

The Basics of Weight Control

A calorie is a unit of energy. Most foods and beverages contain calories.

To lose weight you need to:

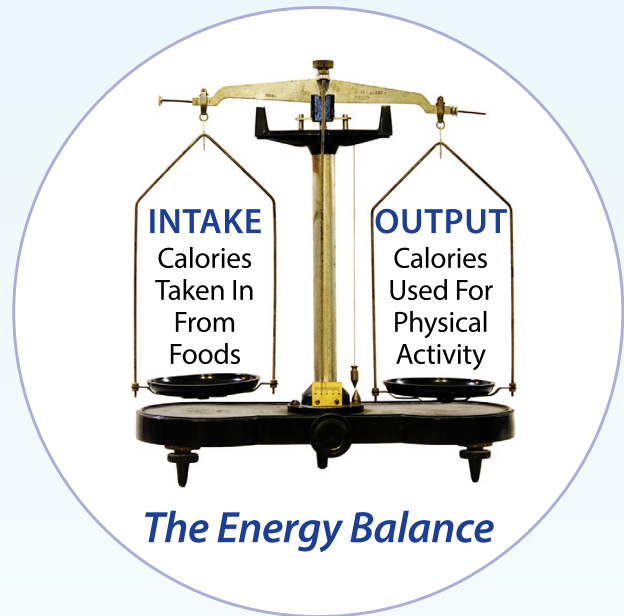
- Eat and drink fewer calories
- Increase physical activity
- Combine the two for the best results

The foods you eat and the beverages you drink provide energy and nutrients. The basic required nutrients are: water, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, dietary fibers, vitamins, and minerals. Carbohydrates, proteins, and fats provide energy in the form of calories. Alcohol (beer, wine, liquor) adds calories without providing nutrition.

When you take in more calories than you use, you gain weight.

The calories you do not use are stored as body fat. This is true whether these calories came from fats, carbohydrates, proteins, or alcohol.

Use more calories by increasing physical activity. Manage your weight by balancing what you eat and drink with how active you are.



How do you lose weight?

- Set your daily calorie goal using this chart.

Current Weight	Daily Calorie Goal
Under 200 pounds	1,200 – 1,500 calories/day
200 – 225 pounds	1,500 – 1,800 calories/day
226 – 250 pounds	1,800 – 2,000 calories/day
251 – 300 pounds	2,000 – 2,500 calories/day
301 – 350 pounds	2,500 – 3,000 calories/day
Over 350 pounds	See a MOVE!® Dietitian

- Find your current weight in the left column. Your daily calorie goal for that weight range is listed in the right column. These calorie goals are designed to help you lose about ½ to 2 pounds per week.
- Expect better results if you use the lower number from the daily calorie goal in the chart above.
- Use a book or online calorie counter to accurately track your calories. Handout *S08, Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary*, can be used to track foods and activities.
- When you make it to the next weight range (for instance, you start at 280 pounds and you now weigh 245 pounds), you will need to reduce your daily calorie goal to that lower level.
- If you weigh over 350 pounds or have diet concerns, talk with the dietitian to help set your daily calorie goal.
- Review your *Daily Food and Physical Activity Diary*. Celebrate successful days. On days when goals were not met, think about what got in the way and consider solutions.
- Remember, you need to have clear, daily calorie and physical activity goals to lose weight.