

Maintaining Your Weight Loss: You have met your weight loss goal—now what?

Tips for keeping off the weight you've lost:

First, congratulations are in order for meeting your weight loss goal!. Losing weight is hard work. Now, the next challenge is *maintaining* your weight loss. Keeping weight off can also be hard work, but we know it can be done, thanks to the National Weight Control Registry (NWCR), an ongoing study funded by the National Institutes of Health.

The NWCR has been following over 5000 people who have lost at least 30 pounds and as much as 300 pounds and have kept the weight off for at least one year. People in the Registry have reported how they lost weight, and how they have been successful in keeping it off.

Strategies successful maintainers use -- that you can use too.

- Eat breakfast every day. This helps to curb hunger and prevent possible bingeing later in the day.
- Weigh yourself daily, or at least once a week.
- Be active every day. Registry members get about 60 minutes of activity every day. The most frequently reported form of physical activity by NWCR members is walking.
- Follow a lower-fat, lower-calorie meal plan.
- Get support. Registry members who attended bimonthly support group meetings maintained their weight loss.
- Plan for slips. Have a game plan for getting back on track. If you gain 2 pounds, it is time to use your game plan.

Actions you can take:

- Keep a food journal. If you can't do it every day, try writing down what you eat at least three times a week.
- Problem solve.
 - What has caused you problems maintaining your weight over the last week or month?

- What steps can you take to deal with this problem?

- Eating out of boredom, frustration, stress: What can you do?
 - Plan ahead. Make a list of things you enjoy doing (other than eating!), such as walking, reading, gardening. Keep the list handy and refer to it when hunger strikes.
 - Try waiting out the urge. Wait 10 minutes and if you still want to eat, have a small portion.
 - Call a friend.
 - Have a glass of water or a cup of tea. Hunger can be mistaken for thirst.
 - Your action plan for dealing with emotional eating.

- Focus on the positive. Avoid negative self-talk. Remind yourself of all you have accomplished.
- Deal with lapses. Everyone gets off track once in awhile. This is normal, but it is important to get back on track. How will you deal with lapses?

Resources you can use:

For more information on maintaining your weight loss, check out the National Weight Control Registry website at: <http://www.nwcr.ws/> or call 1-800-606-NWCR (6927).

The Weight-control Information Network (WIN) established in 1994 is a service of the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease (NIDDK), National Institutes of Health (NIH). WIN provides information about weight control, physical activity and nutrition. You can access fact sheets and brochures on their website at <http://www.win.niddk.nih.gov>, or by calling 1-877-946-4627.