MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans

VETERAN WORKBOOK

MOVE!®

VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration

Welcome to MOVE!

Welcome to the MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans (MOVE!), supported by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP). We are proud to make this program available to Veterans. Now in its second decade, MOVE! includes the most up-to-date approaches for weight management. Congratulations on taking this step towards healthy living!

MOVE! is a Lifestyle Intervention

MOVE! is a comprehensive lifestyle intervention designed to help you adopt a healthy lifestyle, meet your goals, and, in the process, manage your weight. Although MOVE! is a weight management program, it is about much more than weight. It is about enhancing your ability and confidence to achieve your health goals. MOVE!'s core ideas - helping Veterans learn tools and strategies for healthful eating and physical activity - are easy to follow and based on the latest evidence. With the help of a MOVE! care team, Veterans can reduce health risks, prevent or reverse certain diseases, improve their quality of life, and even live longer!

MOVE! Supports Whole Health and Healthy Living

VA is committed to implementing the Whole Health System to provide health and well-being services by partnering with Veterans to support their Whole Health and what matters most to them. **Whole Health** is a philosophy and an approach to delivering healthcare that empowers and equips Veterans to take charge of their health and well-being and live life to the fullest. MOVE! and other **NCP Healthy Living** services, programs and tools support Whole Health and VA's Whole Health System by specifically addressing Veteran needs and preferences, including their mission, aspiration and purpose.

The MOVE! Veteran Workbook

This workbook was designed to empower and equip Veterans to manage their health. Throughout the MOVE! Program Veterans will take charge of their health using recommended tools and strategies. This workbook includes 16-modules focusing on **eating wisely**, increasing **physical activity**, and applying **healthy behaviors** as a lifestyle. This workbook is also meant to be interactive with goal-setting tools, reflection questions, and practice activities. The more you put into MOVE! and the workbook, the more you will get out of it!

This workbook supports the MOVE! options of care for Veterans:

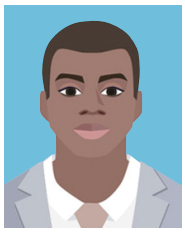
- **MOVE! Group Sessions** have the greatest evidence for success and are the most common way Veterans participate in MOVE! Clinician-led groups meet regularly and follow a structured format. To enable more Veterans to participate, many medical centers provide video and telephone options.
- **MOVE! Individual Sessions** are available at some medical centers for Veterans who prefer one-on-one coaching.
- **TeleMOVE!** is for Veterans who may benefit from frequent reminders to stay on track with their health and weight management goals. This includes daily interaction with in-home messaging technologies and periodic clinician contact.
- **MOVE! Coach** is a mobile app for Veterans who prefer to set their own pace. Brief check-ins with a MOVE! clinician may be available at VA facilities that offer MOVE! Coach with Care. Simply go to the App Store on any iOS device or the Google Play store on any Android device and download the app now!
- **Weight Management Medications** and **Bariatric Metabolic Surgery** are treatment options that may be helpful for some Veterans.

This workbook supports Veterans Health Administration staff:

- **MOVEmployee!** is available at some facilities to assist staff with achieving their health goals so they can better help Veterans.

Get to Know Your Guides

There are four characters in this workbook that give you different kinds of helpful information.

Teresa's Tips Teresa offers general helpful hints and tips.	 **Smart Alex** Alex offers in-depth technical or medical information on a topic.
Tom's Toolkit Tom gives information on weight management tools.	**Hannah's How-To** Hannah gives step-by-step instructions on how to complete a task or activity.

Medical Statement

If you are concerned about changing your eating style or increasing your physical activity talk to your MOVE! care team and your primary care provider to develop a plan that is right for you.

Quotes and Images

Throughout this workbook, you will find quotes from Veterans who have participated in their local VA MOVE! Program. For more inspiration, visit our Success Story webpage to read about Veterans like you. You may be able to submit your own Success Story!

- **MOVE! Success Stories**
  https://www.move.va.gov/SuccessStories/index.asp

Some Veterans in the workbook are seen participating in sports clinics offered through VA and our partners. If you are interested in participating in these events, please visit their websites for more information.

- **National Veterans Golden Age Games**
  https://www.blogs.va.gov/nvspse/national-veterans-golden-age-games/
- **National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic**
  https://www.veteransgolfclinic.org/
- **National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic**
  https://www.blogs.va.gov/nvspse/national-veterans-summer-sports-clinic/
- **National Veterans Wheelchair Games**
  http://www.wheelchairgames.org/
- **National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic**
  https://www.wintersportsclinic.org/

Please be advised: It should not be assumed that the photographs next to the quotes represent the source of the quotes.

Welcome to the MOVE! Weight Management Program - we are glad you are here! This workbook provides in-depth information. It also provides a range of tools for you to use to reach your goals. We encourage you to try all the tools so you can determine which work best for you. Use the information in this workbook to focus on what really matters to you and jump-start your healthy living lifestyle. You will become better equipped to manage your weight, enhance your well-being, and reduce your risk of disease. You will learn more from your MOVE! care team, your primary care team, and other Veterans during your weight management journey.

Acknowledgments

The VA MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans Curriculum is based on the curriculum from the Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) research study supported by the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease.

Materials have been adapted from *The Centers for Disease Control Diabetes Prevention Program Curriculum (CDC DPP Curriculum)* and the *University of Florida Weight Management Lab.*

© 2012, University of Pittsburgh, based on the DPP research trial supported by cooperative agreement number U01-DK48489 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which has certain rights in the material.

Finally, thank you to the more than 1 million Veterans who have participated in MOVE! and the VA clinicians who worked with them! Your support and feedback have helped us to continuously improve the MOVE! Program and materials over the last decade. We also want to thank the Veterans who participated in our focus groups and provided valuable feedback to make the workbook more engaging and Veteran-centered. And last but not least, thank you to our MOVE! teams who provided input and feedback on this workbook to inform its implementation and usability.

Table of Contents

MODULE ONE: Welcome to MOVE! 8

- Exploring Your Reasons to MOVE! 9
- Measuring Readiness 10
- Keys to Success 11
- Getting Started with Goal Setting 13

MODULE TWO: Tracking What You Do 18

- Tracking Your Food 19
- Tracking Your Activity 23
- Busting Barriers 24
- Reward Your Success 25

MODULE THREE: Tip the Balance 28

- Your Calorie Goal 30
- My Eating Patterns 32
- Burning More Calories 36

MODULE FOUR: Eat Wisely 40

- Eat Wisely by Creating a Healthy Plate 42
- My Healthy Plate Food Groups 45
- Know About Liquid Calories 49
- Size It Up! 50
- Building a Healthy Plate Based on Your Caloric Target 51
- Busting Barriers 53

MODULE FIVE: Get Fit for Life 56

- Types of Physical Activity 58
- How Active Should I Be? 60
- Measures of Intensity 60
- How Active Am I? 63
- Preparing to Get Fit 64
- Busting Barriers 67

MODULE SIX: Take Charge of Your Health 70

- Raising Awareness 72
- Conquering Unhelpful Thoughts 74
- Emotional Triggers 76
- Body Image 78

MODULE SEVEN: Menu Planning, Shopping, and Cooking 82
Meal Planning Made Easy 84
Being a Smart Shopper 88
Making Sense of Food Labels 92
How Can I Cook Healthier Foods? 95
Cook it Safely, Keep it Safe 97
Busting Barriers 98

MODULE EIGHT: Managing Challenges 102
Common Weight Management Challenges 104
Steps to Problem Solving 105
Practice Problem Solving 108
Weight Plateaus 109
Moving Beyond a Plateau 110

MODULE NINE: Pump Up Your Physical Activity 114
How Active Am I? 116
What's in a Warm Up? 117
Engage Your Core 117
Increase Your Cardiovascular Activity 118
Increase Your Steps 122
Increase Your Strength Training 123
Increase Your Flexibility 125
What's in a Cool Down? 126
Putting it All Together 126
Strength and Balance Exercises 129
Flexibility Exercises/Stretching 137

MODULE TEN: Conquer Triggers and Cues 140
Recognizing Triggers and Cues 142
What Are My Triggers? 143
Cravings vs. Hunger 144
Conquering Cravings 145
Healthy Ways of Responding to Triggers and Cues 146
Managing Your Environment 148
Planning for Successful Social Encounters 149
Busting Triggers and Cues 151

MODULE ELEVEN: Finesse Your Food 158
Macronutrients 160
Making Healthy Food Swaps 166
Skip the Fad Diets 171

MODULE TWELVE: Dust Yourself Off 174
Recognizing a Slip 176
Planning to Handle Slips 178
From Slips to Relapse 180
MODULE THIRTEEN: Dining Out 184
Plan for High-Risk Situations 186
Restaurant Eating 187
Fast Food Options 188
Takeout Tips 191
Social Eating 192
After Eating Out 193
MODULE FOURTEEN: Manage Stress and Find Support 196
Keys to Managing Your Stress 198
Tracking My Stress 199
What Are My Stressors? 200
Mindfulness 201
Maximize Your Support System 206
MODULE FIFTEEN: Fine Tune Your Physical Activity 210
How Active Am I? 212
Fine Tuning Your Physical Activity 213
Being Physically Active with Chronic Conditions 214
Chronic Pain and Weight 216
Physical Activity and Medications 218
Staying Motivated with Physical Activity 220
MODULE SIXTEEN: Maintain Your Progress 222
Maintaining Your Lifestyle 224
Staying Motivated 227
Review Your Weight Management Toolkit 229
Mini-Modules
Weight and Sleep 232
Manage Weight and Quit Tobacco—You Can Do Both! 236
Be Involved in Your Health Care 240

MODULE
ONE

Welcome to MOVE!

Congratulations on taking this step towards managing your health and weight!

We are glad you are here. Your health care team is ready to help you reach your goals. In the MOVE! Program, you will learn how to lose weight safely and improve your health. You will be an active participant in this journey, and your health care team will be your "coaches." MOVE! is a weight management program targeting lifestyle changes in three main areas: 1) Behavior, 2) Nutrition, and 3) Physical activity.

MOVE! Program Features:

- A focus on improving your health and wellness
- Support for eating wisely and increasing your physical activity
- Coaching and feedback to help you reach your goals

"MOVE! is not a diet. It is a life-changing program."

– Floyd, lost 54 pounds and has kept it off for more than a year

We are Ready to Partner with You!

Your MOVE! care team consists of a diverse group of professionals ready to help you. MOVE! teams can include dietitians, physical therapists, exercise physiologists, behavioral health staff, psychologists, nurse practitioners, and physicians. Your health care team is also an important resource, including your primary care provider, specialty providers, and pharmacists.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Identify your motivation and reasons for making changes to eating and activity habits.**
2. **Describe the behavior-change process.**
3. **Set your weight-loss goals.**

Exploring Your Reasons to MOVE!

Before you begin your weight management journey, it is important to find your reasons for change. Over time, people motivated by their own needs and desires find it easier to maintain change.

MOVE! Program Recommendations

Making a commitment to participate in MOVE! for at least 6 months is critical to success. Losing just 5% of your body weight can improve your overall health. We recommend that you start with a goal to lose 5% to 10% of your body weight. If you weigh 200 pounds, that is a 10- to 20-pound loss. To accomplish this goal, a healthy weight loss of ½ to 2 pounds per week is considered safe.

Why the MOVE! Program?

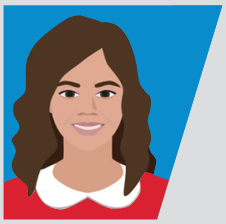
Why is weight management a priority for you now?

What do you hope to gain from participating in MOVE!?

How will forming healthier habits improve your life?

Create your own MOVE! Success Story and join the many Veterans who have had success with MOVE!

Visit www.move.va.gov and click on Success Stories to read their inspiring messages.



Teresa's Tips

"Did you know that research studies show losing as little as 5% of your current body weight lowers your risk of heart disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer?"

Measuring Readiness

On a scale of 0 to 10, how important is weight management to you right now?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all important		A little			Somewhat		Very			Extremely important

Reflections

Consider your number. Why isn't it a lower number?

What would it take to increase your number?

How is your weight getting in the way of what you want?

How is it affecting your health?

Decisional Balance

Starting a weight management program can be challenging because it involves changes to your lifestyle—that is, changing how you eat and how active you are. Not everyone is ready to start this journey, and that's okay. It is important for you to move forward when you are ready. You are in control, and your care team is here to help you!

Reasons to commit to weight management:

Concerns about committing to weight management:

* If you have more **reasons** than **concerns**, you are ready to begin!

* If you have more **concerns** than **reasons**, it may be helpful to talk to your care team about ways to resolve your concerns. They are here to assist you!

Keys to Success

MOVE! is about making healthy changes in eating, physical activity, and behavior. There are several key strategies that will help you.

- **Make lifestyle changes you can maintain**
- **Eat wisely and cut extra calories**
- **Be physically active to improve your health**
- **Set goals you can reach**
- **Keep a daily record of what you eat and your physical activity**
- **Weigh yourself at least weekly**
- **Ask your family, friends, and MOVE! Team for the support you need**
- **Celebrate your success!**

In MOVE!, you will learn skills like planning and preparing, problem solving, and stress management that will help you with these behaviors. Most people who commit to MOVE! can reach a healthier weight, feel better, have more energy, and reduce health problems.

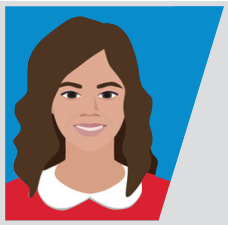
10 Health Gains from Weight Loss

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

"MOVE! is life changing. If you're not happy with the way you are—how you feel about the world and yourself—try it out. What do you have to lose?

Just the weight!"

– James, lost 150 pounds



Teresa's Tips

"Changing many things at once can be difficult and stressful. It may be better to **change one or two things at a time**. Keep this in mind while you set your SMART goals."

Steps to Behavior Change

Behavior change is the key to managing your weight. Remember that eating habits and other lifestyle behaviors have been learned and can be changed. Changing old habits can be difficult. Here are some ways to get started. These strategies can be used with any behavior, including eating and physical activity.

Make a Plan	This can include planning meals, fitting in activity, or setting reminders for yourself
Write it Down	Writing down your plan and goals can help you commit to making healthy changes
Set small, achievable Goals	Setting small but achievable goals will help you to experience early successes and keep up your motivation
Monitor Your Progress	Keep track of it in a mobile app or your *Food and Activity Log*, which helps you to find patterns in your behavior
Reward Yourself Often	Do something for yourself when you reach your goals
Surround Yourself with Positive People	Find those who will be most supportive of your efforts
Keep in Contact with Your Health Care Team	Your health care team can help you make changes safely, manage other health conditions, and answer any questions you may have

Getting Started with Goal Setting

You are preparing to make changes to get healthier. You are moving in the right direction! To achieve your weight-loss goal, create an action plan to decrease calories and increase physical activity. Goals are the road map that will guide you to success. They will give you a clear idea of where you want to go and how to get there.

Ready, Set, Goals!

Now is the time to write down your weight-loss goal. Fill in the blanks below to identify an achievable goal. Use the *Weight Loss by the Numbers* chart to help you find your weight-loss target.

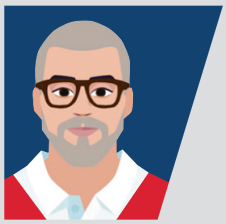
Weight-Loss Goal

Losing just 5% can improve your health.

My current weight is _____ pounds.

My goal is to lose _____ % of my current weight, equal to _____ pounds.

By losing _____ (1/2 to 2) pounds per week, I will reach my goal by _____ (date).



Tom's Toolkit

"**Goal setting** provides a clear picture of what your target outcome will be and can help you take smaller actions to meet that goal. Writing down your goals will help you stay on track. People with **SMART goals tend to be more successful**. Adjust or add to your goals at any time. After you achieve one goal, set a new one."

Make Your Goals SMART!

When writing a goal, ask yourself the following questions. Are each of these included in your goal?

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 do-able 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 or be active for at least 15 minutes every day this week.

Weight Loss by the Numbers

Find your current weight in the blue columns. Read across the row to find the number of pounds you would need to lose to achieve a 5%, 8%, or 10% weight loss.

Wt	5%	8%	10%	Wt	5%	8%	10%	Wt	5%	8%	10%
140	7	11	14	**265**	13	21	27	**390**	20	31	39
145	7	12	15	**270**	14	22	27	**395**	20	32	40
150	8	12	15	**275**	14	22	28	**400**	20	32	40
155	8	12	16	**280**	14	22	28	**405**	20	32	41
160	8	13	16	**285**	14	23	29	**410**	21	33	41
165	8	13	17	**290**	15	23	29	**415**	21	33	42
170	9	14	17	**295**	15	24	30	**420**	21	34	42
175	9	14	18	**300**	15	24	30	**425**	21	34	43
180	9	14	18	**305**	15	24	31	**430**	22	34	43
185	9	15	19	**310**	16	25	31	**435**	22	35	44
190	10	15	19	**315**	16	25	32	**440**	22	35	44
195	10	16	20	**320**	16	26	32	**445**	22	36	45
200	10	16	20	**325**	16	26	33	**450**	23	36	45
205	10	16	21	**330**	17	26	33	**455**	23	36	46
210	11	17	21	**335**	17	27	34	**460**	23	37	46
215	11	17	22	**340**	17	27	34	**465**	23	37	47
220	11	18	22	**345**	17	28	35	**470**	24	38	47
225	11	18	23	**350**	18	28	35	**475**	24	38	48
230	12	18	23	**355**	18	28	36	**480**	24	38	48
235	12	19	24	**360**	18	29	36	**485**	24	39	49
240	12	19	24	**365**	18	29	37	**490**	25	39	49
245	12	20	25	**370**	19	30	37	**495**	25	40	50
250	13	20	25	**375**	19	30	38	**500**	25	40	50
255	13	20	26	**380**	19	30	38	**505**	25	40	51
260	13	21	26	**385**	19	31	39	**510**	26	41	51

Body Mass Index

Smart Alex

"Your health care team may talk with you about body mass index (BMI). It is calculated from your height and weight. BMI is an estimate of body fat and a gauge of your risk for diseases that can occur with more body fat. In general the higher your BMI, the higher your risk for certain diseases such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, gallstones, breathing problems, and certain cancers. BMI provides information about your potential degree of risk and treatment options. Even a small amount of weight loss can help reduce your risk for chronic diseases, but you are not expected to have a BMI in the 'normal range.'"

"Be proud of every achievement you make—even if it's losing a half-pound or adding 1 minute to your walking."

– Eileen, lost 58 pounds and increased her physical activity from 3 minutes to 45 minutes, 3 times a week

What are Your Target Behaviors?

Once you've set your weight-loss goal, it is important to consider what small actions you can take to get there. These changes often relate to nutrition and physical activity. Use the space below to brainstorm potential SMART goals. Identify one or two things you can do in each category. (Note: While participating in MOVE!, you will revise or select a new healthy eating and physical activity goal each week.)

Healthy Eating: What food and drink choices can you make that will result in better nutrition and fewer calories?

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Physical Activity: What can you do to decrease your sitting time and gradually increase your time moving?

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

On a scale of 0 to 10, how confident are you about making healthy eating and activity changes?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all confident		A little		Somewhat			Very			Extremely confident

The more confidence you have to make a change, the more successful you will be.

Reflections

Consider your number. Why isn't it a lower number? What would it take to make you more confident?

Recall things you did successfully in the past. What did you do to make it happen?

Think about how you can use successful strategies from the past to accomplish what you want to do now.

Module Summary

"VA delivered on its offer of providing a life-changing service. The MOVE! Program works."

– Jim, lost 45 pounds, reduced his pain level and insulin use

Reasons to MOVE!

You reflected on your own reasons for starting your weight management journey. Veterans who have participated in MOVE! reported reasons such as:

- Decreasing their health risks for chronic conditions
- Improving health conditions and feeling better
- Staying active with their families

Decisional Balance

You also considered the ***pros*** and ***cons*** of making a change. Understanding why you want to lose weight will help you keep your momentum up. Recognizing your concerns about committing to weight management will also help you plan and prepare for roadblocks that might occur.

Weight Management Basics

You were introduced to some key behaviors for weight management. You will cover each in more depth throughout the MOVE! Program.

- Set SMART goals
- Eat and drink fewer calories per day
- Be more physically active
- Weigh yourself regularly
- Track your progress

SMART Goal Setting

You learned how to create SMART goals. Your goals should be specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and time-based. You also created your own weight-loss goals.

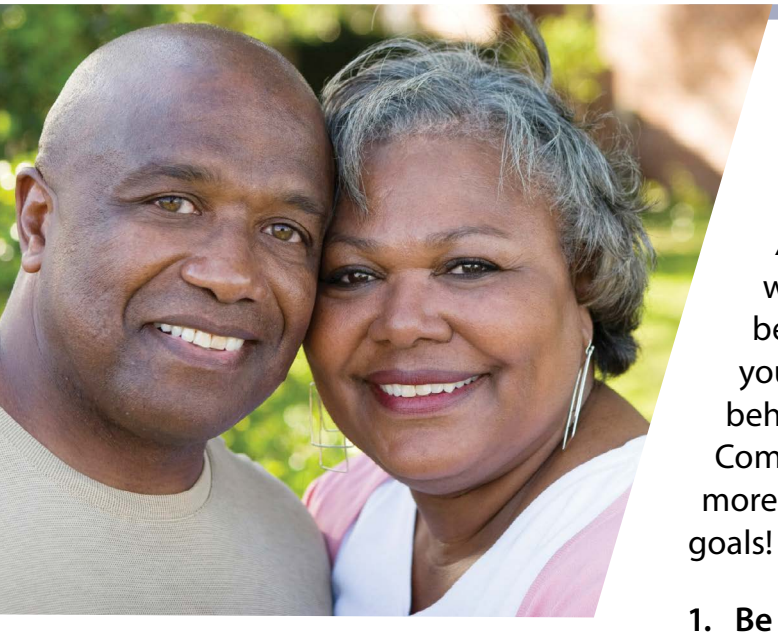
Look back at your reasons for change if you start to feel discouraged.

Module To-Do:

1. **Reflect on your reasons and motivation for making healthy changes. Keep these reasons top of mind as you progress through the program.**
2. **Set your weight-loss goals. Think about what actions you can take to start working towards your goals. Be prepared to share your goals at your next meeting.**
3. **Start writing down what you eat every day and how active you are on your *Food and Activity Log* or record them using a smartphone app.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
TWO

Tracking What You Do



How do I get started with tracking?

MOVE! is about helping you better manage your weight and health. The MOVE! *Food and Physical Activity Log* is designed to help you monitor your weight, physical activity, and food intake. This will be one of your most valuable tools to help you reach your goals. Tracking increases your awareness of your behavior and helps you change unhelpful behaviors. Complete the log as often as possible; daily is best. The more you track, the more likely you are to achieve your goals!

1. **Be real. Write down what you really eat, not just what you had planned.**
2. **Be accurate. Measure portions, read food labels, and time your physical activity.**
3. **Be complete. Include everything you eat and drink and any moderate activity you do.**

"I knew that the key to losing weight was finally being honest with myself."

– Steve, lost 50 pounds

Tracking effort predicts success.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Describe the purpose of tracking.**
2. **Learn how to track what you eat and drink.**
3. **Learn how to track your activity.**

Tracking Your Food

Paying attention to what and how much you eat each day is essential for learning what you want to keep doing and what you want to change. Keeping a food diary will help you identify unhelpful eating patterns (like late-night snacking) and track your calorie intake. You should write down each food item as soon as possible: Memories can be misleading!

See the example of *Sarah's Story*.

Tom's Toolkit

"**Self-monitoring is the act of observing and regulating your behavior.** Self-monitoring activities include behaviors like keeping a daily log of food and exercise, wearing a pedometer, and using a weight management mobile application like MOVE! Coach. Self-monitoring increases your awareness of how much you eat and drink and how active you are. **Just the act of tracking your behavior will help you change your behavior!** By keeping track of how many calories you take in and how many calories you burn each day, it will be easier for you to meet your goals. Be in the know!"

Sarah's Story

Sarah has slowly gained weight over the past 10 years. Her VA provider has encouraged her to lose 15 pounds to help lower her blood pressure and cholesterol, suggesting she try the MOVE! Program for support.

For three weeks, Sarah tries to eat better but hasn't seen any results. Frustrated, she decides to try MOVE! and contacts the MOVE! Coordinator for an assessment. The MOVE! Coordinator asks Sarah to tell her what she ate yesterday. Sarah tries to recall everything she ate.

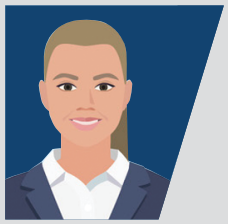
The table on the next page shows what Sarah *thinks* she ate at each meal and what she really ate at each meal. This activity shows how Sarah underestimated the number of calories she was eating each day.

Calories	What Sarah *Thinks* She Had	Calories	What Sarah *Really* Had	Calories	Extra Calories
Breakfast	• Bowl of cereal with milk	• 100 (cereal) • 100 (milk)	• 1 ½ cups cereal with 8 oz whole milk • Coffee with 1 Tbsp whole milk and 2 tsp sugar	• 150 (cereal) • 150 (milk) • 50 (milk and sugar)	**150**
Lunch	• Ham sandwich • Apple	• 150 (bread) • 200 (ham) • 150 (mayo) • 50 (apple)	• Sandwich with 2 slices of bread, 6 oz ham and 1 ½ Tbsp mayo • Medium apple • Iced tea with sugar	• 150 (bread) • 200 (ham) • 150 (mayo) • 50 (apple) • 150 (sugar)	**150**
Snack	• Did not record	• Did not record	• Granola bar • Coffee with 1 Tbsp whole milk and 2 tsp sugar	• 200 (granola bar) • 50 (milk and sugar)	**250**
Dinner	• Salad • Mashed potatoes • Piece of fish	• 100 (salad) • 100 (potatoes) • 200 (fish)	• Salad with 2 Tbsp blue cheese dressing • 1 cup mashed potatoes made with whole milk and 3 Tbsp butter • 3 oz fish • 8 oz iced tea with sugar	• 50 (salad) • 150 (dressing) • 100 (potatoes) • 100 (butter) • 200 (fish) • 75 (sugar)	**275**
Dessert	• Small bowl of ice cream	• 175 (ice cream)	• 1 cup ice cream	• 320 (ice cream)	**145**

What Sarah *Thinks* She Had	Calories	What Sarah *Really* Had	Calories	Extra Calories
Daily Total	**1,325**	**Daily Total**	**2,295**	**970**

Sarah thought she ate 1,325 calories but actually ate 2,295. She ate 970 calories more than she thought she did. It is important to be thorough when completing your food log to get an accurate reflection of how much you ate. This will help you identify what changes you need to make.

There are many tools available to help you track how much you eat and drink, such as measuring cups and spoons, a kitchen scale, calculators, and food labels. You will want to write down what and how much you eat in your *Food and Activity Log*. Your MOVE! team will work with you and provide feedback on your log.



Hannah's How-To
Track your Food

"**In the *Food and Activity Log*, you will write a weekly goal to make healthier choices.**

Example: 'I will cut down on calories by eliminating snacking while watching TV in the evenings this week,' or 'I will drink water or sugar-free beverages in place of regular soda this week.'

During the MOVE! Program, you will track the foods you eat, the amount, and the calories. To get started, write down what you eat each day. This is done to help you get in the habit of using your *Food and Activity Log*.

For the first week, your food log will look like the example below. Write down everything you eat and drink throughout the day, one item per line:

- ☑ Write down everything you eat and drink. Don't forget the extras, like butter on toast.
- ☑ Write down how food was prepared (baked, broiled, fried, etc.).
- ☑ Write down the type of food or drink (for example, fat-free or whole milk)"

Enough Detail

Week 1 Day 1	Day/Date: Saturday 06-01-19
Food/Beverage:	
Multi-grain cereal O's	
Milk 1%	
Banana	
Wheat bread toasted	
Ham	
American cheese	
Green apple	

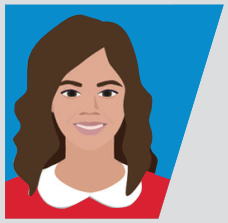
Needs More Detail

Week 1 Day 1	Day/Date:
Food/Beverage:	
Cereal	
Banana	
Ham sandwich	
Apple	

Hannah's How-To
Track your Food

"As you progress through the program, the detail of your tracking will also increase. The final version of the food log will look like this."

Week 1 Day 1	Day/Date: Saturday 03-18-23			
Time:	Food/Beverage:	Amount:	Calories:	Mood/Feelings:
8:15am	Multi-grain cereal O's	1 cup	106	Tired
8:15am	Milk 1%	3/4 cup	77	Tired
10:30am	Banana	1 medium sized	105	Tired
12:30pm	Wheat bread toasted	2 slices	138	Happy
12:30pm	Ham	2 ounces	60	Happy
12:30pm	American cheese	1 slice	104	Happy
12:30pm	Green apple	1 medium sized	95	Happy



Teresa's Tips

"**MOVE! produces a *Food and Activity Log* as a booklet for your use during the MOVE! Program.** However, you can use whatever tracking method you find most helpful, such as websites or tracking apps for smart devices. **Any method of tracking will help you meet your weight loss goals, so find the one that is right for you!**"

"Weighing in daily, recording my food logs, and sending them to my TeleMOVE! Coordinator worked for me. She reviewed them and let me know when I needed to change what I was eating."

– Larry, lost 127 pounds and has improved arthritis, blood sugar, and blood pressure

Tracking Your Activity

Keeping track of how active you are will help you decrease your sitting time and monitor how many calories you burn each day. Use a fitness log to track your minutes of activity each day. Record your activity of at least moderate intensity. That means you can talk through it, but not sing through it. Include exercise, of course, but also remember to include everyday activities like sweeping the floor briskly and mowing the lawn.

There are many tools that can help you time your activity, like watches, timers, and smartphone and computer apps. Record the type of activity and minutes spent doing the activity in your *Food and Activity Log* to discuss with your MOVE! team.

Hannah's How-To
Track your Activity

"**In the *Food and Activity Log*, you will write a weekly goal to increase your activity.**

Example: 'This week, I will be active for 15 minutes or more on at least 4 days and do strengthening activities twice,' or 'I will take the stairs or do chair exercises during my work breaks.'

Over the course of the MOVE! Program, you will track each activity you do, the time spent doing it, and your intensity level. To start off, write down the physical activity you did each day. This is done to help you get used to tracking your activity.

For the first week, your activity log will look like this. Write down all physical activity you engage in, one session per line.

Physical Activity:
Walk the dog AM
Climbed stairs at work on break
Chair push-ups between calls at my desk
Swept the floor

As you progress through the program, the detail of your tracking will also increase. The final version of the activity log will look like this."

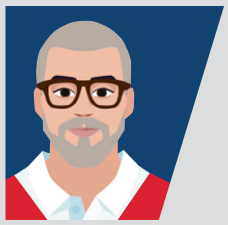
Physical Activity:	Minutes:	RPE Intensity:
Walk the dog AM	15	5
Climbed stairs at work on break	10	7
Chair push-ups between calls at my desk	30	4
Swept the floor	10	3

Busting Barriers

Now let's review some common barriers and possible solutions to completing the *Food and Activity Log*. 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.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
I'm too busy.	☐ Set aside a few minutes at certain times each day. ☐ Set a reminder. ☐ Remember why you are tracking—for your health!
I keep forgetting.	☐ Make tracking part of your daily routine. ☐ Set a reminder, alarm, or timer. ☐ Leave yourself notes where you will see them. ☐ Ask others to remind you.
I don't like to track.	☐ Share your progress with others. ☐ Give yourself a small (nonfood) reward for meeting your goals. ☐ Compete with family or friends to see who can track the most activity and meals. ☐ Try using smartphone apps to track.
I have trouble reading and writing.	☐ Record your voice with a smartphone or other device. ☐ Ask your coach, friends, or family to help you write your food and activity. ☐ Take a picture of your food.
Write your own	☐

Reward Your Success



Tom's Toolkit

"**Rewards are a fantastic way to keep up your motivation and regulate your behavior.** Reward yourself often for achieving your goals. You can set small rewards for meeting your weekly SMART goals and larger rewards for hitting a weight-loss target."

What Rewards You?

Consider what kinds of things reward you. Below is a list of rewards that may motivate people to make healthy changes. **Identify some rewards that are reasonable for you or fill in your own.**

1. Buy a new workout outfit
2. Buy a new water bottle
3. Get a massage
4. Unwind with a movie of your choice
5. Download a new fitness app
6. Buy a new workout song
7. Enjoy a "staycation"
8. Take a trip to a farmer's market
9. Buy a refrigerator magnet with a motivational quote
10. Learn a new sport—try fencing, karate, tennis, or swimming
11. Learn a new skill—try playing the piano, singing, acting, or painting
12. Enjoy a laugh at a local comedy club
13. Take a day trip to your favorite local town
14. Go on a fishing trip
15. Go see your favorite band
16. Buy a new pair of running shoes
17. Attend a local sporting event
18. Golf at your favorite course
19. Sign up for a charity walk event
20. Take a cooking class
21. Start a garden
22. Go for a hike and enjoy nature
23. Go camping in the wilderness
24. Get a one-on-one personal training session
25. Get a new book at the library and enjoy a relaxing afternoon reading
26.
27.
28.
29.
30.

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one new healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. 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 do-able for you?
Time-based: When will you start? When will you review your goal to see if it still makes sense for you?

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

"I was really scared to get on the scale the first several weeks. But after seeing a change, I couldn't wait to get back in class to show everyone how good I was doing."

– Donald, lost 55 pounds and reversed his prediabetes

Module Summary

Self-Monitoring

In this module, you learned how to complete the *Food and Activity Log*. Your *Food and Activity Log* will be the most powerful tool in your toolkit. Try to complete your log as often as possible—every day is best. Ask your MOVE! team how you can share your log to get feedback on your progress. Veterans who complete their log and receive continual feedback on their progress are more likely to meet their goals.

"They kept me accountable for weight loss and food decisions through tracking."

– Teresa, lost 40 pounds, has less back pain, and enjoys cooking new meals

Rewards

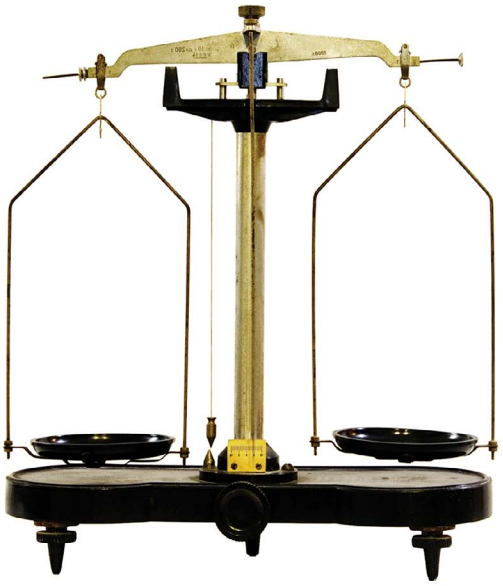
Using rewards during your weight management journey is a fantastic way to congratulate yourself and recognize all your hard work. Make a list of rewards that you might give yourself for meeting small and large goals.

Module To-Do:

1. **Write down everything you eat and drink every day in your *Food and Activity Log* or with another logging tool.**
2. **Write down how many minutes you are moderately active every day in your *Food and Activity Log* or with another logging tool.**
3. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE THREE

Tip the Balance



What is an energy balance?

Calories are the energy in food. They fuel everything you do from sleeping to being physically active. Calories can come from carbohydrates, fat, protein, and alcohol. If your body doesn't need them to fuel current activity, it stores them for later use. Body weight is linked to energy balance. If you eat more calories than you use, you may gain weight. If you eat fewer calories than you use, you may lose weight.

What you eat is just as important as how much you eat.

"I got on board with the caloric diary, which made me start thinking about what I was putting in my mouth."

– Rodney, lost 52 pounds and improved his self-image and self-esteem

There are complex factors that affect your weight and your energy balance, which can be thought of as calories in and calories out. These factors may be from a person's body, mind, environment, and society. Weight management focuses on some of the factors within your control, like your food and drink choices (calories in) and activity choices (calories out). It is important to keep in mind that your body's response to weight change may make it harder to maintain your success.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Recognize the link between energy balance and weight.**
2. **Understand your eating patterns.**
3. **Learn how to burn more calories than you take in.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Your Calorie Goal

Your calorie goal is the estimated daily caloric intake you will need to achieve your weight-management goal. If you take in fewer daily calories than your body needs for its daily activity level, your body will burn stored body fat—contributing to reduced weight. On the other hand, if you take in more daily calories than your body needs, your body will store additional fat—which may contribute to weight gain.

There are basically three ways to manage your energy balance:

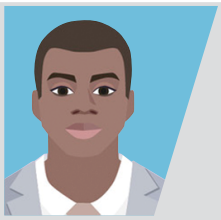
1. **Adjust your daily caloric intake.**
2. **Adjust your daily activity level.**
3. **A combination of #1 and #2.**

To lose weight, it is recommended that you create an **energy deficit of at least 500 calories/day**. Generally, you can achieve this deficit by **gradually** reducing your dietary intake to:

1200-1500 calories/day for women
or
1500-1800 calories/day for men

You should reduce your calorie intake slowly over time so your body adjusts and you don't feel too hungry. If you want a more tailored daily calorie goal specific to your age, sex, height, build, and weight, talk to your MOVE! Team.

My daily target calorie goal is:



Smart Alex

"Most people lose about 1 pound per week when they create an energy deficit of at least 500 calories per day but this can vary. As weight is lost your body and metabolism change, so you may need to reevaluate your daily calorie goal later in the program."

Tarik's Story

Tarik has struggled with managing his weight for most of his life. At his last check-up, Tarik's doctor encourages him to lose 30 pounds at a rate of 1 pound per week. To learn more about how to accomplish this goal, Tarik signs up for his local MOVE! Program. Tarik learns he needs to burn 500 more calories than he takes in each day. His MOVE! Facilitator explains Tarik can cut 500 calories per day by:

1. **Changing his eating habits and taking in 500 fewer calories each day**
2. **Being more active and burning 500 more calories each day**
3. **Cutting 500 calories through a mixture of eating and activity changes**

Tarik needs about 2,200 calories a day just to stay at the same weight. If he cuts 500 calories per day, that leaves him with a target of 1,700 calories. To Tarik, that doesn't sound like a lot of calories to work with, so he decides to reach his goal through a mixture of eating and activity.

Let's see how Tarik does on Sunday.

What Tarik needs to maintain his current weight: 2,200 calories/day

Tarik's calorie goal to lose weight: 1,700 calories/day

Food	Calories In
Breakfast	400
Morning snack	100
Lunch	500
Afternoon snack	100
Dinner	600
Evening snack	200
Total	**1,900**

Physical Activity	Calories Out
Brisk morning walk	70
Mows the lawn	90
Brisk evening walk	70
Total	**230**

Tarik beat his goal by 30 calories!

Calories In	*1,900*
Calories Out	*- 230*
	= 1670

My Eating Patterns

To meet your recommended daily calorie intake, it is important to understand your current eating habits. Being aware of what, when, why, and how you eat will help you identify eating patterns and ways to eat fewer calories.

What Are My Eating Patterns?

Look for patterns in last week's food records. See if you can identify:

What times of the day are you most likely to eat?

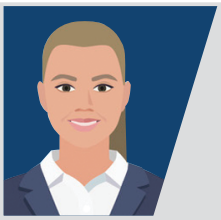
Do you tend to snack at certain times of the day?

How much do you usually eat in one sitting? Do you usually skip meals? What else can you learn from your food records?

It's important to learn what situations trigger food and drink choices that don't support your health goals. After reviewing your food records, write down patterns that you noticed. For example:

1. **I ate when I wasn't hungry.**
2. **I skip meals a lot!**
3. **I tend to eat more than planned when I eat out.**
4. **I eat a lot of prepackaged high-calorie foods (like frozen pizza).**

Fill in your own below:



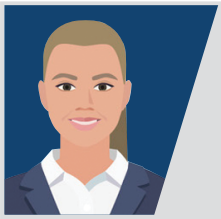
Hannah's How-To
Make Healthy Food Swaps

"One way to reduce calories is to think about making healthy substitutions to the foods you are already eating. For example, use cooking spray instead of butter when frying eggs. **Use the table below to think about how you can start making healthy food swaps.**"

Breakfast - Healthy Swap	**Calories Saved**
1 cup fat-free milk ***instead of*** 1 cup whole milk	63
1 squirt cooking spray ***instead of*** 1 pat butter	34
2 pats reduced calorie margarine ***instead of*** 2 pats butter	36
Lunch - Healthy Swap	**Calories Saved**
2 tomato slices, ¼ cup sliced cucumbers, and 2 onion slices ***instead of*** ¾ ounce cheese and 1 ounce ham	154
½ cup diced raw pineapple ***instead of*** 1 ounce potato chips	118
½ Tbsp regular ranch dressing ***instead of*** 2 Tbsp regular ranch dressing	109
Side salad with low-fat vinaigrette ***instead of*** a medium order of French fries	270
Dinner - Healthy Swap	**Calories Saved**
½ cup steamed broccoli ***instead of*** ½ cup broccoli fried in ½ Tbsp vegetable oil	62
1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese ***instead of*** 1 cup whole milk ricotta cheese	89
¼ cup pasta with tomato sauce side dish ***instead of*** 1 cup pasta with tomato sauce entree	138
One slice of a cheese pizza ***instead of*** one slice of a meat and cheese pizza	60
Snacks - Healthy Swap	**Calories Saved**
3 cups air-popped popcorn ***instead of*** 3 cups oil-popped popcorn	73
8 ounces sugar-free nonfat yogurt ***instead of*** a package of 6 peanut butter crackers	82
1 bottle sparkling water ***instead of*** a 12-ounce can regular soda	136
One large orange ***instead of*** 3 chocolate sandwich cookies	54

Source: Ideas for Every Meal. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/cutting_calories.html

How might you start making healthy food swaps in your next meal?



Hannah's How-To
Rethink Your Drink

"Another way to cut calories is to think about **how much you drink.** This chart shows the calories in a variety of drinks, from highest to lowest. For high-calorie drinks, size really matters. Reducing the amount you drink from 20 ounces to 12 ounces can save you calories each day."

Type of Drink	Calories in 20 oz	Calories in 12 oz	Calories Saved
Fruit punch	320	192	128
100% apple juice	300	180	120
100% orange juice	280	168	112
Lemonade	280	168	112
Regular lemon-lime soda	247	148	99
Regular cola	227	136	91
Sweetened iced tea	225	135	90
Tonic water	207	124	83
Regular ginger ale	207	124	83
Sports drink	165	99	66
Fitness water	36	18	18
Unsweetened iced tea	3	2	1
Sparkling water (unsweetened)	0	0	0
Water	0	0	0

Circle the drinks you usually have.

How can you reduce your calorie intake from each drink? For example, will you reduce the amount you drink or switch to another lower calorie drink?

Review the table on Types of Milk.

Type of Milk	Calories in 8 oz.
Chocolate milk (whole)	208
Chocolate milk (2%)	190
Chocolate milk (1%)	158
Plain milk (whole)	150
Plain milk (2%)	120
Plain milk (1%)	105
Plain milk (fat free)	90

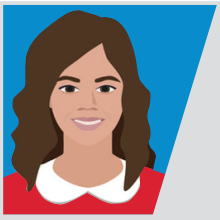
Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

"The most difficult habit to form was maintaining a food log but the game changer was when I started weighing and measuring my food. No one had ever taught me about portion sizes or basic nutrition guidelines. I find education to be key. I eat with a purpose now."

– Bobbi, lost 50 pounds and feels strong and confident

What type(s) of milk do you currently drink?

Do you see a benefit of switching to a lower calorie milk or changing how much you drink?

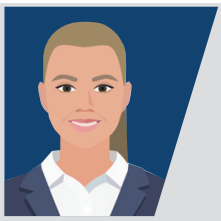


Teresa's Tips

"Next time you make a trip to your favorite coffee spot **consider these tips for reducing your calorie intake.**

- Ask for your drink to be made with skim milk instead of whole milk
- Order the smallest size you can get
- Hold the flavors or consider sugar-free flavors. Regular flavor syrups contain sugar and add calories
- Skip the whip. The whipped cream on top of coffee drinks adds calories and fat
- Order a plain cup of coffee with skim milk or drink it black."

Burning More Calories



Hannah's How-To
Burn More Calories

"**The following table provides the number of calories burned doing 10 minutes of each physical activity listed.** The calories will vary depending on a number of factors including weight, age, and environmental conditions. The figures given are for men ranging in weight from 175-250 pounds and women ranging from 140-200 pounds. If you weigh more than this, you will burn more calories per minute."

Calories Burned in 10 Minutes		
Light Activity	Men	Women
Ballroom dancing	35-50	28-40
Cleaning, sweeping at moderate effort	26-38	21-30
Washing dishes	29-42	23-30
Tai chi	35-50	28-40
Moderate Activity	Men	Women
Walking at 2.5 miles per hour	48-73	36-56
Bicycling at <10 miles per hour	46-66	37-53
Step aerobics	64-91	51-73
Mowing the lawn, walking	64-91	51-73
Raking leaves	44-63	35-50
Shoveling snow	61-88	49-70
Bowling	44-63	35-50
Golf, walking and pulling clubs	61-88	49-70
Slow lap-swimming	63-90	54-72
Vigorous Activity	Men	Women
Jogging at 9 minutes per mile	149-213	119-170
Basketball	75-108	60-86
Carrying groceries upstairs	87-125	70-100

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

"Within the first week, I started losing weight using the tools MOVE! taught me. As the weeks went on, I learned how to shop for food in a healthier way, what foods I should stay away from, and about starting an exercise regimen and actually sticking with it."

– Ralph, lost 25 pounds and lowered his A1c

Module Summary

> "If you want to lose the weight, you have to set goals for yourself. For me, it meant setting a goal to walk every day."
>
> – Jim, lost 82 pounds and likes the man he sees in the mirror

Energy Balance

Many factors affect your weight. You can take steps to balance the calories you take in (food and drink) and the calories you use (physical activity).

Eating Patterns

Learning about your current eating patterns is a crucial step in making healthy lifestyle changes. This will help you set specific goals. When you look at your food records, you will begin to see patterns. You may tend to eat more during or after certain activities or situations. Or you may skip meals or eat more during certain times of day.

How to Eat Fewer Calories

To meet your 500-calorie daily deficit, make healthy food and drink choices. Limiting the amount of oil, butter, cream, and fried foods you consume can help you meet your energy goal.

How to Burn More Calories

Find ways to sit less and move more every day to increase your daily activity, burn more calories and meet your daily calorie deficit. There are many kinds of activities that can keep you moving!

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider your energy balance as you set goals for eating wisely and being physically active.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Notes:

MODULE
FOUR

Eat Wisely

How do I get started with changing my eating habits?

MOVE! is about building healthy eating habits by making small sustainable changes over time. To start changing your eating habits, it is important to BE MINDFUL about your food choices. Here are some basic healthy eating tips to get you started. Consider some of these options when you write your weekly SMART goals.

Good Nutrition = Results

"I not only learned how to eat, I learned how to live."

– Lee, lost 32 pounds and gained energy

BE MINDFUL:

B*uy healthy foods to keep at home and work*
E*at a nutritious breakfast everyday*
M*ake a healthy plate*
I*nvolve others, eat at the table, take your time, and savor your food*
N*ourish your body; avoid skipping or delaying meals*
D*rink more water—drink a glass before each meal*
F*ix foods at home*
U*se a plate for snacks and portion control*
L*imit high-fat, high-calorie, and sugar-sweetened foods*

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn how to create a healthy plate.**
2. **Recognize the items in each food group.**
3. **Identify common serving sizes.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

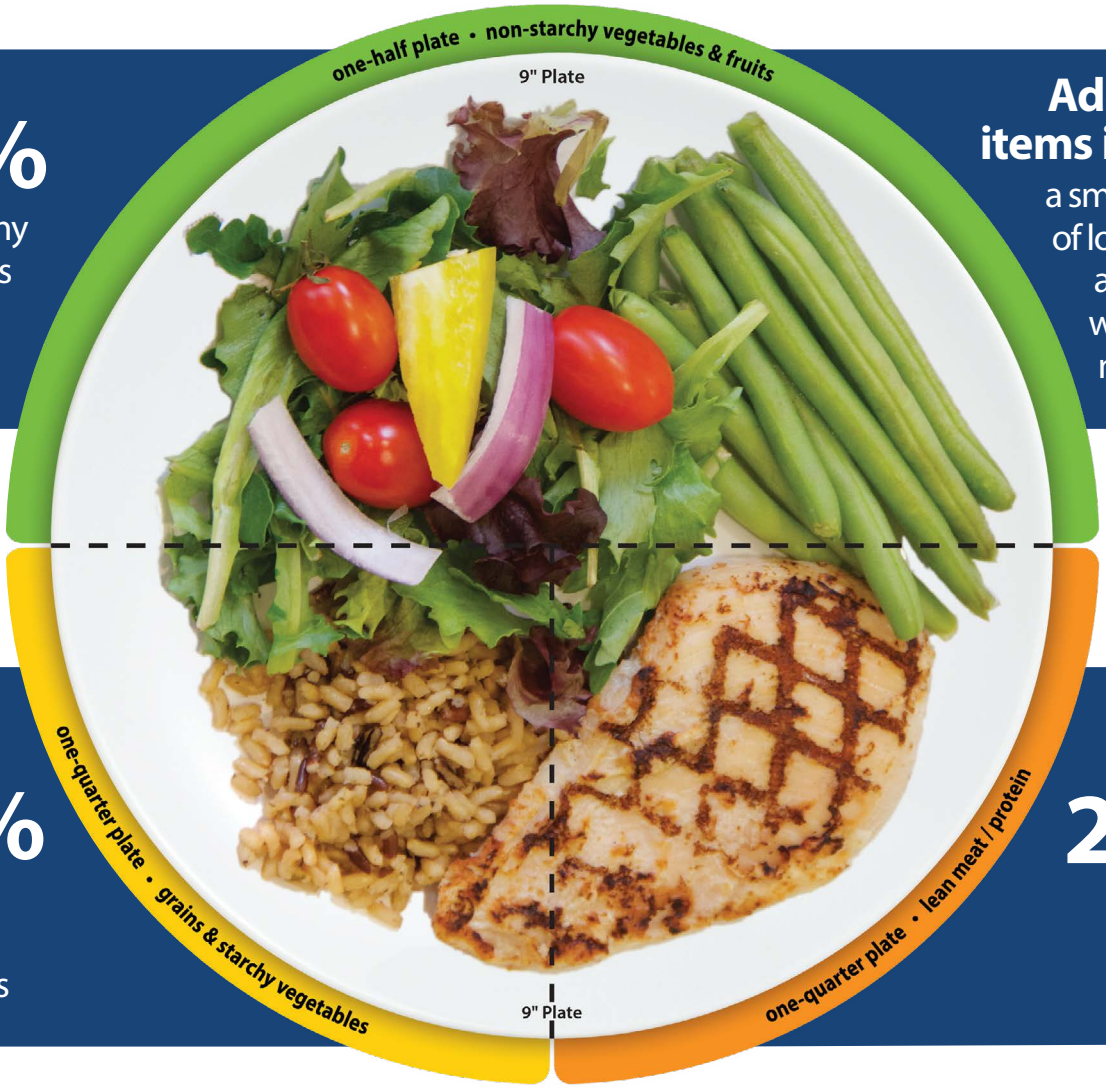
- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Eat Wisely by Creating a Healthy Plate

Thinking about what goes on your plate and in your glass before you eat helps you create a healthy plate. Vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy products, fruits, and lean protein foods are all great choices. Eating from all food groups can help you get all the nutrients you need. Before each meal ask yourself, "How healthy is my plate?" **Use the guidelines in this section to evaluate the types and portions of food on your plate.**

My Healthy Plate

50%
Non-starchy Vegetables and Fruits



Additional items include:
a small amount of low-fat dairy and a drink with little or no calories.

25%
Starch or Starchy Vegetables

25%
Protein

When building your plate, remember to choose foods that are:

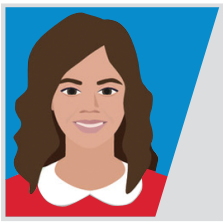
- Low in calories, saturated fat, and sugar
- High in fiber and water
- High in vitamins, minerals, and protein

Rate My Plate

Think about what you ate for dinner. Draw your meal, including the types of foods and the portion sizes, on the plate below. Consider how well your plate matched the recommended healthy plate.

How could you make your plate healthier next time?

Continue tracking what you eat and drink.



Teresa's Tips

"Creating a healthy plate and managing your portion sizes can **reduce risks of developing diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and some types of cancer.**"

Culturally Diverse Plates

You can use the healthy plate model to incorporate cultural traditions at any meal. The key to making the healthy plate model work for you is to draw the connections between your cultural foods and the designated food groups. Honor the cultural traditions you love while eating healthier.

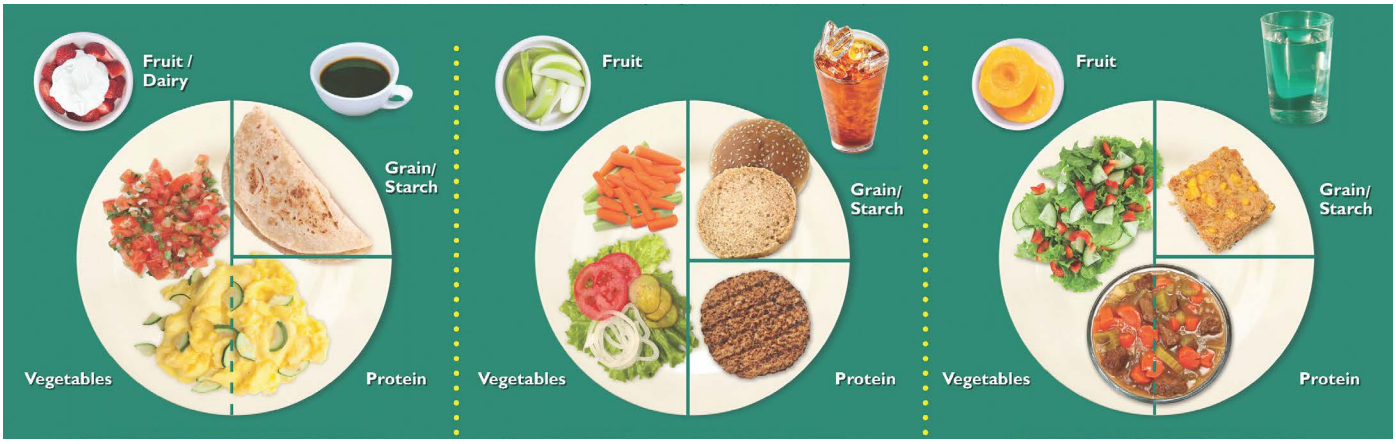


Image source: https://www.ihs.gov/diabetes/education-materials-and-resources/index.cfm?module=productDetails&productID=2468

Pictured here: Yogurt with strawberries, salsa, scrambled eggs with zucchini, tortilla, coffee

The plate consists of: 50% vegetables and fruit, 25% grain/starch, and 25% protein, with a side of dairy

Pictured here: Apple, carrots, celery, lettuce, tomato, onion, pickle, beef patty, bun, unsweetened tea

The plate consists of: 50% vegetables and fruit, 25% grain/starch, and 25% protein

Pictured here: Peaches, salad, beef and vegetable stew, cornbread, water

The plate consists of: 50% vegetables and fruit, 25% grain/starch, and 25% protein

Combination foods contain multiple food groups, like the beef and vegetable stew. Since the stew contains items from both the vegetable and protein food groups, the bowl of stew covers both of those sections of the plate. Another example is the hamburger. The burger components have been separated on the plate to show the vegetables, grain, and protein food group items that make up that one combination food.

Explore foods and customs from a variety of cultures and find traditional recipes from around the world at https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-meal-planning/culture-and-food

Now let's learn more about food groups. As you go through each food group, circle foods you typically eat. If you don't see a food you usually eat listed, write it down in the appropriate section.

My Healthy Plate Food Groups

50% Non-starchy Vegetables and Fruits

Non-starchy vegetables and fruits are low in calories and full of fiber, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. The fiber helps you feel full, controls hunger, and supports successful weight management.

***Tip:** You can choose fresh, canned, or frozen fruits and vegetables. Choose fruits and vegetables with a variety of colors, especially dark green, red, and orange.*

Non-starchy Vegetables

- Asparagus
- Beets
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Green beans
- Leafy greens
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Onions
- Peppers
- Summer squash
- Tomatillos
- Tomatoes

Fruits

- Apples
- Apricots
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Grapefruit
- Grapes
- Kiwi
- Mango
- Melons
- Oranges
- Pears
- Strawberries

Foods to Limit

- Dried fruits – ¼ cup serving or less
- Fruit with added sugars or syrup
- Vegetables with added salt, butter, or cream sauces
- Fruit juice with added sugars
- Overcooked or boiled vegetables – this removes vitamins
- Canned vegetables with added salt

25% Whole Grains and Starchy Vegetables

Whole grains and starchy vegetables are great sources of fiber, antioxidants, minerals, and B-vitamins. Each day, at least half of the grains we eat should be whole grains. Whole grain means it is the "complete" grain. Refined grains have been milled and are usually "white" grains. Milling not only removes most of the fiber, but also removes up to 25% of the grain's protein and many essential nutrients.

***Tip:** Check the ingredient list and look for the first or second ingredient to include the words "whole" or "whole grain."*

Whole Grains and Starchy Vegetables

100% whole grain cereal

100% whole wheat bread

100% corn tortillas

100% whole wheat pasta

Brown rice

Black beans

Green Peas

Popcorn

Lentils

Yams

Oatmeal

Potatoes

Pumpkin

Squash

Corn

Foods to Limit

- Frosted corn flakes, degerminated cornmeal
- Refined grains or "white" grains (white bread, white rice)
- Tortilla chips, potato chips
- "Enriched" wheat or semolina pasta
- Crackers made with "enriched" wheat flour
- Vegetables with added salt, butter, or cream sauces
- "Enriched" flour
- Popcorn with added salt or butter

25% Lean Protein

Protein is necessary to build and maintain healthy muscle mass while supporting tendons, ligaments, and other tissues. We need protein to keep our bodies in good working order, repair body cells, and protect us from bacteria and viruses. Vary your lean protein choices by including seafood, beans, and nuts.

Lean Protein

Eggs

Fish and seafood (salmon, trout, herring, shrimp)

Lean meats (lean ground beef, top loin steak, round eye roast, poultry, pork loin). Choose beef cuts labeled "choice" or "select."

Natural or raw nuts or nuts in the shell

Soy products (tofu, tempeh)

Beans, peas, and lentils are part of the protein group and the vegetable group.

Foods to Limit

- Fatty meat (bacon, bologna)
- Nuts with added oils from roasting
- Breaded meat and poultry
- Poultry skin

Smart Alex

"All foods can fit. **Research has shown that people who do not forbid themselves from having certain foods tend to have better health.** People who don't deny themselves specific foods or food groups experience less internal pressure to diet because they have a broader understanding of how their food intake impacts their overall energy balance."

Healthy Dairy Options

Dairy products are loaded with essential vitamins and minerals, including carbohydrates, protein, calcium, and vitamins A, D, and B12. Three servings of dairy per day can improve bone health and may reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Dairy intake is associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 diabetes and with lower blood pressure in adults. Fermented dairy, like yogurt and a yogurt-like drink called kefir, and other naturally fermented foods contain healthy bacteria called probiotics that help promote gut health.

Healthy Dairy

Skim or low-fat milk

Lactose-free milk

Unsweetened fortified soy milk

Low-fat cheese

Plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt

Foods to Limit

- Whole milk
- High-fat cheese
- Yogurt high in fat or with added sugars

Other Foods to Limit

Foods with Added Sugar

- Processed snack foods
- Cookies
- Candy
- Corn syrup
- Ice cream
- Honey
- Molasses
- Sugar

Fatty Foods

- Deep-fried foods (French fries, fried chicken, and donuts)
- Fatty meat (bacon, bologna, regular ground beef)
- Creamy salad dressings
- Mayonnaise
- Shortening
- Butter
- Lard

"Don't get wrapped up in the final goal but set little goals along the way."

– Jonathan, lost 30 pounds and says his mood and energy are better

Know About Liquid Calories

Many beverages contain sugar, fat, and alcohol, which can be major sources of calories. For weight management, it is better to get your calories from food rather than beverages.

Water is the best beverage choice

- For most adults, 9-13 cups of fluid per day are recommended.
- It's an essential nutrient and has zero calories. Always keep a water bottle with you.
- Drinking enough water each day regulates body temperature, keeps joints lubricated, prevents infections, delivers nutrients to cells, and keeps organs functioning properly.
- Being well-hydrated may improve sleep quality, cognition, and mood.

The next best options

- Try low-fat (1%), fat-free (skim) milk or calcium-fortified dairy alternative (soy milk, almond milk, etc.). Limit to 3 cups per day to meet your dairy serving recommendations.
- Try unsweetened tea or coffee.

If water or milk doesn't satisfy you?

- Put some fizz in your cup by drinking carbonated water.
- Add flavor to your water with lemon, lime, watermelon, or cucumber slices.
- Enjoy the beverage of your choice, but less of it. Remember to check the serving size and number of servings on the can or bottle. Select smaller cans or cups instead of large options.

Smart Alex

"**Heat, physical activity, and certain foods can increase your need for water.** Watch out for signs of dehydration; they include headaches, loss of energy, constipation, dry lips and tongue, dry skin, muscle or joint soreness, muscle cramps, light headedness, nausea, vomiting, elevated body temperature, water retention problems, hoarse voice, restlessness, and low-volume and/or dark-colored urine. Be sure to drink up!"

Beverage Swap

List your three favorite sugary, high-calorie beverages. What alternatives can you choose to reduce your beverage calorie intake?

Sugary/High-Calorie Drinks:

Alternatives:

Size It Up!

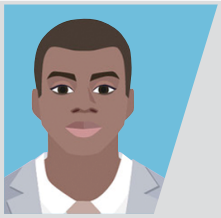
Identifying the correct serving size is important for portion control. A portion is the amount of food you choose to eat. A serving is a standard amount of food. It helps you estimate how much to eat. You can use everyday items or even your hand to estimate a serving size.

1 teaspoon	¼ cup	3 ounces of meat
1 tablespoon	½ cup	1 medium baked potato
1 ounce	1 cup	1 medium piece of fruit

"When I compared the recommended serving sizes to the portion sizes that people typically eat, I was shocked.

I'd been eating more than twice the serving size without even realizing it!"

– Michael, lost 62 pounds and maintained the loss for over 2 years



Smart Alex

"The process of satiety, or feeling full after eating, is complex. A full stomach is only part of it. Digestive hormones secreted by the gut also signal the brain when the stomach is being filled by food or water. It can take up to 20 minutes for this feedback system to tell your brain how full you are. **It is important to eat slowly and savor your meal so that your brain knows when you are satisfied, making it less likely that you will eat until you're overly full."**

Building a Healthy Plate Based on Your Caloric Target

The tables below provide general guidelines for food-group breakdowns based on the target calorie range you identified in Module 3. If you want to know more about a nutrition plan that is specific to your age, physical conditions, or dietary restrictions, talk to your MOVE! team.

Look back to Module 3 to find your daily target calorie range. Review how many servings of each food group you should eat per day to meet that target calorie range.

Calories (CAL)

Fruits	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Fruits (cups/day)	**1 cup**	**1 ½ cups**	**1 ½ cups**	**1 ½ cups**	**2 cups**

Vegetables	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Vegetables (cups/day)	**1 ½ cups**	**1 ½ cups**	**2 cups**	**2 ½ cups**	**2 ½ cups**
Non-starchy veg (cups/week)	6 ½	6 ½	9	11	11
Beans and peas (cups/week)	½	½	1	1 ½	1 ½
Starchy veg (cups/week)	3 ½	3 ½	4	5	5

Grains	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Grains (ounces/day)	**4 oz**	**5 oz**	**5 oz**	**6 oz**	**6 oz**
Whole grains (ounces/day)	2	2 ½	3	3	3
Refined grains (ounces/day)	2	2 ½	3	3	3

Protein Foods	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Protein Foods (ounces/day)	**3 oz**	**4 oz**	**5 oz**	**5 oz**	**5 ½ oz**
Meats, poultry, eggs (ounces/week)	14	19	23	23	26
Seafood (ounces/week)	4	6	8	8	8
Nuts, seeds, soy products (ounces/week)	2	3	4	4	5

Dairy	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Dairy (cups/day)	**2 ½ cups**	**2 ½ cups**	**3 cups**	**3 cups**	**3 cups**

Oils	1,200 CAL	1,400 CAL	1,600 CAL	1,800 CAL	2,000 CAL
Oils (grams/day)	**17 g**	**17 g**	**22 g**	**24 g**	**27 g**

Note: Available at https://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-food-patterns

If dairy is not consumed, daily protein intake may need to increase.

Now that you have reviewed the daily recommended serving sizes for your target calorie range, let's see how you can turn it into a healthy meal plan (see also Module 7 – Meal Planning, Shopping, and Cooking). A healthy meal plan varies based on eating styles and preferences. For example, Meal Plan B—light eating throughout the day with a large dinner, Meal Plan C—consistent eating throughout the day.

Meal Plan A (based on a 1,600-calorie plan)	
Breakfast	**Quantity**
Grains	2 ounces
Fruits	½ cup
Dairy	1 cup
Morning Snack	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Fruit	½ cup
Lunch	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Vegetables	½ cup
Fruits	½ cup
Dairy	½ cup
Protein	2 ounce
Afternoon Snack	**Quantity**
Vegetables	½ cup
Dairy	½ cup
Dinner	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Vegetables	½ cup
Dairy	1 cup
Protein	3 ounces

Meal Plan B (based on a 1,600-calorie plan)	
Breakfast	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Dairy	1 cup
Protein	1 ounce
Morning Snack	**Quantity**
Fruits	1 cup
Dairy	½ cup
Lunch	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Vegetables	½ cup
Dairy	½ cup
Protein	2 ounce
Afternoon Snack	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Vegetables	½ cup
Dinner	**Quantity**
Grains	2 ounces
Vegetables	½ cup
Fruits	½ cup
Dairy	1 cup
Protein	2 ounces

Meal Plan C (based on a 1,600-calorie plan)	
Breakfast	**Quantity**
Fruits	1 cup
Dairy	1 cup
Morning Snack	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Dairy	½ cup
Protein	1 ounce
Lunch	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ½ ounces
Vegetables	½ cup
Dairy	1 cup
Afternoon Snack	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ounce
Vegetables	½ cup
Dairy	½ cup
Protein	1 ounce
Dinner	**Quantity**
Grains	1 ½ ounces
Vegetables	½ cup
Fruits	½ cup
Protein	3 ounces

Note: Available at https://www.myplate.gov/myplate-plan
Proportions adjusted for a 1,600-calorie plan.

Busting Barriers

Now let's review some common barriers to eating wisely and possible solutions. 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.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
Shopping for healthy food is too expensive.	☐ Use coupons and buy foods on sale. ☐ Buy in bulk. ☐ Buy fruits and veggies that are in season or grow your own. ☐ Buy frozen fruits and veggies.
Shopping for and cooking healthy food takes up too much time.	☐ Ask friends or family to help you get things done. ☐ Shop on the weekends. ☐ Use a list to make sure you get everything you need for the week. ☐ Buy healthy convenience items, like prewashed salad. ☐ Look for recipes for fast, healthy meals.
I don't like the way healthy food tastes.	☐ Choose items with a variety of flavors, textures, scents, and colors. ☐ Dress up food with herbs, spices, low-fat salad dressing, lemon juice, vinegar, hot sauce, plain nonfat yogurt, or salsa. ☐ Grill or roast veggies and meat to bring out the flavor. ☐ Learn new cooking methods and recipes from books or videos, or take a healthy cooking class.
Write Your Own.	☐

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

"If you put your mind to it, the MOVE! program will work for you!"

– LaWanya, lost 20 pounds and improved blood pressure and cholesterol levels

Module Summary

Eating Strategies

Remember the BE MINDFUL eating strategies.

- ***B***uy healthy foods to keep at home and work
- ***E***at a nutritious breakfast everyday
- ***M***ake a healthy plate
- ***I***nvolve others, eat at the table, take your time, and savor your food
- ***N***ourish your body; avoid skipping or delaying meals
- ***D***rink more water, drink a glass before each meal
- ***F***ix foods at home
- ***U***se a plate for snacks and portion control
- ***L***imit high-fat, high-calorie, and sugar-sweetened foods

Create a Healthy Plate

Eating wisely is about eating foods from all food groups and building a healthy plate to get the nutrients your body needs. Creating a healthy plate and monitoring your portion sizes will help you manage your weight. Try to choose low-fat foods from each group to eat less fat and calories. Your plate should consist of:

- **50% non-starchy vegetables and fruits**
- **25% whole grains or starchy vegetables**
- **25% lean protein**
- **Don't forget to include healthy dairy options and drink plenty of water**

Avoid Liquid Calories

Pay attention to the calories you consume through drinks. Drinking water can help you limit calories from sugar-sweetened and alcoholic beverages. Drinking water before each meal will also help you feel fuller. Be sure to get enough dairy (milk or calcium-fortified dairy alternatives) as well; it offers key nutrients like calcium, vitamin D, and potassium. When water and milk just won't do, be mindful of how much you are drinking and keep track of your liquid calories in your *Food and Activity Log*.

Recommended Food Servings and Portion Sizes

This module discussed general serving-size recommendations for various daily caloric intake plans you can use when building your healthy plate. You can use everyday items to estimate the serving size of your foods. It is important to maintain a well-balanced diet to achieve weight loss. Check out MyPlate.gov for more detailed information about food groups and portion sizes.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your Food and Activity Log or another method every day.**
3. **Consider how healthy your plate is at each meal. Are you meeting the My Healthy Plate guidelines? What changes do you need to make to create a healthy plate?**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
FIVE

Get Fit for Life

How do I get started with changing my physical activity?

MOVE! is about being more active in whatever way works best for you. To increase your physical activity, it is important to start slowly and gradually add to your activity over time. Listen to your body to prevent injury. If you are concerned about increasing your activity, talk to your health care team. To enjoy being active, it helps if you are interested in the activity. Try several different kinds of activity to find out what is best for you. Also, it helps to find active moments throughout the day, such as taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking farther away from the door. There are lots of ways to be active and enjoy yourself, so mix it up!

"I walk more, park farther away, and take the stairs.

I wear my pedometer every day."

– Terrill, lost 31 pounds and is pain free

Strive for progress, not perfection!

Being physically active helps you manage your weight. It has many other benefits, including reducing your risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and colon cancer. It can help decrease your blood pressure, improve your cholesterol, and prevent or control diabetes. Regular physical activity strengthens bones and muscles. It also helps you be more flexible. Being active can also improve your sleep, mood, and self-esteem, and it can reduce stress and depression.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Identify ways to get active that work for you.**
2. **Describe the benefits of getting active.**
3. **Learn how to get fit.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Types of Physical Activity

Physical activity is anything that gets your body moving. The three types of physical activity—programmed, lifestyle, and work activity—all build upon each other. They help meet physical activity goals, reduce boredom, and keep your mind and body challenged. Here are some examples of each type of activity.

Check off the things you're already doing and star the things you want to start doing.

Lifestyle Activities

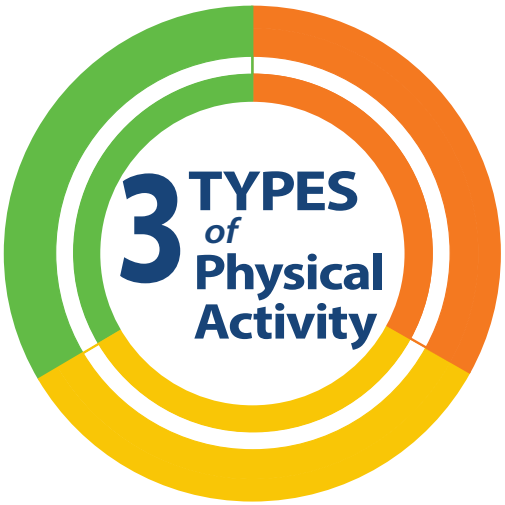
Be active at home. Lifestyle activities may be the easiest category in which to participate because the movement comes from your daily activities or chores. These are your *Active Moments* throughout the day. Find them and gradually increase their frequency and intensity.

- ☐ Wash your car
- ☐ Vacuum
- ☐ Chop or split wood
- ☐ March in place during TV commercials
- ☐ Do yard work
- ☐ Walk extra laps when you are at the mall
- ☐ Get off the bus one stop early and walk the rest of the way
- ☐ Walk or ride a bicycle for transportation instead of riding in a car or bus
- ☐ Run or walk briskly when you do errands
- ☐ Replace Sunday drives with Sunday walks
- ☐ Play actively with your children (or grandchildren) or pets
- ☐ Walk whenever you can—after dinner, with the dog, when golfing

Work Activities

Be active on the job. Work activities involve finding *Active Moments* while at work.

- ☐ Take the stairs instead of the elevator (up or down)
- ☐ Stand up while talking on the phone
- ☐ Walk during your lunch break
- ☐ Try to get at least 250 steps every hour
- ☐ Stand or move during long meetings
- ☐ Use a copy machine on the other side of the building
- ☐ Walk down the hall to talk to a co-worker instead of phoning or emailing
- ☐ Use a resistance band or stability ball in your office when you can



Programmed Activities

Be active and exercise. Programmed activities are probably what most people think of as organized or structured exercise. Along with lifestyle and work activities, programmed activities are a terrific way to get active, add variety, and involve others. There are four kinds of programmed activities: cardio, strengthening, flexibility, and stability.

Cardiovascular (or "cardio")

- ☐ Walking
- ☐ Jogging or running
- ☐ Stair climbing
- ☐ Aerobics & water aerobics
- ☐ Dancing
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ Roller or ice skating
- ☐ Chair exercises
- ☐ Machines (treadmill, stationary bike, elliptical, rowing)
- ☐ Any sport you enjoy (basketball, tennis, swimming, golf, pickle ball)

Stability

- ☐ Standing balance exercises
- ☐ Seated balance exercises
- ☐ Stability ball balance exercises
- ☐ Core exercises
- ☐ Tai Chi

Strengthening

- ☐ Free weights
- ☐ Resistance tubes & bands
- ☐ Weight machines
- ☐ Pilates
- ☐ Calisthenics
- ☐ Medicine balls
- ☐ Body weight exercises

Flexibility

- ☐ Use a foam roller over tight muscles
- ☐ Pilates
- ☐ Stretching—passive and active
- ☐ Yoga
- ☐ Breathing exercises

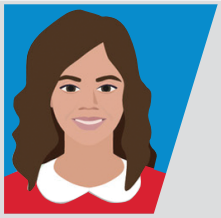
Why do I want to be more physically active?

How Active Should I Be?

The *2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans* state that you can protect your health by being physically active. Getting at least 150 and up to 300 minutes (2.5 to 5 hours) per week of moderate-intensity physical activity can lead to important health benefits. If you are able to be active more than 300 minutes per week, you will see more benefits to your health.

Physical Activity Recommendations for Adults

- Move more and sit less—any activity is better than no activity
- 150 minutes of moderate OR 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week
- For weight loss, work up to 300 minutes of moderate OR 150 minutes of vigorous activity per week
- Do strengthening activities at least 2 days a week
- Spread out your activity—aim to be active at least 5 days per week



Teresa's Tips

"***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, slow 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."**

Measures of Intensity

There are **two** ways to measure physical activity intensity: taking your heart rate and using the Rate of Perceived Exertion Chart. Let's review both so you can decide which one is right for you.

Know Your Heart Rate

Taking your pulse during physical activity allows you to measure how hard you are exercising. You should exercise to stay within your target heart range.

The table on the next page shows target heart rate ranges for exercise based on the maximum heart rate for selected ages. For example, the target heart rate for a 45-year-old will be 88-149 beats per minute, from moderate-to-vigorous activity.

Compare your measured heart rate to the target heart rate zone.

- For moderate-intensity activity, your heart rate should be closer to the 50% range.
- For vigorous-intensity activity, your heart rate should be closer to the 85% range.

Target Heart Rate Ranges Based on Age 50%-85% of Maximum Heart Rate				
Age (years)	**50% (BPM)**	**70% (BPM)**	**85% (BPM)**	**Maximum Heart Rate (BPM)**
20	100	140	170	200
25	98	137	166	195
30	95	133	162	190
35	93	130	157	185
40	90	126	153	180
45	88	123	149	175
50	85	119	145	170
55	83	116	140	165
60	80	112	136	160
65	78	109	132	155
70	75	105	128	150
75	73	102	123	145
80	70	98	119	140
85	68	95	115	135

*BPM = Beats Per Minute

Increasing your heart rate is a key part of exercise, and it is important that your heart rate is not too high or too low.

You should be able to breathe comfortably while exercising to ensure you are exercising at a level that is safe and effective for your body. Note that if you take beta blockers to treat high blood pressure, they may prevent you from reaching your target heart rate. It may be helpful to use another measure of intensity like the RPE Scale.

Hannah's How-To
Measure Your Heart Rate

"1. Use your index and middle fingers to take your pulse. Don't use your thumb.
2. Place these two fingers on your wrist, just below the base of the thumb.
3. Count the number of beats (pulses) for 15 seconds.
4. Take this number and multiply by 4 to find your heart rate in beats per minute.
   a. For example, if you count 25 beats, then 25 x 4 = 100 beats per minute.
   b. A quick way to do this in your head is to double the number twice. 25 doubled is 50. 50 doubled is 100."

Rate of Perceived Exertion Chart

10	MAX EFFORT ACTIVITY	Feels almost impossible to keep going. Completely out of breath/unable to talk.
9	VERY HARD ACTIVITY	Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely breathe or speak a single word.
7-8	VIGOROUS ACTIVITY	On the verge of becoming uncomfortable. Short of breath/can speak a sentence.
4-6	MODERATE ACTIVITY	Feels like you can exercise for hours. Breathing heavily/can have a short conversation.
2-3	LIGHT ACTIVITY	Feels like you can maintain for hours. Easy to breathe and have a conversation.
1	VERY LIGHT ACTIVITY	Anything other than sleeping. For example, watching TV, riding in a car.

Smart Alex

"**You can use the RPE Chart to rate how hard you are exercising.** Cardio activities should be done at levels 4-8, or moderate to vigorous. Strengthening activities should be done at levels 7-9, or vigorous to very hard. You can gradually increase intensity as you become more fit with consistent activity. Activities that used to be hard will become easier over time."

How Active Am I?

It's okay if you do not meet the physical activity guidelines right now. Using the table below, let's compare where you are now to what is recommended.

Target Activity Level	Current Activity Level
Be active at least **5 days** per week	I am active _____ days per week.
Be active for at least **10 minutes** at a time	I am active for at least _____ minutes at a time.
Do strengthening activities at least **2 days** per week	I do strengthening activities _____ days per week.
Do **150 minutes** of moderate-intensity activity **or** Do **75 minutes** of vigorous-intensity activity per week	I do _____ minutes of _____-intensity activity per week.

See Module 9 for progressive activity plans to get you started with cardio, strengthening, and stretching. Refer to these as you develop your physical activity goals.

"Find an exercise program that fits your schedule and stick to it."

– Thomas, lost 70 pounds and no longer has high blood pressure or high cholesterol

Preparing to Get Fit

When you increase your physical activity, safety is important to prevent injury or illness.

Safety First

- If you are concerned about starting to increase your activity, talk with your health care team

Warm Up and Cool Down

- Warm up before you exercise
- Cool down and stretch at the end of your session
- Take 5-10 minutes for each to prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness

Intensity

- Start where you are comfortable and increase gradually over time—this will help you avoid injury
- Mix up your activities to prevent strain on any one part of your body
- Always use good posture and pay attention to your form with any activity
- Listen to your body. Slow down or stop if you feel very tired, sick, lightheaded, or your joints hurt

Hydration

- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after activity

Apparel

- Wear comfortable shoes and clothes that are right for the activity and weather
- Use safety gear as needed

Weather

- Be active indoors if it's too hot or too cold outside
- Know the signs that you are overheated: headache, fast heartbeat, dizziness, nausea, light-headedness

Teresa's Tips

"A simple way to plan and progress your physical activity is to follow the concept of FITT: Frequency, Intensity, Time, Type of activity. **Whether you are a beginner or have experience, FITT can help you build your physical activity program.** Consider each aspect of FITT as you create your plan.

Frequency: ***How often are you active?***
Intensity: ***How hard are your heart and muscles working?***
Time: ***How long are you active?***
Type of Activity: ***What activities are you doing?"***

Using a Fitness Tracker

A pedometer or activity tracker can help you monitor your steps and activity, get feedback on your activity levels, and reach your physical activity goals. It is important to wear your pedometer or activity tracker every day.

Walking is just one way to move that can help you lose weight, keep it off, and improve your health. There are many other options if walking is not preferred or possible. If you choose to track steps, you can set daily and weekly goals. Gradually increase your goals as you are able. Moving your body in any way you can is better than being still. Every movement and every minute count!

Note: Pedometers and activity trackers will measure your steps and activity in different ways: the swing of your arm, GPS, etc. Be sure to read the instructions to know how your device works.

"I take the stairs whenever possible and park farther away. My energy level has probably doubled which is saying a lot for a 77-year-old woman! I can do it if I put in the effort."

– Sandy, lost 25 pounds with support from her friends

Hannah's How-To
Find the Right Fit

"**Whatever the activity, wearing the right kind of shoes is very important for your comfort and safety.**

- Shop around for various styles and brands. Ask the salesperson to assist you in choosing the shoe best suited for your chosen activity.
- If possible, go to an athletic store and be fitted for shoes that are appropriate for your width, arches, and gait.
- When trying on new shoes, wear the kind of socks you will wear when you are active. Wear cotton socks or athletic socks.
- Your feet swell slightly during activity and at the end of the day. Shop for new shoes right after you have been active or at the end of the day.
- Walk around when trying on shoes. There is no need to break in athletic shoes. They should feel comfortable right away.
- There should be one thumb's width of space between your longest toe and the end of the shoe.
- The heel should not pinch or slip when you walk.
- The shoes should bend easily at the ball of your feet just behind your toes.
- After exercising check your feet for any sores, cuts, or blisters. Tell your primary care team if these don't heal.
- Replace your shoes when the soles (bottom) are worn or slick. If the insoles (inside cushions) are worn, but the rest of the shoe is still in good shape, you can replace just the insoles.
- If you are walking regularly, you may need to replace athletic shoes frequently. Many runners replace their athletic shoes every 3–6 months."

"**The first week [of walking daily] was very hard. Then I started seeing results that motivated me. I still struggle with my disabilities; they are easier to deal with now."**

– Ezequiel, lost 60 pounds, sleeps and feels better

Busting Barriers

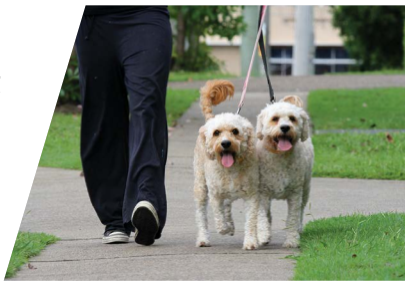
Now let's review some common barriers and potential solutions to being physically active. Which of these challenges do you think you might have? How might you overcome them? People who can anticipate challenges and are ready with a solution are more successful at maintaining change.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
I am not motivated to exercise.	☐ Identify reasons it is important to YOU to increase your physical activity.
I don't have time to be active.	☐ Break your 150 minutes into smaller chunks, any amount is better than none. ☐ Take the stairs instead of the elevator, even to go down! ☐ Use a fitness app to track your activity. ☐ Plan ahead for activity and put it on your schedule. ☐ Increase the intensity of daily activities (vacuum, sweep, or garden briskly). ☐ Stretch, do sit-ups, or pedal a stationary bike while you watch TV. ☐ Take a walk during your break or lunch. ☐ Join a nearby gym. Plan to go before or after work.
I feel embarrassed.	☐ Work out in your own home. ☐ Work out with a friend. ☐ Consider joining a men-only or women-only gym.
Working out is boring.	☐ Work out with a friend. ☐ Join a community sports league or walking group. ☐ Use a fitness app to challenge yourself and track progress. ☐ Listen to music, watch TV, or talk on the phone while you are active to help make it more interesting. ☐ Keep trying new activities until you find something you like.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
It costs too much.	☐ Do free activities like walking. ☐ Use items around the house for strength training, like canned food or water bottles. ☐ Buy workout clothes and equipment on sale. ☐ Look for free fitness classes at your library or community center. ☐ Attend a VA Be Active and MOVE! class.
It is hard to exercise when it's too hot or cold outside.	☐ Walk around a mall. ☐ Get an exercise video from a local library. ☐ Join the local gym or participate in community classes. ☐ Use active video games. ☐ Put on some music and dance.
Being active is painful or tiring.	☐ Ask your health care team for some ways to get active that are right for you. ☐ Work out safely (see *Preparing to Get Fit*). ☐ Work out at the time of day when you have the most energy. ☐ Walk slowly or swim. ☐ Do yoga or Tai Chi.

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week



Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Types of Activity

In this module, you learned there are many ways to be active. Lifestyle activities include being active during your daily routines. Work activities involve ways to be active while at work. Finally, programmed activities include planned exercise such as cardio, strengthening, flexibility, and stability exercises. It may be helpful to try several different activities to find what works best for you.

Get Fit

In this module, you learned the targets for how often, how long, and how intense each type of physical activity should be. Remember to set small goals to increase your endurance. Increase your frequency of activity before you increase the intensity. Don't overdo it! Pushing your body too hard can result in injuries and reduced motivation.

Stay Safe

Some activity is better than no activity. It is important to be active safely. Be sure to warm up, cool down, and stretch when active. Stay hydrated, and monitor your intensity level. Start small and gradually increase your activity to prevent injury or muscle fatigue.

Have fun when you work out and be mindful of all that your body can do!

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider your current physical activity level. How will you gradually increase your activity on a daily and weekly basis?**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
SIX

Take Charge of Your Health

How do I set myself up for success?

This module will discuss how thoughts, feelings, and behavior work together to help or hinder your efforts to improve your health. First, it is important to be aware of your thoughts and feelings about weight management, particularly those that might get in your way. Rethinking unhelpful thoughts can keep you in the right mindset for progress. Identifying feelings that may trigger unhealthy patterns can help you be more intentional with your choices. Practicing mindfulness and paying attention to how your thoughts and feelings affect your behavior are important for managing your health.

"Everything about the MOVE! Program seemed to work for me.

From day 1, realizing it is a 'self-managed' program clearly defined my own responsibility to succeed."

– Bob, lost 40 pounds, lowered his A1c, and stopped 3 medications

Every positive thought moves you in the right direction.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn about the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behavior.**
2. **Recognize unhelpful thoughts and how to rethink them.**
3. **Describe how feelings (both physical and emotional) influence what you do.**
4. **Review the importance of body image.**

Progress Check-In

- ☐ I met my previous healthy eating goal
- ☐ I met my previous physical activity goal

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

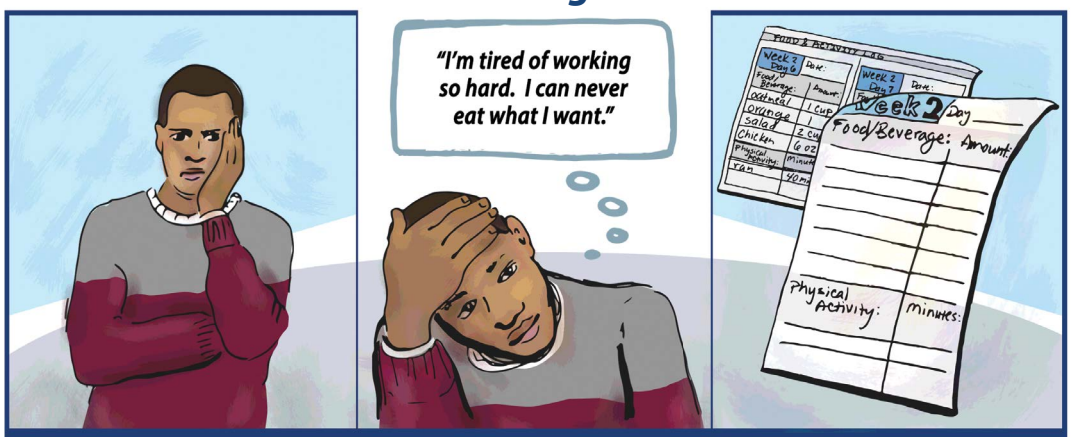
- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Raising Awareness

Thoughts, feelings (both physical and emotional), and behavior influence each other. Feelings such as hunger, sadness, boredom, or fear can trigger eating behavior, and eating may result in different feelings like happiness, anger, frustration, or fullness. Understanding how your thoughts and feelings influence eating (and how eating influences your thoughts and feelings) is another step to reaching your weight management goals. Practicing *mindful awareness,* or *mindfulness*, is a way to do this. Mindfulness means being fully aware of what is going on within and around you without judgment.

Consider the examples below. Both situations resulted in difficult feelings. In situation A, negative thinking resulted in behavior that was not consistent with the person's goals. In Situation B, a more realistic appraisal of the situation helped the person get back on track with her goals.

Situation A: You didn't lose weight this week.



Feelings	Thoughts	Behaviors
You feel deprived and frustrated.		You stop using your food and activity log.

Situation B: You ate more than you planned at dinner.

Feelings	Thoughts	Behaviors
You feel discouraged.		You review your reasons for wanting to change and your goals for this week.

Teresa's Tips

"Your attitude about weight management is driven by your thoughts and emotions and is reflected in your behavior. A negative attitude can get in the way of achieving your goals. **To keep a realistic attitude, keep unhelpful thoughts in check, set achievable goals, and reward yourself for achieving your goals.** Be kind to yourself through the ups and downs of your weight management journey. A positive attitude will help you succeed!"

Practicing Awareness

When you have a desire or urge to eat more than you planned, stop and pay attention to what you are thinking and feeling. Be sure to write down thoughts and feelings that you notice and what you do in response. The more you pay attention to these things and write them down, the easier it will be to find patterns. Being aware of patterns gives you the ability to change them - whether it's rethinking your thoughts, addressing your feelings, or choosing a different response.

This week, if you find yourself with a strong desire or urge to eat more than you planned, take out this chart and write down your feelings and thoughts and what you did. *Circle* any unhelpful thoughts and behaviors and think about what you could do differently next time.

Situation Day, time, what was going on?	**Feelings** What were you feeling?	**Thoughts** What were you thinking?	**Behaviors** What did you do?
Tuesday, after dinner, paying bills	Anxious, stressed	I'll feel better after a snack break.	Stopped for a snack break even though I wasn't hungry. Didn't finish paying bills.

Conquering Unhelpful Thoughts

How you think about weight management can affect how successful you are. While it may seem like your emotional response is determined or caused by a situation, how you interpret or think about different situations influences your emotional reactions. Sometimes unhelpful thinking can lead to discouragement or negative feelings that may impact your choices. It is important to remember that a *thought* is just a *thought*—it isn't necessarily wrong or right, true or false. If you can rethink unhelpful thoughts, you'll boost your confidence to make positive lifestyle changes.

Recognizing Unhelpful Thoughts

Let's review some common negative thinking patterns and some alternative ways of thinking. Which of these thoughts have you had or do you think you might have? Recognizing unhelpful thoughts is the first step to changing them!

Type of Thought	Example	Rethink It
All or Nothing	I've blown the entire day.	• I had one slip at lunch but I can get back on track at dinner. • I won't give up because of one slip.
Making Excuses	I can't meet my eating goals because my wife keeps making cookies.	• I can enjoy a cookie as long I don't overdo it. • I will ask my wife to make something healthy instead.
Filtering Information	I haven't stuck to my meal plan at all this week.	• I stuck to my meal plan four out of seven days. • I have a plan for how to stay on track in the future.
Self-Labeling	I'm the world's worst cook.	• My family liked the stir-fry I made last night. • I'll keep learning more about cooking.
Comparing	My friend has lost so much more weight than I have.	• I'm not going to give up. • I'll ask my friend for some tips.
Assume the Worst	I just know I'm going to get hurt. Then I won't be able to work out.	• I'll take steps to work out safely. • If I do get hurt, I'll find a different way to be active.
Overgeneralizing	I'll never be able to lose weight.	• With hard work, I can lose weight. • I can be patient if the weight doesn't come off right away.
Imperatives	I must eat everything on my plate.	• Whatever I don't eat, I can save for leftovers.

Tom's Toolkit

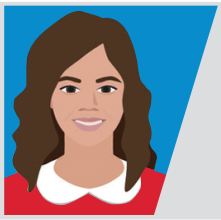
"When you catch yourself feeling bad (stressed, angry, hurt, anxious, scared, sad, etc.), **use these simple steps to rethink your unhelpful thoughts.**

1. Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself when you were feeling bad?
2. Question it—is it a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?
3. Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?
4. Consider alternatives—are there other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be true?"

Rethinking Unhelpful Thoughts

Now let's practice using the four steps to rethinking unhelpful thoughts. **Write down two unhelpful thoughts** from the *Practicing Awareness* activity. Work through the steps to rethink your unhelpful thought.

	Thought 1	Thought 2
Step 1 Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself?		
Step 2 Question it—is this a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?		
Step 3 Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?		
Step 4 Consider alternatives—what are other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be true?		



Teresa's Tips

"**Every behavior is a choice, and every choice has a consequence**—you have control over what you do. Realizing every behavior is a choice empowers you to make more positive choices in the future!"

Emotional Triggers

An important first step in making lifestyle changes is to understand your habits. How often do you eat more than you planned in each of these situations?

Use the 1-to-4 scale.

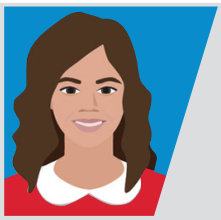
1 = Never, or Does not apply | 2 = Occasionally | 3 = Sometimes | 4 = Often

- ☐ When happy
- ☐ While alone
- ☐ When bored
- ☐ When lonely
- ☐ At social gatherings
- ☐ When depressed
- ☐ When nervous
- ☐ When frustrated
- ☐ While working
- ☐ At the movies
- ☐ While reading
- ☐ While drinking alcohol
- ☐ While watching TV
- ☐ While smoking cigarettes
- ☐ While doing housework
- ☐ When celebrating
- ☐ While on vacation
- ☐ While away from home
- ☐ While talking on the phone
- ☐ At restaurants or dining halls
- ☐ While eating regular meals
- ☐ While preparing meals
- ☐ After physical activity

"To future MOVE! participants, I say come with a proper mindset.

And I offer this incentive: at first, it won't be easy, but once you accept and implement the lifestyle changes that MOVE! offers, it will."

– Lee, lost 32 pounds and sleeps better



Teresa's Tips

"**Are you eating out of hunger or habit?** Sometimes situations, time of day, thoughts, or emotions can trigger us to eat. When you feel the urge to eat, think about whether you are hungry or are just trying to fill an urge. If it is just an urge to eat, find something to distract yourself for 15 minutes."

A Healthy Way of Coping

Be mindful of how your feelings affect your behavior. Some feelings can cause an urge to eat at times when you did not intend to or be inactive when you had plans to be more active. Consider instead what is causing your emotion and how you can respond to the feeling differently.

Write down your emotional triggers from the *Practicing Awareness* activity. Brainstorm ways you can respond to that emotion. Healthy coping responses could include things like socializing with friends or family, being physically active, distracting yourself (watching TV, reading, working in the yard, etc.), and meditation and relaxation exercises.

What Am I Feeling?	How Can I Cope?
Example: Anxious, stressed, overwhelmed	Examples: Go for a walk, take deep breaths, squeeze a stress ball, pray, call a friend.

"I have now taken the MOVE! classes two times.

The first time, I was not mentally ready to make changes.

The second time I participated, I was focused on improving my health."

– Joe, lost 50 pounds and learned how to cook and enjoy vegetables

Body Image

The image you have of your body affects you physically and emotionally. Your body image is influenced by your experiences during childhood, adolescence, and adulthood.

Accepting your body is important. No matter how many positive lifestyle changes you make in this program, it will be difficult to be satisfied with your accomplishments if you do not appreciate all the things your body does for you. This can set you up for disappointment and frustration.

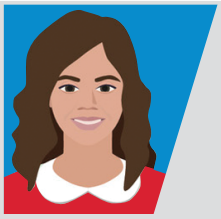
Body image refers to different types of bodily experiences and perceptions. These different parts of body image affect each other:

- **How you see yourself in a mirror**
- **How you see and focus on different body parts**
- **Your mental picture of your body**
- **How you experience your body in different spaces**
- **How you perceive sensations (like heat, cold, hunger, anger)**
- **Thoughts, statements, and feelings about your body**

Going Beyond Appearance

We constantly see advertisements and media portrayals of beauty and the "ideal" body type. These images make many women and men feel insecure and negative about their own appearance. Recognizing that these pressures exist is the first step in developing a healthy body image.

Another important step is recognizing that body image is more than skin-deep. It's also about what's on the inside. Focusing on what your body can do is a great way to improve your body image. And remember, the changes you are making may not always be reflected in the numbers on the scale and that is okay! Your new lifestyle is improving your health. You may have already lowered your blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugars. This all leads to a healthier you!



Teresa's Tips

"When feeling down, the craving for 'comfort food' increases. Practicing awareness will help you recognize this connection and empower you to decide how you will respond, whether that is using mindfulness to enjoy a portion of 'comfort food' or engaging in another activity to manage your feeling."

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors

It is important to understand how your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors influence each other to help or hinder your weight management progress. Practicing mindfulness (being fully aware of what is going on within and around you without judgment) can provide insight into how your thoughts and feelings influence your behavior.

Rethinking Unhelpful Thoughts

Unhelpful thoughts can get in the way of your health goals because they can lead to eating more than you planned or being inactive.

1. Recognize your unhelpful thought—what were you thinking or telling yourself when you were feeling bad?
2. Question it—is it a realistic thought? Is there evidence that this thought is true?
3. Ask yourself—is it helpful to think this way?
4. Consider alternatives—are there other ways of thinking about this? Are there other things that could be *true*?

Emotional Triggers

Emotions can trigger many people to eat more than they intended. It is important to identify what your emotional triggers are so you can stop them in their tracks. Keep a diary of how you are feeling when you eat to identify your common emotional triggers. Consider different ways of coping with the emotion that don't involve food.

Body Image

Body image is how you perceive and experience your body. There are many parts of body image, including how you see yourself in the mirror, your mental picture of your body, and statements you make about your body.

Rethinking unhelpful thoughts and becoming comfortable with your body can help you be more accepting of yourself. Focus on how your body helps you do the things you enjoy.

Having a healthy mind is important for having a healthy body.

Module To-Do:

1. Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.
2. Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.
3. Consider how your thoughts and emotions might be affecting your behavior and how you can make them work for you—not against you.
4. Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.

Notes:

MODULE
SEVEN

Menu Planning, Shopping, and Cooking

What can I do to add healthy eating to my lifestyle?

Getting a better grasp on menu planning, shopping, and cooking will help make healthy eating a habit. It is recommended that you eat balanced meals with portioned snacks in between. Eating consistently will help you be mindful of the types of foods you select. To maintain your health, it's important to learn how to plan meals, shop for nutritious foods, read food labels, and practice healthy cooking methods that bring out the best flavor. Healthy eating can be enjoyable. There are lots of ways to save time and money when you buy and prepare healthy foods!

"I haven't stopped eating anything, I just eat intelligently!"

– Lee, lost 32 pounds and enjoys trying new foods

Your food logs have helped you find patterns in your eating (skipping meals, eating after meals). Now we'll talk about some specific ways to create healthy, regular eating patterns:

- Aim for 2-3 balanced meals in a calorie range right for you and 1-2 healthy snacks. Space your eating times about 3-4 hours apart.
- Managing weight will be easier if you can eat your meals on a regular schedule, but it doesn't have to be an exact schedule.
- It is important to eat first thing in the morning—it helps support your metabolism and prevents feeling hungry later in the day.
- Eating late at night is generally not good for you. Eat more food earlier in the day so you aren't overly hungry after dinner.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Practice menu planning.**
2. **Learn how to shop for healthy food.**
3. **Learn how to make sense of food labels.**
4. **Identify ways to prepare healthy meals.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Meal Planning Made Easy

Planning meals ahead of time can help you stick to a healthy eating style. Here are some tips to get started with meal planning for you or for the whole family!

START

Phase 1: Map Your Week

- **Start by using a weekly meal planning chart** (see *My Meal and Snack Plan* Activity).
- **Check your schedule.** Are there nights you'll be out or commitments that will impact who is home for dinner? Note your scheduling details on the chart under the appropriate day of the week.

Phase 2: Plan Your Meals

- **Write down your evening meals first.** When selecting entrée recipes and side dishes, remember to create a healthy plate (see *Module 4 – Building a Healthy Plate Based on Your Caloric Target & Meal Plans*).
  - » **Look at what you have.** Check your pantry, fridge, and freezer to see what ingredients you already have.
  - » **Vary your protein.** If you have chicken one day, try seafood, beans, lean meats, or eggs on other days.
  - » **Choose easy meals.** Include quick and easy meals as well as ready-to-reheat freezer meals (see *Hannah's How-To* later in the module).
- **Write down your breakfast, lunch, and snacks.** Most of us stick to the same thing for breakfast and lunch so it is okay to put these on autopilot until you get used to meal planning. Write in two or three options for breakfast and lunch (cereal, leftovers, sandwich). Keep your options simple.
- **Create balance.** If you have veggies, grains, and protein at one meal, include fruit and dairy in your next meal.

Teresa's Tips

"If you use balance and moderation with your meal planning, all foods will fit.

Balance – to manage your weight, balance what you eat and drink with your activity level.

Moderation – eat until you are satisfied, not stuffed.

Variety – choose a wide variety of foods, like vegetables, fruits, whole grains, meats, poultry, seafood, eggs, beans, nuts, seeds, and dairy to help you get all the nutrients that you need."

Phase 3: Make Mealtime a Success

- **Write down your thaw, prep, and cook times**. Adding this information to your meal planning chart is a huge time saver. It prevents you from starting to make dinner at 5 pm only to realize that it will take 3 hours to cook the recipe you chose. This planning will make it more likely that you will stick with your menu plan. It will also help you to know when to start meal preparation.
- **Plan for leftovers.** Prepare enough of a dish to eat it multiple times during the week to save time and money.
- **Make mealtime a priority.** Whether you eat alone or with others, make time for meals. If you have others in your household, try to cook, eat, and clean up together.
- **Work your meal plan.** Don't expect to get it right the first time. As you discover what works and what doesn't, update your plan and incorporate what you learn into the next week's plan.

Jackson's Story

Jackson's family has a history of high cholesterol and high blood pressure. While serving in the Army for 8 years, Jackson was able to manage his weight effectively. However, since his discharge 4 years ago he has gained 30 pounds and he is worried about high cholesterol and high blood pressure.

Jackson starts the MOVE! Program at his local VA and learns the importance of healthy eating habits. He uses the MOVE! Healthy Plate as a guide to plan a weekly menu, remembering to include plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins. As Jackson considers what recipes he wants to use, he checks his refrigerator and pantry for items he has available.

Jackson's Meal and Snack Plan

Day	Morning	Snack	Afternoon	Snack	Evening
Monday	• Oatmeal • Strawberries • Coffee/skim milk	Rice cake with hummus	• Chicken breast • Spinach and tomato salad • Tea/lemon	Apple	• Black bean burrito with tomato, low-fat cheddar, and salsa • Sparkling water with lemon
Tuesday	• Nonfat plain yogurt • Strawberries • Coffee/skim milk	Apple	• Turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato • Pickle • Tea/lemon	Baked tortilla chips and salsa	• Peppers stuffed with brown rice • Salad • Sparkling water with lemon
Wednesday	• Scrambled eggs with veggies • Whole wheat toast • Coffee/skim milk	Fruit and nut bar	• Chicken salad • Pita chips • Tea/lemon	Broccoli with non-fat yogurt dip	• Chicken and veggie stir-fry • Sparkling water with lemon
Thursday	• Oatmeal • Strawberries • Coffee/skim milk	Whole wheat crackers with peanut butter	• Chicken breast • Spinach and tomato salad • Tea/lemon	Air-popped popcorn	• Baked pork loin • Steamed broccoli • Whole wheat pasta • Sparkling water with lemon
Friday	• 100% whole wheat bread with peanut butter • Coffee/skim milk	Celery with low-fat cream cheese	• Turkey sandwich with lettuce and tomato • Pickle • Tea/lemon	Orange	• Leftover chicken and veggie stir-fry • Sparkling water/lemon
Saturday	• Scrambled eggs with veggies • Whole wheat toast • Coffee/skim milk	Fruit and nut bar	• Leftover baked pork loin • Steamed broccoli • Fruit • Sparkling water/lemon	Carrots with hummus	• Garden salad with chicken • Baked potato/low-fat sour cream • Fruit • Skim milk
Sunday	• Nonfat plain yogurt • Strawberries • Coffee/skim milk	Apple	• Baked potato • Side salad • Fruit • Sparkling water/lemon	Rice cake with peanut butter	• Grilled turkey burger • 100% whole wheat roll • Salad • Skim milk

My Meal and Snack Plan

Plan your meals and snacks for one week. See also the example meal plans in Module 4 – Eat Wisely.

Day	Morning	Snack	Afternoon	Snack	Evening
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					

Being a Smart Shopper

Eating wisely doesn't have to be expensive. Here are a few tips on ways to eat well while keeping your meals and budget in balance.

Plan Ahead

Stick to your list
Bring your shopping list with the foods and quantities you need to buy. You'll save money and time by only buying what you need.

Search for coupons
Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Join your store's loyalty program, if available. Find out if your store will match competitor's coupons.

Have a healthy snack
Eat a healthy snack before you shop so you won't be hungry. This will help you make healthy choices.

At the Store

Compare brands
Store brands can be less expensive than name brand foods. Compare items to find better prices while getting the same nutrition.

Try canned or frozen
Compare the price and number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.

Buy non-perishables in bulk
Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale because they last much longer than fresh ones.

At the Store

Buy small amounts of perishables
Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often so you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

Celebrate the season
Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to find and usually cheaper. Try a local farmers' market for in-season produce.

Good sources of protein
Shop for beans, peas, eggs, canned tuna (in water), and peanut butter—all are good sources of protein and affordable.

Get whole-grains
Purchase whole-grain foods (pasta, bread, rice)—they are good sources of fiber and make inexpensive side dishes.

Keep it simple
Buy products in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat foods are convenient but often cost more.

Use food labels
Read food labels while you shop to help you choose healthier items.

"I learned so much about nutrition. I now read food labels for everything I buy."

– Lance, lost 40 pounds and his doctor was able to stop most of his medications

Jackson's Shopping List

Using the meal plan he created with help from his MOVE! team, Jackson took an inventory of items he already had on hand and prepared a list of everything he would need to buy. That weekend, Jackson tried some of the healthy shopping tips he received from his MOVE! team. He also went shopping with a budget in mind. Jackson only brought coupons for items he intended to buy from his shopping list to avoid being tempted to buy unhealthy food items. He was impressed by how much healthy food he was able to get for his money by planning ahead and making informed choices.

Jackson's Shopping List

Non-Starchy Veggies

- [ ] Lettuce
- [ ] Tomatoes
- [ ] Carrots
- [ ] Spinach
- [ ] Broccoli
- [ ] Peppers

Protein Foods

- [ ] Chicken breasts
- [ ] Eggs
- [ ] Sliced turkey
- [ ] Pork loin
- [ ]
- [ ]

Grains/Starchy Foods

- [ ] Black beans
- [ ] 100% whole wheat bread
- [ ] 100% cornmeal tortillas
- [ ]

Dairy

- [ ] Low-fat cheddar
- [ ] Skim milk
- [ ] Plain nonfat yogurt
- [ ]
- [ ]

Fruit

- [ ] Oranges
- [ ] Apples
- [ ] Strawberries
- [ ] Lemons
- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

Drinks

- [ ] Tea
- [ ] Sparkling water

Other

- [ ] Salsa
- [ ] Garlic
- [ ] Hummus

My Shopping List

After you plan your meals and snacks for the week, make a list of the items you need to buy and the quantity of each item.

My Shopping List

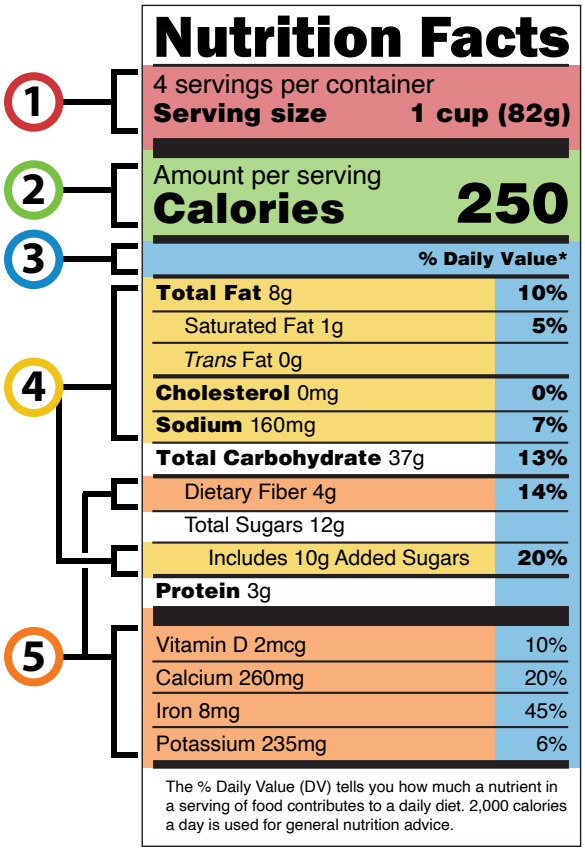
Non-Starchy Veggies	Protein Foods	Grains/Starchy Foods

Dairy	Fruit	Drinks

Other

Making Sense of Food Labels

Reading and understanding the Nutrition Facts label can help you make informed food choices when shopping.



1 KNOW the Serving Size

While we usually say "portion" or "helping" when we talk about how much we eat, "serving size" is the official term used on food labels. Information listed on the Nutrition Facts label is based on a typical serving in common measurements like cups, ounces, or pieces. Be sure to look at the number of servings in the container. Even small containers may have more than one serving. If you eat more or less than the serving listed, you must multiply or divide the nutritional values by the number of servings you eat.

2 CHECK the Calories Per Serving

The calories listed are for one serving of the food. For example, if you eat 2 servings of this item you must double the calories per serving (250 calories x 2 servings = 500 total calories).

3 BE AWARE of % Daily Values

This section tells you how the nutrients in one serving of the food contribute to your daily total. Use it to choose foods that are high in the nutrients you should get more of and low in those you need less of. **Tip:** 5% daily value or less is low, 20% or more is high. Percent Daily Values on the Nutrition Facts label are based on a 2,000-calorie diet. Your % Daily Value may be higher or lower depending on your daily calorie needs.

4 LIMIT these Nutrients

Eating too much **total fat** (especially **saturated fat** and **trans fat**), **cholesterol**, **sodium**, or **added sugars** may increase your risk of developing chronic diseases like obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.

Added sugars are sugars and syrups that are added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared. This does not include naturally occurring sugars such as those in milk and fruit. Added sugars should be limited to 10% of your daily calories.

5 GET MORE of these Nutrients

Americans often don't get enough dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium from food. Look for foods with 10% or more of these nutrients in the % Daily Value column.

Food Label Quiz

Refer to the Nutrition Facts label and circle or write the correct or best response.

1) *The Nutrition Facts given on a food label are based on the serving size.*

a) True

b) False

2) *How many servings are in this container?*

a) 1

b) 4

c) 8

3) *How many calories are in one serving?*

a) 120

b) 250

c) 660

4) *What percent of your recommended daily value of calcium will you get from one serving (based on a 2,000 calorie diet)?*

a) 6%

b) 10%

c) 20%

5) *How many grams of total sugars are in one serving?*

a) 4 grams

b) 10 grams

c) 12 grams

6) *How many grams of protein are in one serving?*

a) 0 grams

b) 3 grams

c) 4 grams

7) *This product contains a high amount of added sugars (based on the % daily value).*

a) True

b) False

8) *If you ate the whole container, how many calories would you consume?*

a) 250

b) 500

c) 1000

9) *If you ate the whole container, how many grams of saturated fat would you consume?*

a) 4 grams

b) 8 grams

c) 37 grams

10) *If you ate ½ cup, what percent of your recommended daily value of total fat would you consume?*

a) 5%

b) 10%

c) 20%

Answer Key

1) A – True
2) B – Four
3) B – 250
4) C – 20%
5) C – 12 grams
6) B – 3 grams
7) A – True
8) C – 1000
9) A – 4 grams
10) A – 5%

Teresa's Tips

"The claims on food labels can be confusing. Knowing what these claims mean can help you choose healthier products. **Use this table guide when interpreting label claims.** The FDA has not defined 'low sugar' so read the Nutrition Facts label to see if the quantity fits into your dietary plan. For products labeled 'no added sugar,' natural sugar may already be present and sugar substitutes may be added."

Nutrient	"Free" Ex: Fat free	"Low or Lite" Ex: Low in fat	"Reduced" Ex: Reduced fat
Fat	Less than 0.5 grams of fat per serving	Less than 3 grams of fat per serving	At least 25% less fat per serving than the original food product. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low fat," so this may still be a high-fat food.
Saturated Fat	Less than 0.5 grams of saturated fat and less than 0.5 grams of trans fatty acids per serving	1 gram of saturated fat or less per serving and 15% or fewer calories from saturated fat	At least 25% less saturated fat per serving than the original item. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low saturated fat," so this may still be a food high in saturated fat.
Calories	Less than 5 calories per serving	Less than 40 calories per serving	25% or fewer calories per serving than the original product. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low calorie," so this may still be a high-calorie food.
Cholesterol	Less than 2 milligrams of cholesterol per serving	20 milligrams of cholesterol or less per serving	At least 25% less cholesterol per serving than the original item. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low cholesterol," so this may still be a food that is high in cholesterol.
Sodium	Less than 5 milligrams of sodium per serving	140 milligrams of sodium or less per serving	At least 25% less sodium per serving than the original item. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low sodium," so this may still be a food that is high in sodium.
Sugar	Less than 0.5 grams of sugar per serving	Not defined	At least 25% less sugar per serving than the original item. **Caution:** Original product may not be "low in sugar," so this may still be a food that is high in sugar.

How Can I Cook Healthier Foods?

Eating wisely at home not only saves you money, it can also help you cook healthier food options that save on calories. Here are some tips to keep in mind when preparing food at home.

Cooking	Eating
• Lightly steam veggies like green beans and broccoli so they stay crisp and colorful. • Grill or roast veggies and meat to bring out the flavor. • Dress up food with herbs, spices, low-fat salad dressing, lemon juice, vinegar, hot sauce, plain nonfat yogurt, and salsa. • Add a mixed green salad and a side of fruit to a meal. • Stretch costly meals (like meat dishes) by substituting beans and adding more vegetables. • Learn new healthy cooking methods or take a healthy cooking class. Healthy Teaching Kitchens are available at many VA Medical Centers.	• Use a plate or bowl and avoid eating out of boxes, bags, or cartons unless they are single servings. • Fix your plate in the kitchen. Serve your meal in a buffet style, leaving the serving bowls in the kitchen so that if you decide to eat more, it will be a mindful choice. • Whenever possible, find a quiet space to eat with few distractions. People often eat more than they intended when in front of the TV, computer, or while engaged in other activities.

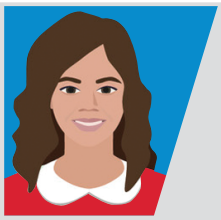
"I take time to learn to make foods that I like. I try to learn every day. I now have more food and recipes than I can eat."

– John, lost 64 pounds and has better mobility and independence

Hannah's How-To

"Here are some quick and nutritious food preparation techniques."

Technique	Description
Stir-fry or Sauté	Use a cast iron or non-stick skillet or a wok. Most dishes can be cooked using 1 tsp of olive or canola oil, or reduced-sodium broth.
Microwave	Because microwaves cook foods quickly, few nutrients are lost during the cooking process. Read the cooking directions carefully; it is easy to overcook foods.
Slow Cooker	Slow cookers cook food slowly at low temperatures. Set it up in the morning and dinner will be ready and waiting when you get home. Soups, stews, and pot roasts all make great slow cooked meals. Extra-lean, less marbled cuts of meat become tender and juicy when cooked in a slow cooker.
Bake, Broil, and Grill	Bake, broil, or grill foods on a rack to drain fats away during cooking. Not only is this a healthier way to cook, it's delicious, too!
Steam	Steam using a microwave, stove, or steamer. Steaming helps keep nutrients and flavor in foods without adding fat.
Pressure Cook	Using steam, pressure cookers can cook a pound of potatoes in just 4 minutes or a chicken stew in less than 30 minutes. A pressure cooker can also turn the toughest cut of meat into a tender main course. Don't over-season foods—pressure cooking uses very little liquid, so flavors are more concentrated.
Poach	When poaching, the food is covered with liquid (such as water, broth, milk, or wine) and gently simmered until done. Poaching uses less liquid than boiling, so delicate flavors are less diluted. Poaching works well for fish or eggs.



Teresa's Tips

"Here are some ways to cook with less fat.

- Bake, grill, or stir-fry in a small amount of healthy oil
- Coat pans with cooking spray, like olive or canola oil
- Use nonstick cookware
- Simmer in water or low-sodium chicken or vegetable stock
- Steam or microwave
- Take the skin off chicken before you cook it
- Trim the fat off meat before you cook it."

Cook it Safely, Keep it Safe

A critical part of healthy eating is keeping foods safe. You can reduce contaminants and keep food safe to eat by following safe food handling practices. Four basic safety principles work together to reduce the risk of foodborne illness—Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill.

Clean	• Wash hands with soap and water • Sanitize surfaces • Throw away perishable food after 7 days at the longest • Keep appliances clean • Rinse fresh vegetables and fruits
Separate	• Separate foods when shopping » Place raw seafood, meat and poultry in separate plastic bags. Store them on lower refrigerator shelves and keep ready-to-eat foods on higher shelves. • Separate foods when preparing and serving » Always use a clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw seafood, meat, and poultry. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.
Cook	• Use a food thermometer when cooking • Cook food to safe internal temperatures » Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb, veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145°F. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least 3 minutes before carving or eating. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160°F. Cook all poultry, including ground turkey and chicken, to an internal temperature of 165°F.
Chill	• Keep foods at safe temperatures » Keep hot foods at 140°F or above until you are ready to store them. Then cool and refrigerate leftovers promptly. Store cold foods at 40°F or below. Refrigerate perishable foods within 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature is above 90°F).

Busting Barriers

Now let's review some common barriers to menu planning, shopping, and cooking, and potential solutions. 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.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
I need to eat foods my family doesn't like.	☐ Keep your own supply of healthy foods, and encourage your family to try them. ☐ Make a separate small portion for yourself without added fat and salt. ☐ Use spices and herbs to add some flavor! ☐ Modify your family's favorite dishes to make them healthier.
My spouse/ partner doesn't cook healthy foods.	☐ Talk with your family about how you can eat healthier meals together. Be flexible, creative, and try new things. ☐ Be prepared to eat a separate meal, if necessary. Eat together even if the food is different!
It's unpleasant/ boring/hard to shop, cook, and eat this way.	☐ Shop, cook, and eat healthy meals with friends and family. ☐ Learn new cooking methods and recipes from books, articles, and videos. Or take a healthy cooking class. ☐ Try new ingredients.
Healthy cooking takes too much time.	☐ Choose recipes with few ingredients and a short cooking time. ☐ Cook soups, stews, or meat in a slow cooker when you are busy. ☐ Do meal preparation on the weekends (e.g., pack lunches or cut up veggies for stir fry). ☐ Make enough for several meals. Divide meals into single servings in freezer bags or containers. ☐ Measure out single servings of snacks, like air-popped popcorn, in bags or containers. ☐ Use leftovers (meats and veggies) in an omelet, pasta or rice dish, stew, soup, salad, or burrito.

Barrier	Barrier Buster
Write Your Own.	

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Menu Planning

Planning meals ahead of time can help you stick to a healthy eating style. Plan a weekly menu to avoid stress during the week. Find balance in the items and meals you plan—if you have veggies, grains and protein at one meal, include fruit and dairy in the next meal. Plan to have leftovers for a quick and easy meal—store the extra portions in single serving size containers or freeze them to last longer.

"You must control the food, don't let the food control you!"

– Lenny, lost 35 pounds

Shopping for Healthy Foods

Make a list of items you need for your weekly menu—it helps to stick to your list. Use coupons, store sales, loyalty programs, and generic products to reduce costs. You can make your food stretch farther and last longer by purchasing canned or frozen fruits and veggies in addition to portions of fresh produce. Search for healthy and cost-effective protein options besides meat, like beans, lentils, peas, eggs, and canned tuna. Whole grains are a major source of fiber and can be inexpensive, filling side dishes. Be sure to read food labels and food label claims to make informed choices.

Healthy Cooking Methods

Learn various cooking methods, like grilling or roasting, to bring out the food's flavor and retain nutrients. There are many alternatives to seasoning or flavoring your food with high-calorie, high-fat options like butter and sauces. Dress up your food with herbs, spices, low-fat salad dressing and gravy, lemon juice, vinegar, hot sauce, plain nonfat yogurt, and salsa. Adding a mixed green salad and/or a side of fruit to each meal can help you feel full without adding excessive calories. Use a plate or bowl for each meal and snacks to help control portion sizes.

Cook it Safely, Keep it Safe

When shopping for, preparing, and storing healthy foods, remember the four basic safety principles:

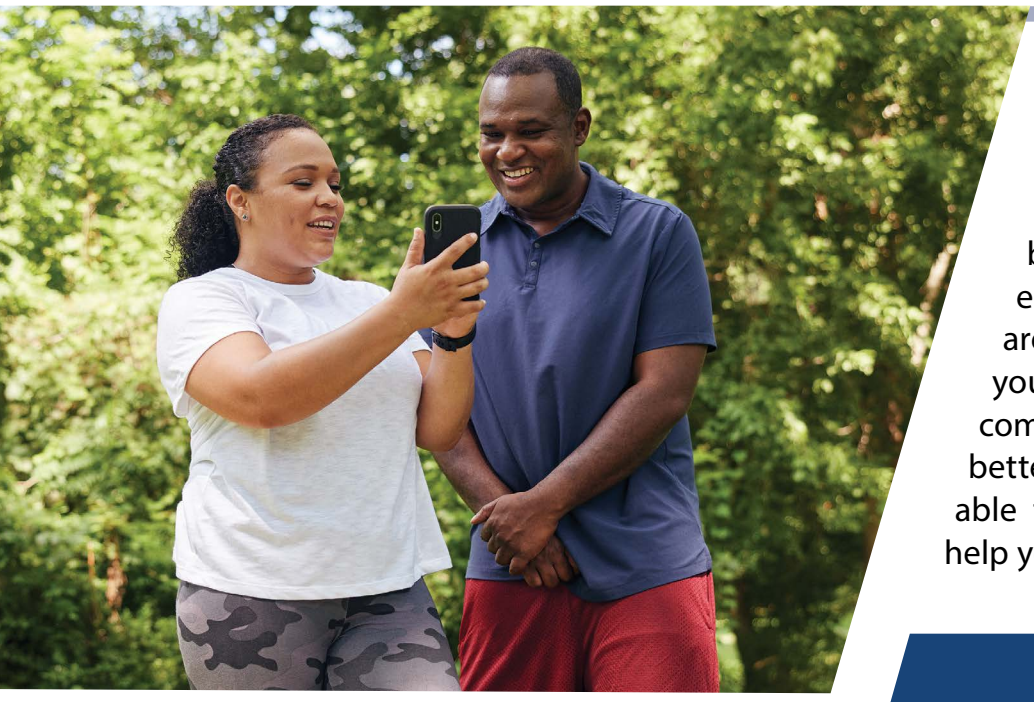
- Clean
- Separate
- Cook
- Chill

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day. Use USDA's FoodData Central at https://fdc.nal.usda.gov/ or other websites to learn how many calories are in the foods you eat and start tracking calories if you haven't already.**
3. **Consider ways you can plan, shop, and cook healthy meals that will save time and money and fit with your schedule.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**
5. **Review additional resources:**
   - **a.** https://www.nutrition.va.gov/ for cookbooks and nutrition education
   - **b.** https://myplate.gov/ for calorie charts, MyPlate Plan, and links to cookbooks and recipes
   - **c.** https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/educational/lose_wt/eat/recipes.htm for heart healthy recipes for African American style and Latino cooking

MODULE
EIGHT

Managing Challenges



How do I solve problems?

While working through the MOVE! Program, challenges and barriers will occur. It is normal to encounter challenges when you are making significant changes to your lifestyle. Veterans face many common barriers when trying to better manage their health. Being able to recognize these barriers will help you get past them.

"I'm not going to say my road was easy. It's just like life… life isn't always easy. But I'm confident I can keep the weight off."

– James, lost 350 pounds over a 20-year lifestyle change journey

This module will review the process of problem solving. When facing unfamiliar problems, it is important to think about what you can control and what you can't—and then focus your energy on the things you can control.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Identify common weight management challenges.**
2. **Outline the steps to problem solving.**
3. **Select strategies that work for you to bust barriers.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Common Weight Management Challenges

SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Special Occasions can present challenges because your daily routine may be interrupted.

- Eating out (fast food or restaurants)
- Socializing over food, picnics, and parties
- Traveling

THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS

Thoughts and Emotions can slow down weight management efforts.

- Lack of confidence
- Boredom
- Stress
- Depression or anxiety

LIMITED RESOURCES

Limited Resources can hinder your ability to manage your weight successfully.

- Not enough money
- Lack of proper clothing and equipment
- Limited access to healthy food
- Lack of proper cooking tools

LIMITED SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

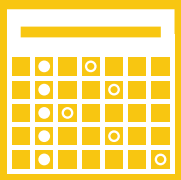
Limited Support from Others can feel like an uphill battle for things like:

- Buying healthy foods
- Cooking healthy foods
- Being physically active

LIMITED TIME

Limited Time is one of the most common weight management challenges. It can be difficult to find time for:

- Physical activity
- Planning and preparing meals
- Shopping for healthy foods



MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Medical Conditions can make weight management more difficult.

- Chronic conditions
- Pain
- Limited mobility

Steps to Problem Solving

It can be discouraging and stressful to encounter challenges or barriers that interfere with your efforts to make healthy changes. Sometimes our thoughts, feelings, or lack of support or resources get in the way of meeting weight mnagement goals. Sometimes people respond to challenges in ways that are not helpful like letting the problem control them, acting too quickly, trying solutions that don't fit their situation, or giving up. There will be challenges and being prepared to tackle them will keep you moving forward. **When new barriers arise during your weight management journey, use the steps to problem solving to work through the barrier and find a solution that will work for you.**

Tom's Toolkit

"Problem solving is an essential element in your weight management toolkit. Use the steps below to define and address weight management challenges you encounter."

Step 1 Clearly describe the problem. *What is the challenge you are facing?*	It is important to clearly define the problem before trying to solve it. **1)** Learn all the available facts. **2)** Separate facts from assumptions. **3)** Find out what makes the situation a problem. **4)** Set realistic goals about the situation.
Step 2 Come up with options. *What are some ways to solve the problem?*	Brainstorming is a fantastic way to come up with solutions to a problem and stay focused. Come up with as many solutions as possible. Put off your judgment until later; consider every idea you have. Refine your possibilities by combining or changing ideas you have already listed.
Step 3 Pick the best option. *Which option would work best to solve the problem?*	Evaluate your choices to determine which of the possible solutions is best. Think about which solution will be effective and how you can maximize positive effects and minimize negative effects of the solution. Consider whether the solution is one you are willing to carry out. Think about the effects of the possible solution on yourself and others. Now you are ready to compare your solutions and choose the best option.
Step 4 Make an action plan. *How will you put the plan into practice?*	Consider how you will put your solution into practice. Keep in mind that a solution may not work and that is okay! Learning what works and what does not work is important. If the solution doesn't work, you can always go back to earlier steps and try a different solution.
Step 5 Try it. *How did it go?*	Plan how you will know that the solution is successful before you carry it out. Your plan should use simple, concrete language.

Teresa's Tips

"**When faced with challenges, it is best to focus your attention on things you can control.** When barriers emerge, ask yourself if this is something you have control over. Some challenges may not be in your control to solve. Instead, consider what aspects of the problem may be under your control. Barriers and challenges will occur regularly during your weight management journey. Don't sweat the barriers you can't control and find the opportunities you can."

Paulo's Problem

Paulo has diabetes and COPD (breathing problem), and he wants to start living a healthier lifestyle by changing his eating and physical activity habits. Paulo saw a flyer for the VA MOVE! Program at his local outpatient clinic and decides this is just the thing he needs to get started. For the first two months, Paulo achieves his eating and activity goals and loses 15 pounds.

But recently Paulo's workload has increased a great deal, so he starts going to work early and working through his lunch. As a result, he starts to miss his daily walks. He also doesn't have time to pack his lunch in the morning, so he grabs a snack from the vending machine. After a week, Paulo reports back to his MOVE! group and is upset with himself for getting off track with his eating and activity goals. He has gained three pounds at his weekly weigh-in. He feels like a failure and is thinking about giving up.

Paulo's MOVE! group members help him think about ways to get back on track and use the five steps to problem solving to identify a solution. **Paulo decides he has two problems to address.**

"**I feel great. Not only great physically, but mentally, emotionally, and spiritually too. I am much happier and deal with life's ups and downs much more constructively.**"

– Octavio, lost 25 pounds and enjoys hiking with his children

Paulo's Problem Solving

Step	Problem 1	Problem 2
Step 1 Clearly describe the problem. *What is the challenge you are facing?*	Paulo doesn't have a healthy lunch each day. He leaves for work early, so he doesn't have time to pack his lunch each morning.	Paulo doesn't get enough activity each day. He sits at his desk and works through lunch.
Step 2 Come up with options. *What are some ways to solve the problem?*	• Pack his lunch the night before • Keep healthy snacks at work • Ask a friend or family member to pack his lunch for him • Shop for items that he can pack quickly, like fruit and yogurt	• Walk outside or around the office • Be more active during evenings and weekends • Take the stairs instead of the elevator • Ride his bike to work • Park in a distant spot of the lot at work • Use a stand-up desk
Step 3 Pick the best option. *Which option would work best to solve the problem?*	Paulo decides the best choice is to pack his lunch the night before.	Paulo decides that he first wants to try and be more active during the evenings and weekends.
Step 4 Make an action plan. *How will you put those choices into practice?*	Paulo sets a reminder on his phone each night to pack his lunch before he goes to bed.	Paulo asks his wife and son if they will go on evening walks with him to help him stay on track.
Step 5 Try it. *How did it go?*	This worked well for Paulo. He packs his lunch with dinner leftovers or makes a sandwich along with fruit, yogurt, and nuts.	Getting his family involved helped Paulo stick to this new exercise routine.

Practice Problem Solving

Now let's practice using the steps to problem solving to find solutions to a few of your current barriers. **Use the table below to step through the problem-solving process.**

Step	Problem 1	Problem 2
Step 1 Clearly describe the problem. *What is the challenge you are facing?*		
Step 2 Come up with options. *What are some ways to solve the problem?*		
Step 3 Pick the best option. *Which option would work best to solve the problem?*		
Step 4 Make an action plan. *How will you put those choices into practice?*		
Step 5 Try it. *How did it go?*		

Weight Plateaus

After several weeks of making lifestyle changes and losing weight, you may experience a time when your weight stays the same for a while despite eating fewer calories, choosing healthier foods, and being more active. This is called a plateau, which may be due to changes in your body, your behavior, or both. **Everyone who has lost weight for an extended period has experienced a plateau.**

A plateau is when you lose less than 1-pound during a 3-week period even though you are consistent with your lower calorie eating plan and exercise routine. It can be frustrating to be working hard and not lose weight. It can help to understand that **plateaus will happen** and to think about what may be contributing to the plateau. And remember, the changes you are making do not always show up on the scale but they are still helping you be a healthier you!

What are your thoughts and feelings when the number on the scale stays the same?

If you're frustrated or discouraged by a weight plateau, there are some questions you can ask yourself:

Question	Yes or No
Am I self-monitoring my calorie intake accurately?	
Am I estimating my portion sizes accurately?	
Based on my current weight, is my calorie deficit enough to lose weight?	
Am I meeting my weekly goal for physical activity?	
Do I notice any health benefits from my efforts?	

Based on your responses is there anything you can change?

Moving Beyond a Plateau

It is natural to have times when you are not tracking your food and physical activity as closely, which can result in eating more and moving less than intended. There are some things you can do to get back on track.

1. Meet your healthy eating goal while maximizing the accuracy of weekly records

a. Look up portion sizes and measure all the foods and drinks you consume until you know what the recommended portion of each item looks like.

b. Always keep your weekly record with you and record what you eat as soon as you finish eating (or even before you start eating).

c. Each time you write something down, think back to see if you ate or drank something since you last recorded—and write it down now.

d. Remember to add in sources of "hidden" calories (like the oil used in cooking, mayonnaise on a sandwich, sugar and creamer in coffee, etc.).

e. Look at the quality of the foods you eat since nutrition also affects your health and weight status.

2. Meet your physical activity and step goal consistently

a. Wear your pedometer or another type of activity tracker daily and meet your step goals.

b. Exercise most or all days of the week.

"One important concept my coach worked me through is accepting that you plateau at different steps and that it's not all going to be downhill. I can't beat myself up or be hard on myself. I weigh myself every morning and mark it on my calendar. It's gratifying, but also a kick in the butt."

– Peggy, lost 165 pounds and enjoys many activities that she wouldn't have previously attempted like triathlon relays

Teresa's Tips

"Involve your family members and friends from the start of your weight management journey to **build a support system** that can help you problem solve when barriers arise."

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Reasons for participating in a weight management program can change over time. Reflect on why you started the MOVE! Program and write down what matters most to you now.

Module Summary

Common Weight Management Challenges

The process of implementing a lifestyle change is challenging and can present many barriers. Don't let these barriers interfere with your success. Recognize that barriers are common and plan for ways to work around these obstacles.

- Special Occasions
- Thoughts and Emotions
- Limited Resources
- Limited Support from Others
- Limited Time
- Medical Conditions

"Living alone was a challenge. It was hard trying to eat healthy on a limited income. It was also hard sometimes to prepare food with my Parkinson's.

I really had to depend on myself and my 'adopted family' in MOVE! to get through."

– Joseph, lost 180 pounds, lowered his A1c, and enjoys traveling and volunteering more

Steps to Problem Solving

1. Clearly describe the problem. What is the challenge you are facing?
2. Come up with options. What are some ways to solve the problem?
3. Pick the best option. Which option would work best to solve the problem?
4. Make an action plan. How will you put those choices into practice?
5. Try it. How did it go?

Weight Plateaus

Plateaus are a part of losing weight for everyone. Staying consistent with the behaviors that helped you be successful in the first place will help you overcome a plateau.

- Record calories accurately
- Meet activity goals daily
- Recall your reasons for participating to stay motivated

If it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider the ways you can use the steps to problem solving to address health and weight management barriers.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Notes:

MODULE
NINE

Pump Up Your Physical Activity

How do I progress my physical activity?

Now it is time to start thinking about how to progress your activity. There are several kinds of programmed activities you can do like cardiovascular (cardio), strengthening, stretching, and engaging your core (stability). Cardio activity works your heart and large muscle groups. Walking is a fun and simple way to be physically active and increase your cardio. Strengthening is important for building strong muscles and bones. Stretching will improve flexibility and help prevent injuries. Engaging your core is vital for good posture and back care.

"My life is so much more active now. My husband and I take walks after dinner instead of planting ourselves in front of the television!"

– Amber, lost 92 pounds and trained for a half marathon

This module will help you evaluate your current physical activity level and determine how to progress over time. Sample plans with exercise examples are provided to get you started. If you would like assistance with your physical activity plan, talk to your MOVE! Team.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn the importance of a warm-up and cool-down.**
2. **Identify cardio, strengthening and flexibility activities.**
3. **Create an activity plan that works for you.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

How Active Am I?

Reflect on your current physical activity plan.

Target Activity Level	Current Activity Level
Be active at least **5 days** per week	I am active _____ days per week.
Be active for at least **10 minutes** at a time	I am active for at least _____ minutes at a time.
Do strengthening activities at least **2 days** per week	I do strengthening activities _____ days per week.
Do **150 minutes** of moderate-intensity activity **or** Do **75 minutes** of vigorous-intensity activity per week	I do _____ minutes of _____-intensity activity per week.

Are you more active now than at the start of MOVE!? If so, in what ways?

Are you ready to increase your activity now? If so, what will you do?

What's in a Warm Up?

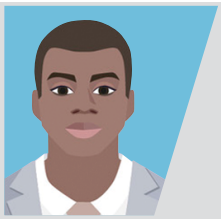
Warming up before you are active prepares your body for activity. Warming up can help prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness.

A warm up may take 5 to 15 minutes.

1. **Do your planned activity, such as walking, but at a lower intensity (slower pace) for a brief time. This may mean walking slowly for a few minutes before speeding up.**
2. **If you plan to do something more vigorous than walking, do a few minutes of gentle stretching after you warm up.**

Engage Your Core

Your body's core muscles are those around your trunk, pelvis (hips), and back. This is where your center of gravity is located. All body movement involves the core muscles. You should strive to be aware of your core muscles at all times when you are active. Weak core muscles can lead to poor posture, back pain, and increased risk for injury. Strong core muscles can improve your posture, balance and movement, and support your back.



Smart Alex

"To locate your core muscles, you can do the following: **cough once and notice the muscle in your lower abdomen that is active when you do.**

This is the transversus abdominis muscle. Work on keeping this muscle active while you are exercising and it will engage more of the other core muscles, too. As with any exercise or activity, remember to keep breathing throughout and don't hold your breath."

Increase Your Cardiovascular Activity

Cardio activity requires the body's large muscles to move in a rhythmic manner for a sustained period. Cardio causes a person's heart to beat faster than usual. Brisk walking, running, cycling, jumping rope, and swimming are all examples.

Cardio activity has three parts:

1. ***Intensity***, or how hard a person works to do the activity. Intensity can be moderate (for example, brisk walking) or vigorous (for example running or jogging).
2. ***Frequency,*** or how often a person does cardio activity.
3. ***Duration,*** or how long a person does an activity in any one session.

Teresa's Tips

"***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, slow 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."

You can use the Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE) chart, shown on the next page, to rate how hard you are exercising.

- Cardio activities, like walking and cycling, should be done at levels 4-8.
- As you become more fit, you may find that activities become easier and earn a lower RPE score. When this happens, you can choose to gradually make your activities harder to increase the challenge and advance your fitness.
- For example, slow walking on level ground may be a level 7 effort for you in the beginning. As your fitness improves, it may take brisk walking up a slight hill to get to that same level 7 effort.

Rate of Perceived Exertion Chart

10	**MAX EFFORT ACTIVITY**	Feels almost impossible to keep going. Completely out of breath and unable to talk.
9	**VERY HARD ACTIVITY**	Very difficult to maintain exercise intensity. Can barely breathe or speak a single word.
7-8	**VIGOROUS ACTIVITY**	On the verge of becoming uncomfortable. Short of breath but can speak a sentence.
4-6	**MODERATE ACTIVITY**	Feels like you can exercise for hours. Breathing heavily but can have a short conversation.
2-3	**LIGHT ACTIVITY**	Feels like you can maintain for hours. Easy to breathe and have a conversation.
1	**VERY LIGHT ACTIVITY**	Anything other than sleeping. For example, watching TV, riding in a car.

Teresa's Tips

"Another way to measure your exercise intensity is the **Talk Test: During moderate-intensity exercise, you should be able to talk with a friend.** If you cannot talk comfortably, you are exercising at a vigorous level. If you are just starting to exercise, begin with light-intensity or moderate-intensity activities and build up."

Hannah's How-To
Up Your Cardio

"This is a sample **12-week plan to work up to a goal of 150 minutes of at least moderate-intensity activity per week.** The best types of activities for this plan are ones that use large muscle groups (arms, legs, trunk), like walking, jogging, dancing, cycling, or swimming. Remember to start with a 5-10-minute warm up and end with a 5-10-minute cool down.

Tip: You can adjust the days of the week on this plan to fit your schedule. You can also do more for more benefits."

Weeks 1-3

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	4 – 6	10 – 15 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	4 – 6	10 – 15 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	4 – 6	10 – 15 minutes
Saturday	Rest	None

Weeks 4 & 5

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	7–10 minutes at 4 – 6 7–10 minutes at 7 – 8 7–10 minutes at 4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Saturday	Rest	None

Weeks 6 & 7

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	7 – 8	20 – 30 minutes
Monday	4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	7–10 minutes at 4 – 6 7–10 minutes at 7 – 8 7–10 minutes at 4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	4 – 6	20 – 30 minutes
Saturday	Rest	None

This sample plan was adapted from: How to Write an Exercise Prescription by MAJ Robert L. Gauer, MD and LTC Francis O'Connor, MD, FACSM, Department of Family Medicine, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Weeks 8 & 9

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	4 – 6	30 – 40 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	10 minutes at 4 – 6 10 minutes at 7 – 8 10 minutes at 4 – 6	30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	4 – 6	30 – 40 minutes
Saturday	10 minutes at 4 – 6 10 minutes at 7 – 8 10 minutes at 4 – 6	30 minutes

Week 10

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	3	30 – 40 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	8	30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	3	30 – 40 minutes
Saturday	8	30 minutes

Week 11

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	4 – 6	30 – 40 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	10 minutes at 4 – 6 10 minutes at 7 – 8 10 minutes at 4 – 6	30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	4 – 6	30 – 40 minutes
Saturday	10 minutes at 4 – 6 10 minutes at 7 – 8 10 minutes at 4 – 6	30 minutes

Week 12

Day	Effort/Intensity RPE Scale	Total Duration
Sunday	Rest	None
Monday	4 – 6	30 – 40 minutes
Tuesday	Rest	None
Wednesday	10 minutes at 4 – 6 10 minutes at 7 – 8 10 minutes at 4 – 6	30 minutes
Thursday	Rest	None
Friday	7 – 8	30 – 40 minutes
Saturday	Rest	None

Maintenance: **30-60** minutes at **7-8** or higher, **5-6** times/week

Increase Your Steps

Walking is a fantastic way to sit less and move more. It's free, fun, and you can do it almost anywhere. Walking a little every day may help you create a regular routine, and preferably aerobic activity should be spread throughout the week. Consider using a pedometer or fitness tracker to measure the number of steps you take or the number of minutes you are active. Challenge yourself to see how many steps or minutes you can get!

Six Reasons to Get Up and Walk

1. Brisk walking has many health benefits.
2. Walking burns calories, which, in addition to eating wisely, can help you manage your weight.
3. More than half of the body's muscles are designed for walking, which makes it a very natural movement for the body.
4. Brisk walking is a cardio activity. It makes your heart, lungs, and muscles stronger.
5. Walking refreshes the mind, reduces fatigue, increases energy, and improves sleep.
6. You can have fun socializing with friends and family while walking.

Hannah's How-To
Walk More

"Start with short, 10-minute walks and build from there. Here is a **10-week walking plan** to get you started."

For Beginners

Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Minutes walking	10	10	15	18	20	20	25	30	32	35
Walks per week	2	3	3	3	3-4	4	4	4	4	4

For Those Who Are Already Active

Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10
Minutes walking	20	22	25	30	30	35	35	40	42	45
Walks per week	3	3	3	3	4	4	4-5	4-5	4-5	4-5

"I realized that you have to start small. Even if you can't do 2,500 steps in a day, you do what you can. Once you do 2,500 and that gets easy, you can go ahead and do a little bit more. It's like building a brick building one brick at a time."

– James, lost 350 pounds over a 20-year lifestyle-change journey

Increase Your Strength Training

Strength training improves endurance, muscle and bone strength, coordination and balance. You can perform strength training with or without equipment. To increase resistance and intensity of your strength workout, you can use your body weight, free weights, resistance bands or resistance tubes.

Six Reasons to do Strengthening Activities

1. Helps your body burn more calories.
2. Decreases stress on your joints.
3. Prevents muscle loss associated with aging.
4. Makes it easier to do household chores and other daily activities.
5. Improves your body's ability to use insulin and maintain healthy blood sugar levels.
6. Protects your independence as you age and makes falls less likely.

"Even if I don't feel like it, I go to the gym 5 days a week because I am determined to reach and stay at my goal weight. I do a little strength training and a little cardio."

– Michael, lost 87 pounds with MOVE! and bariatric surgery

Hannah's How-To
Increase Strengthening Activities

"It is important to do strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity for all major muscle groups on **2 or more days per week**. Using the RPE Scale, rate how hard you are working when exercising. The last few reps of strengthening activities, like lifting free weights and doing pushups, should feel like a level 9 (very hard) on the RPE Scale. Start with a weight you can easily move and gradually add to it to increase the challenge. Instructions for completing these strengthening activities are located at the back of Module 9.

Tip: You can perform strength training with just your body weight, free weights, or with resistance bands or tubes."

Muscle Group: Legs

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Knee extension	Body weight	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3
Knee flexion	Body weight or Tube or band	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3
Plantar flexion (heel raise)	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3

Muscle Group: Hips

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Standing hip abduction	Body weight	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3
Side steps	Tube or band	8–12	2	2–3
Hip flexion	Body weight	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3

Muscle Group: Chest

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Wall push-ups	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3
Chair push-ups	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3

Muscle Group: Abdominals

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Chair stands	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3
Crunches	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3
Twists	Tube or band	8–12	2	2–3

Muscle Group: Shoulders

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Shoulder abduction (arm raise)	Free weight	8–12	2	2–3
Shoulder flexion	Free weight	8–12	2	2–3

Muscle Group: Arms

Strength and Balance Exercises	Weight Type	Repetitions per set	Sets per session	Sessions per week
Biceps curl	Free weight or Tube or band	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3
Chair dips	Body weight	8–12	2	2–3
Triceps extension	Body weight or Tube or band	8–12 per side	2 per side	2–3

Increase Your Flexibility

Stretching can increase your freedom of movement to do the things you need to do and the things you like to do. Always warm up your body with some light activity **before** you stretch. It is also beneficial to stretch **after** you do your strength or cardio activities. You should stretch every day. If you cannot stretch every day, aim for at least 3 times a week for 20 minutes each session.

Hannah's How-To
Increase Flexibility

"Stretching is a low-intensity activity. As you progress your stretching, **remember that increasing your range of movement may feel slightly uncomfortable, but should not be painful. Push yourself to stretch farther, but not so far that it hurts.** Also remember to keep breathing while holding each stretch. No bouncing! Instructions for completing these stretching activities are located at the back of Module 9."

Flexibility Exercise/ Stretch	# of repetitions per set	# of sets per session	# of sessions per week
Calf and hamstring	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Inner thigh	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Quadriceps	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Lower back and hamstring	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Trunk rotation	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Shoulder	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training
Arm and side	4 per side	1	After cardio or strength training

What's in a Cool Down?

You can help prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness if you cool down after physical activity. Cooling down slows your heart rate gradually and helps prepare your muscles for the next time you are active.

A cool down may take 5 to 15 minutes.

1. **To cool down, continue your activity, but slow down the pace for a brief time to slow your heart rate.**
2. **Stretch all major muscle groups used during the activity. Stretching the muscles while they are warm will help to increase flexibility.**

Putting it All Together

How will you increase your physical activity over the next few weeks?

In the table on the next page, write down a weekly plan for physical activity.

Remember you should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week and include:

1. **Daily stretching.**
2. **Cardio 3-4 days a week.**
3. **Strengthening 2 days or more a week.**

Activity	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Walking: How many steps?							
Cardio: How many minutes?							
Strength: How many sets?							
Stretching: How many repetitions?							

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Why Warm Up and Cool Down

You can prevent injury and reduce muscle soreness if you warm up before and cool down after physical activity.

- Warming up prepares your muscles and heart for activity.
- Cooling down slows your heart rate gradually and helps prepare your muscles for the next time you are active.

Engage Your Core

Your body's core muscles (around your trunk, pelvis (hips), and back) are where your center of gravity is located. When doing any movements or exercise, you should try to engage your core muscles. Strong core muscles can help with proper posture, balance, and back health.

Progressing Your Physical Activity

As you start thinking about how to increase your activity, remember to include a combination of cardiovascular, strengthening, and stretching. Each component has different benefits for your health and your weight. It is important to find a plan that will work for you. Be sure to start small and build your activity level as needed to maintain the right intensity. If you would like assistance with your physical activity plan, talk to your MOVE! Team.

When you feel like quitting, think about why you started.

Module To-Do:

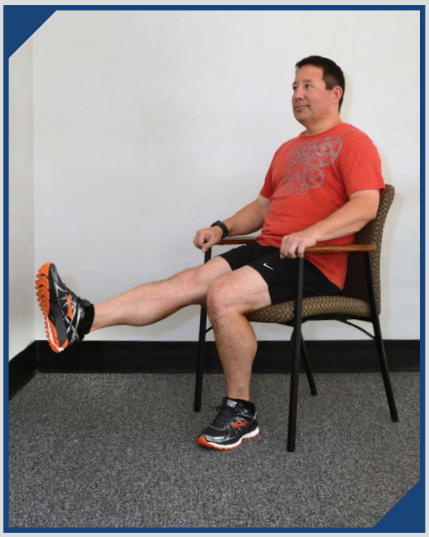
1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider ways you can pump up your physical activity. Can you find a way to make cardio activity, strengthening, and stretching a part of your weekly physical activity routine?**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Strength and Balance Exercises

Knee Extension:

Strengthens quadriceps muscles (front of thigh). Progress to ankle weights when you feel ready.

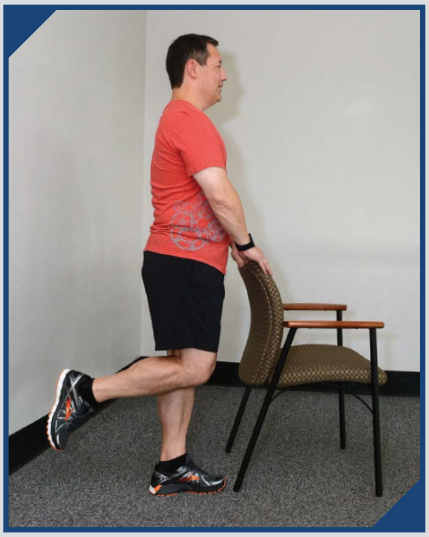
- Sit upright in a chair with hips and knees flexed at 90 degrees, if possible. Start with your feet flat on the floor. Rest your hands on your thighs or to the side of the chair.
- Slowly extend one leg in front of you as straight as possible, toes pulled back towards you, if possible.
- Hold for 1 to 2 seconds.
- Slowly bend your knee and rest your foot flat on the floor. Pause.
- Repeat with other leg.
- Alternate legs until you have done 8 – 12 repetitions with each leg.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 alternating repetitions.



Knee Flexion:

Strengthens hamstring muscles (back of thigh). Progress to ankle weights when you feel ready.

- Stand upright, feet hip-width apart, and hold onto a table, chair or counter for balance.
- Slowly bend one knee as far as possible lifting your foot up and off floor. Keep both knees close to each other.
- Hold for 1 to 2 seconds.
- Slowly lower your foot back down to the floor. Pause.
- Repeat with your other leg.
- Alternate legs until you have done 8 – 12 repetitions with each leg.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 alternating repetitions.



Knee Flexion:

Using resistance bands or tubes.

- You may wish to hold onto a wall or chair for this exercise.
- Loop one end of the band or tube around your standing ankle.
- Loop the other end under the moving foot.
- While keeping both knees together, bend the knee of the moving foot and bring the heel toward the gluteus muscle (buttocks). You should feel the hamstring muscle (back of thigh) working.
- Repeat 8 – 12 times for each leg.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions per side.

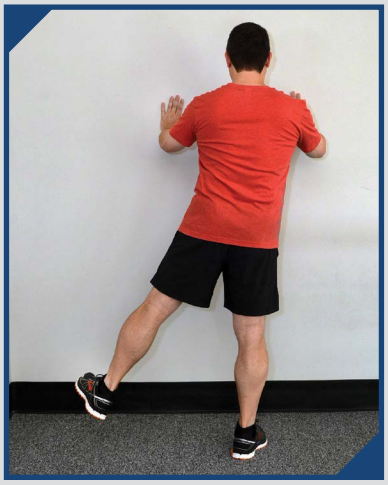
Plantar Flexion (heel raise):

Strengthens calf muscles. Progress to standing on one foot at a time when you feel ready.

- Stand upright, feet flat on the floor hip-width apart, holding onto a table, chair or counter for balance.
- Slowly raise heels, standing on tiptoes, as high as comfortable.
- Hold for 1 -2 seconds.
- Slowly lower heels all the way back down. Pause.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Standing Hip Abduction (lateral raise):

Strengthens the hip abductor (side of the hip) muscles.



- Stand upright with arms extended and both hands on a wall or chair for support, feet hip-width apart.
- With standing knee slightly bent, lift the other leg to the side using the muscles at the outside of your hip. Keep your knee and toes pointing forward and your torso upright (do not lean your body to the opposite side).
- Slowly lower the raised leg back to starting position. Repeat for 8-12 repetitions and switch to the other side.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions for each side.

Side Steps for Abductors:

Strengthens the hip abductor (outer hip) muscles.

- Make sure to wear pants or socks that cover your ankles. Step into the resistance tube or band so that both feet are inside.
- Start with the ankles close together. With knees slightly bent, take 2 large steps to the right and then 2 large steps back to the left.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8-12 alternating repetitions.

Hip Flexion:

Strengthens hip flexor (front of hip and thigh) muscles.

- Stand upright using a chair or table to balance.
- Slowly bend one knee and lift your thigh toward your chest, without bending at the waist.
- Hold for 1 second.
- Slowly lower your leg back to the floor. Pause.
- Repeat with other leg.
- Alternate legs until you have done 8 – 12 repetitions per side.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 alternating repetitions.

Wall Push-ups:

Strengthens pectoral (chest) and triceps (back of arm) muscles.

- Stand a step or two away from the wall with your feet hip-width apart. Extend both arms and place your hands on the wall at chest height. Engage your abdominal muscles to keep your body aligned (plank position).
- Slowly bend your elbows and let your body tilt toward the wall, keeping the abdominal muscles tight.
- Straighten elbows and repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Chair Push-ups:

Strengthens pectoral (chest) and triceps (back of arm) muscles.

- Using a sturdy chair braced against a wall, extend both arms and place your hands flat on the chair seat. Engage your abdominal muscles to keep your body aligned (plank position).
- Slowly bend your elbows and let your body tilt toward the floor, keeping the abdominal muscles tight.
- Straighten your elbows and repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Chair Stands:

Strengthens glutes (buttocks), quadriceps (front of thigh) and improves balance.

- Start by sitting upright, abdominals engaged, on the edge of your seat, hands resting on thighs, feet hip-width apart.
- Slowly rise to standing, pressing hands into thighs if needed for assistance.
- Slowly return to a seated position using hands on thighs to assist if needed.
- Keep your back upright and your knees over your ankles so you can see your toes. Shift your weight back so the work comes from your gluteus muscles.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Crunches:

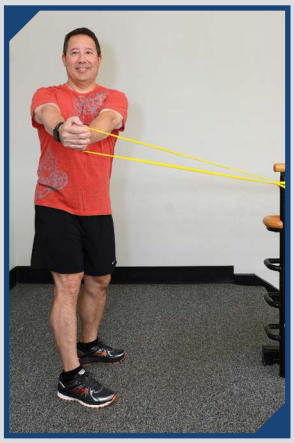
Strengthens the abdominal muscles.

- Lay on the floor or a mat with your knees bent and back flat.
- Gently, slide your fingers toward your heels while tightening your abdominals, raising your shoulders and head slightly. Keep your eyes up toward the ceiling to avoid straining the muscles at the front of your neck.
- Return to starting position and do 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Twists:

Strengthens trunk muscles and challenges balance.

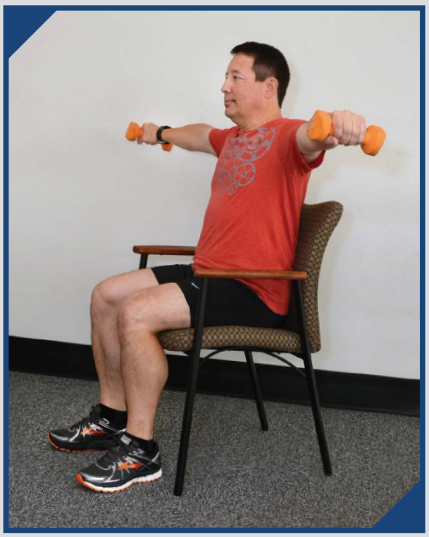
- Wrap the tube around a fixed object (tree, railing, door handle, etc.)
- Standing with feet hip distance apart and both hands grasping the tube, tighten your abdominal muscles and twist your upper body to the right while keeping toes and hips facing forward.
- Return to center with abdominals still tightened, and twist to the left.
- Focus on your abdominal muscles and make sure they are engaged. This will help improve your posture overall and protect your low back.
- Repeat 8 – 12 full repetitions right and left.
- Rest, then do another 8 – 12 alternating repetitions.



Shoulder abduction (arm raise):

Strengthens middle deltoids (side shoulder muscles).

- Start with a light weight, 2-3 lbs., and only progress when you feel ready. Maximum weight 7 lbs.
- Sit upright in a sturdy chair with your abdominals engaged to support your back.
- Rest feet flat on floor about hip-width apart.
- Hold hand weights with arms extended down at your sides, palms facing inward.
- Raise both arms to the side, shoulder height.
- Hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Slowly lower arms to starting position. Pause.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.



Shoulder Flexion:

Strengthens anterior deltoids (front shoulder muscles).

- Start with a light weight, 2-3 lbs., and only progress when you feel ready. Maximum weight 7 lbs.
- Sit upright in a sturdy chair with your abdominals engaged to support your back.
- Rest feet flat on the floor about hip-width apart.
- Hold hand weights with arms down at your sides, palms facing inward.
- Raise both arms in front of you to shoulder height with elbows extended, and hands rotated so palms now face downward.
- Hold position for 1-2 seconds.
- Slowly lower arms to sides. Pause.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Biceps Curl:

Strengthens biceps (arm muscles).

- Sit upright in a sturdy chair with your abdominals engaged to support your back (can also be performed standing).
- Keep feet flat on the floor hip-width apart, knees and hips at 90 degrees.
- Hold weight with arm extended at your side, palm facing inward.
- Slowly bend the elbow, lifting weight toward shoulder and rotate palm to face shoulder while lifting weight.
- Hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Slowly lower arm to starting position. Pause.
- Do 8-12 repetitions and then switch to the other arm.

Biceps Curl:

Using a resistance band or tube.

- Place the resistance band under your right foot and grasp the handle or other end with your right hand.
- Stand tall with the abdominal muscles engaged. Keep your elbow close to your body.
- Bend your elbow and bring the hand up towards the shoulder.
- Hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Slowly lower arm to starting position.
- Do 8 – 12 repetitions and then switch to the other arm.

Chair Dips:

Strengthens triceps muscles (back of arms).

- Sitting in a sturdy chair braced against a wall with knees and hips at a 90-degree angle, place your hands on the edge of the chair, fingers pointing forward.
- Slowly bend your elbows behind you, lowering your buttocks in front of the chair, keeping your knees behind your toes.
- Return to straight elbows and repeat. Avoid using your legs to assist if possible.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions.

Triceps Extension:

Strengthens triceps muscles (back of arm). Support your working arm with the opposite hand throughout the exercise. (If your shoulders are limiting you from doing this exercise, focus on shoulder stretching exercises. Ask for guidance.)

- Sit upright in a sturdy chair with your abdominals engaged to support your back.
- Hips and knees are bent to 90 degrees, feet flat on the floor hip-width apart.
- Hold a weight in one hand. Raise that arm up, elbow extended, palm facing in.
- Support this arm, below elbow, with other hand.
- Slowly bend the raised arm at the elbow, bringing the weight behind your head toward the same shoulder.
- Slowly straighten arm toward ceiling.
- Hold for 1-2 seconds.
- Slowly bend arm again. Pause.
- Repeat the bending and straightening until you have done 8 – 12 repetitions.
- Repeat 8 – 12 repetitions with your other arm.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions per side.

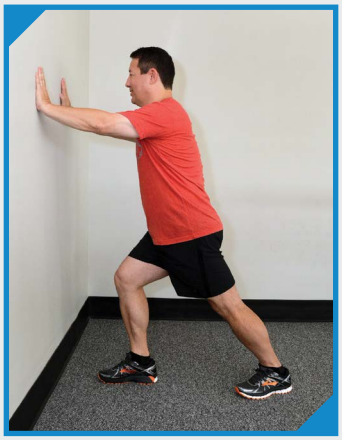
Using a resistance band or tube.

- With your left hand, hold one side of the band close to chest, while your right hand grips the other end with palm facing down.
- Right arm is bent to a 90-degree angle, with elbow close to body.
- Extend right arm until elbow is straight and right hand is alongside your hip.
- Slowly bend right arm until elbow is back to 90 degrees (starting position).
- Repeat 8 – 12 times. Perform the exercise with the left hand.
- Rest, then do another set of 8 – 12 repetitions per side.

Flexibility Exercises/Stretching

Calf and Hamstring Stretch:

- Stand one or two steps away from a wall or other structure and lean on it as shown.
- Bend one leg and place that foot flat on the ground in front of you, keep the other leg straight and behind you.
- Slowly glide your hips forward, keeping your lower back flat.
- Keep the heel of the straight leg on the ground, with toes pointing straight ahead or slightly in.
- Hold the stretch for 15–60 seconds without moving. Breathe normally throughout. Relax.
- Repeat at least 4 times. Now, stretch the other leg.

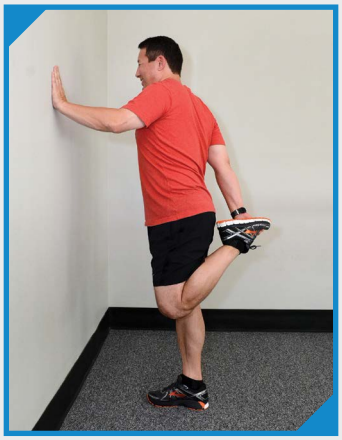


Inner Thigh Stretch:

- Start with your feet a little more than shoulder-width apart.
- Bend your left knee slightly, pointing it out toward the side, and move your right hip downward toward the left knee.
- This stretches your right inner thigh.
- Hold for 15–60 seconds. Breathe normally throughout. Relax.
- Repeat at least 4 times. Now, stretch the other thigh.

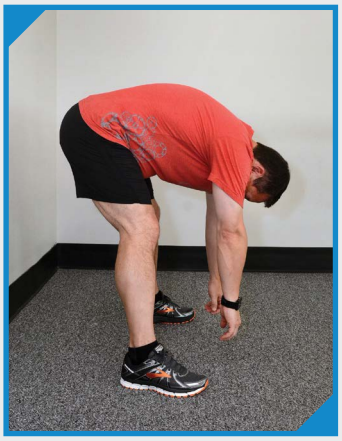
Quadriceps Muscles Stretch:

- Standing close to a wall or a chair, place one hand on the wall or chair.
- Bend one knee and bring that foot close to your buttocks, grasping with your hand if possible. Keep the bent knee close to the standing knee and pointed toward the floor.
- Stand upright with your shoulders back and hips extended.
- Hold for 15–60 seconds. Breathe normally throughout. Relax and slowly move back to your starting position.
- Repeat at least 4 times. Now, stretch the other leg.



Low Back and Hamstring Stretch:

- Start in a standing position with feet about shoulder-width apart and pointed straight ahead.
- Slowly bend forward from the hips. Keep your knees slightly bent. Let your neck and arms relax.
- Go to the point where you feel a slight stretch in the back of your legs and low back.
- Hold this stretch for 15–60 seconds. Breathe normally throughout. Slowly come back to a standing position with knees still slightly bent and relax.
- Repeat at least 4 times.



Trunk Rotation:

- Lie on your back on the floor with your knees bent and your back in a neutral position.
- Cough once and hold to tighten your abdominals.
- Keeping your shoulders on the floor, let your knees fall slowly to the left. Go only as far as is comfortable—you should feel no pain, only a stretch. Breathe normally throughout.
- Use your trunk muscles to pull your legs back up to the start position and relax.
- Repeat the exercise to the right.
- Repeat at least 4 times.

Shoulder Shrug:

- Stand upright with your abdominal muscles engaged. Gently shrug both shoulders, as if you are trying to touch your ears to your shoulders.
- Hold for 15–60 seconds, slowly relax back to starting position.
- Repeat at least 4 times.

Arm and Side Stretch:

- Stand with feet hip-width apart and bend your knees slightly.
- Raise one arm and gently pull that elbow behind your head while you bend from your hips to the side.
- Hold the stretch for 15–60 seconds. Breathe normally throughout. Slowly return to starting position and relax.
- Repeat at least 4 times. Now, stretch the other side.

MODULE
TEN

Conquer Triggers and Cues

How do I conquer triggers and cues?

A trigger, also sometimes called a cue, is something that you tend to react to in a certain way without even thinking about it. A trigger can be internal (something that happens inside of you - like a physical sensation or thought). It can also be external (something that happens outside of you - like sights, smells, times of day, people, or places). When you respond to a trigger in the same way over time, you build a habit. Some habits may help you meet your health and weight management goals while others may make it harder.

"The first step was changing my 'all-you-can-eat' mindset. I had to eliminate my love affair with food."

– Joseph, lost 150 pounds, has improved body image and no longer needs to take medication for several health conditions

It takes time to break an old habit or build a new one!

There are several ways you can change triggers and habits:

1. Avoid the trigger or cue.
2. Change how you respond to a trigger.
3. Add new cues that help you make healthier choices.

Each of these strategies will help you build new, healthier habits.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn how to identify your triggers and cues.**
2. **Identify ways of managing your environment.**
3. **Demonstrate ways to change habits by breaking the behavior chains.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

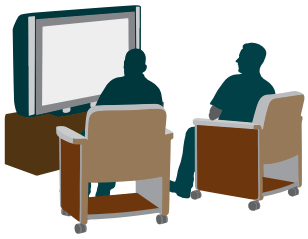
Recognizing Triggers and Cues

The things that you feel or see (like hunger or the sight or smell of food), thoughts and feelings (see also Module 6), or other people's comments or actions, all may serve as triggers.

Below are some common triggers that may lead to eating or drinking more than you planned or at times when you are not hungry.

At the dining table	**In the kitchen**	**At or on the way to work**
• Serving dishes on the table • Large dinner plates • Others eating large portions	• Ready-to-eat foods (ice cream, cheese, cookies, chips) • Leftovers	• Bakery or coffee shop • High-fat, high-calorie goods readily available (in your desk, public areas, or vending machines)

Below are some common triggers that may make it hard to be active.

		
When commuting or traveling	**In the home**	**At work**
• Long periods of sedentary time • Changes to your routine • Shoes or clothes that are not appropriate for movement or activity	• Watching TV • Sitting at the computer • Playing video games	• Sitting at a computer for long hours • Long conference calls or meetings where you forget to stand up or move • Everything you need is within arm's reach

What Are My Triggers?

Think about what triggers you to eat or drink more than you intended or to be less active than you planned. Do certain foods or situations trigger your cravings? Do certain locations or activities trigger you to be inactive? Becoming aware of your eating and activity patterns can help you better manage your weight. Write down the things in your life that have been triggers in the past.

What has triggered you to buy foods that do not fit into your healthy meal plan?

What has triggered you to eat foods that do not fit into your healthy meal plan or to eat more than you planned?

What has triggered you to sit still instead of being active?

Hannah's How-To
Be Thoughtful About Temptation

"**Sometimes we all need a little help dealing with temptation. Next time, try these steps.**

1. Take 5 slow, deep breaths to relax.
2. Check in with yourself. How are you feeling? Was there a trigger or cue?
3. Think of how resisting the impulse will benefit your health and help you meet your goals.
4. Think of an activity you can do instead.
5. If you choose to eat, use mindfulness to fully enjoy a portion.
6. Whatever you choose, remind yourself that it was your decision and one that was thoughtfully made."

Cravings vs. Hunger

One of the most important parts of successful weight management is knowing why you eat. For example, do you only eat when you are hungry, or do you eat because you are bored? It's important to know what you are responding to when you want to eat—is it hunger or is it a craving? Hunger is a healthy, natural cue that will signal when it is time to eat. When you notice a craving, practice pausing before responding to it. You may decide to ignore the craving.

Write in the boxes if these questions are true or false for you.

	1. Even after a large meal, I still want dessert.
	2. I have a gnawing feeling or growling in my stomach several hours after I eat.
	3. When someone mentions a food I love, I want to eat.
	4. I feel light headed after not eating for hours.
	5. When I drive by a certain restaurant, I want to eat.
	6. There is a time every day when I feel hungry.

Numbers 1, 3, and 5 are likely psychological cravings. Numbers 2 and 4 are physical hunger. Number 6 could be either.

It's important to distinguish cravings from hunger. Hunger comes on slowly, not all of a sudden. Pay attention to your body and learn your signs of hunger. Eat 5-6 small, balanced meals to help you manage your hunger and be less likely to overeat at the next meal. Choose high-fiber foods such as vegetables, whole grains, or fruit along with lean protein. Eat slowly and enjoy the taste of what you eat.

- Cravings often don't last that long—you might find they pass if you wait a few minutes.
- Cravings tend to be more emotional than physical.
- Once you know your urge to eat is a craving, there are things you can do to manage it.

Conquering Cravings

You can identify cravings by paying careful attention to when you want to eat. Consider these questions when you fill out your *Food and Activity Log* or other tracking method to determine whether you are eating because of hunger or a craving.

- Did something other than physical hunger urge you to eat?
- Did someone offer you food?
- Did something make you think about food?
- Did you see something that made you want to eat?
- Did you smell something that made you want to eat?

If you notice yourself having a craving there are two main strategies to manage it: *distraction* and *confrontation*.

Distraction

Distraction helps you ignore the craving. When you know you are craving food, do something else. Think about something pleasant or do something to take your attention away from the urge to eat. The craving will soon pass, usually within 10 minutes. If you have many cravings throughout the day, ***confronting*** the craving may be a better strategy.

Confrontation

Confrontation involves facing the craving. You could pretend that the craving is another person trying to convince you to respond. Argue with this person and say why you are deciding not to eat the food that you are craving, "I just ate dinner and plan to have popcorn in a few hours. I don't need a snack right now. It's just a craving." Remind yourself you can manage the craving.

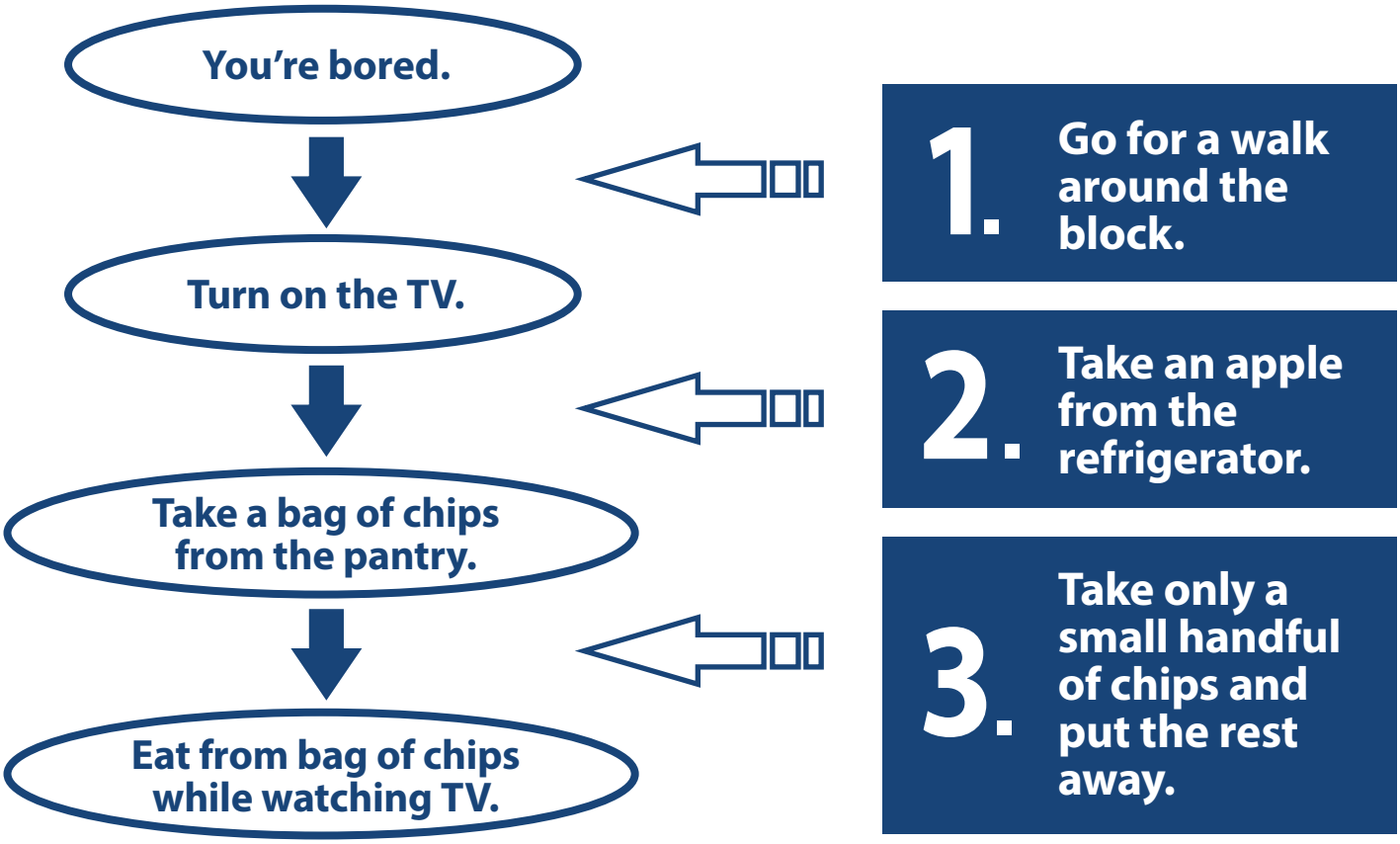
Which approach is more appealing to you, distraction or confrontation? Describe how you will use this method the next time you have a craving.

Healthy Ways of Responding to Triggers

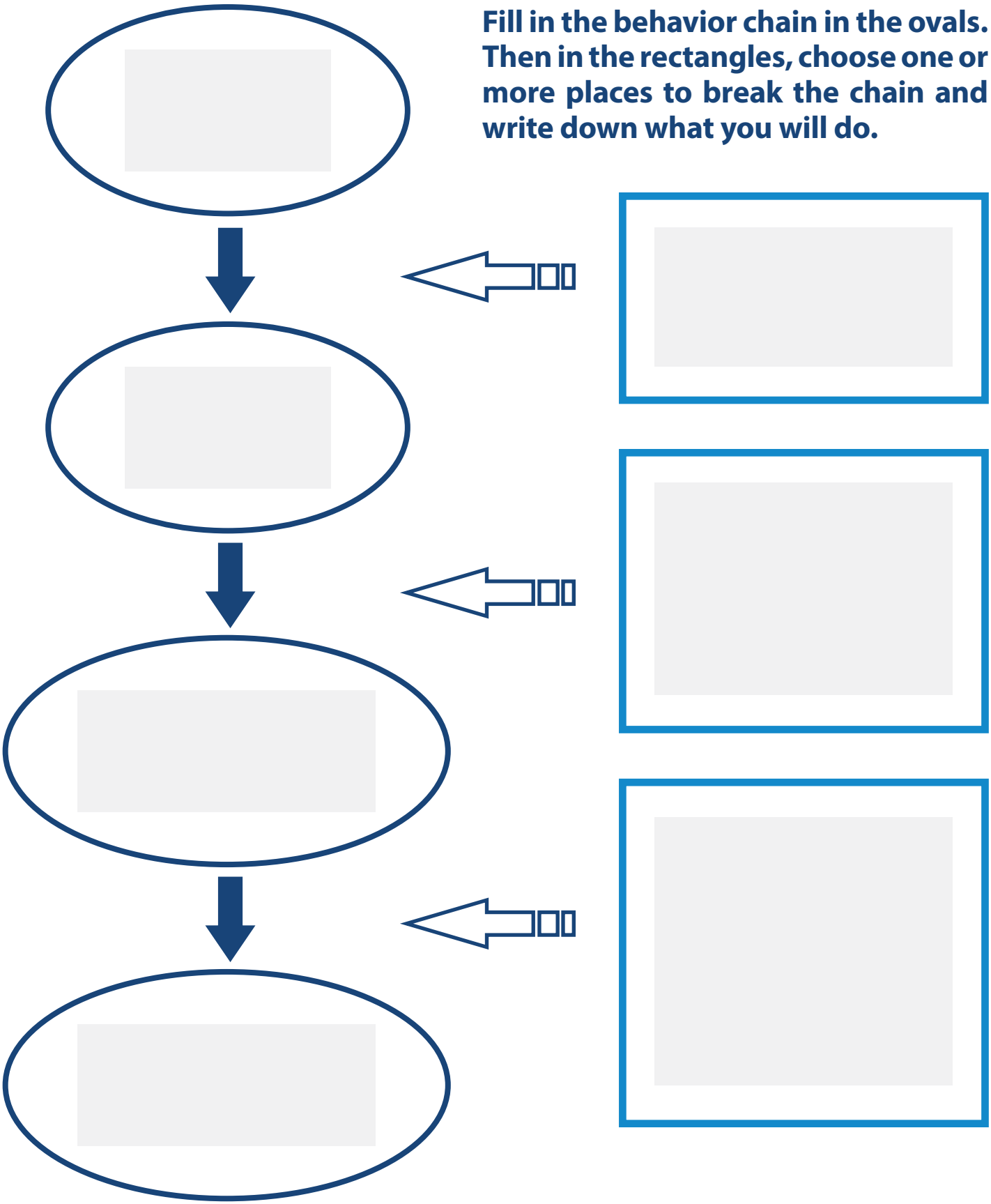
To lead a healthy lifestyle, you'll need to learn to manage triggers or cues. There are several ways you can change problem triggers and habits:

Strategy	Example
1. Avoid the trigger or keep it out of sight.	Limit the amount of foods that you crave in your house and store them out of sight, like on the top shelf of the pantry.
2. Add a new cue that helps you lead a healthier life.	Leave your sneakers by the front door to remind you to go for a walk.
3. Build new, healthier habits to replace problem habits.	Keep low-fat, low-calorie foods, like veggies, on hand and ready to eat for a quick snack.

To apply these strategies, let's practice breaking the chain of events that may trigger behaviors that don't support your health goals. View the example chain and three potential ways to break the chain. Then fill in the blank chain on the next page with a problem cue/habit for you (ovals). Write down what you will do to break the chain in the rectangles.

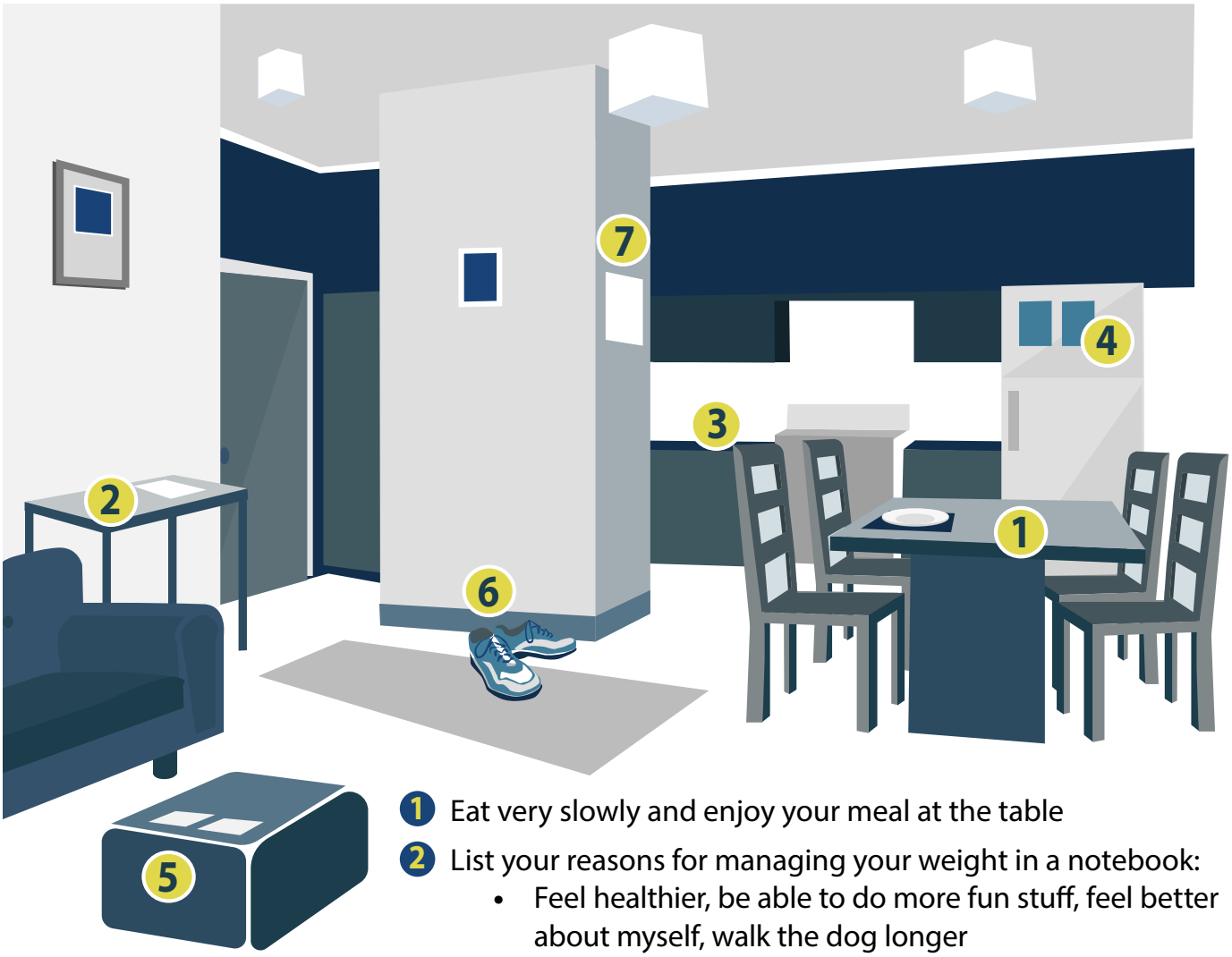


Fill in the behavior chain in the ovals. Then in the rectangles, choose one or more places to break the chain and write down what you will do.



Managing Your Environment

Your environment can impact your ability to change habits and create new healthy ones. Set yourself up for success by managing your environment at home and at work. Create an environment that will work ***for*** you, not against you. Post reminders about healthy behaviors where you will notice them - on the refrigerator, on the table, in your car, on the mirror, anywhere!



1. Eat very slowly and enjoy your meal at the table
2. List your reasons for managing your weight in a notebook:
   - Feel healthier, be able to do more fun stuff, feel better about myself, walk the dog longer
3. Keep healthy snacks ready to eat on the counter and in the refrigerator
4. Keep your Food and Activity Logs out in plain sight
5. Post your positive changes where they can be seen each day as positive reinforcement
   - Accomplishments to date: 1) Wrote in my food log 30 days in a row, 2) Blood pressure is lower, 3) Down 1 pant size
6. Keep your walking shoes out and easily accessible
7. Post your reasons to MOVE! from Module 1 as inspiration to make healthy choices

Planning for Successful Social Encounters

Sometimes certain people or social events can trigger behaviors that don't support your new health goals. It may be helpful to plan ahead for these kinds of situations so you know how you will respond or break the chain of events.

Write down a response to each of the following triggers using these three thoughtful strategies:

1. Avoid the trigger or keep it out of sight.
2. Change how you respond to the trigger.
3. Add a new cue that helps you lead a healthier life.

Social Triggers

Shopping Triggers and Cues	How I Would Break the Chain
"When we go to the movies, we always get a big bucket of popcorn and soda to share."	
"My family gets pizza every Friday night."	
"I keep cookies/candy on hand for when my grandkids visit."	

Food and Eating Triggers and Cues	How I Would Break the Chain
"My friends and I always have wings, beer, and chips while we watch the game."	
"After church, my prayer group has coffee and donuts."	
"When I go to holiday parties, birthday parties, or family gatherings my favorite comfort foods are always there."	

Inactivity Triggers and Cues	How I Would Break the Chain
"My friends and I sit together in the cafeteria every day during lunch."	
"When dinner is over, we all like to watch TV."	
"When the weather is bad, I am stuck inside."	

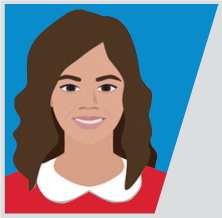
Busting Triggers and Cues

It can be challenging to cope with unhelpful eating and inactivity triggers and cues. Here are some common triggers and ways to cope with them. Which of these triggers have you had before? How might you overcome them? People who can recognize and anticipate their triggers and are ready with a solution are more successful at maintaining change.

Triggers	Trigger Buster
Shopping Triggers and Cues	
This treat is on sale/I have a coupon for it.	☐ Find ways to save money on healthy items instead. ☐ Don't clip coupons for foods that don't fit in your meal plan.
This looks good but it's not on my list.	☐ Spend your time in the aisles with items that are on your list. ☐ Buy a very small amount. For instance, get a single ice cream bar instead of a whole container of ice cream. ☐ Buy a healthier version. Take a close look at the Nutrition Facts. Don't rely on the word "healthy" alone. ☐ Keep in mind that the store's goal is to get you to buy things.
It's for my spouse/kids/ grandkids.	☐ Show your love in other ways. It will be better for you—and for them.
Write Your Own.	☐ ☐ ☐

Triggers	Trigger Buster
Food and Eating Triggers and Cues	
I'm hungry.	☐ Eat something with good nutrition. ☐ Stop when you feel full. ☐ Use a small plate.
I like to nibble on something while I watch TV.	☐ Avoid eating out of large containers and bags. Get yourself a single serving. ☐ Knit, ride a stationary bike, use resistance bands, or lift weights instead. ☐ Chew sugar-free gum or nibble on crunchy veggies like celery. ☐ Eat only at the kitchen/dining room table.
I feel sad/ anxious/ stressed/mad.	☐ Ease your feelings in other ways. For instance, talk with a friend. ☐ Practice relaxation.
I feel bored.	☐ Do something different: go for a walk, mow the lawn. ☐ Learn something new to occupy your mind. ☐ Read a good book.
I feel lonely.	☐ Contact your friends or family. ☐ Meet people: take a class, join a team or club, or volunteer. ☐ Adopt a pet.
I don't want to waste food.	☐ Cook smaller amounts. ☐ Store the leftovers in the fridge or freezer or give them away. ☐ Remind yourself that your health is more important than a few bites of food.

Food and Eating Triggers and Cues	
I'm not hungry but this looks or smells good.	☐ Keep healthy items visible and ready to eat. For instance, store cut-up veggies on the main shelf in the fridge and a bowl of fruit on the table. ☐ Plan to incorporate it into your meal plan at another time. ☐ Keep healthy snacks at work to limit use of vending machines and free food in the office.
I have happy memories of eating this.	☐ Use a food swap to make it healthier. ☐ Have a very small serving or share it with someone. ☐ Make new memories of eating healthy dishes.
I always get this at the drive-thru by work.	☐ Take another route so you don't pass the drive-thru. ☐ Don't eat in your car. ☐ Order something healthy.
I don't want to offend the person offering me food or a drink.	☐ Be kind but firm even if they ask multiple times. ☐ Say, "No I'll pass this time, thank you." ☐ Tell them, "Thanks but I'm working on my health and that's really important to me." ☐ Let them know, "It looks delicious but I'm full."
Write Your Own.	☐ ☐



Teresa's Tips

"Self-esteem is how you think and feel about yourself. Better self-esteem may make it easier for you to manage your health and weight. **To improve your self-esteem, set achievable, realistic, short-term goals. Reward yourself for meeting your goals.** Make a list of the positive things about yourself. Be assertive and express yourself. Focus on your strengths instead of your weaknesses. Be confident you will meet your goals. Imagine yourself in the future—healthier, more active, and proud of your accomplishments."

Triggers	Trigger Buster
Inactivity Triggers and Cues	
I'm tired.	☐ Get more sleep at night. ☐ Take a short nap. ☐ Energize yourself by being active for a few minutes.
My joints/feet hurt.	☐ Find activities that are easy on your body, like swimming or yoga. ☐ Focus on what you can do. You may not be able to run but you may be able to walk. ☐ Talk with your health care provider about managing your pain. ☐ Space out activities so you don't overdo it. ☐ Practice relaxation and stretching.
I feel sad/ anxious/ stressed/mad.	☐ Remind yourself that physical activity can improve your mood and reduce anxiety and feelings of stress. ☐ Ease your feelings in healthy ways. For instance, take a brisk walk.
I always lie on the couch and watch TV after dinner.	☐ Ride a stationary bike, use resistance bands, or light weights while you watch TV. ☐ Be active during ads. ☐ Go for a walk after dinner instead.
Write Your Own.	☐ ☐ ☐

Goal-Setting Check-Out

As you make your healthy eating and physical activity goals for this week, consider the following.

1. **Remove one food or eating trigger**
   a. **What food or eating trigger will I remove?**
   b. **What will I need to do to make sure I remove it?**
   c. **What challenges might I have? What will I do to solve them?**
2. **Add one positive cue for being more active**
   a. **What activity cue will I add?**
   b. **What will I need to do to make sure I add it?**
   c. **What problems might I have? What will I do to solve them?**

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Recognizing Triggers and Cues

The things you feel or see may serve as a trigger or cue for eating in ways you did not intend or being less active than planned. The things people say or do around you can also trigger behaviors that do not support your health goals. It is important to recognize the triggers and cues that may work against you when trying to manage your weight and health.

"If you stick with the program it works. All you need is the motivation."

– Stephen, lost 80 pounds and enjoys being active with his grandchildren

Cravings vs. Hunger

It is important to recognize cravings versus hunger. When you want to eat, think about whether you are hungry or experiencing a craving. There are two ways to manage cravings: **distraction** helps you ignore the craving and **confrontation** helps you face and move past the craving.

Managing Triggers and Cues

There are three strategies to manage triggers and cues.

1. Avoid the trigger or keep it out of sight.
2. Change how you respond to the trigger.
3. Add a new cue that helps you lead a healthier life.

When you are faced with a trigger or cue that is getting in the way of meeting your health goals, remember you can "break the chain." Ask yourself how you can interrupt this pattern of behavior. Remember that it takes a long time to build a habit and a long time to break a habit. Setting your environment (home, office) up for success can help you replace old habits with healthier ones (for example, leaving your sneakers by the door for walks).

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider how you will manage or remove eating triggers and how you can add cues to your environment for physical activity.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Notes:

MODULE
ELEVEN

Finesse Your Food

How do I finesse my food choices?

Calories come from three main suppliers of nutrients in food, known as macronutrients: carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. They can also come from alcohol; however, alcoholic beverages do not provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, or other nutritional value. To get more nutrients while reducing calories, try the meal and snack suggestions in this module. Changes that you can continue long-term will help you be successful with your goals and maintain a healthier weight.

"Losing weight doesn't have to mean starving yourself. It means understanding what you eat and what you want your life to be going forward."

– Ben, lost 60 pounds and states he gained his life back

For a healthy eating pattern, most people will need to look closely at their food and beverage selections and adjust them to include nutrient-dense foods and beverages in place of other choices. Some changes will be minor and can be done by making simple swaps, while others will require greater effort to accomplish.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Identify the three macronutrients in a healthy diet.**
2. **Identify at least one healthy swap you can make to improve your food choices.**
3. **Learn to recognize a fad diet.**

Progress Check-In

- ☐ I met my previous healthy eating goal
- ☐ I met my previous physical activity goal

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Macronutrients

Choose Healthy Carbohydrates

The role of carbohydrates or "carbs" is to provide energy. They are the body's main source of fuel, needed for physical activity, brain function and operation of the organs. Carbohydrates include sugar, starch, and fiber. Carbs that contain more fiber raise blood sugar levels gradually and provide sustained energy. Refer to Module 4 for more information on the healthy plate food groups.

Choose MORE of These Carbs			
Vegetables	***Non-starchy*** vegetables		
	• Brussel sprouts • Carrots • Cauliflower • Eggplant • Greens (kale, chard, collards)	• Lettuce (Romaine, iceberg, Bibb) • Okra • Peppers (sweet and hot) • Radishes • Spinach	• Sprouts • Turnips • Summer squash (yellow or zucchini)
Fruits	Fruits ***with no sugar added***		
	• Apples (+ unsweetened applesauce) • Blueberries • Cherries • Grapes	• Mango • Oranges • Peaches • Pears • Plums	• Raspberries • Strawberries • Watermelon
Grains	***Whole*** grains		
	• 100% whole wheat • 100% whole grain • Whole rye grain bread or crackers • Whole wheat pasta • Whole cornmeal	• Oats (whole, steel-cut, rolled, quick, instant) • Quinoa • Barley • Bulgar • Brown rice (including instant)	• Wild rice • Whole grain cereals • Whole wheat flour • Popcorn
Legumes	***Legumes***		
	• Lentils • Beans (kidney, pinto, wax, black, fava, green, garbanzo or chickpeas, cannellini)	• Dried peas (black-eyed, sugar snap, mung) • Edamame • Alfalfa sprouts	

Choose FEWER of These Carbs

Vegetables

Starchy vegetables*

- Corn
- Lima beans
- Peas (green, snow, split)
- Plantain
- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Sweet potatoes
- Taro
- Winter squash (butternut, acorn, Kobacha)
- Yams
- Parsnips
- Cassava (yuca)

*Limit starchy vegetables to 25% of your plate.

Fruits

Fruits ***with sugar added***

- Sweetened applesauce
- Most dried fruit, like cranberries
- Fruit Rollups
- Fruit sorbet
- Fruit juice*

*Most fruit juice contains as many carbs as sugar-sweetened beverages. Instead of drinking juice, try adding a small amount of fruit to water. If juice is a must, choose 100% fruit juice with no added sugar in limited amounts.

Grains

Refined-grains

- Wheat germ
- Wheat bran
- White bread
- White flour
- Pasta, crackers and baked goods made with "enriched" wheat flour*
- Pastries
- Cookies
- Cakes

*Cracked wheat, stoned wheat, wheat berry, 100% wheat, seven-grain, multigrain – all are made from mostly refined grains, not whole grains.

*Limit refined-grains to half of your daily servings of grains.

Which healthy carbs are you already eating and drinking?

Which less healthy carbs could you eat less frequently or in smaller amounts?

Eat Your Protein

Protein provides amino acids, the basic building blocks of the body. We need protein to keep our bodies in good working order, repair body cells as they wear out, and protect us from bacteria and viruses. Foods rich in protein are all types of meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk products, dried beans, and nuts.

Adult men and women need a total of **3-6 ounces from the protein food group per day,** depending on calorie level. More protein may be needed if dairy is not consumed. **Consider replacing two beef/chicken/pork meals a week with fish or plant-based protein for more variety and to reduce intake of saturated fats.**

Protein Options: Seafood/Nuts/Beans/Dairy

- Fish
  - » Salmon
  - » Tuna
  - » Herring
  - » Trout
  - » Tilapia
- Shellfish
  - » Shrimp
  - » Crab
  - » Crawfish
  - » Oysters
- Nuts/Nut Butters
  - » Almonds
  - » Walnuts
  - » Pistachios
  - » Pecans
  - » Peanuts
  - » Cashews
- Other
  - » Dry beans, peas, or lentils
  - » Eggs
  - » Greek yogurt
  - » Low-fat cheese
  - » Tofu

Protein Options: Meat/Poultry

- Poultry (chicken, turkey)
  - » Chicken and turkey without skin
  - » Lean or extra lean ground turkey
  - » Ground white meat chicken
- Lean beef and pork cuts*
  - » Top loin chops
  - » Tenderloin
  - » Top sirloin
  - » Top round (London Broil)
  - » Round eye
  - » Bottom round (rump roast)
  - » Round tip, arm, and chuck shoulder
  - » Extra lean ground beef (90% lean or more)

*Choose cuts labeled "Choice" or "Select," instead of "Prime," which usually has more fat. Choose cuts with the least amount of visible fat (marbling). Even then, trim any visible fat before preparing the beef.

Write down some ways you can incorporate meatless meals into your menu planning. For example, what new recipes could you try or recipe substitutions would you make?

Go Good Fat!

Fats help the body absorb certain vitamins, produce hormones, and build body tissues. Fats are important for the brain and the central nervous system. The four major types of fats are: **monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, saturated fats,** and **trans fats**.

Adequate fat is an important part of a healthy eating plan. **Most dietary fat should come from unsaturated fats, especially fatty fish, seeds and nuts that provide omega-3 fatty acids.** Eating two 3-ounce servings of fish per week meets the recommendation for omega-3, which is linked to decreased inflammation. Monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats are known as "healthy fats" because they are good for your heart, cholesterol levels, and overall health. These fats tend to be "liquid" at room temperature.

Small amounts of fat (less than 10% of your calorie intake) can come from saturated fats. Try replacing sources of saturated and trans fat with unsaturated options. For example, replace butter on your toast with a smear of mashed avocado. Instead of chips, try 10 olives or 20 nuts for a snack.

Smart Alex

"**Cholesterol is a waxy substance found naturally in the blood and all the cells in your body.** It is mainly produced in the liver, but also found in foods such as red meat, high fat cheese, butter, and eggs. Cholesterol is essential for maintaining good health and only becomes a problem when the level in your blood is too high.

Know your cholesterol test results:

LDL (low density lipoprotein cholesterol) is sometimes called 'bad' cholesterol because it adds to fatty buildups in the arteries. High levels of LDL cholesterol raise your risk for heart disease, stroke, and peripheral artery disease. Lower LDL numbers are better.

HDL (high density lipoprotein cholesterol) is sometimes called 'good' cholesterol because a healthy level may protect against heart attack and stroke.

Triglycerides store excess energy from food and drinks. A high triglyceride level combined with high LDL cholesterol or low HDL cholesterol is linked with fatty buildups within the artery walls, which increases the risk of heart attack and stroke."

Healthy Fats	Food Sources	
Monounsaturated fats *Lower LDL*	• Olives and olive oil • Canola oil • Sunflower oil • Peanut oil	• Avocados • Nuts and seeds • Peanut butter
Polyunsaturated fats *Lower Triglycerides and raise HDL cholesterol*	• Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring, trout, sardines) • Ground flaxseed • Walnuts • Corn oil	• Soybean oil • Safflower and cottonseed oils • Soymilk • Tofu
Less Healthy Fats	**Food Sources**	
Saturated fats *Increase total cholesterol levels including HDL and LDL*	• High-fat cuts of meat (beef, lamb, pork) • Chicken with the skin • Whole-fat dairy products • Butter • Ice cream	• Cheese • Lard • Palm and coconut oil (snack foods, non-dairy creamers, whipped toppings)
Unhealthy Fats	**Food Sources**	
Trans fats *Increase total cholesterol levels including LDL and lower HDL cholesterol*	• Artificial trans fats, most commonly known as partially hydrogenated oils, were previously found in many processed foods. Since 2020, food manufacturers are no longer allowed to use partially hydrogenated oils.	• Natural trans fats are present in very low levels in food products such as milk, butter, cheese, and meat that come from cows, sheep, goats, buffalo, and deer.

What types of heart-healthy fats (mono and polyunsaturated fats) are you already eating?

How might you replace saturated or trans-fats you normally eat with heart-healthy fats?

Find the Fat

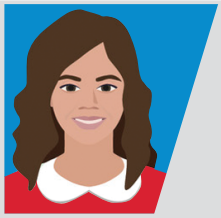
Most of the fat we eat (70%) is hidden in foods, meaning you can't visibly see it like you can on a steak. Look at the fat and calories in a typical fast food meal.

Food	Fat Grams	Total Calories
Fried fish sandwich	26	440
Large French fries	22	400
Apple turnover, fried	15	260
Vanilla milkshake	10	334
Total:	**73**	**1434**

73 grams of fat is about 18 teaspoons of fat. That's almost a whole stick of butter!

Typically, frying food triples the calories compared to other cooking methods that don't require added fat.

Write down some foods you eat that are high in fat.



Teresa's Tips

"Fat has more than twice the calories found in carbohydrates or protein. Eating less fat can help you eat fewer calories."

Macronutrient	Calories per Gram
Carbohydrates	4
Protein	4
Fat	9

Think about finding lower fat choices. Instead of a doughnut, choose toast or an English muffin made with 100% whole grains. Have an orange instead of potato chips, or a grilled chicken sandwich instead of a cheeseburger. You get the idea!

Use the calorie table in the Food and Physical Activity Log or an app to fill in the table.

How many calories can you save by making these swaps?

Options	Fat Grams	Total Calories
Instead of… 10-15 potato chips		
Choose…. 3 cups of air-popped popcorn		
Instead of… 4 oz pork spareribs		
Choose… 4 oz pork loin chop		

Making Healthy Food Swaps

Recipe Smart Stand-Ins

Use the following tips to trim excess calories, fat, and cholesterol from your favorite recipes.

If your recipe calls for:	Try these healthy substitutions:
Whole or 2% milk	• Fat-free milk (non fat/skim) • Low-fat milk (1%)
Cream	• Evaporated fat-free milk • Fat-free half-and-half
Whipped cream	• Whip chilled, evaporated fat-free milk
Sour cream	• Fat-free or low-fat sour cream • Plain low-fat yogurt or Greek yogurt
Mayonnaise	• Light, low-fat, or fat-free mayonnaise • Mayonnaise made with olive oil • Fat-free plain yogurt • Mashed avocado
Cream cheese	• Reduced-fat or fat-free versions (no fat-free for baking)
Ricotta cheese	• 1% cottage cheese • Skim or non-fat ricotta
Whole-milk cheese (regular cheese)	• Part-skim milk mozzarella • Low-fat or reduced-fat cheese (made with 1% or 2% milk)
Butter, lard, shortening	• Depending on the recipe, use canola or olive oil • In baking, swap 1 cup mashed ripe banana or avocado puree for 1 cup of butter
Oil (in baking)	• Replace half the oil with unsweetened applesauce (Example: a recipe using 1 cup of oil would use ½ cup oil and ½ cup applesauce)

If your recipe calls for:	Try these healthy substitutions:
1 egg yolk	• 1 egg white
1 egg (as thickener)	• 1 tablespoon flour
1 whole egg	• 2 egg whites • 1 egg white and 2 teaspoons of oil • 1 tablespoon flax seed (flax meal) with 3 tablespoons of warm water—whisk with fork, combine, let sit for 5-10 minutes—substitute for 1 egg in baking
Nuts, coconut	• Use fewer nuts and toast them to enhance flavor
Frosting	• Sifted confectioner's sugar • Top with sifted cocoa powder • Meringue
Luncheon meats	• Low-fat varieties – skinless turkey, chicken, or lean ham
Sausage	• Lean ground turkey • Veggie sausage
Bacon	• Canadian bacon • Turkey bacon • Lean ham, prosciutto or pancetta
Cream soups	• Fat-free broths • Broth-based soups • Fat-free (skim) milk-based soups

"Through the program, I began to eat less processed carbohydrates, more fruits and vegetables, and more lean meats. Now, I am also conscious of foods high in sodium, fat, and cholesterol—I'm trying to eat less of those foods."

– Robert, lost 46 pounds, is free from back pain, and takes less insulin

Snack Attack

When you need a snack, consider these options. Check off the snacks you want to try!

Under 100 Calorie Snacks	100-200 Calorie Snacks
☐ 1 kosher dill pickle	☐ 1 cup yogurt with ½ cup fresh or frozen unsweetened berries
☐ 1 cup sugar-free gelatin	☐ 1 plain rice cake with 1 Tbsp peanut butter and a small sliced banana
☐ 2 sugar-free frozen fruit popsicles	☐ ¾ cup cottage cheese with ¼ cup berries
☐ 1 sugar-free fudge pop	☐ Fruit smoothie with ¾ cup yogurt and ½ cup fruit
☐ 8 oz miso soup	☐ 1 oz of pretzels
☐ 1 fruit cup	☐ 1 small whole wheat pita with 1 oz low-fat cheese and ½ cup vegetables
☐ 1 cup fat-free Greek yogurt with 2 tsp sugar-free jam	☐ 1 small-medium apple with 1 Tbsp peanut butter
☐ 2 brown rice cakes with 2 Tbsp sugar-free jam	☐ 1 cereal bar or reduced-fat granola bar
☐ ½ cup carrots with 1 Tbsp light ranch dressing	☐ 2 clementines with 1 string cheese
☐ 3 cups air-popped popcorn	☐ 10 baked tortilla chips with ½ cup salsa
☐ 1 cup strawberries with 3 Tbsp nonfat yogurt	☐ ¼ cup almonds, cashews, or pistachios
☐ 4 oz unsweetened applesauce sprinkled with cinnamon	☐ ½ cup frozen yogurt
☐ 1 cup raw vegetables with 2 Tbsp hummus or guacamole	☐ ½ cup cottage cheese with 1 cup pineapple
☐ 3 graham crackers	☐ ½ cup sorbet or sherbet
☐ 3 vanilla wafers with ½ cup fat-free (skim) milk	☐ 2 hard-boiled eggs
☐ 1 slice cinnamon-raisin toast with 1 tsp honey	☐ 2 oz tuna with 4 wheat crackers
☐	☐ 1 slice 100% wheat toast with ⅕ avocado
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

Teresa's Tips

"You can enjoy dessert *and* meet your health and weight management goals. Enjoy a single-serving frozen treat, gelatin or pudding cup. You can also make a mini version of your favorite dessert. Sometimes a few bites is all that is needed to feel satisfied."

Bring Out the Flavor

Eating wisely doesn't mean your food should be bland. You can bring out the flavor in your foods in many ways. Adding herbs and spices during cooking, substituting low-fat toppings on foods, and healthy cooking techniques can help you spice up your foods (see Module 7 for healthy cooking options). Use herbs and spices to add extra flavor to food without adding salt or calories. Try some of these recommendations at your next meal!

Sweet Seasonings (to replace sugar)	Savory Seasonings (to replace salt)
• Allspice	• Black pepper
• Anise	• Coriander
• Caraway	• Curry power
• Cardamom	• Cumin
• Cloves	• Dill seeds
• Cinnamon	• Garlic powder
• Mace	• Ginger
• Nutmeg	• Lemon zest
• Poppy seeds	• Mustard
• Sesame seeds	• Onion powder
• Vanilla	• Vinegar

Try different herbs and spices when preparing meat and vegetables.

Fish
• Curry powder • Dill • Dry mustard • Marjoram • Paprika • Pepper • Turmeric

Chicken
• Ginger • Marjoram • Oregano • Paprika • Rosemary • Sage • Tarragon • Thyme

Beef
• Bay leaf • Marjoram • Nutmeg • Oregano • Pepper • Rosemary • Sage • Thyme

Lamb
• Curry powder • Garlic • Mint • Rosemary • Thyme

Pork
• Coriander • Cumin • Curry powder • Garlic • Oregano • Pepper • Sage

Veal
• Bay leaf • Curry powder • Ginger • Marjoram • Oregano

Carrots
• Allspice • Cinnamon • Cloves • Ginger • Mint • Sage • Tarragon

Green Beans
• Basil • Curry powder • Dill • Garlic • Onion • Tarragon • Thyme

Tomatoes
• Basil • Bay leaf • Black pepper • Dill • Marjoram • Oregano • Parsley • Onion

Potatoes
• Chives • Dill • Garlic • Paprika • Parsley • Sage • Thyme • Turmeric

Corn
• Basil • Chives • Cumin • Curry powder • Dill seeds • Onion • Paprika

Mushrooms
• Black pepper • Marjoram • Nutmeg • Oregano • Parsley • Sage • Tarragon

Skip the Fad Diets

Most people who are trying to lose weight would like for it to happen right away. This has created a market for fad diets and weight-loss pills and supplements.

Fad Diet FAQs

Q: ***How can I tell if something is a "fad" diet?***

A: Signs of a fad diet include:

1. Miraculous claims and testimonials
2. Promises of fast weight loss
3. Rules that make you avoid certain food groups
4. A food plan that does not consider your preferences and lifestyle

Q: ***Do fad diets work?***

A: No! They can help you lose weight over the short term, but people tend to gain it back once they stop the fad diet. To lose weight and keep it off, you must change your eating and physical activity and make this part of your lifestyle. Fad diets don't result in long-term weight loss and may be bad for your health.

Q: ***Will over-the-counter weight loss supplements help me?***

A: No. Many over-the-counter supplements contain questionable, if not dangerous substances. Some of these products contain medications that should require a prescription or are illegal in the United States. **These substances can also interact with your prescribed medications.**

There are a small number of prescription medications that are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for weight management. If you feel you would benefit from a weight loss medication, let your MOVE! or health care team know. These medications are designed to work in conjunction with MOVE!

Q: ***Are all diets bad?***

A: No. Eating healthier is always good for you. Your health care team or dietitian may recommend a special dietary plan, also called a diet. These dietary plans do work in managing problems like diabetes. They also help you manage your weight. The current medical opinion is that one should choose a healthy eating style and stick with it now and in the future. Find a healthy dietary plan that works for you.

Smart Alex

"There are several healthy dietary plan choices you can consider when trying to manage your weight. **There is not one 'right' diet for everyone. You should choose a healthy food plan that reduces your calorie intake and that you can maintain over the long-term.** Healthy plans include the Mediterranean diet, DASH diet (dietary approaches to stop hypertension), low-carb diet, or low-fat diet. Consult with your MOVE! team if you're interested in learning more about these plans."

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Carbohydrates, Protein, and Fats - Macronutrients

Carbohydrates or "carbs" are the body's main source of fuel and are needed for physical activity and brain and organ function. Protein supplies amino acids, the basic building blocks of the body. We need protein to keep our bodies in good working order and to protect us from bacteria and viruses. Fats help the body absorb certain vitamins, produce hormones, and build body tissues and are important for the brain and the central nervous system. The four major types of fats are: **monounsaturated fats, polyunsaturated fats, saturated fats, and trans fats.** Most dietary fat should come from unsaturated fats. Small amounts can come from saturated fats (less than 10% of your calorie intake).

"The main thing for me was calories, calories, calories. I counted my calories."

– Jerry, lost 42 pounds and no longer needs blood pressure and cholesterol medication

Making Healthy Food Swaps

There are many ways to add nutrients and reduce calories by making changes to the meals and snacks you already eat. Healthy eating doesn't mean giving up all the foods you love! Learning to finesse your food with healthy food swaps, menu alterations, and recipe adjustments can help you maintain an overall healthy eating pattern. Remember to plan your meals choosing non-starchy vegetables and lean protein options. Use "healthy fats" because they are good for your heart, cholesterol levels, and overall health. Use seasonings to bring out the flavors in your foods. Modify recipes without sacrificing taste and consider healthy new snacks to help stay on track.

Dietary Plan Choices

There is not one "right" eating style for everyone. You should choose a healthy food plan that has the right amount of calories for your body and that you can maintain over the long term. If you eat nutritious foods and control your portions, all foods can fit. Consult with your MOVE! team to select a plan that matches your health needs.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider ways you can reduce calories by making healthy substitutions in your meal planning and cooking.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
TWELVE

Dust Yourself Off

What should I do when I have a slip?

By now you are well on your way to a healthier lifestyle! You've probably been through times when you didn't stick to your new eating and activity plans. These are called slips. Slips are a normal part of making lifestyle changes and are to be expected. It's important to think of a slip as ***temporary*** and to ***learn from it.***

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

"I've done MOVE! three times, and it's shown me that to be successful, I need a weight-loss program that requires a lifestyle change—not simply a diet."

– Robert, lost 137 pounds over 4 years and can now keep up with his grandchildren

Guilt from a slip can lead to more slips and less confidence. A series of slips can be a problem if they lead to a relapse. A relapse is a series of slips that result in a return to unhealthy eating and physical activity habits. Don't let a slip lead to guilt or despair—and don't give up!

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn that slips are a normal part of lifestyle change.**
2. **Recognize what may trigger a slip.**
3. **Identify how to handle slips so that you avoid relapsing.**

Progress Check-In

- ☐ I met my previous healthy eating goal
- ☐ I met my previous physical activity goal

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

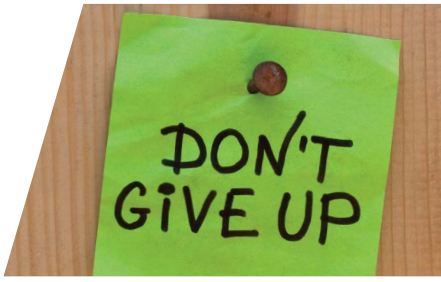
Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Recognizing a Slip

Slips are a common experience—everyone who is trying to lose weight or maintain weight loss will experience a slip from time to time. A single slip, no matter how extreme, will not cause you to fail. The problem is not the slip itself. The problem can come if you don't get right back on your healthy lifestyle plan after you slip.



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.***

What situations cause you to slip from healthy eating?

What situations cause you to slip from being active?

Tom's Toolkit

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

1. Rethink unhelpful thoughts.
2. Ask yourself what happened so you can reflect on and learn from the experience.
3. Get back on track right away.
4. Talk to someone who supports you.
5. Focus on all the positive changes you've made."

Handling Slips

You've learned that slips are a normal part of making lifestyle changes. Most people who are trying to manage their weight make mistakes or have slips. How you respond to slips is key to your success in this program and beyond. There are several tools and strategies that you can use for responding to a slip. **Consider these strategies the next time you have a slip.**

Rethink your unhelpful thoughts.	Negative thoughts can be your worst enemy. Don't fall into negative thought patterns like All or Nothing Thinking or Self-Labeling. Rethink your unhelpful thoughts. See Module 6 - Conquering Unhelpful Thoughts.
Ask yourself what happened.	Reflect on the situation and learn from the slip. How can you avoid this type of slip in the future? How can you manage the situation differently?
Get back on track right away.	Plan how you can get back on track right away. For example, make your very next meal a healthy one or get back on schedule with your activity plan. Don't let your slip turn into a relapse.
Talk to someone supportive.	Call your MOVE! team or a friend to discuss your slip. Talk about your new strategy for handling slips going forward. Commit yourself to a renewed effort.
Focus on positive changes.	You are making lifelong changes! Slips are just one part of the process.

How can planning to handle slips help you be more successful with your long-term health goals?

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

How will you change the way you respond to slips?

Planning to Handle Slips

Because slips are to be expected during your weight management journey, planning on how you will respond when a slip occurs can help you save time, effort, and frustration getting back on track.

Describe a situation that caused a slip from healthy eating.	
Describe one situation that has caused you to slip from healthy eating.	
Can you avoid that situation in the future? How?	
Make a plan to get back on your feet the next time you slip.	
When this slip happens, I will:	
When will I act?	
What will I do first?	
The roadblocks that might come up:	
I will handle the roadblocks by:	
To make my success more likely, I will reward myself with:	

Describe a situation that caused a slip from being active.	
Describe one situation that has caused you to slip from being active.	
Can you avoid that situation in the future? How?	
Make a plan to get back on your feet the next time you slip.	
When this slip happens, I will:	
When will I act?	
What will I do first?	
The roadblocks that might come up:	
I will handle the roadblocks by:	
To make my success more likely, I will reward myself with:	

From Slips to Relapse

Getting discouraged after a slip may lead to more slips. This may then cause a person to lose confidence in their eating and activity patterns. A series of slips can lead to a relapse, or falling back into old eating and activity habits, which can result in weight gain.

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

If you have a series of slips:

1. **Stay calm.** If you get anxious or start to blame yourself, things may get worse. You may get worked up and feel like giving up. Stay calm. Know that one slip or a series of slips does not mean failure.

2. **Analyze the situation.** Instead of blaming yourself for a series of slips, learn what contributed to the slip. Was it certain feelings or the presence of food, other people eating, or other activities? What thoughts did you have?

3. **Take charge immediately.** Take action right away with alternative activities. Leave the house, put food you don't want to eat in the trash or stored away.

4. **Ask for help.** Use your social support network. If you would like support during slips, ask for help! You can also reread this workbook for reminders and support.

5. **Renew your commitment.** Remind yourself how far you've come and the progress you've made. One slip does not undo all your hard work! Restate your goals and renew the commitment you made at the start of this program.

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

> "I feel blessed that the VA is offering this program. I wish I would have started it earlier, but you have to be in the right mindset. It's a lifetime benefit.
>
> I am more active, my house is clean, and I'm able to be involved more in helping the people in my community."
>
> – Valerie, lost 25 pounds and has more energy and mental clarity

Reasons for participating in a weight management program can change over time. Reflect on why you started the MOVE! Program and write down what matters most to you now.

Module Summary

Recognizing a Slip

You are making positive lifelong changes in this program! Slipping from your healthy lifestyle plans is a normal part of making positive changes. Try to 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?

"Don't get discouraged by the number on the scale. Keep going!"

– Darryl, lost 53 pounds, improved his health and feels like a teenager again

Handling Slips

To meet your health goals, it's important to make an action plan to get back on track after a slip. Slips are a normal part of making lifestyle changes. However, ignoring these slips or not addressing them can cause you to relapse, or to fall back into your old eating and activity habits.

Preventing Relapse

The good news is that a slip does not have to end in a relapse. To prevent a relapse, follow the five steps after a slip:

1. Stay calm
2. Analyze the situation
3. Take charge immediately
4. Ask for help
5. Renew your commitment

Learning to handle slips and prevent relapses will help you enjoy continued success with your new eating and activity goals!

A slip does not always lead to a relapse.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider how you can plan for slips and respond in a productive way to get back on track.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Notes:

MOVE!®

MODULE THIRTEEN

Dining Out

How can I dine out and eat wisely?

To eat wisely when you're away from home, it is important to recognize situations that are high-risk for you. Situations that interrupt your normal routine—like traveling, holidays, or eating at restaurants—may cause you to slip in your eating or activity patterns. These are called high-risk situations. Your family, friends or co-workers may unintentionally create high-risk eating situations for you. Many people don't understand how difficult it can be to make healthy meal choices consistently.

"I plan ahead for situations out of my control like picnics or parties. I want to enjoy the event while also sticking to my healthy eating plan."

– Joe, lost 40 pounds and has maintained his healthy lifestyle for several years

To maintain your healthy lifestyle, it's important to learn how to handle high-risk situations. Once you know which situations are challenging, you can avoid them or make a plan for how to handle them. Predicting and preparing for these situations will help you prevent slips. Try to stay focused on your goals when faced with high-risk situations.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Identify your high-risk eating situations.**
2. **Make a plan to cope with high-risk situations.**
3. **Learn how to eat wisely when eating out.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Plan for High-Risk Situations

To eat wisely when dining out, it is important to know yourself and what situations may trigger you to stray from your healthy eating plan. Once you identify these situations, you can avoid them or plan ahead for how you will deal with them.

Let's review an example where going to a party may be a high-risk situation for you. If you don't want to avoid the party, ***here are some ways you can cope:***

- **Eat something before the event so you aren't overly hungry when you arrive.**
- **Bring a healthy dish to share.**
- **Use your assertive skills to pass and say "no, thank you" when offered food you don't want.**
- **Instead of high-calorie drinks, enjoy a cup of coffee, tea, or water.**
- **Do more socializing than eating; enjoy the time spent with friends or getting to know someone new.**

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.***

High-Risk Situations	Your Usual Response	A Better Way to Manage in the Future

Restaurant Eating

Eating out may seem like a challenge when trying to improve your health. However, you can learn to enjoy a restaurant meal while making healthier food choices. You can also learn how to find lower fat and calorie choices at restaurants, even fast food restaurants.

Before Eating Out: Make a Plan

- Call restaurants and ask about low-fat, low-calorie choices or look at the menu online.
- Pick restaurants that offer a variety of healthy options. Avoid buffets and all-you-can-eat restaurants.
- Make healthy food choices at other meals on the day you eat out.
- Eat something small or have a large, low-calorie drink before you go.
- Don't drink alcohol before eating.

While Eating Out: Ask for What You Want

Ask if foods can be cooked differently, like baked or grilled instead of fried. Don't be afraid to ask for foods that aren't on the menu.

- Before ordering, ask how much food is usually served.
- Order dressing, gravy, sauces, or spreads "on the side."
- Ask for less cheese or no cheese.
- Skip the chip or bread basket.
- Order a small size (appetizer, lunch portion, children's or senior's portion).
- Order à la carte, mixing healthy side orders to make a great meal.
- Eat a smaller portion by splitting your order with a family member or friend.
- Ask your server to put half of your order in a take-home container before the other half is served to you. *Be sure to refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours!*

Which of the tips you learned on the previous page will you use the next time you eat out?

Fast Food Options

You can make lower fat choices at many types of restaurants. By making careful menu selections and paying attention to menu descriptions, you can find healthier options. **Test your skills at selecting low-fat, low-calorie options in the following fast food challenges!**

Burger Challenge:

Using the menu below, build a meal that is less than 600 calories and less than 28 grams of fat. Write your response in the space provided.

BURGER Menu

Burgers	Fat (g)	Calories
Hamburger (single)	9	250
Cheeseburger (single)	12	300
Double cheeseburger	24	450
Bacon cheeseburger	16	339
¼ pound hamburger	19	410
¼ pound cheeseburger	26	520

Sandwiches and Wraps	Fat (g)	Calories
Crispy chicken sandwich	17	440
Grilled chicken sandwich	11	380
Fish sandwich	18	380
Grilled chicken wrap	13	340

Chicken	Fat (g)	Calories
6-piece chicken nugget	15	250
3-piece chicken tender	14	310

Sides	Fat (g)	Calories
Small French fries	10	220
Medium French fries	15	320
Side salad	0	80
Baked potato with sour cream	3	310

Salads	Fat (g)	Calories
Garden salad	9	120
Garden salad with crispy chicken	26	480
Garden salad with grilled chicken	14	270

Drinks and Desserts	Fat (g)	Calories
Medium cola	0	210
Medium diet cola	0	0
Medium iced tea	0	0
Large coffee	0	0
Hot fudge sundae	10	330

Hannah's How-To
Make a Healthy Swap

"Ask your server:

- Can I have this baked/steamed/broiled/grilled instead of fried?
- Can I have extra veggies on my sandwich instead of cheese?
- Can I have the dressing/sauce/gravy/sour cream/butter on the side?
- Can I have a baked potato instead of fries?
- Can I have a salad instead of coleslaw?
- Can I have fruit as my dessert?"

Taco Challenge:

Using the menu below, build a meal that is less than 600 calories and less than 28 grams of fat. Write your response in the space provided.

TACO Menu

Tacos	Fat (g)	Calories
Crunchy beef taco	10	170
Soft beef taco	9	180
Soft chicken taco	5	160
Crunchy beef taco supreme	11	190
Soft beef taco supreme	10	210

Quesadilla	Fat (g)	Calories
Chicken quesadilla	26	510
Steak quesadilla	27	520

Taco Salad	Fat (g)	Calories
Southwest taco salad	41	770
Steak taco salad	57	900

Sides	Fat (g)	Calories
Black beans	1	50
Nachos	13	220

Burritos	Fat (g)	Calories
Bean burrito	9	350
Chicken burrito supreme	11	370
Steak burrito supreme	12	380
5-layer burrito	18	490

Bowls	Fat (g)	Calories
Chicken bowl	20	450
Steak bowl	22	470
Veggie bowl	19	410

Drinks and Desserts	Fat (g)	Calories
Medium cola	0	210
Medium diet cola	0	0
Medium iced tea	0	0
Large coffee	0	0
Cinnamon twists	6	170

Chicken Challenge:

Using the menu below, build a meal that is less than 600 calories and less than 28 grams of fat. Write your response in the space provided.

CHICKEN Menu

Entrees	Fat (g)	Calories
Crispy chicken breast	21	390
Crispy chicken breast, no skin	3	150
Crispy chicken drumstick	8	130
Crispy chicken thigh	19	280
Grilled chicken breast	7	210
Grilled chicken drumstick	4	80
Grilled chicken thigh	9	150
Grilled chicken sandwich	11	380
Chicken club sandwich	15	430
Grilled chicken wrap	45	660
Grilled market salad	31	540
Chicken nuggets, 8-piece	11	250
Chicken strips, 4-piece	19	410

Sides	Fat (g)	Calories
Mashed potatoes with gravy	4	130
Macaroni and cheese	6	140
Corn on the cob	0.5	70
BBQ baked beans	1	190
Green beans	0	25
Coleslaw	12	170
Biscuit	8	180

Drinks and Desserts	Fat (g)	Calories
Medium cola	0	210
Medium diet cola	0	0
Medium iced tea	0	0
Large coffee	0	0
Apple turnover	11	230
Chocolate chip cookie	6	120

Teresa's Tips

"Look for these low-fat words and avoid these high-fat words when ordering off a restaurant menu."

Low-Fat Words	
• Baked	• Poached
• Boiled	• Roasted
• Broiled	• Steamed
• Grilled	• Stir-fried

High-Fat Words	
• Alfredo	• Buttered or buttery
• Au gratin	• Cheese sauce or cheesy
• Breaded	• Creamed or creamy Scalloped
• Gravy	• Fried, deep-fried, batter-fried, or pan fried
• Pastry	• Hollandaise
• Rich	
• Southern style	

Takeout Tips

Make your takeout order work for you by making informed choices and small changes to your favorite pizza or Asian-inspired dish.

Asian-Inspired Takeout

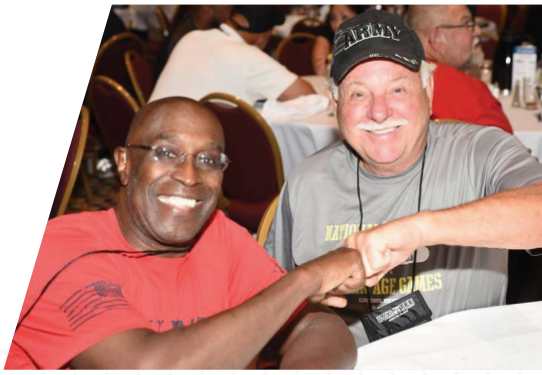
- Look for veggies: Pick dishes that highlight veggies, like chicken and broccoli or a vegetable stir-fry. Be mindful of the type of sauce used.
- Try steamed foods: Many foods can be steamed rather than fried. Steamed dumplings and rice are lower in saturated fat than the fried versions.
- Adjust your order: Most restaurants are happy to accommodate your requests. Ask that your food be cooked with less oil or half the sauce.
- Add sauces sparingly: Sodium in soy sauce and calories from added sugars in duck and teriyaki sauces can add up quickly, so use less of these.

Pizza

- Select a thin crust option.
- Ask for half the cheese.
- Throw on the veggies: Add all your favorite veggies like onions, green peppers, and mushrooms.
- Use meat toppings sparingly: Meats like pepperoni and sausage are high in fat and calories.

"Things like not meeting in eating places and drinking lots of water really work for me—it keeps me feeling full."

– Robert, lost 50 pounds with the support of his wife and friends in MOVE!



Social Eating

Eating with others can sometimes make healthy eating difficult because of the abundance of food, limited food options, and social pressure to eat or drink a certain way. There are ways to enjoy eating with others that will keep you on the right track. Let others know you are eating healthier and ask for their support. Try to order your meal first so you're not tempted by what other people choose.

Special Occasion Eating and Social Events

Special occasions such as parties, celebrations, or holiday meals can make it challenging to eat wisely. Strive to make celebrations fun, healthy, and active. Holidays can be a challenging time of the year. They are often filled with time-honored traditions that include favorite meals and foods. As you celebrate, think of little changes you can make to create healthier meals and active days.

Follow these tips to help you eat wisely at your next celebration. Notice that some of these strategies are similar to what you might use when dining out.

Be Prepared	Make Healthy Habits Part of Your Celebration
• Avoid skipping meals. Stay on your meal and snack routine by eating before the celebration. • Bring a healthy dish to the party so you know there will be at least one healthy option. • Practice saying "No, thank you." • Chew gum or have a mint when you're done enjoying your meal.	• Drink plenty of water or other low-calorie beverages. • Let "My Healthy Plate" be your guide. • Focus on activities that get you moving and having fun with friends and family. • Limit when you eat from the buffet. • Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages. They contain empty calories and make it harder for you to avoid temptation.
Don't Deny Yourself	**Focus on the People, Not the Food**
• Enjoy special foods using mindfulness to savor your portion. • Take time to pay attention to each bite of food. • Choose low-calorie appetizers, such as crunchy vegetables, fruit kabobs, and fresh salads.	• Focus on the conversation and having a good time. • Be a model for healthy habits for adults and children! • Make exercise a part of the fun.

How will you prepare to eat wisely for your next social occasion?

After Eating Out

Think about the choices you made and if they supported your health goals. Every experience is a learning experience.

After Eating Out: Follow Up

- Think about what went well and what you may do differently at the next occasion.
- Tuning into your body's natural hunger and fullness levels can be helpful in social situations. It can also be challenging! If you ate more than you planned, it doesn't mean you are back at square one. Reflect on your progress. Remember your purpose. It takes many steps to reach the top of a mountain, and there will be slips and stumbles along the way.
- If you had any slips, remind yourself that you are still moving in the direction of your health goals and make a plan to get back on track right away. Identify "triggers" that led to eating more than you planned. Write them down. Come up with strategies to manage these triggers in the future.
- If you successfully managed the situation as you had planned and in support of your health goals, congratulations! Reflect on how you did this so you can do it again in the future.
- Be kind to yourself. Listen to your positive self-talk or rethink any negative thoughts. You can use your experience as a learning opportunity to help you succeed.

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

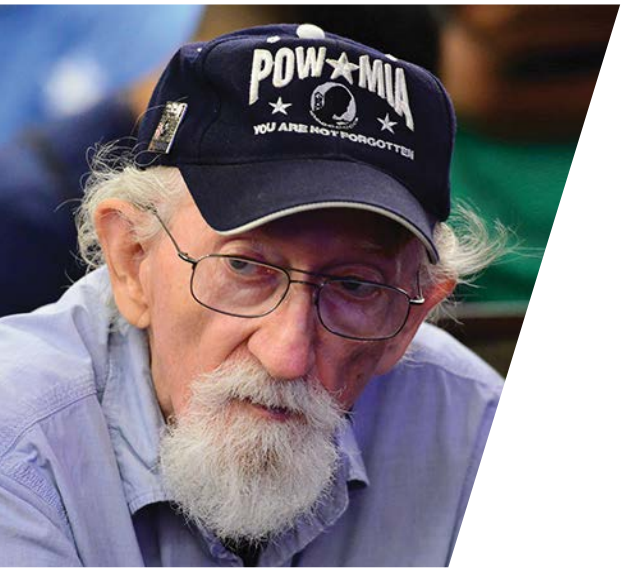
Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?



"If I go out to eat, I will order lower carb options. I stay away from most fried foods and breading."

– Joseph, lost 180 pounds and feels he will live longer

Module Summary

Plan for High-Risk Situations

Planning for high-risk situations can help you maintain the healthy eating patterns that you have established over the course of MOVE! It is important to recognize situations that may be triggers for eating more than planned or foods that don't support your health goals. Dining out and celebrations are examples of such situations. The good news is there are many ways you can follow a healthy eating plan and still enjoy those special occasions.

Dining Out

Dining out may be a necessity in a busy life, but there are ways that you can choose healthier menu items and meet your daily calorie goal. Read the menu carefully and look for options that are grilled, baked, or broiled, and limit deep-fried and breaded items. With a greater emphasis on healthy eating, many restaurants and fast food places offer lower calorie foods. Many of your favorite dining locations have calorie or nutrient information available.

Social Eating

Special occasions, holidays, and other gatherings may occur with a meal, but food does not have to be the only focus. You can pay more attention to your family and friends, conversations, and having fun. During the holidays, think about small changes you can make to your family recipes to create healthier versions of your favorite foods. Let your family and friends know you are eating healthier foods and ask for their support in your efforts.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider how you can eat wisely while dining out or when eating at social occasions.**
4. **Review the new module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
FOURTEEN

Manage Stress and Find Support

How do I manage stress?

Stress is a common part of life. Everyone experiences periods of high stress. Prolonged high stress can cause high blood pressure, a weakened immune system, heart disease, and digestive problems. Headaches, depression, irritability, and low energy are other common symptoms. While stress is a natural response that serves us well in the short term, there are things we can do to help our bodies recover.

"I feel better, think more clearly, and have less stress. And I'm having much more fun than I did before—I'm getting out, going to the movies, meeting friends, and laughing a lot."

– Henry, lost 74 pounds and wakes up refreshed in the morning

You can learn ways to manage your stress more effectively. Techniques like relaxation practice, increasing physical activity, or changing your thoughts in response to stress can help you lower your stress and improve your readiness to respond in stressful situations. You can learn to deal with stress more easily when it arises. It might help to remember that you cannot always control the causes of stress, but you can control the way you react to it.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Think about stressful situations and plan how to cope with them.**
2. **Learn how to practice a variety of stress management techniques.**
3. **Recognize how to find and ask for support.**

Progress Check-In

I met my previous healthy eating goal ☐

I met my previous physical activity goal ☐

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Keys to Managing Your Stress

1. Track Your Stress

Stress affects everybody differently. By regularly monitoring and tracking your stress, you raise your awareness of how you experience stress and get a better sense of your baseline or usual stress level. Knowing how your body reacts to stress will help alert you when your stress level is rising.

2. Identify the Sources of Your Stress

Knowing the sources of your stress is important. After you have an idea of the things that cause your stress, you can develop a plan for dealing with each of them.

3. Practice Mindfulness Regularly

Mindfulness is a way to be fully aware in the present moment of physical sensations, emotions, and thoughts, but without judging them. Practicing mindfulness routinely can help you manage stress. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction techniques have been proven to reduce stress and stress-related conditions in Veterans. They can reduce anxiety, improve attention and memory, and help manage chronic pain.

4. Be Physically Active

Physical activity is one of the most effective stress management techniques. It increases endorphins, improves sleep, raises self-esteem, and relieves muscle tension. If you are going to exercise to help relieve stress, do so at an intensity that is comfortable for you.

5. Practice Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is one of the fastest ways to deal with stress in the moment. Use deep breathing to manage stress, anxiety, and panic. It is also effective for managing depression and other emotional responses, and it can even be helpful for some medical conditions.

6. Plan Pleasant Activities

Research has shown that the things we do affect the way we feel. When you spend time in activities that you find relaxing, enjoyable, or just plain fun, you tend to feel less distressed and happier. For many people, life demands seem to replace pleasant activities. If you notice this happening to you, it's time to plan for positive time.

Tracking My Stress

Rate your stress level regularly by choosing a number between 0-10, where 0 means not bothersome, 5 means somewhat bothersome, and 10 means very bothersome. Tracking your stress will help you identify patterns in your stress.

On a scale of 0 to 10, how bothersome has your stress been?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all bothersome		A little			Somewhat		Very			Extremely bothersome

Date & Time	Stress Level (0-10)	What was I doing?	What was I thinking?

What Are My Stressors?

Use this activity to identify your current stressors. Here are some examples of things that may cause stress. **Check off the ones that apply to you or write your own.**

- ☐ Job change/promotion
- ☐ Family conflict
- ☐ Staying healthy
- ☐ Lack of confidence
- ☐ Loneliness
- ☐ Money worries
- ☐ Pain/fatigue
- ☐ Retirement planning
- ☐ Public speaking
- ☐ Traffic to/from work
- ☐ Travel/vacation/holidays
- ☐ Upcoming wedding
- ☐ Climate change
- ☐ World economy
- ☐ War/terrorism
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

Now, review your list of stressors and, for each one, ask:

- Is this important to me?
- Is this under my control?

List each of your stressors in the appropriate box below:

	Important	Not Important
Control		
Do Not Control		

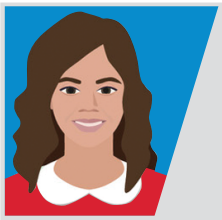
- Let go of the stressors that you identified as not important. They aren't worth the stress they cause.
- Take some time to address those stressors that you feel are important and that you do have at least some control over.
- Practice stress management techniques for the stressors that are important but that you do not control. You might also avoid these stressors or limit exposure to them.

Hannah's How-To
Deep Breathing Exercise

"1. **Start by sitting down in a comfortable place that's free from distraction.** Uncross your legs, put both feet on the floor, and rest your hands in your lap. Pay attention to how this position feels and let your mind and body just 'be' for a few moments.
2. **Now place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly, below your rib cage.**
3. **Breathe in slowly so that your belly moves out against your hand while the hand on your chest remains relatively still.** Exhale fully and completely. Try breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth – if this is uncomfortable, do what feels right.
4. **Count as you inhale.** That is, when you breath in, think one to yourself; as you breathe out, think the word relax. Think two on your next breath in and relax on the breath out; and so forth. When you reach the count of ten, start counting backward down to one.
5. **Cycle through this exercise at least one time.** Remember that deep breathing is a skill that requires practice and patience."

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is being fully aware of what is going on within and around you, physically and emotionally, at any moment in time. It means paying attention each changing moment. Mindfulness can be applied to many aspects of life. Mindful eating may help you enjoy food more by allowing you to fully experience and appreciate meal and snack times.



Teresa's Tips

"Mindful eating takes the concept of mindfulness and **applies it to what, where, when, why, and how you eat.** This means being aware of the physical and emotional feelings connected to eating.

- **Observe your body.** Notice hunger and fullness signals that guide you to start and stop eating.
- **Observe your reaction to food without judging it.** What do you like? What don't you like?
- **Savor your food.** While eating, slow down and notice all of the colors, smells, flavors, and textures of food.

Mindfulness may help you to avoid overeating. First bites may be the most satisfying and additional bites may not be as pleasurable. Keeping this in mind can help with portion control."

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Techniques

Here are six different techniques you can practice to help reduce your stress.

Mindfulness Meditation

The intention of this meditation is to be fully aware of what is going on in the present moment without any judgment.

Compassion Meditation

This meditation can lower stress and stress hormone levels and raise self-esteem. You can improve self-compassion by working on rethinking unhelpful thoughts and by practicing this meditation.

Body Scan Meditation

This meditation is deeply relaxing and can help you become more accepting of areas of pain or discomfort.

Mindful Eating Exercise

This exercise helps you to practice mindfulness with something you do every day: eating. You will learn how to increase your awareness while eating, which can increase mindfulness and improve your eating habits overall.

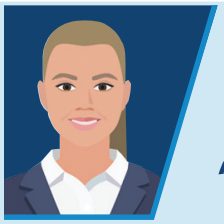
Progressive Muscle Relaxation

This exercise can help you become aware of muscle tension so you can release it when needed.

Mindfulness Circle

This image will help you return to mindful awareness throughout your day.

Which of these six techniques sound like something you might try?



Hannah's How-To
Mindfulness Meditation

"To anchor yourself in the present, **focus on your breath as you inhale and exhale**. Breathing mindfully does not involve a conscious changing of how you breathe.

1. Set aside 1-5 minutes for this meditation, and tell yourself that you will not engage your thoughts during that time. As thoughts pop up, just notice them and let them go.
2. As you notice your mind thinking about things, try to let those thoughts go without judging them and return your attention to your breathing. The point of this meditation is not to stop having thoughts. The point of this meditation is to become more aware of your thoughts without automatically engaging them.

If focusing on your breath does not work to bring you into the present moment, you can focus on anything in the present, such as sounds, a picture you like, or a candle flame, so long as you don't have to think about it."

Hannah's How-To
Compassion Meditation

"1. First, **take a few deep, cleansing breaths** and ground yourself in the present.
2. As you breathe deeply, focus on your heart and visualize softness, warmth, and compassion glowing in your chest. Repeat these phrases to yourself: '**May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease.**'
3. After a minute or two, visualize extending this energy to include somebody you care deeply about. Now repeat the phrases, filling in the person's name. For example, '**May my spouse be happy. May my spouse be well. May my spouse . . . .**'
4. Next, visualize extending the energy to somebody you feel neutrally about. Repeat the phrases with his or her name. For example, '**May the cashier at the store be happy. May the cashier be well. May the cashier . . . .**'
5. Now extend the energy to somebody for whom you have negative feelings. Repeat the phrases with his or her name.
6. Finally, visualize extending this energy to the rest of the world. Repeat the phrases saying, '**May everyone be happy. May everyone be well. May everyone . . . .**'
7. As you become comfortable with this practice, try extending the length of time you spend at each stage, increasing the overall time spent on the meditation."

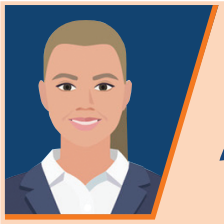
Hannah's How-To
Body Scan Meditation

"The Body Scan Meditation can help you **become more accepting of areas of pain or discomfort** rather than tense up in response to them which can make it worse.

To practice the Body Scan Meditation, get into a comfortable position. You might lie down on the floor or in bed with a pillow under your head. Take a few deep, grounding breaths and gently bring your awareness to the present.

1. Pay attention to a specific body part, such as your left foot. As you breathe deeply, scan that part of your body for sensations. Notice these sensations, but try not to get lost in thought. Gradually let your focus move to different body parts, one by one — each leg, your hips, stomach, chest, hands, arms, and head.
2. Practice mindfulness meditation with your focus on your body. Become aware of your mind's tendency to get lost in thought. When you notice this happening, let go of the thought and gently redirect your attention back to your body. Try not to engage in the content of the thoughts.

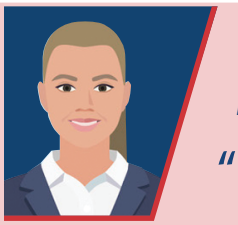
If you have any pain or discomfort, just notice it, accept it, and continue scanning. Continue to scan each part of your body in this way until you have scanned your whole body."



Hannah's How-To
Mindful Eating Exercise

"Mindful eating is an ongoing practice, but **it starts with three steps.**

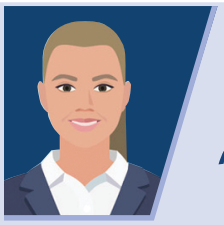
1. Become aware of the physical characteristics of food. Make each bite a mindful bite. Think of your mouth as being a magnifying glass, able to zoom in. Imagine magnifying each bite 100%. Pay close attention to your senses. Use your tongue to feel the texture of your food. Take in the aroma. Ask yourself, '**How does it really taste? Is this something I really want? Does it satisfy my taste buds? Is my mind truly present when I take a bite so that I experience it fully?**'
2. Become aware of repetitive habits and the process of eating. Notice how you eat. Fast? Slow? Do you put your fork down between bites? Are you stuck in any mindless habits, such as eating a snack at the same time each day, multi-tasking while you eat, or eating the same foods over and over? Ask yourself the following questions: '**Do I have any ingrained habits concerning how I snack? When I pick up my fork, what stands in the way of eating wisely?**'
3. Become aware of mindless eating triggers. Look for specific cues that prompt you to start and stop eating. Is your kitchen a hot spot for snacking? Do feelings such as stress, discomfort, or boredom lead to eating? Become an expert on the emotions that trigger you to eat when you aren't physically hungry. Ask yourself, '**What am I feeling right before I snack? Are my environment, emotions, or dining companion helping or hurting my efforts to eat wisely?**"



Hannah's How-To
Progressive Muscle Relaxation

"Progressive Muscle Relaxation can help you **recognize when your muscles are tense** and teach you how to return your muscles to a relaxed state.

1. Breathe normally and let your body just 'be.' Take note of how your body feels from your toes to your head. Does any of your body feel tense, stiff, or achy?
2. Close your eyes and notice how your toes feel. Tightly curl your toes to the point where you feel tension, as if trying to squeeze a small ball between your toes and the ball of your feet. Hold this toe curl for 10 seconds. Release your curl and let your toes spread. Notice how your toes feel when they are free from tension.
3. Next, repeat this cycle of tensing and relaxing with your calves. Next, do your thighs. Move up the body. Repeat with your hands, then arms, and then the muscles of your upper back and shoulders. Finally, tense and relax your neck and face.
4. After you complete tensing and relaxing each muscle in the body, breathe in through your nose and hold your breath for 5 seconds. Slowly and gently breathe out through your mouth. Open your eyes and notice how your muscles—your feet, calves, thighs, fists, arms, back, neck, and face—feel when relaxed."

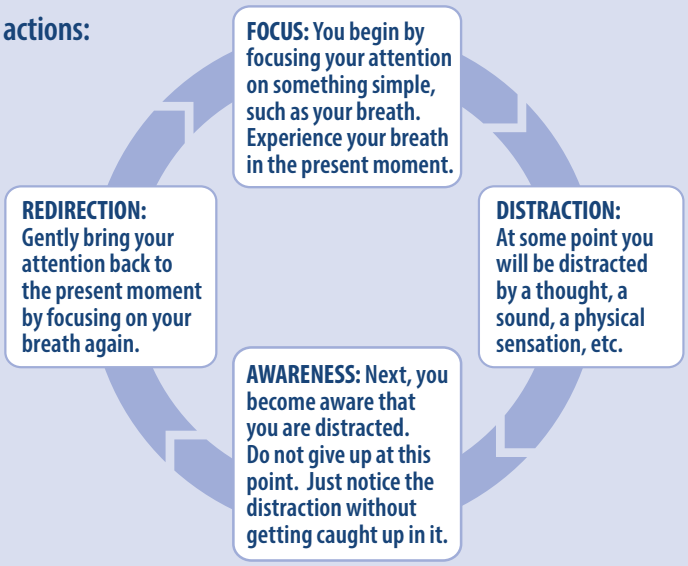


Hannah's How-To
Mindfulness Circle

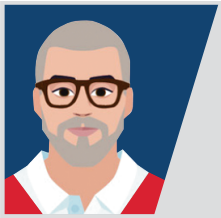
"Mindfulness practice doesn't have to be limited to focusing on your breath. **You can do almost anything mindfully.** Try practicing mindfulness with one of the activities below or one of your own. Be aware of your breath, senses, thoughts, and feelings as you perform the activity. Consider your posture, your mood, how quickly you move, what is going on around you, and your level of tension.

Try being mindful while doing these everyday actions:

- Washing hands
- Stopping at a red light
- Looking at a clock or your watch
- Washing dishes
- Brushing your teeth
- Taking a shower
- Dressing and undressing
- Walking"



Maximize Your Support System



Tom's Toolkit

"***Social Support* is a great tool to use for weight management.** Share your successes as well as your struggles with your support team. Letting other people know your goals can help you be accountable for meeting them. Friends and family members can help keep you motivated or assist you during tempting situations like social gatherings. It may also be important to share your weight management journey and the things you learn with those that live with you. For example, if you know late-night snacking is a concern for you, and you would rather not have snacks in the house, share this with the person who does the household grocery shopping. This way it can be a team effort that others may choose to be part of."

Who Could Support Me?

Surround yourself with positive people and ask them for encouragement. Choose people that will act as good cheerleaders during this process. Be sure to let them know how important their support is for your success.

How Can I Ask for Support?

Your supporters care about you and want you to be well. Tell your supporters what they can do to help and be specific. For example, "Every week or so, ask me how I am doing," or "Please don't offer me fried food." Also, consider sharing some of the information you have learned in MOVE! so they can eat wisely and be active with you.

Who Could Support Me?	How Could They Support Me?

"**Everyone has helped me stay on track—VA staff, family, friends. It amazed me each week how many people wanted to read my weekly status reports on social media. I was amazed how many words of encouragement I received…the response was tremendous."**

– John, lost 213 pounds with MOVE! and bariatric surgery

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

> "One of the hardest things for me to do was to slow down when eating and enjoy every bite. I feel good now and don't want to gain the weight back—and that keeps me moving."
>
> – James, lost 43 pounds and enjoys playing sports and helping his family

Reasons for participating in a weight management program can change over time. Reflect on why you started the MOVE! Program and write down what matters most to you now?

Module Summary

Managing Stress

Stress is a normal part of living, but you can reduce the stress you feel by recognizing your stressors and responding in a helpful way. There are many healthy living activities that can help you better manage your stress. Eating wisely and being physically active are great ways to prevent or reduce stress. You can also practice your problem-solving skills to develop resilience (see Module 8). Rethinking unhelpful thoughts is another way to manage your reaction to stressful situations (see Module 6).

"The biggest take away from the MOVE! program is that you aren't alone. There are lots of Veterans who have the same struggle, and it doesn't make us weak or less of a person to ask for help."

– Amber, lost 92 pounds and practices mindful eating

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

Practice mindfulness by bringing yourself fully into the present to experience each situation. Use any of the six stress-reduction techniques described in this module at least once a day. Practicing mindfulness is like building a muscle; you must exercise it regularly to see progress.

Social Support

Support from family and friends is an integral part of your health journey. Having someone in your corner can help you stay motivated, stick to your goals, and manage the lifestyle changes you are making in MOVE! Consider who in your life could support you during this process, what kind of support they could provide, and how you might ask them for it.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider ways you can manage stress during your weight management journey. Practice the relaxation and stress reduction techniques.**
4. **Review additional resources:**
   a. **Manage Stress Healthy Living Message:** https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Manage_Stress.asp
   b. **Managing Stress Video:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15GaKTP0gFE
5. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

Notes:

MODULE
FIFTEEN

Fine Tune Your Physical Activity

How can I be more physically active and stay motivated?

Now that you have been physically active for several weeks and have been progressing your activity plan, we will review some ways you can fine tune your plan. By now, you have identified at least a few activities that you enjoy doing on a regular basis. At this point, you are working toward building physical activity into your daily routine.

"I enjoy life, and do something active every day. Now, I walk with my friends from VA every Tuesday, and sometimes we ride bikes and fish. It's nice bonding time."

– Walter, lost 184 pounds and enjoys life

As you hone your physical activity routine, it is important to consider tips and strategies to stay safe while exercising. You may also have questions about being physically active while managing chronic health conditions or chronic pain. Most Veterans will benefit from being physically active and rarely are there activities that are "off-limits." Work with your MOVE! team to identify the activities that will benefit you the most, improve your health, and possibly reduce your pain.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn how to refine your physical activity plan.**
2. **Identify ways to manage chronic conditions and pain while being active.**
3. **Learn how to stay motivated to be active.**

Progress Check-In

- ☐ I met my previous healthy eating goal
- ☐ I met my previous physical activity goal

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

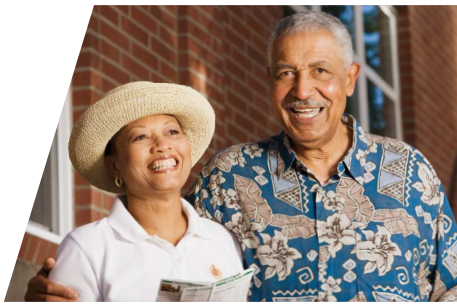
How Active Am I?

Reflect on your current physical activity plan.

Target Activity Level	Current Activity Level
Be active at least **5 days** per week	I am active _____ days per week.
Be active for at least **10 minutes** at a time	I am active for at least _____ minutes at a time.
Do strengthening activities at least **2 days** per week	I do strengthening activities _____ days per week.
Do **150 minutes** of moderate-intensity activity **or** Do **75 minutes** of vigorous-intensity activity per week	I do _____ minutes of _____-intensity activity per week.

What have you changed about your physical activity?

What progress have you made on making physical activity a part of your daily routine?



What kind of increases can you make to your physical activity routine?

Fine Tuning Your Physical Activity

Teresa's Tips
Be Safe

"**When exercising outdoors, it is important to be safe.** Bring identification, emergency contact information, and health and medication information with you. Let someone know where you are going and how long you will be gone. Carry your cell phone if you have one. Take a familiar route. Be active in public places—avoid isolated trails, paths, and poorly lit areas. Consider exercising with a buddy. Wear comfortable fitting socks and shoes and brightly colored or reflective clothing."

Tips for Warm and Cold Weather Activity

Warm Weather	Cold Weather
• Exercise in the early morning or after the sun sets. • Take frequent rest and water breaks. • Choose water or a low-calorie sport drink. • Avoid beverages with alcohol or caffeine because they can cause dehydration. • Wear light, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable fabrics. • Reduce your speed or distance as needed. • Exercise indoors during air quality alerts, extreme heat, and very high humidity. • Wear sunscreen, hats, sun-protective clothing, and sunglasses.	• Dress in layers. Start with a synthetic material–it will draw the sweat away from your body and dry quickly. Then layer with wool or cotton to absorb moisture. Your final layer should help keep out the cold air or rain—something lightweight and wind/waterproof. • Wear a hat to avoid losing heat through your head. • Protect your feet with socks to keep them warm and dry. • Choose mittens over gloves so your fingers can warm each other.
• Drink plenty of water—you can become dehydrated in warm or cold weather. Drink water before you go out and bring some with you. • Pay attention to your body—if you start to feel overheated or too cold, go back indoors.	

"Another important thing I learned is that regardless of your physical limitations, everybody can exercise. Being active with bilateral leg braces was a struggle I needed to overcome. I started by walking for 30 minutes, with lots of breaks. Today, I regularly walk 5 miles every morning, taking breaks when I need to."

– John, lost 63 pounds and gained confidence

"I was suffering from constant chronic pain from five lower back surgeries…What worked for me was the nutrition advice and exercises, which I had to acclimate to but became easier as I moved through the program. I do a lot of fun things with the family now that I could not beforehand because of the associated pain. My daily life is a 180-degree turnaround from before; more activities with the wife and family, better moods and outlook upon life."

– Amber, lost 44 lbs and enjoys yoga and jogging

Being Physically Active with Chronic Conditions

Veterans who experience chronic conditions like arthritis or low back pain or who have physical limitations can benefit from moving more. As you begin to fine tune your physical activity, it is important to recognize if there are activities you should limit and those you should do more of to improve your health. Physical activity **almost always helps improve** medical conditions. It is wise to reduce or pause activity and talk to your healthcare team if your condition worsens. Many Veterans can begin mild or moderate intensity exercise **safely** without having a check-up.

Condition	LIMIT these Activities	DO MORE of these Activities
Arthritis of Hip or Knee	Any high-repetition, high-resistance or high-impact activity Weight-bearing activities: 1. Jogging 2. Stair climbing 3. High-impact cardio	Chair exercises Outdoor or stationary cycling Swimming, water aerobics, water walking Elliptical machines Rowing machines
Osteoporosis	Bending forward at the waist 1. Sit-ups or crunches	Muscle strengthening activities to reduce bone loss and protect joints
Low Back Pain	High-impact activities that involve running or jumping	Chair exercises Walking Slow jogging Outdoor or stationary cycling Swimming, water aerobics, water walking Elliptical machines Rowing machines Core strengthening exercises
Lower Extremity Amputation	No limitations with proper prosthesis Running, sprinting, and swimming will require special adaptations.	With proper prosthesis, no activities are limited. As you lose weight, your prosthesis may need to be adjusted.
Stroke or Spinal Cord Injury	This will vary based on your function and abilities.	Ask for a referral to a physical therapist or kinesiotherapist for an individualized activity plan.
Balance Problems	Unassisted walking Outdoor cycling Jumping or side-to-side motion	Chair exercises Stationary cycling Walking on treadmill with handrail Other fitness machines with handles or grips Swimming, water aerobics, water walking Referral to exercise specialist for moderate-to-severe problems

Chronic Pain and Weight

Many Veterans experience chronic pain. Experiencing chronic pain can lead to: 1) Reduced activity or movement, 2) Decreased ability to shop and prepare healthy meals, and 3) Depression and anxiety, contributing to isolation and poor sleep. If you have chronic pain, increasing movement can be challenging. However, regular physical activity often **improves chronic pain**. Keep in mind it may take a few weeks before you see a benefit.

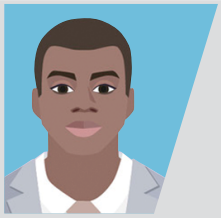
Research has shown:

- Weight loss can improve function and decrease pain.
- Increasing activity and other healthy behaviors improves function and can reduce pain regardless of weight loss.
- Increasing healthy behaviors and activity can improve cardiovascular health and conditions like diabetes and sleep apnea.

Chronic pain is challenging, but being physically active can help you to manage your pain and may even decrease it.

Retrain the Brain

The brain is a fierce protector of the body. Pain is only one way the brain takes action to protect against actual or potential dangers. With chronic pain, the brain might produce pain even when there is no actual threat. Over time, a person may start to believe that movement is dangerous because it hurts when they move. Exercise works best when you can reduce the perceived threat of movement. By gradually showing the brain that movement is helpful and not harmful, activity can increase over time. Sometimes this requires that we say, "It may hurt, but that doesn't mean that it's doing harm."



Smart Alex

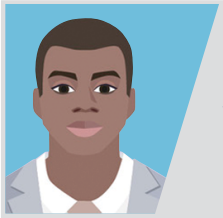
"When the nervous system lives with pain for a long time, it becomes 'sensitized.' This means that your 'warning bells' go off even though no actual tissue damage is occurring. The key to managing this is to find a level of activity you can maintain without the alarms going off or getting louder. Research shows that when people understand the role of the brain and the nervous system in the production of pain, they move more, are less depressed, and experience less pain."

Pace Your Way to Success

The best way to ensure success with exercise is to pace yourself. First determine how many minutes you can move before pain becomes louder, ("Can I be physically active 10 minutes without increasing my pain?"), then start the first few sessions at 20% less than your limit (8 minutes). Increase your total physically active time by 10% (or 1 minute) each week. This is called graded exercise and is proven to be the best way to exercise when you have chronic pain.

It is also important to stretch. When pain is present longer than we expect, muscles can become "overprotective" and start to tighten even at the thought of movement. You can improve your flexibility by starting slowly and listening to your body. Practice slow movements that keep you feeling safe. Explore boundaries and breathe while you move.

If you think your pain may keep you from physical activity, talk with your health care team.



Smart Alex

"**Soreness and cramps are signs that your muscles are adjusting to new activity.** You can prevent or limit muscle soreness and cramps by gradually increasing how often, how hard, and how long you are active. Wear socks and shoes that are comfortable and made for physical activity. Warm up before and cool down after each activity. Pain-relief creams, ice, or a heating pad may offer some relief. Do some gentle activity to keep sore muscles moving. Doing no activity will make your soreness worse.

If you do get a muscle cramp:

- Gently stretch the muscle and hold it until the cramp subsides.
- Massage the cramped area.
- If it continues to hurt, put ice on the cramped muscle for a few minutes.
- Sometimes changing what you eat and drink can help. Ask your MOVE! dietitian or primary care team for guidance.

If you have an injury that is affecting your ability to exercise, talk with your MOVE! team for guidance."

Physical Activity and Medications

As you become more physically active, it is important to consider the medications you take and how they may affect your activity. Review the following list—are you currently taking any of these medications? If so, review the solutions you can implement to be safe while being active.

Medication Class	Examples	Solutions
BETA-BLOCKERS May limit the heart's ability to beat faster in response to exercise. This may result in difficulty catching your breath, fatigue, and make it difficult to monitor your exercise intensity. Even though your heart rate does not increase, you will still get all the benefits of exercise.	*Propanolol, atenolol, metoprolol, sotalol, carvedilol*	• Increase your warm-up and cool-down time. • Monitor your blood pressure because regular exercise may improve your heart health and lower your blood pressure. • Ask your health care team if you can take a different medication or a smaller amount.
STEROIDS May cause loss of muscle mass leading to weakness and poor endurance. They may also cause mood swings, which could affect your motivation to be active.	*Prednisone, dexamethasone, hydrocortisone, methylprednisolone, fludrocortisone*	• Start slowly and gradually increase physical activity. • Think positively. Call on friends and family to help you stay motivated. • Ask your health care team if you can take a different drug or a smaller amount.
THYROID REPLACEMENT MEDICATION May limit your ability to exercise if you take too much or too little medicine.	*Levothyroxine*	• Ask your health care provider to check your thyroid level to make sure you are taking the right amount.

Medication Class	Examples	Solutions
DIABETES MEDICATIONS Exercise naturally causes your blood sugar to go down. In some cases, exercise combined with your regular diabetes medications could result in low blood sugar. Symptoms of low blood sugar include feeling shaky, lightheaded, weak, confused, or extremely hungry.	*Insulin, glyburide, liraglutide, semaglutide, glipizide, metformin, pioglitazone, empagliflozin*	• Monitor your blood sugar with your glucose meter before, during, and after a new exercise routine until you become familiar with how the exercise affects your blood sugar. Your health care team can give you upper and lower limits. • Don't exercise on an empty stomach or when you are dehydrated. Think ahead and have glucose tablets or hard candy with sugar or a beverage containing sugar with you while exercising. Avoid exercising too close to bedtime. • Ask your health care team about adjusting your diabetes medications if you experience low blood sugar before, during, or after exercise.
STIMULANTS and DECONGESTANTS May limit the body's ability to regulate temperature. Can cause increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, and abnormal heart beats.	*Methylphenidate, dextroamphetamine, pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine*	• Exercise in the morning, before taking your medicine. • Try to stay cool and not overheat during exercise. • Monitor your heart rate. • Ask your health care team if you can take a different medication or how to safely exercise on the medication.

As you improve fitness and lose weight, let your health care team know. You may be able to decrease your dosages or discontinue some medications. Always consult with your health care team before making any changes to medications.

Staying Motivated with Physical Activity

Make physical activity part of your daily routine! Here are some ways to help you stay on track:

- Set realistic and achievable goals.
- Schedule activity by making it part of your regular routine—choose a convenient time of the day.
- Have a support system to stay encouraged – friends, family, group exercise.
- Join a gym or club or consider having a certified personal trainer.
- Use music and video or TV fitness programs.
- Use a pedometer/odometer and record your progress in your *Food and Physical Activity Log*.
- Do a variety of activities to keep things interesting.
- Keep moving—every minute of movement throughout the day adds up so check your progress regularly.
- **Have fun!**

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for Next Week

Set one healthy eating and one physical activity goal to work on over the next week. Remember to make them SMART (see Module 1).

Healthy Eating:

I will

Physical Activity:

I will

If you did not meet your goals from last week, what will you do differently this week?

Module Summary

Fine Tune Your Activity

Fine tuning your activity means you have identified at least a few activities that you enjoy and do on a regular basis. It is important to consider ways to stay safe while exercising outdoors and in different types of weather. Be sure to:

- Drink plenty of water—you can become dehydrated in warm or cold weather. Drink water before you go out and bring some with you.
- Pay attention to your body—if you start to feel overheated or too cold, go back indoors.

"There have been so many positive changes with the improved mobility that it's hard to name them all. I'm no longer diabetic, I use fewer medications, and my physical problems have been greatly reduced. I can now keep up with my 5-year-old granddaughter."

– Robert, lost 201 pounds

Being Active and Managing Chronic Pain

Veterans who experience chronic conditions like arthritis or low back pain or who have physical limitations **can benefit** from moving more. Depending on the type of condition, it is important to recognize the activities you may need to limit and those you can do more of to improve your health. Physical activity **almost always improves** medical conditions.

If you have chronic pain, increasing movement can be challenging. However, regular physical activity often **improves chronic pain**. The brain is a fierce protector of the body. Pain is only one way the brain takes action to protect against actual or potential dangers. By gradually showing the brain that movement is helpful and not harmful, activity can increase over time.

Physical Activity and Medications

It is important to consider the medications you are taking and how they may affect your activity. Some types of medications can interfere with being active. If you have concerns about your medications affecting your activity, talk to your health care team. Always consult with your health care team before making any changes to medications.

Module To-Do:

1. **Set two weekly SMART goals in your Module Check-Out.**
2. **Record in your *Food and Activity Log* or another method every day.**
3. **Consider ways you can fine tune your physical activity. Consider how you can be physically active with chronic conditions or pain.**
4. **Review the next module in preparation for your next meeting.**

MODULE
SIXTEEN

Maintain Your Progress

How do I keep up the momentum?

Congratulations, you have reached the end of the MOVE! Program! It is an accomplishment that will benefit your health now and in the future. As you finish the program, let's talk about some things that will help you maintain your healthy lifestyle. The three core principles are to follow a healthy eating style, be active often, and stay consistent.

"My life is completely different now. [The MOVE! team] empowers you to empower yourself."

– Rachael, lost 200 pounds and developed healthy habits

Remember how much work you have done to get to where you are now – this will help you maintain your motivation and momentum!

Participating in MOVE! is a great start to improve your health and quality of life, but weight management requires a lifelong commitment, lifestyle changes, and long-term follow-up with your health care team.

In This Module You Will:

1. **Learn how to maintain your healthy lifestyle.**
2. **Learn eight tips for staying motivated.**
3. **Be proud of the healthy changes you have made!**

Progress Check-In

- ☐ I met my previous healthy eating goal
- ☐ I met my previous physical activity goal

My weight today is _____ pounds.

Reflect on your goals from the last module.

What successes did you have?

What challenges did you encounter?

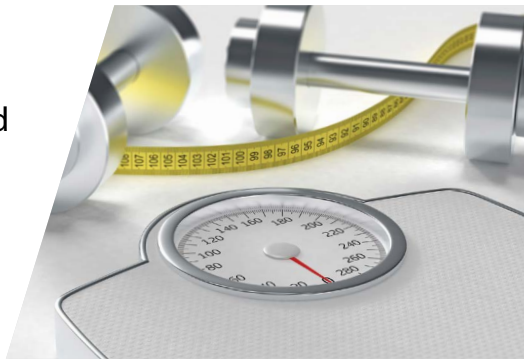
What helped you address those challenges? What did you learn that can help you prepare for this week?

Even the Smallest Changes Can Make a Big Difference

What benefits did you notice from your efforts this past week? Think about how they help you do what's important to you.

- ☐ Better sleep
- ☐ Better check-up
- ☐ Improved memory
- ☐ Clothes fit better
- ☐ Less stress
- ☐ More endurance
- ☐ More energy
- ☐ Less pain
- ☐ Better mood
- ☐ Healthier cooking
- ☐ Greater confidence
- ☐ More organized
- ☐ Fewer prescription medications
- ☐ Better blood pressure control
- ☐ Better blood sugar control
- ☐ Other:

Maintaining Your Lifestyle



There are three strategies for maintaining a healthy lifestyle and managing weight long-term. 1) Follow a healthy eating style, 2) Be active often, and 3) Stay consistent and on track. Review the following strategies to help you maintain the progress you made with your health and weight management goals.

1 Follow a healthy eating style

- **Maintain a healthy and realistic eating pattern.** In studies of people who have lost weight and kept it off for at least a year, most continued to eat fewer calories than they did before weight loss.
- **Keep your eating patterns consistent.** Follow your healthy eating pattern regardless of changes in your routine. Plan ahead for weekends, vacations, and special occasions. By making a plan, it is more likely you'll have healthy foods on hand for when your routine changes.
- **Eat breakfast every day.** Eating breakfast is a common trait among people who have lost weight and kept it off. Eating breakfast may help you avoid getting overly hungry later in the day and then possibly eating more than you intended.

Smart Alex
Reevaluate Your Daily Calorie Goal

"As you lose weight, the number of calories your body needs to function will decrease since it will be more efficient at doing your daily activities. If you met your weight goal and are ready to transition to maintenance, continue with your current plan. If you have additional weight loss goals, revisit your daily calorie goal so you can maintain a calorie deficit. Talk with your MOVE! team if you are ready to reevaluate your daily calorie goal."

2 Be Active

- **Get daily physical activity.** People who have lost weight and kept it off typically engage in 60-90 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week. Remember you can break up activity into several sessions over the day.

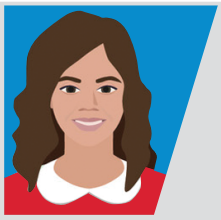
3 Stay Consistent and on Track

- **Be mindful of your food and activity choices.** Keeping a food and physical activity journal can help you track your progress and spot trends. For example, you might notice that your weight creeps up during periods when you have a lot of travel or when you work overtime. Recognizing this tendency can be a signal to make a change.
- **Monitor your weight.** It's a good idea to keep track of your weight so you can plan accordingly and adjust your meals and exercise as necessary. If you gain a few pounds, get back to following your plan quickly. For weight maintenance, it is recommended that you weigh yourself every day or at least weekly.
- **Get support from family, friends, and others.** People who have successfully lost weight and kept it off often rely on support from others to help them stay on course and get over any "bumps." Having a friend or partner who is also working on health goals or maintaining a weight loss can help you stay motivated.

Which of these strategies will be the easiest for you to maintain and why?

Which of these strategies will be the hardest for you to maintain and why?

What can you do to prepare yourself for successful maintenance?



Teresa's Tips
Maintenance Plan for Weight Change

"For accurate weight tracking, try to weigh after waking up, before you eat or drink, and after using the bathroom.

3-4 pound gain: Work on your portion control. Problem solve to determine any changes in behavior that may be contributing to weight change (for example, eating out more, larger portions, increased frequency of snacks, decreased activity).

5-6 pound gain: Be more accurate about tracking all food and drinks and use this information to make adjustments. Be more accurate about tracking physical activity and increase if needed."

"I have kept my weight off for over 15 months now. We attend the MOVE! monthly alumni classes to keep motivated and keep the weight off. They even invite me to speak with their new groups as a motivational speaker!"

– Floyd, lost 54 pounds and quit smoking

Staying Motivated

Use these **eight tips** to stay motivated over the next 6 months and beyond.

1 Remember the benefits you've 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?

2 Recognize your success.

What changes are you most proud of making?

What changes helped you reach your goals the most?

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, like on your refrigerator door.
- Mark your activity milestones on a map toward a particular goal.

4 Keep track of your weight, eating, and activity.

- Monitor your food intake and physical activity daily. During busy times, try to keep track at least three days a week—two weekdays and one weekend day.
- Weigh yourself and record your weight at least once per week—daily is best.

5 Develop your eating and activity routine.

Write down meal and planned eating routines that will be good for you to continue.

6 Set new goals for yourself. Develop ways to reward yourself when you meet each goal.

Set specific short-term goals for yourself.

Write down some non-food rewards for reaching goals.

7 Create some friendly competition.

Set up a competition with friends or family to help you reach your goals. See who can meet their goal the most days or who can log the most steps each week!

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

Review Your Weight Management Toolkit

Here's a quick review of some of the tools and tips we've used over the past few months.

- **Exploring motivation** (Module 1)
- **Setting SMART goals** (Module 1)
- **Self-monitoring and tracking** (Module 2)
- **Rewarding successes** (Module 2)
- **Managing the energy balance** (Module 3)
- **Creating a Healthy Plate** (Module 4)
- **Using the FITT principle and physical activity guidelines** (Module 5)
- **Rethinking unhelpful thoughts** (Module 6)
- **Meal planning and shopping** (Module 7)
- **Managing challenges/problem solving** (Module 8)
- **Building an activity plan** (Module 9)
- **Arranging eating and activity cues** (Module 10)
- **Using food swaps** (Module 11)
- **Learning from slips** (Module 12)
- **Planning for high-risk situations** (Module 13)
- **Stress reduction and relaxation** (Module 14)
- **Social support** (Module 14)
- **Being active and managing pain** (Module 15)
- **Maintaining motivation** (Module 16)

Goal-Setting Check-Out

Goals for the Next 6 Months

Set some goals to work on over the next 6 months to maintain your progress.

Activity Goal

In the next 6 months, I will get at least _____ minutes of activity most days of the week at a moderate intensity or more.

I currently weigh _____ pounds.

In the next 6 months, I will:

☐ ***Lose weight*** ***I will reach _____ pounds.***

☐ ***Maintain my weight*** ***I will stay at _____ pounds.***

Module Summary

Maintaining Your Progress

Remember the steps for long-term success and review these modules when you need a refresher.

- Weigh yourself at least once per week (daily is best) and keep track of your weight.
- Track your food intake and activity daily.
- Get 60-90 minutes of physical activity per day on all or most days of the week.
- Get support from family and friends when you need it.
- Reaffirm your goals regularly and often.

Celebrate the Progress You Have Made

You've made it through 16 modules of the MOVE! Program! Be proud of the changes you have made to:

1. Improve the quality of your nutritional intake.
2. Increase your daily physical activity.
3. Manage your weight.
4. Improve your health and the overall quality of your life.

Module To-Do:

1. Set a weight loss or weight maintenance goal for the next six months.
2. Develop short-term goals to help you meet your weight target.
3. Identify how you will continue to track your food and activity for the next six months.
4. Use a calendar to record and track your weight at least once per week.
5. Create a plan to address any instances of weight gain.

Notes:

Weight and Sleep

You may be wondering, "What does sleep have to do with weight management?" It's probably more important than you think!

Studies suggest that getting a good night's sleep helps your metabolism work well. Your metabolism is the body's process for converting the food and beverages you eat and drink into energy for all you do. Your metabolism is strongly influenced by your eating style, physical activity, hormones, and the amount of muscle you have. When your metabolism is working well, your body uses calories faster, which helps with weight management.

On the other hand, poor sleep habits can reduce metabolism and the rate at which your body uses calories. This may be one reason why people who don't get enough quality sleep have been shown to have an increased risk of diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and weight gain. When you don't get enough sleep, hunger increases because your body produces more hormones that increase appetite.

Sleep difficulties are very common, can cause problems with daytime functioning and may contribute to many other medical conditions. There are steps you can take to maintain healthy sleep. And if you are not getting enough quality sleep, you can talk with your health care team who will work with you to find ways to improve your sleep.

Are You Getting Enough Sleep?

Many people who think they are getting enough sleep may not be. Adults usually benefit from 6-9 quality hours of sleep per night. But nearly one in three adults report sleeping less than 6 hours per night.

Even if you're getting enough total hours of sleep, if you don't feel well-rested with that total sleep time, then you may not be getting high-quality sleep.

Maintaining Healthy Sleep

High-quality sleep is needed for good health. Sleeping well is just as important as being physically active and eating wisely. If you are already getting enough quality sleep, here are some tips to help you continue sleeping well.

- Allow yourself enough time to sleep at night.
- Go to bed and get up at around the same time every day.
- Allow time to unwind before bed.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly but avoid vigorous exercise close to bedtime.
- Avoid napping. Be particularly careful to refrain from late afternoon and evening naps as they are most likely to disrupt nighttime sleep. If napping is unavoidable, set an alarm to wake up after 30 minutes.
- Keep the bedroom quiet, dark, and comfortable.
- Avoid using electronic devices in the bedroom (TV, cell phones, tablets, computers). White noise from fans or sound machines are fine.
- Use the bed only for sleep and intimacy.
- Identify stressors and continue to manage stress.

What are some healthy sleep practices that you can start to apply tonight to maintain or develop healthy sleep?

Is it Time for a Sleep Check-up?

You brush your teeth every day for good dental hygiene, but you may still get a cavity now and then. When that happens, brushing won't fix the cavity. Similarly, good sleep habits alone won't resolve sleep disorders like Insomnia Disorder and Obstructive Sleep Apnea.

One in three people have problems sleeping at some point in their lives. There's a big difference between one night of poor sleep and trouble that persists. If your sleep trouble goes on for months, you may have a sleep disorder and may benefit from a referral to a sleep physician or Behavioral Sleep Medicine specialist.

Concerned about your sleep?

VA's Sleep Check-Up tool can help you understand it: https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/checkup/index.asp

Talk with Your Health Care Team

The two most common sleep disorders are: **Insomnia Disorder** and **Obstructive Sleep Apnea Disorder**. Insomnia symptoms include difficulty with:

- Falling asleep
- Staying asleep
- Waking too early

These symptoms may warrant the diagnosis of Insomnia Disorder depending on frequency, duration, and whether they directly impact your daily functioning.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia, or **CBT-i**, is considered the gold standard for treating Insomnia Disorder. CBT-i is a short-term therapy that targets thoughts and actions that can disrupt sleep. With CBT-i, you also learn to manage anxiety associated with falling asleep.

For a self-guided approach to managing Insomnia take the Path to Better Sleep Course at https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/insomnia/index.asp or download VA's CBT-i Coach app and use the companion workbook https://www.mirecc.va.gov/docs/visn6/Improve_Your_Sleep_A_Self-Guided_Approach_for_Veterans_with_Insomnia-V2.pdf

Obstructive Sleep Apnea is a sleep disorder caused by blocking of the airway during sleep. Symptoms can include:

- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Loud snoring
- Observed episodes of stopped breathing during sleep
- Waking up gasping or choking
- Difficulty concentrating during the day

For some people, especially those with higher weights, the airway can collapse during sleep. This narrowing of the airway makes it hard to breathe. Sometimes, the entire air passage can become blocked. This is called Obstructive Sleep Apnea or simply Sleep Apnea. Several treatments exist for Sleep Apnea. Losing weight with healthy eating and activity can help improve the condition. The most common treatment involves wearing a device called a continuous positive air pressure (or CPAP) machine. Some less commonly used treatment options also exist. Your care team will work with you to help decide the best course for the condition.

If you have been diagnosed with Sleep Apnea and are not using your treatment device every night, please contact your VA sleep provider or primary care provider to discuss this because untreated Sleep Apnea can have dangerous effects on your health.

For resources about sleeping well visit https://www.prevention.va.gov/Healthy_Living/Sleep_Well.asp

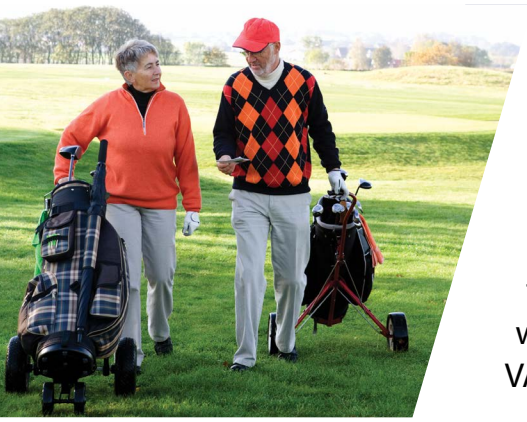
Effective treatments are available for both Insomnia Disorder and Obstructive Sleep Apnea. Talk to your health care team for an assessment and learn about therapies and treatment options to help you sleep better. Regardless of the reason for your sleep difficulties, it's important to take an active role when deciding on a treatment. Share your preferences and goals with your care team. This will help you to work together to find a plan that's right for you.

"It has been said, you never know what you have been missing until it arrives. Life is so much easier without the extra weight. My health has improved a lot. I have been off my blood pressure medication and off my CPAP machine."

– David, lost 47 lbs and breathes better

MOVE!
Mini-Module

Manage Weight and Quit Tobacco—You Can Do Both!



Some Veterans continue to use tobacco because they are worried they will gain weight if they stop. It's true: People often do gain weight after quitting tobacco. But you don't have to!

In this mini-module, we'll show you some ways to make quitting tobacco easier. We'll also give you some tools to help you on your weight management journey even after quitting, and we'll list some VA resources that can help you along the way.

VA Wants to Help You Quit Tobacco!

Quitting tobacco is hard. But VA has more tobacco-cessation treatment options available than ever before!

Local VA health care providers—Talk with your primary care or mental health provider to learn about the FDA-approved medications and behavioral counseling options available. There may be programs available that are unique to your local VA Medical Center.

Quit VET—Speak with a tobacco cessation counselor and make a quit plan by calling **1-855-QUIT-VET** (1-855-784-8838). Quitline counselors are available between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday.

SmokefreeVET—Receive daily support and encouragement for quitting tobacco. Veterans can text the word **VET** to **47848** or visit http://smokefree.gov/VET to get started.

Websites—Visit https://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/quit-tobacco/ to learn the benefits of quitting and available tobacco cessation resources and https://veterans.smokefree.gov/ for interactive online tools to help quit tobacco.

Stay Quit Coach—Download this app at https://mobile.va.gov/app/stay-quit-coach to receive the tools and information to quit smoking. It's available for free to download from both the Apple and Android app stores.

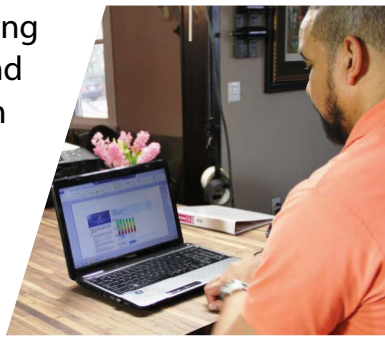
Ways You Can Quit Tobacco—And Stay Quit

Quitting tobacco isn't easy, but you can do it. Consider this: There are more former tobacco users today than current tobacco users. Quitting takes practice. Even the most motivated person may try to quit five or more times before succeeding. Each time brings lessons learned. Just don't give up!

Counseling—A health care provider or counselor can also help you make behavioral changes to stop using tobacco. Cessation counseling involves talking about your tobacco use and the role it plays in your daily routine. You have the best chance of quitting when you combine this counseling with tobacco cessation medications.

One important aspect of counseling is identifying your triggers for tobacco use. These could include talking on the phone, drinking a cup of coffee, drinking alcohol, feeling bored, or needing a break. Counseling will help you figure out how you can avoid or cope with triggers like these so you don't start smoking again after you quit. For example: If you smoke with your morning coffee, your counselor may suggest drinking your coffee in a smoke-free environment, such as a restaurant or workplace kitchen, or switching to tea instead.

Medications—Research shows that a person has the best chance of quitting tobacco for good when they use medications to help reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms. If you want to quit using tobacco, talk with your VA health care team about these medications. Your primary care or mental health provider can suggest one or more medications to help you quit. Treatments include:



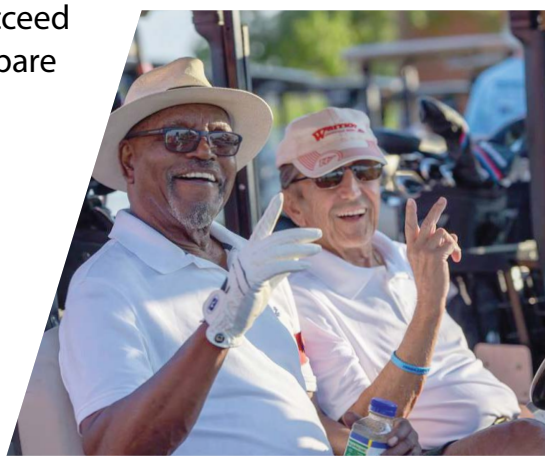
- Nicotine replacement therapy (NRT)
  - » Nicotine patch
  - » Nicotine lozenge
  - » Nicotine gum
- Bupropion (Zyban®, Wellbutrin®)
- Varenicline (Chantix®)

Nicotine is the addictive substance in tobacco and NRT medicines deliver nicotine without the other harmful components found in tobacco products to reduce withdrawal symptoms. Nicotine from NRT is delivered more slowly, making it less addictive, and you gradually reduce the level of nicotine over time until you no longer need it. Bupropion and varenicline are prescription medications that do not provide nicotine, but reduce cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

Often, a combination of two or more of these medications works the best. Your health care team will use your medical history and talk with you to decide what approach may work best for you. You can learn more and explore medication options in this online, interactive NRT explorer:

https://veterans.smokefree.gov/tools-tips-vet/quit-for-good-with-nrt

Other things you can do to quit—You can set yourself up to succeed by preparing before your quit date. Keep these tips in mind as you prepare to and then actually stop using tobacco.



- *Get support from others*—Family and friends can be your best allies as you stop using tobacco. Let them know you're quitting and ask friends who are tobacco users not to use tobacco around you.
- *Get rid of all tobacco, ashtrays, e-cigarettes, vape pens, and lighters before your quit day*—These can all be triggers to start using tobacco again. Remove these from your car as well.
- *Use tobacco substitutes*—Sugar-free gum and mints, crunchy veggies like carrots or celery sticks, and even toothpicks, straws, and cinnamon sticks can all help you get past a craving. The average craving goes away in 3-5 minutes, so a substitute can help get you through that time.
- *Change your routine*—Starting on your quit day, make some changes to your daily routine. For example, get up at a different time, drink your coffee out of a new mug, or drive to work using a different route. Small changes like these can help break old routines and trigger the mindset that "it's a new day!"
- *Plan activities to replace tobacco use*—Doing something active, meditating, reading, or enjoying a favorite hobby are all ways you can fill the time you used to spend smoking or using tobacco. If you often smoked after meals, replace that with brushing your teeth or even a healthy dessert.

Quitting Tobacco—A Healthy Lifestyle Choice!

The positive health effects of quitting tobacco far exceed the small effect tobacco can have on your weight. If you quit tobacco:

- You'll feel healthier and have fewer health problems.
- You'll be able to be more active or play harder without becoming short of breath.
- You'll save money.
- You'll sleep better.
- You can reduce chronic pain symptoms.
- You can improve your mood and reduce depression and anxiety.
- Your sense of taste and smell will improve.
- Your clothes, car, and home will smell better.
- Your fingers and nails will lose the yellow stain.
- You'll reduce your risk of developing cavities.
- After just 1 year of living tobacco-free, your risk of heart disease will drop by one-half.
- After 10-15 years, your risk of stroke or heart attack will drop to about the same as a nonsmoker.
- What other benefits are you looking forward to? If you think of some that are not listed, make a note here:

Managing Your Weight Without Tobacco

Quitting tobacco can sometimes make it harder to manage weight. Fortunately, you already know how to manage your weight without tobacco! The same healthy lifestyle changes you are making with MOVE! can help you manage your weight even without tobacco.

Eat wisely—To keep losing weight or maintaining your weight loss after you quit, remind yourself of these healthy eating tips:

- Eat more vegetables and fruit. Fill up on these healthy choices!
- Avoid high-fat, high-sugar foods and beverages.
- Eat small meals 5 or 6 times a day, instead of 2 or 3 large meals.
- Eat very slowly and be mindful of your food. Completely enjoy every bite!
- Eat at the table, not in front of the TV.
- Plan ahead. Bring your lunch rather than eating fast food.
- Keep healthy, crunchy snacks handy, such as carrot sticks, apples, and pretzels.
- Drink plenty of water.

Be active—The nicotine in tobacco can raise your metabolism. That's why being active is so important when you quit using tobacco. Being active boosts your metabolism and helps you burn more calories.

- Take walks, or push if you use a wheelchair for mobility, garden, go bicycling, swim, play active sports–whatever you enjoy. Remember that exercise and breathing become easier when you quit!
- Set a time each day to do some physical activity.
- It may be better to break activity into shorter amounts of times, two or three sessions per day.
- Make small changes that boost your activity during the workday, like parking farther from the office, taking the stairs, and getting up and moving every hour.
- Drink water to stay hydrated instead of sugary sports drinks.
- Manage urges to smoke or eat by taking a 5-minute activity break (for example, walk or roll if using a wheelchair around the block).

Be Involved in Your Health Care

It is important to talk to your health care team about all aspects of your care, including your weight management goals. Some health problems may make it harder to manage your weight. Some medications may also make it harder to lose or maintain weight. Together, you and your health care team may decide to make changes to your treatment plan to help you meet your weight management goals.

Many medical problems will improve with changes to your diet and physical activity habits that are part of your weight management plan even if the numbers on the scale don't change. You and your team may decide to start with these changes to see if your condition improves before adding a new medication or undergoing a procedure. Likewise, if you are taking a medication that can cause weight gain, your doctor may be able to prescribe a different medication.

Several medical conditions are common in people with higher body weights.

Diabetes and Prediabetes

Diabetes is a chronic (long-term) condition. When you have diabetes, the sugar level in your blood is too high. Diabetes keeps your body from turning food into energy. That's why you may feel tired and rundown, especially after eating. You may also be more likely to develop other health problems. These include foot, eye, heart, and kidney problems.

People with higher body weights have a greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes. With this form of diabetes, your body's cells have trouble using insulin. This "insulin resistance" not only raises your blood sugar levels, it can cause further damage to your body. Over time, the pancreas may lose its ability to produce enough insulin, raising your blood sugar levels even higher.

If you have prediabetes, your blood sugar is higher than normal, but not so high to be considered diabetes. About one in four people with prediabetes will develop Type 2 diabetes within 3 years of being diagnosed with prediabetes.

Healthy eating and increased physical activity can improve the body's response to insulin and control of blood sugar levels. In turn, this can reduce the risk of moving from prediabetes to diabetes. These healthy lifestyle changes can also help people with diabetes to manage their blood sugar better.

High Blood Pressure

Sometimes called hypertension, high blood pressure is common in people with higher body weights. Over time, high blood pressure can damage the arteries, heart, and kidneys and can lead to heart disease and stroke. Treatment options include eating healthy foods, increasing physical activity, and taking blood pressure-lowering medications.

High Cholesterol

High cholesterol is often linked to eating foods high in cholesterol and saturated fat or having an inherited condition that causes elevated cholesterol levels. High cholesterol increases your risk of developing heart disease and stroke. Treatment options include eating healthy foods, increasing physical activity, and possibly taking cholesterol-lowering medicines.

Heartburn/Acid Reflux

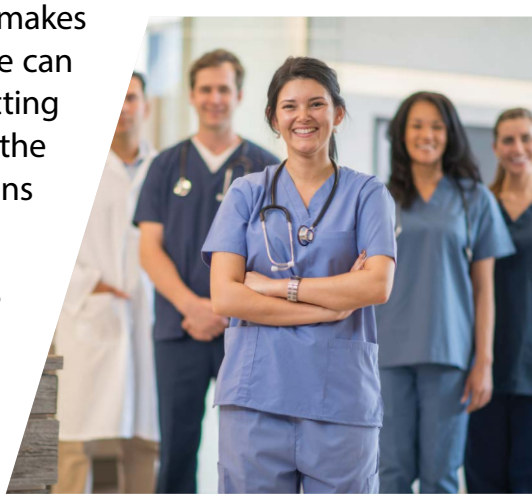
Having a larger waist circumference can cause acid reflux—when stomach acid washes up and irritates your throat and chest. This condition is often called heartburn. Acid reflux can also cause coughing, sore throat, a bitter taste in the mouth or back of the throat, and burning and pressure in the chest. Acid reflux that occurs frequently or over a long time can also cause damage to the esophagus (the tube between the throat and stomach), tooth enamel, bad breath, trouble swallowing, and asthma. Losing weight can help relieve acid reflux and its symptoms, as can cutting back on alcohol or smoking.

Arthritis

Having a higher body weight does not directly cause arthritis but it can make arthritis worse because higher weight puts more stress on certain joints, such as your knees. This stress can cause the joints to become inflamed or wear our sooner. The resulting joint pain may make it more difficult to be active, which makes long-term health and weight management more challenging.

Sleep Apnea

In some people, the airway can collapse during sleep. This narrowing makes it hard to breathe and sleep restfully. Sometimes, the entire air passage can become blocked. This is called sleep apnea. Since the lungs aren't getting enough air, the brain tells the body to wake up just enough to tighten the muscles and unblock the air passage. With a loud gasp, breathing begins again. This process may repeat throughout the night.



Several treatments exist for sleep apnea. Losing weight can help improve the condition. Other treatments include wearing a mouthpiece, using a continuous positive air pressure (or CPAP) machine, and surgery. If untreated, sleep apnea can cause fatigue, high blood pressure, and lung and heart disease.

Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver

Fatty liver is when there is too much fat in the cells of the liver. The liver can be damaged and can enlarge. Many people feel fine and have no symptoms but some develop serious liver damage that can lead to liver failure. Also, heart disease, stroke, and diabetes are more common in people with fatty liver.

Fatty liver often occurs in people with high blood sugar, higher body weight, or high cholesterol. Losing weight, following a healthy eating style, and being physically active can help decrease the amount of fat depositing in the liver and can slow down the process of damaging the liver cells.

Heart Disease

Having a higher body weight can increase the workload of the heart and contribute to heart and circulation issues such as heart attacks, heart failure, and blood clots.

Cancer

Having a higher body weight has been associated with an increased risk of developing at least 10 different cancers.

Medications and Weight

Some common treatments for these and other conditions can cause weight gain or make it harder for you to lose weight.

Condition	Medications
Diabetes	Weight gain is a common side effect for people who take insulin or other commonly used diabetes medications. However, other diabetes medications are available that may promote weight loss and help you reduce or even eliminate your insulin dosage.
High Blood Pressure	Several medicines used to treat high blood pressure may contribute to weight gain and fatigue while others are less likely to promote weight gain. Losing as little as 5% body weight can lower your blood pressure and may reduce the amount of medication you need to keep your blood pressure controlled.
High Cholesterol	Some medicines used to treat high cholesterol can promote insulin resistance and raise your blood sugar levels. However, losing weight can reduce the doses needed to control your cholesterol.
Arthritis	Some treatments that relieve the pain from arthritis, such as steroid pills or injections, can cause weight gain and raise blood sugars.
Mental Health	Some anti-psychotic medications prescribed for bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and posttraumatic stress disorder can cause weight gain. Some antidepressant medications can also cause weight gain.
Hormonal	Some hormone replacement therapies, steroids, and birth control medication can lead to weight gain and make it more difficult for you to lose weight.
Pain	Some over-the-counter medications, like naproxen sodium, contain high levels of sodium, may cause you to hold water.

There may be alternatives for these medications. Talk to your health care team if you think your medicines may be contributing to your weight. Never stop taking a medicine without first talking to your health care team, but do let them know about your concerns.

Be Involved in Your Health Care

We strongly encourage you to play an active role when you visit with your health care team. To get the most out of your visit, plan the questions you want to ask and the things you want to discuss. Share any concerns you may have about your care, especially if you think it may be affecting your weight management goals. Finally, be sure to leave the visit with information about your conditions, treatments, and what you can do to manage your conditions.

Here are some ways to be more involved in your health care and get the most out of your next visit.

Before your visit:

- Write down your health questions and concerns.
- Bring a list of all the medications you take, including vitamins and supplements.
- Get more information about health conditions, medications, and other treatments options at https://www.veteranshealthlibrary.va.gov and www.myhealth.va.gov.
- If you are feeling distressed, reach out for help. If you're having emotional distress that is interfering with your life, call 988 or talk with your healthcare provider.

During your visit:

- Bring a family member, friend, or caregiver to help you remember what you and your team discuss.
- Share your questions, problems, and concerns with your team at the beginning of your visit.
- Tell your team about your past illnesses, hospitalizations, medications, and any problems you may be experiencing.
- Tell your team about your goals - what matters most to you about your health - as well as your needs and preferences for treatment.
- Work with your team to create a plan that addresses your needs, and ask to be involved in making decisions about your care.
- Know your medications and why you take them, and ask for written instructions and information to take home with you.
- Ask your team to clarify anything that's confusing, and speak up if you have concerns or think something is wrong.
- Ask when and how you will get test results and additional treatments.

After your visit:

- Revisit the Veterans Health Library and My HealtheVet.
- Tell your team if you have problems following your care plan, or if there is a change in your conditions or health.
- Consider ways you can stick to your plan, such as by using medication reminder systems and tracking logs, or by letting others know about your goals and plans.
- Be sure to keep track of and celebrate progress toward your goals!

Notes:

Keys to Success:

Making a commitment to your health and weight management goals is critical to success.

- Identify your reasons for wanting to be healthier.
- Set goals that you can reach.
- Eat wisely.
- Be physically active.
- Make lifestyle changes that you can maintain.
- Weigh yourself at least weekly—daily is best.
- Keep a daily record of what you eat and your physical activity.
- Ask your family, friends, and MOVE! team for the support you need.
- Make other changes that help you do what matters most to you in life.
- **Celebrate your success!**

IB 10-1234 P96942 December 2024, R3

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration