

THE FAMILY VAN

We are Family

WEIGHT CONTROL

(Body Mass Index: BMI)

What's Weight Gotta Do with It?



The key to good health and long life is in your own hands! And nutritious and balanced food and regular physical activity is that key! If we eat nutritious food and exercise regularly, it will keep our body weight at optimum levels. But if we do not pay attention to our weight it can lead to overweight which can cause many diseases.

Your Healthy and Balanced diet can help you to:

Give you vitality and energy for life,

Boost your immune system,

Delay the effects of aging,

Help beat tiredness and fatigue,

Enhance your ability to concentrate and possibly alter your mood,

Ward off most of the serious illnesses mentioned above especially diseases of the heart, and

*May also improve your mental health such as cognitive and memory capacity which potentially increases your ability to process and retain information- in other words- **your intelligence.***

Help you stay at a weight that's right for you,

Improve sports performance,

Keep you active and fit into old age,

Protect teeth and keep gums healthy,

But Unhealthy diet can lead to Overweight and Obesity which leads to increased risk* of:

Premature death,

Gallbladder disease,

Sleep apnea,

High cholesterol

Menstrual irregularities,

Tiredness and fatigue

Diabetes

Psychological disorders and psychological difficulties due to social stigmatization.

Staying at a healthy weight or losing weight can greatly decrease your risk of these diseases.

Heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure (hypertension),

Osteoarthritis (degeneration of cartilage/ bone in joints),

Cancer (endometrial, colon, kidney, gallbladder, others)

Complications of pregnancy,

Hirsutism (presence of excess body and facial hair),

Incontinence (urine leakage due to weak pelvic muscles)

Stress, Asthma, Increased surgical risk,

Psychological disorders and psychological difficulties due to social stigmatization.

What is obesity?

A certain amount of body fat is good for you to protect your internal organs, keep you warm and protect you from injuries. However, having too much body fat can be dangerous and is called obesity. For adults, overweight and obesity ranges are determined by using weight and height to calculate a number called the "body mass index" (BMI). BMI is used because, for most people, it correlates with their amount of body fat. Being obese is to being overweight to the point healthy.

What Causes Obesity?

Obesity is a result of a complex variety of social, behavioral, cultural, environmental, physiological, and genetic factors. Three main factors affect weight gain – being overweight **1. food, 2. physical activity and 3. your family history (“genes”)**. Consuming certain food which are too high in calories can lead to weight gain as is consuming food in excess of what your body needs. Lack of physical activity also leads to weight gain. Some people have a history of obesity in the family or tend to gain weight faster than others. Efforts to maintain a healthy weight should start early in childhood and continue throughout adulthood, as this is likely to be more successful than efforts to lose weight or maintain weight loss once obesity is established.

What is BMI?

You probably have heard the term “BMI” which means Body Mass Index. A body mass index is a comparison of height to weight to understand if for you are at a healthy weight for someone of your height. **BMI 25 - 30 is considered overweight, and BMI 30 or higher considered obese.** This chart can also tell you how much weight you need to lose to be healthier. **Ask The Family Van staff to give you a BMI chart so that you can track your own weight control measures.**

How much Should I weigh?

Get a BMI Chart from The Family Van! The BMI chart will tell your ideal weight range for your height. Ideally, the goal for adults is to achieve and maintain a body weight that optimizes their health. However, for obese adults, even modest weight loss (e.g., 10 pounds) has health benefits. **The Family Van staff will help you in this process- to get your initial BMI and then help you monitor your weight until you have reached your desired goal!**

What can I do to lose weight?

Three things mainly determine our weight: *Diet, Exercise, and Genes!* **Talk to The Family Van Staff** to know what food will help you lose weight through balanced diet and exercise.

1. Exercise: Try to exercise each day of the week. At first it may become tired easily. Start with easier exercise such as walking for 10 minutes. Each day try to walk further and faster. When you feel stronger and after you have spoken with your health care provider, you should begin to exercise more intensely so that your heart beats faster and you are sweating. This is called cardiovascular exercise and is good for your heart and will help you to lose weight also. Before beginning any intense exercise program you should speak with your health care provider.

2. Diet: Cut down fats: Cut down or eliminate foods that are high in saturated fats or trans fat in your diet including fast foods, fried foods, pastries, foods cooked with a lot of oil. When you are shopping always look for foods that say low-fat or non-fat including milks and cheeses. Avoid animal sources of fat such as butter, margarine, mayonnaise, lard, oils, nuts, egg yolk.

Cut down calories: Try to cut down on juices, sodas and deserts as they are high in sugar which can change to fat when it is inside the body. Avoid juices as sold in supermarkets

Add fruits and vegetables: Try to eat at least 5 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables each day. If you want a snack try to have a fruit or vegetable rather than a greasy food.

Add whole grains: Eat good sources of whole grains.

You are not alone! YOU have the power to control your weight!

CDC says, a third of all adults in US are overweight or obese!

Additional Resources

http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition_for_everyone/healthy_weight/index.htm

The Family Van
1542 Tremont Street, Roxbury, MA 02120
P: 617 442 3200 F: 617 442 3200
familyvan@hms.harvard.edu

