deal with boredom or dips in motivation to stay on track with health goals. Give yourself permission to be proud of yourself!



“MOVE! can and will work if [you] are willing to give it a chance and stay positive! My life has changed in so many positive ways. I have more energy, feel less pain, and am no longer at high risk for diabetes.”

– Nikki, lost 65 pounds and enjoys being active with her grandchildren

Module To-Do

1. Consider a recent accomplishment that you can reflect on to maintain motivation to make healthy choices.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE FIVE:

Being Physically Active



How active should I be?

Physical activity helps people maintain a stable weight. An activity routine that includes cardio, strengthening, flexibility, and balance exercises improves fitness and overall health. Physical activity decreases the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, and some forms of cancer. Regular activity also improves blood pressure, cholesterol levels, bone mass, energy levels, mood, and brain function. Reducing sedentary time is a great way to start being more active!

You are more likely to maintain your current weight and less likely to experience regain when you are more active. To maintain weight loss, most people need 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity activity, like brisk walking or water aerobics, most days of the week.

Cardio activities are best to keep your weight stable. Strengthening exercises are important to keep muscles active and strong. Combining cardio and strengthening activities has been shown to result in greater lean body mass (more muscle) compared to cardio alone.



Physical activity is often the best predictor of weight maintenance after weight loss.

In This Module You Will:

1. Understand the importance of physical activity for weight maintenance
2. Brainstorm ways to overcome barriers to physical activity
3. Develop a long-term physical activity plan

Check-In: Using Skills for Weight Maintenance

Reflect on how you are using the four skills for weight maintenance in your life.

1. Reflecting on positive results

3. Asking for support

2. Planning for high-risk situations

4. Monitoring weight

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep

More energy

Fewer medicines

Better check-up

Less pain

Better blood pressure

Improved memory

Better mood

Better blood sugar

Clothes fit better

Healthier cooking

Better body image

Less stress

Greater confidence

Better relationship with food

More endurance

More organized

Better social life

Other:

How have you planned ahead to manage high risk situations? How did it go?

What support have you received? What tools have you used to help you with your goals?

What have you learned from your weight monitoring plan?

Physical Activity Guidelines

The *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* state that you can improve your health by being physically active. Keep track of your activity. Aim for 150 to 300 minutes or more per week. If you are able to be active more than 300 minutes per week, you will see more benefits to your health.

- **Moderate-intensity** activity makes you breathe a little harder and sweat a little. You should be able to carry on a conversation, but not sing. Examples include brisk walking, cycling, dancing, or gardening.
- **Vigorous-intensity** activity makes you sweat and breathe hard, and makes your heart beat fast. Examples include jogging, lap swimming, and aerobics classes.

Physical Activity Recommendations for Adults

- Move more. Any activity is better than no activity.
- Aim for 150-300 minutes or more of moderate-intensity activity, or 75-150 minutes or more of vigorous-intensity activity per week.
- Do strengthening activities at least 2 days per week.
- Spread out your activity. Aim to be active at least 5 days per week.



“Simple tasks like getting in and out of my car are so much easier [now]. I like hiking in the state park trails and seeing our country’s wonderful natural beauty.”

– John, lost 58 pounds and lowered his blood pressure

Busting Barriers

Now let's review some common barriers and potential solutions to being physically active. Which of these challenges do you think you might have? How might you overcome them? People who can anticipate challenges and are ready with a solution are more successful at maintaining change.

Barriers to physical activity	Solutions to overcome barriers
I don't have time.	<p>Schedule it on your calendar.</p> <p>Commit to 10 minutes. If you do extra, bonus!</p> <p>Break it up throughout the day.</p> <p>Remember that every step or minute counts.</p> <p>Include more movement into your daily activities, like dancing while doing housework.</p> <p>Use a fitness app to track your activity.</p>
There's bad weather.	<p>Walk around a mall or other indoor location.</p> <p>Use an online exercise video or get one from a local library.</p> <p>Use items around the house for strength training, like canned food or water bottles.</p> <p>Use active video games.</p> <p>Put on some music and move or dance.</p> <p>Wear appropriate clothing for the weather.</p>
It costs too much.	<p>Use a free exercise app, like Team Red, White, and Blue® or MOVE! Coach.</p> <p>Gym hop. If you live in an area with lots of options, switch your gym when the promotion ends and move to a gym that has a better promotion.</p> <p>Watch free YouTube walking or activity videos. Search terms: low-impact, chair yoga, tai chi, 2-mile walk, etc.</p> <p>Take classes through the parks and recreation department in your area.</p> <p>Attend a Be Active and MOVE! class at your VA.</p>

Barriers to physical activity	Solutions to overcome barriers
<p>Being active is painful or tiring.</p>	<p>Ask your health care team for some ways to get active that are right for you.</p> <p>Be active at the time of day when you have the most energy.</p> <p>Find activities that are easy on your body, like swimming or yoga.</p> <p>Focus on what you can do. You may not be able to run but you may be able to walk.</p> <p>Space out activities so you don't overdo it.</p> <p>Practice relaxation and stretching.</p>
<p>I don't feel safe exercising.</p>	<p>Ask someone you know to be your exercise buddy.</p> <p>Be active in public places and avoid isolated or poorly lit areas.</p> <p>Dress to be seen. Wear bright colors and reflective materials that are appropriate for the weather.</p> <p>Carry identification and emergency contact information with you.</p> <p>Let someone know where you will be going and when you will be back. Take a familiar route.</p> <p>Bring your phone with you.</p> <p>Drink water before, during, and after exercise.</p> <p>Listen to your body. Stop if you feel chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness, or nauseous.</p>
<p>Write your own:</p>	

Enjoying Physical Activity

Life has roadblocks that can get in the way of reaching goals and keeping healthy habits. Maintaining physical activity habits can be easier if you change how you think about them. Positive self-talk can empower you to maintain a physical activity routine for the long term.

The idea is to start thinking about physical activity the way you want it to be before it is that way. Imagine physical activity as **fun**. Imagine it as a **celebration** of what your body can do! Imagine that you **enjoy** moving your body!

Think about how you would design your ideal physical activity routine.

What would that look like?

What would that feel like?

What kinds of things might you say to yourself?

Use positive self-talk and reflection to help you maintain your motivation and enjoy being physically active.

Setting Long-Term Physical Activity Goals

After brainstorming possible barriers and solutions to being physically active, you are ready to set some long-term physical activity goals. Think through this in three steps. First, think about what your long-term goal is. Then consider your shorter-term SMART goal to help you get closer to your long-term goal. Lastly, reflect on what you will need to do to achieve these goals.

Example 1

- **Long-term goal:** I will regularly meet the recommendation of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity a week.
- **SMART goal:** I will cycle for 15 minutes, 3 days per week, and record it using my activity tracker.
- **I will need:** A bicycle, tricycle, exercise bike, pedal exerciser, or arm bike, and a helmet if cycling outside

Example 2

- **Long-term goal:** I will regularly meet the recommendation to do strengthening activities 2 days per week.
- **SMART goal:** I will participate in a virtual strengthening class on Mondays and Wednesdays through the parks and recreation department.
- **I will need:** Class registration, schedule the class on my calendar, dumbbells or household items like canned goods

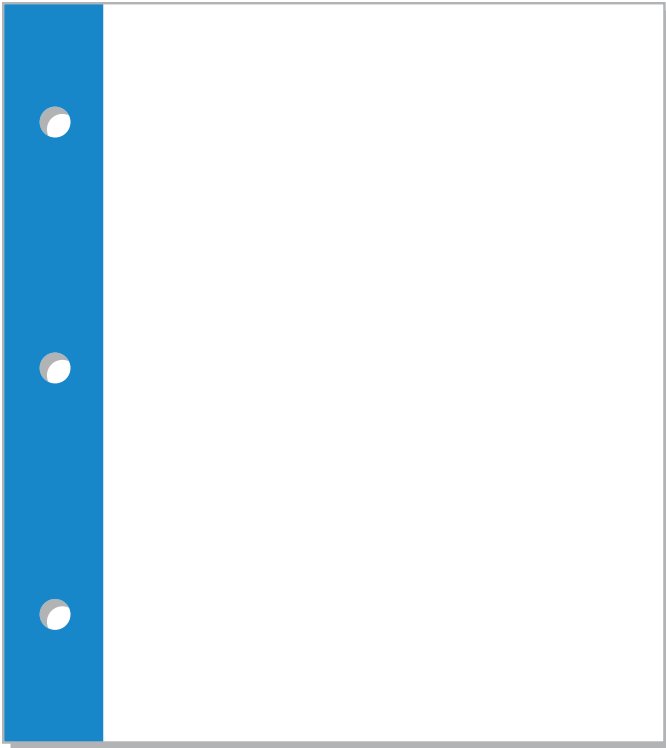
Example 3

- **Long-term goal:** I will hike in a national park.
- **SMART goal:** On 2 mornings per week, I will walk for 20 minutes outside, and on 2 additional days I will use the elliptical for 10 minutes. I will record my activity on my calendar.
- **I will need:** Hiking boots or shoes, a water bottle, calendar

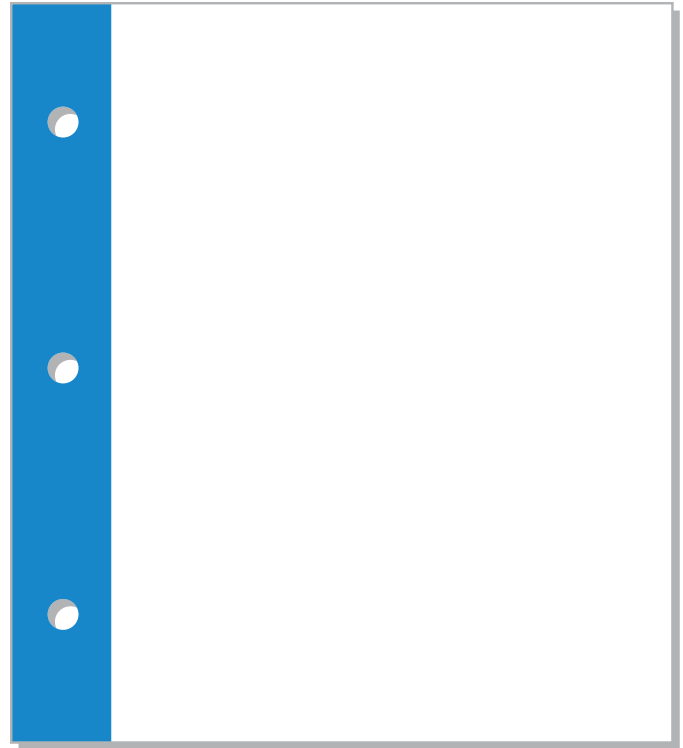


My Physical Activity Plan

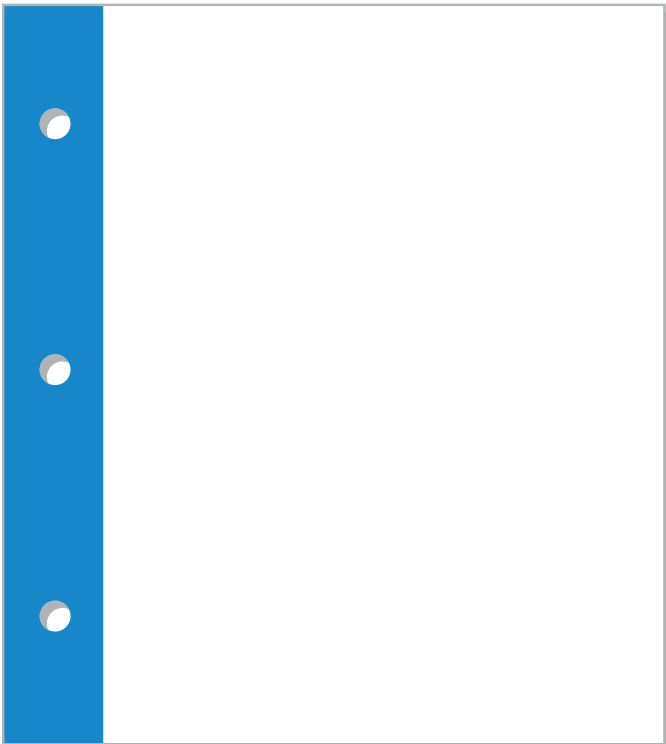
Long-term goal:



SMART goal:



I will need:



Remember to Make Your Goals SMART

Specific: What will you do?

Measurable: How will you know you are making progress?

Action-Oriented: What actions will you take to reach the goal?

Realistic: Is the goal doable for you?

Time-based: When will you start?
When will you review your goal to see if it still makes sense for you?

Module Summary

Physical Activity for Weight Maintenance

Physical activity is often the best predictor of weight maintenance after weight loss. Combining cardio and strengthening activities has been shown to result in greater lean body mass (more muscle) compared to cardio alone.

Overcoming Barriers to Physical Activity

Life has roadblocks that can get in the way of reaching goals and keeping healthy habits. Positive self-talk can be used to empower you to be physically active. Imagine it as a celebration of what your body can do!

Setting Long-Term Physical Activity Goals

People who can anticipate challenges and are ready with a solution are more successful at maintaining change. Brainstorming possible barriers and solutions to being physically active can assist you in setting achievable long-term physical activity goals. Think about the long-term goal you would like to accomplish. Then set a short-term SMART goal for how you can begin taking action. Finally, consider what you will need to reach your goal.



Module To-Do

1. Consider your current physical activity. How will you maintain or gradually increase your activity on a daily or weekly basis?
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE SIX:

Social Experiences and Weight Bias



What is weight bias?

Your experiences, relationships, and thoughts and feelings about yourself may be influenced by the perceptions of others.

Weight bias means having negative attitudes about a person's body size or weight. These negative attitudes can show up as stereotypes and may result in stigma. Weight stigma can show up as teasing, bullying, discrimination, and other forms of unfair treatment. Experiencing weight bias and stigma can negatively impact emotional and physical health. More than 40 percent of US adults across a range of body sizes report experiencing weight discrimination at some point in their life.



“Tough love” does not work.

In This Module You Will:

1. Be introduced to the concepts of weight bias and stigma
2. Learn about weight bias internalization
3. Discuss causes and consequences of internalization
4. Review ways to counteract or combat internalization

Check-In: Using Skills for Weight Maintenance

Reflect on how you are using the four skills for weight maintenance in your life.

- 1. Reflecting on positive results
- 2. Planning for high-risk situations
- 3. Asking for support
- 4. Monitoring weight

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep	More energy	Fewer medicines
Better check-up	Less pain	Better blood pressure
Improved memory	Better mood	Better blood sugar
Clothes fit better	Healthier cooking	Better body image
Less stress	Greater confidence	Better relationship with food
More endurance	More organized	Better social life

Other:

How have you planned ahead to manage high risk situations? How did it go?

What support have you received? What tools have you used to help you with your goals?

What have you learned from your weight monitoring plan?

Weight Stigma Exists in Many Areas of Life



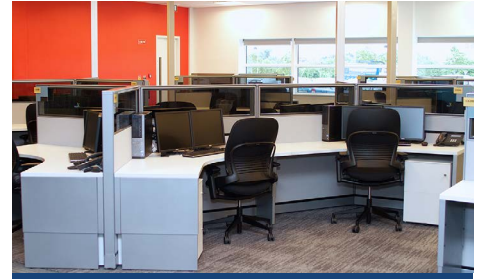
Social Relationships

- Teasing
- Bullying
- Exclusion
- Shaming



Educational Settings

- Lower expectations
- Worse academic outcomes
- Stereotyping by teachers



Employment

- Hiring inequalities
- Reduced salaries
- Job loss
- Stigma from co-workers



Healthcare Settings

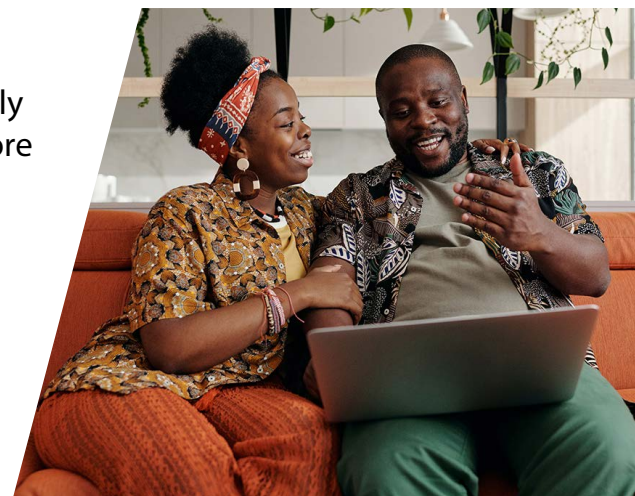
- Bias from providers
- Lower quality of care
- Judgment or blame



Mass Media

- Stereotypical portrayals in news and entertainment media, TV, films, and social media

Weight bias is a deeply rooted prejudice in society. This is partly because of social and cultural ideals that connect thinness to core values such as hard work and individualism. The implication is that people in larger bodies lack willpower and discipline. However, research shows this is not the case. Weight and energy balance are very complex with factors that can and cannot be controlled.



Internalization of Weight Bias

When people are exposed to weight bias over time, they can start to believe the negative external judgements and apply them to themselves. This is called weight bias internalization (also known as self-directed stigma). When a person applies negative stereotypes to themselves (such as being lazy or lacking willpower), it lowers their confidence and motivation to make healthy choices.

Weight is Stigmatized Throughout Life

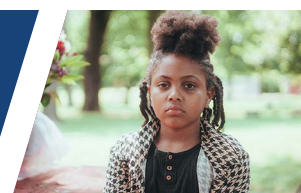
Age 3-5

Negative weight stereotypes begin in preschool.



Youth

Stereotypes worsen, leading to teasing and bullying.



Adolescence

Bullying and exclusion occur from multiple sources. This causes harm to emotional, social, and physical health.



Adulthood

Weight stigma is institutionalized as discrimination in:

- Employment
- Health care
- Education



Mid/Late Adulthood

Weight stigma and discrimination remain present.



Weight stigma can lead to many negative consequences. People who experience weight stigma may also cope with it in ways that do not support their overall health.

Describe a time when you experienced weight bias and the impact it had on you.

Consequences of Weight Stigma

People who experience weight stigma may also experience the following:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Higher body weight
- Low self-esteem
- Poor body image
- Substance use
- Thoughts of suicide
- Increased heart and hormonal health risks
- Poor quality of life
- Disordered eating behaviors – bingeing, emotional eating, or purging
- Avoidance of physical activity
- Stopping or giving up weight management efforts

Counteracting Weight Bias Internalization

You can combat or counteract negative thoughts about yourself and others.

Strategies	Example
Challenge negative thoughts	When you become aware that you are being hard on yourself, stop and practice the countering unhelpful thoughts skills that you learned in Module 6 of the MOVE! Veteran Workbook.
Write down your thoughts	Transfer your negative thoughts out of your head and into a journal. Write about the situation, what you are thinking or telling yourself, and name your feelings about it.
Give self-affirmations	Remind yourself of things you like about yourself or be encouraging. Post notes on your mirror or find other reminder methods that work for you.
Focus on what is important	Focus on what you value in life. What do you live for? What is most important to you?
Talk to others with shared experiences	Talk with your MOVE! team members and Veterans.
Set specific goals	Set specific, achievable goals can boost confidence in your ability to accomplish health behaviors. Celebrate when you reach a goal!
Get involved	Learn more about weight bias and share information with those around you.

Which strategy from the table would you consider using to counteract weight bias internalization?

Module Summary

Weight Bias and Bias Internalization

Weight bias is defined as negatively prejudging individuals due to their size. This typically involves stereotyping people with higher weights. Weight bias has been documented in many settings like work, school, and in health care. When individuals believe negative stereotypes, apply them to themselves, and devalue themselves due to their weight, this is called weight bias internalization.

Combating Bias Internalization

When responding to feeling judged due to weight, consider how you can rethink unhelpful thoughts and use helpful strategies to cope.



Module To-Do

1. Notice instances of weight bias and practice catching and counteracting self-critical thoughts.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE SEVEN:

Having an Active Lifestyle



How can I move more?

The human body was designed for movement, but time spent being sedentary, or inactive, is rising. Americans spend an estimated six to eight hours a day engaged in sedentary behavior. This includes sitting, driving, reading, watching TV, and using a computer. People 60 years and older are often more sedentary, spending up to eight or nine hours per day inactive.

Research shows that bursts of exercise may not undo the risk of a sedentary lifestyle. Even people who exercise regularly could be at increased risk for heart disease and stroke if they spend lots of time being inactive.



High body weight combined with an inactive lifestyle can contribute to the risk of developing:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Cancer
- Muscle and back problems
- Blood clots
- Dementia
- Anxiety

It is important to move more throughout the day! Being inactive affects both the body and the mind.

In this module, you will:

1. Understand the importance of reducing sedentary time
2. Strategize how to move more throughout the day
3. Set a new SMART goal to increase lifestyle activity

Check-In: Using Skills for Weight Maintenance

Reflect on how you are using the four skills for weight maintenance in your life.

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring weight

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep	More energy	Fewer medicines
Better check-up	Less pain	Better blood pressure
Improved memory	Better mood	Better blood sugar
Clothes fit better	Healthier cooking	Better body image
Less stress	Greater confidence	Better relationship with food
More endurance	More organized	Better social life

Other:

How have you planned ahead to manage high risk situations? How did it go?

What support have you received? What tools have you used to help you with your goals?

What have you learned from your weight monitoring plan?

Types of Lifestyle Activity

Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. Lifestyle activity is one of the three types of physical activity – lifestyle, programmed, and work activity - that contribute to overall activity. Any of these types of activity can help you meet your physical activity goals, reduce boredom, and keep your mind and body challenged.

Lifestyle Activities

Lifestyle activities are your active moments throughout the day. They include the things you do during your daily routine. Try to increase your active moments gradually each day.

Here are some examples of lifestyle activities that can help break up sedentary time.

Check off the things you are already doing and the things you want to start doing.

Wash the car by hand

Vacuum

Dance

Chop or split wood

Push mow the yard

Weed the garden

Take extra laps when you are at the store

Ride a bicycle for transportation

Move briskly when you do errands

Replace Sunday drives with Sunday workouts

Play actively with your children, grandchildren, or pets

Walk or wheel whenever you can: for example, after dinner, with the dog, or when golfing

Get off the bus one stop early and walk or use your wheelchair the rest of the way



Why should I move more during the day?

Ways to Move

If you are already physically active, great! It is also important to take breaks from sedentary time.

- **Set a timer.** Use your phone, watch, or activity tracker to alert you every 30 minutes. Take a break, move around, or go get a drink of water.
- **Stand up.** If possible, use a desk that can be adjusted to various heights and stand up during work. If standing is a challenge, do some seated exercises at regular intervals.
- **Take the long way.** Avoid using an elevator if possible. Use the stairs up or down if you are able. Take a longer path to your destination.
- **Be physically active daily.** Choose from cardio, strengthening, stretching, and flexibility activities every day to keep you healthy.
- **Stay active at home.**
 - » When watching TV, walk, lift dumbbells, or use resistance bands every few minutes or during commercials to add active moments to your day.
 - » Work in the garden to grow some of your own vegetables.
 - » Complete one house cleaning task every day.
 - » Stand while cooking your own meals.
 - » Walk, stand, or push the wheels of a wheelchair if you have one while on the phone.
 - » Look back at the sample physical activity plans in Module 9 of the MOVE! Veteran Workbook.
 - » Follow along with Get Fit For Life Videos in the MOVE! Video Gallery at www.move.va.gov.

Specifically, how will you reduce your sedentary time over the next few weeks? Write your SMART goal here:

How will you remember to do more lifestyle activities during the day?

Who can support you?

Studies show that people who consistently get up to move as little as 2 minutes after 30 minutes of inactivity live longer.

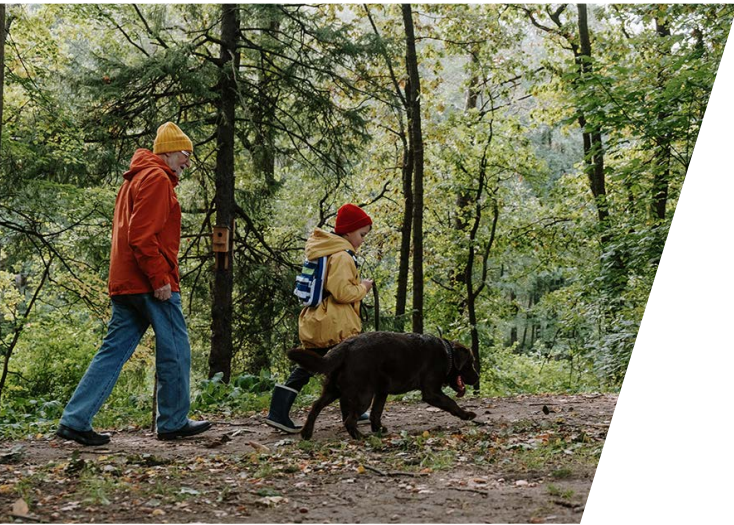
Module Summary

Move More

Prolonged sedentary time can be bad for the heart and blood vessels regardless of how much planned physical activity you get. Even people who exercise regularly benefit from breaking up periods of inactivity with movement.

Lifestyle Activities

Lifestyle activities can improve metabolism and health. If you are already physically active, that is the most important thing. But it is good to incorporate breaks from sedentary time too.



“My health has dramatically improved, and I am looking forward to a long and healthy independent life of adventure.”

– Dale, lost 45 pounds and enjoys hunting, fishing, and hiking

Module To-Do

1. Consider your current lifestyle activities. How will you break up sedentary periods to move more throughout the day?
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE EIGHT:

Communicating About Weight Bias



How can I respond to weight bias?

A previous module introduced the concepts of weight bias and responding to self-talk. This module will provide tips on how to respond to negative comments from others. Everyone will have a preference for how they respond depending on the situation, relationship with the person, and their own personality. Consider the pros and cons for different ways of responding and choose the most effective method for you.



In This Module You Will:

1. Discuss pros and cons of different ways of responding to weight bias
2. Practice using an effective communication tool
3. Recall the skills for weight maintenance

Check-In: Using Skills for Weight Maintenance

Reflect on how you are using the four skills for weight maintenance in your life.

- 1. Reflecting on positive results
- 2. Planning for high-risk situations
- 3. Asking for support
- 4. Monitoring weight

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep	More energy	Fewer medicines
Better check-up	Less pain	Better blood pressure
Improved memory	Better mood	Better blood sugar
Clothes fit better	Healthier cooking	Better body image
Less stress	Greater confidence	Better relationship with food
More endurance	More organized	Better social life

Other:

How have you planned ahead to manage high risk situations? How did it go?

What support have you received? What tools have you used to help you with your goals?

What have you learned from your weight monitoring plan?

Responding to Weight Bias

When you hear someone say a biased statement, you can respond in different ways. The goal of the conversation may differ depending on who you are speaking with. The three main goals could be to:

1. Have the person change their behavior;
2. Improve or maintain the relationship; and/or
3. Maintain or increase your own self-respect.

Achieving all three goals is ideal, but that will not always be possible. You may change your words or how you say them based on which goal is most important to you.

Scenario

Tonight, you are attending a party for a friend and were asked to bring a tray of cookies for dessert. A family member stops by to visit before you leave and sees the cookie tray on the counter.

Family Member: Are you sure you should have all those cookies? It doesn't look like you need to be eating any more sweets.

Response 1: Why don't you mind your own business!

What are the pros of this response?

What are the cons of this response?

Response 2: Yeah, you're probably right.

What are the pros of this response?

What are the cons of this response?

Response 3: These cookies are for a party. But even if they were for me, I ask that you please don't comment about my food choices, and I won't comment about yours.

What are the pros of this response?

What are the cons of this response?

Response 3 may be the most effective because it is an example of being assertive and standing up for oneself without being overly aggressive. Effective means doing what works. It may be fair for someone to want to yell at the person for making a critical comment but doing so won't likely lead the person to change their behavior.

Communicating Clearly

The **DEAR** acronym is a strategy for communicating effectively. Using this skill, you can express your needs and wants in a way that is respectful to yourself and others, increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes.

Scenario

Someone's family member consistently makes negative comments about weight.

Describe the situation and the other person's behavior. Stick to the facts.

Yesterday, at dinner, you asked me in front of the whole family why I haven't been able to lose weight. You said, "You're smart, you just need to put your mind to it." You make these kinds of comments about my weight almost every time I see you.

Express how the behavior affected you. Convey how it made you feel.

I felt embarrassed and frustrated. I understand that you may be concerned about my weight. However, when I hear these comments, I lose hope that I can manage my weight, and I feel anxious about seeing you.

Assert your request. Ask for the person to change their behavior. Be specific.

Would you please stop making comments about my weight?

Reinforce by explaining how changing this behavior will benefit them.

It would mean a lot to me if you stopped commenting on my weight. I will want to come visit you more often if I don't have to worry about hearing these comments.

DEAR Communication Tool

Choose a specific communication challenge you are dealing with, or that you have dealt with in the past. You may have experienced people commenting to you about your own body or making comments about someone else's body. Answer the prompt for each step to create a plan for communicating about the issue.

Describe: What are the facts of the situation? Do not include opinions or interpretations.

Express: Write an "I" statement to express your feelings: "I feel [emotion] when [description]."

Assert: How will you tell someone what you need? Respond with the specific language you will use.

Reinforce: How will the other person benefit from responding well to you?

Weight Bias in Health Care

Negative attitudes and discrimination toward people with higher body weights are present in many areas of life, including health care.

Patients with higher weight often report:

- Lower trust in providers
- Reluctancy to discuss weight
- Belief that providers lack empathy
- Belief that they won't be taken seriously
- Weight is blamed for unrelated medical problems
- Switching providers
- Avoiding health care

When responding to feeling judged, consider how you can respond. Practice using the DEAR communication tool.



DEAR Communication Tool

Describe: What are the facts of the situation? Do not include opinions or interpretations.

Express: Write an "I" statement to express your feelings: "I feel [emotion] when [description]."

Assert: How will you tell someone what you need? Respond with the specific language you will use.

Reinforce: How will the other person benefit from responding well to you?

Module Summary

Responding to Weight Bias

Responding to negative comments and criticism from others is challenging. Using assertive communications will help. Consider the pros and cons for different ways of responding and choose the most effective method for you.

Effective Communication

DEAR is a communication tool that can be used in many situations, including healthcare settings, to Describe the facts, Express how you feel, Assert what you need, and Reinforce how the other person may benefit from responding well to your ask.



Module To-Do

1. Plan for a possible encounter with weight bias and draft a script with the DEAR format.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE NINE:

Sustaining Progress



What skills are important for weight maintenance?

You've learned about the four skills for weight maintenance in previous MOVE! Maintenance sessions. It is important to regularly use these skills.

It is normal to feel more confident with one skill and less confident with another skill. Take time to identify how you feel about using each one and practice using them.

This session will help you continue gaining confidence with the first two skills: reflecting on the positive and planning for high-risk situations.



Skills for Weight Maintenance

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring your weight

In This Module You Will:

1. Identify positive outcomes following lifestyle changes
2. Review high-risk situations
3. Make a plan for how to avoid slips

Focusing on Positive Outcomes

People who are satisfied with their progress are more likely to continue healthy habits that support weight maintenance. Think about what you are satisfied with and what has helped you feel better.

Check off your areas of satisfaction.

Better sleep

More energy

Fewer medicines

Better check-up

Less pain

Better blood pressure

Improved memory

Better mood

Better blood sugar

Clothes fit better

Healthier cooking

Better body image

Less stress

Greater confidence

Better relationship with food

More endurance

More organized

Better social life

Other:

It is important to reflect routinely on these victories beyond the scale. This will make it easier to recall them on the days and weeks when it feels challenging to continue healthier habits.

Right now, the outcomes from my healthy lifestyle that give me greatest satisfaction are:

They give me the greatest satisfaction because:

Aim for progress, not perfection.

Reviewing High-Risk Situations

High-risk situations can be circumstances or day-to-day events like work stress, caregiving, or juggling family dynamics. They can be specific events, like vacation, social gatherings, or holidays. What they have in common is that they are situations or stressors that may make it hard to eat wisely and be physically active.

Think back to the most recent time when you struggled to stick with a **healthy eating plan**.

Where were you?

How did your plan compare with what actually happened?

How can you adjust your plan for that situation or a similar one in the future?

Think back to the most recent time when you struggled to stick with your **physical activity plan**.

Where were you?

How did your plan compare with what actually happened?

How can you adjust your plan for that situation or a similar one in the future?



Preventing Slips

Slips are more likely to occur in high-risk situations. You may regularly encounter situations that lead to a slip back into old eating or inactive behaviors. It is important to learn from each experience and come up with a plan for dealing with them in the future. See the example below and make several plans for different situations you are likely to encounter in the next few weeks.

Slip Prevention Plan Examples:

If I am going to a party then I will:

eat a healthy meal before I leave my house and drink sparkling water with lime at the party.

If I have to work late then I will:

walk during my lunch break since I won't get to work out that evening.



My Slip Prevention Plan:

If:

then I will:

If:

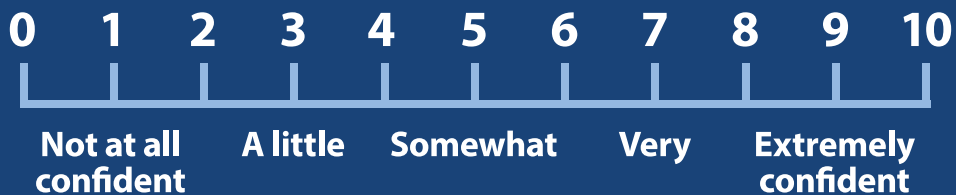
then I will:

If:

then I will:

Measuring Confidence

Choose one of your slip prevention plans. On a scale of 0 to 10, how confident are you about this plan?



Your confidence level:

The more confidence you have about making a change, the more successful you will be.

Reflections

Consider your number. Why isn't it a lower number? What would help you feel more confident?

What did you do in the past to prevent slips?

Think about helpful strategies from the past. How can you use them to accomplish what you want to do now?



Module Summary

Focusing on Positive Outcomes

Regularly reflect on the benefits you receive from eating wisely and being physically active. Doing this will help you recall them more easily on the days and weeks when life gets challenging and when it feels hard to continue healthier habits.

High-Risk Situations and Slips

High-risk situations can be circumstances or day-to-day events that present challenges to eating wisely and being physically active. Slips occur anytime a person makes a choice that doesn't fit into their plan or support their health goals. Slips are a normal part of maintaining healthy behaviors and they are more likely to occur in high-risk situations. Having a plan for dealing with them ahead of time will help you maintain your progress.



“I knew I had to set my mind and way of thinking to maintain better health...a better life and a longer life with mobility to do the things I want to do when I am older.”

– Steve, lost 35 pounds and has fun riding his bike

Module To-Do

1. Consider how you can use your experience with recent high-risk situations and slips to make a plan to manage similar situations in the future.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

MODULE TEN:

Maintenance Support



How do I get and use support?

You're now familiar with the four skills for weight maintenance that have been reviewed in previous MOVE! Maintenance sessions. It is important to regularly use these skills. You will continue to practice them in this module.

This session will focus on the last two skills. You will consider how you can ask for and use support from others. You will also evaluate your monitoring plan and threshold weight and make changes if appropriate.



Skills for Weight Maintenance

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring your weight

In This Module You Will:

1. Reflect on your support team member(s) and ways they help
2. Review your weight monitoring plan and threshold weight

Social Support

People in your life can provide support by giving ideas or encouragement as well as doing certain tasks. Different people like different types of support. To help you maintain your weight and healthy habits, think about who can support you and how.

Example:

The person who can support me most in this journey right now is: my sister.

To be supportive, they can: take walks with me; not bring me homemade cookies; tell me I'm doing a good job.

Your Support

The person who can support me most in this journey right now is:

To be supportive, they can:



Your MOVE! team is here to support you!



Busting Barriers

Let's review some common barriers and potential solutions to asking for support. Which of these challenges do you think you might have? How might you overcome them? People who can anticipate challenges and are ready with a solution are more successful.

Even if the other person cannot help, they are more likely to reply with kindness when you use the following strategies. They also might suggest different ways of getting assistance or other people to ask.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
I don't know what to say.	Determine what it is you need ahead of time and be specific with your request.
It will be awkward.	Before you talk to them, write down or practice what you need to say so that you can say it clearly.
It's been too long since I've talked to them.	Approach them with kindness and honesty.
They are probably busy.	Avoid asking for help at the last minute or at odd times of the day. Remember that people generally like to see themselves as useful and are often willing to take action when asked.
I don't want them to feel obligated.	Offer generosity with your time and talents to help others.
I'm the only one responsible for my health.	Remember that we all have connections to other people. Keep in mind that strengthening social connections has been shown to help with mental health.

Monitoring Progress

People who weigh themselves regularly are more likely to maintain their weight than those who do not. Weighing regularly allows you to notice when your weight increases and assess the situation before larger amounts of weight change. You want to weigh often enough so you can get back on track if you notice a slip, but not so frequently that it becomes a burden. Weighing yourself weekly is recommended, but it is most important to find a frequency that works for you.

Set a Threshold

A threshold weight is a number you choose that signals your weight may be increasing. Keeping in mind that it is normal for body weight to have some fluctuation, a threshold weight may be about five pounds or more above your current weight. For accurate weight tracking, try to weigh yourself after waking up and using the bathroom and before you eat or drink.

If you notice your weight is at or above the threshold, evaluate what is different about your activity level and eating habits without judgment. Consider making SMART goals to address areas of change. You may return to using self-management tools, like measuring food portions and recording in your Food & Physical Activity Tracker or another tracking method.

Monitoring Plan Example

I will keep track of my weight with the following plan:

Measurement Method:	I will use my bathroom scale.
Frequency:	I will measure on Monday mornings.
Recording Method:	I will write down the weight on my calendar.
Threshold Weight:	My current weight is: 270 lbs . If I reach the threshold weight of 275 lbs , then I will set new nutrition and physical activity goals.



My Weight Monitoring Plan

Method:

Frequency:

Current Weight:

Threshold Weight:

When setting new goals, remember to make them **SMART**.

Specific: What will you do?

Measurable: How will you know you are making progress?

Action-Oriented: What actions will you take to reach the goal?

Realistic: Is the goal doable for you?

Time-based: When will you start? When will you review your goal to see if it still makes sense for you?

Example: I will eat 1 cup of vegetables at dinner 4 days this week.

Example: I will march in place during commercials while watching the evening news every weekday this week.



Continuing Your Health Journey

Keep it up! You have been setting goals and creating plans to stay on your health journey. Recall the four important skills for maintaining weight.

1. **Reflect on positive results.** Recall your victories beyond the scale.
2. **Plan for high-risk situations.** Recognize slips early and use your comeback plan.
3. **Ask for support.** Get encouragement from those around you.
4. **Monitor weight.** Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.

Continue to use these skills to make healthy food and activity choices for long-term weight maintenance. Remember that weight management requires a lifelong commitment, lifestyle change, and long-term follow-up with your healthcare team.

What programs, tools, and resources will you use to continue working on managing your health and weight?

Set some goals to work on over the next few months to maintain your progress.

Goal 1:

Goal 2:



Module Summary

Using Your Support Team

Support is important for everyone. What people find supportive may vary.

It can feel challenging to ask for support. There are strategies that can be used to feel more comfortable with that discussion.

Monitoring Weight

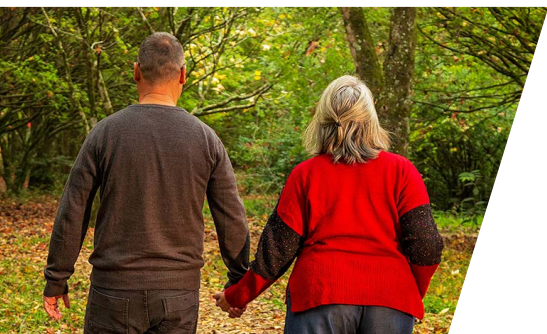
Weighing yourself regularly is important because it can help you notice when your weight may be increasing. Make a plan for how often you will weigh. Set a threshold weight so you know when you may need to make new SMART goals for healthy eating and physical activity.

Continuing Your Health Journey

Continue using the four skills for successful weight maintenance:

1. Reflecting on positive results
2. Planning for high-risk situations
3. Asking for support
4. Monitoring weight.

Aim for 150-300 minutes or more of activity per week with strengthening activities at least 2 days a week. Review the modules in this booklet when you need a refresher. Celebrate and be proud of the changes and progress you've made!



“If I get in a plateau, I review my MOVE! book and my app to stay on track.”

– Anne, lost 25 pounds and enjoys daily walks

Module To-Do

1. Consider how you are getting support and if you would like to make any changes.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.
3. Set 1 or 2 goals to help you continue using the skills for weight maintenance.

Travel and Special Occasions Module



How can I make healthy choices when I'm away from home?

Situations that interrupt your normal routine - like traveling, holidays, or other special occasions - may cause you to slip in your eating or activity patterns. They are often filled with time-honored traditions that include favorite meals and foods. Think of small changes that you can make to create healthier meals and to be active on these days.



In This Module You Will:

1. Identify travel and holiday plans that may be high-risk situations
2. Consider ways to manage holiday stress
3. Make a plan to cope with high-risk situations that may trigger deviations in eating and activity plans

Check-In: Using Skills for Weight Maintenance

Reflect on how you are using the four skills for weight maintenance in your life.

- 1. Reflecting on positive results
- 2. Planning for high-risk situations
- 3. Asking for support
- 4. Monitoring weight

What benefits have you noticed from your efforts?

Better sleep	More energy	Fewer medicines
Better check-up	Less pain	Better blood pressure
Improved memory	Better mood	Better blood sugar
Clothes fit better	Healthier cooking	Better body image
Less stress	Greater confidence	Better relationship with food
More endurance	More organized	Better social life

Other:

How have you planned ahead to manage high risk situations? How did it go?

What support have you received? What tools have you used to help you with your goals?

What have you learned from your weight monitoring plan?

Trips Away from Home

Going on vacation while you are trying to work on your health can seem like a challenge. You can enjoy your trip while making healthy choices.

Pack a cooler: For road trips, take homemade sandwiches or wraps to limit fast food.

Snack smart: Keep low-calorie snacks handy, like pretzels and fruit. Choose wisely from gas station options, like single servings of nuts, baked chips, and granola bars.

Plan for special meals: Think ahead about how often you will include special foods.

Stay hydrated: Bring a refillable water bottle. Set a limit for the number of sweetened and alcoholic drinks you will have.

Keep moving: Plan walking breaks at rest stops. At your destination, walk to explore the area or use the gym if available. You can also stretch or do yoga in your room.

Enjoy your experience: Focus on enjoying the environment and people you are with.

Which tips will you use the next time you are away from home?



Healthy Holidays

Holidays are typically filled with special foods that are only available during that time of year. It can be tempting to eat more of these items because they are not always around. Additionally, holidays can be stressful for many people, and holiday foods may be connected with happy memories. Both of those situations can trigger eating as an emotional response. Recognizing these emotions can help you make a plan for enjoying holiday foods while balancing your health and weight maintenance goals.



Here are some tips to help you enjoy the festivities while maintaining your overall wellness.



Be prepared: Avoid skipping meals. Stick to your regular meal and snack times as close as possible to manage hunger.



Stay hydrated: Keep a glass in your hand with water or another calorie-free drink.



Survey the buffet: Ask about the menu ahead of time or look at all your options before the meal. Knowing all the possible choices will help you decide which items to take and which ones you can pass on.



Bring a dish to share: Bring a vegetable dish or a favorite recipe made with reduced-calorie ingredients.



Be selective: Take a portion of the foods that you love and pass by items that you don't enjoy as much or that are available throughout the year.



Do a double check: Check your plate portions and aim to fill $\frac{1}{2}$ the plate with fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ with protein, and $\frac{1}{4}$ with starchy foods. Make a plan for how many plates of food you will have, like one salad plate and one dinner plate.



Out of sight, out of mind: Sit with your back to the buffet and once you are done eating, leave the kitchen or dining room.



Keep fresh: Chew gum or have a mint when you are done eating.



Limit leftovers: Try to prepare the proper portion sizes to avoid food waste and ask others to take any leftovers home.



Don't give up: If you have a slip, get back on track as soon as you can.

Enjoy gatherings by making the event about connecting with others with less emphasis on the food. Eat slowly and take time to enjoy your meal along with those around you. Plan a walk or a game after the meal to stay moving.

How can you let others know about your healthy holiday plans?

Managing Holiday Stress

There tends to be a few common factors that bring about anxiety and stress around the holidays. Finances, family, crowded stores, and travel can be especially stressful. Alternatively, limited or strained family or social connections can cause stress and add to feelings of loneliness and isolation.

The first steps to coping with stress are to recognize how you perceive the stressors and manage your expectations. This may not reduce or change sources of stress, but once you know the source of stress, you can make a plan for coping with the stressor. It is also important to realize that unexpected situations can arise too. You may try one or all these tips to manage stress around holidays.

Experience the emotions: Allow yourself to acknowledge and express your emotions.

Connect with others: If the holidays bring feelings of loneliness, try attending community activities or volunteering.

It is okay to say “no”: Setting boundaries on your time allows you to avoid overcommitment.

Keep a budget: Develop a holiday budget for food and gifts.

Make a plan: Determine ahead of time on which specific days you will complete certain tasks and activities.

Take time for self-care: Try to stay on your normal sleep schedule, drink water, monitor eating habits, and get regular exercise.

Try relaxation strategies: Set aside time alone to unwind with an activity just for you, like taking a walk, listening to music, practicing deep breathing, meditation, or yoga.

Talk to a professional if needed: Even with our best efforts we can become overwhelmed. You might find yourself experiencing changes in mood. If these feelings don't go away, consult with your health care team. If you are in crisis, dial 988 and Press 1 or Text 838255 to reach the Veterans Crisis Line.

Consider an upcoming holiday. How can you use one of these tips to help manage stress that comes with that holiday?

Everyone experiences stress. How you respond to stress can affect how you feel.

Plan for High-Risk Situations

To eat wisely away from home, it is important to know yourself and what situations are challenging for you. Once you identify these situations, you can plan ahead for how you will deal with them.

Making a Personal Plan

Think about your high-risk situations and how you normally respond to them. Then make a plan to better cope with these situations in the future. Write down your plan.



Your High-Risk Situations	Your Usual Response	A Better Way to Respond



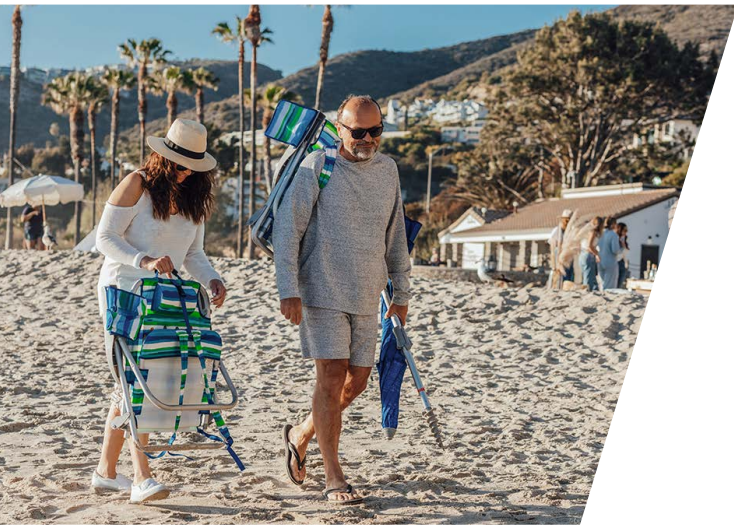
Module Summary

Plan for Travel and Holidays

You can apply what you already know about planning for high-risk situations to specific events like vacations and holidays. To eat away from home successfully, it is important to know yourself and what situations are tempting for you. Once you identify these situations, you can plan ahead for how you will deal with them.

Having Healthy Holidays

It can be tempting to eat more and be less active around the holidays. Recognizing these situations can help you make a plan for enjoying the holiday while balancing your health and weight maintenance goals.



“The program provides useful, practical, and effective information.”

– Delfo, lost 51 pounds and enjoys volunteer work helping other Veterans

Module To-Do

1. Consider your travel and holiday high-risk situations and how you can manage them.
2. Record your weight regularly using your monitoring plan and threshold weight.