

# NUTRITIONAL TIPS FOR WEIGHT REDUCTION



## *A Balanced Diet – The Pyramid Way*

### EAT LEAST

Fats, oils, Sugar, Salt  
USE SPARINGLY



Meat & Alternatives



Fruits & Vegetables



Rice & Alternatives



### EAT MOST

#### GUIDELINES FOR WEIGHT LOSS

The following guidelines will help you get started in the weight loss program.

#### *Reduce Your Fat Intake*

Reducing fat in the diet helps to cut calories.

- Try to avoid fried foods as much as possible.
- Choose lean cuts of meat, and trim off visible fat including the chicken and duck skin.
- Reduce the size of your meat and poultry serving.
- Choose fish, chicken (without skin) or beans more often than red meats eg mutton, duck and beef.
- Avoid meat products eg luncheon meat, sausages, Chinese sausages and burgers.
- Use oil sparingly.
- Always choose "unsaturated" oil eg corn, olive, peanut, soybean or sunflower oil.

Diet is an important part of cancer treatment. Eating the right kinds of foods before, during and after treatment can help the patient feel better and stay stronger. Certain type of cancer treatments may cause some unwanted weight gain. This handout provides some information on how to lose weight in a healthy way.

Losing weight involves more than just getting rid of fat. Successful weight loss also means keeping healthy and happy, having enough energy for a balanced life. It may also means changing your eating habits and lifestyle so that you can maintain the weight you lose.

You are advised to follow a plan that fits in with your food preferences and your lifestyle. You may need to adjust your eating behaviors as well as increasing your exercise level. Exercise helps burn fat faster by raising your metabolic rate and increasing lean muscle.

It is very important to have a balanced diet while you are trying to lose weight, so as to obtain all the nutrients needed during treatment/recovery. You should eat a wide variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups. Use the Healthy Diet Pyramid as a guide to choose what to eat each day. Foods eaten daily should comprise mostly from the base, and least from the tip of the pyramid.

- Opt for unsaturated margarine or low fat spread instead of butter, make sure you use it in small amounts.
- Cook without adding fats such as butter, ghee, lard, cream, margarine, etc on a regular basis.
- Use less coconut cream and coconut milk in preparation of dishes like curries. Try low fat milk or yogurt instead.
- Skim off fat from surface of soups and gravies.
- Choose low fat milk or skimmed milk instead of full cream evaporated or condensed milk. Look for low fat cheese and yogurt too.
- Go easy on salad dressings, mayonnaise, rich gravies / sauces, sambal, cream. Use them sparingly.
- Choose the following low fat cooking methods.
  - Dry stir-fry (or using minimal amount of oil) using a non-stick pan
  - Steam / boil
  - Grill
  - Wrap in foil and bake
  - Roast or bake on a rack (without added fat or oil)
  - Microwave
  - Cook in soup (without added fat or oil)
- Choose food prepared in this way when eating out too

## Eat Moderate Amount of Starchy Carbohydrate and Extra Fibre

Rice noodles, bread and potatoes are good, non-fattening foods that fill you up. Cutting out carbohydrate will just make you feel tired and irritable and will not help long term weight loss.

Dietary fibre is an essential part of the diet, which provides bulk and remains undigested. Foods that are high in fibre are filling without providing many calories.

- Good sources of dietary fibre include:
  - Unpolished rice
  - Rice noodles, iddli and whole-wheat pasta
  - Wholemeal, wholewheat and wholegrain bread and rolls
  - Chapati
  - Wholegrain cereals eg Branflakes
  - Oat cereals eg Quaker, Uncle Toby's, Nestum (unsweetened)
  - Potatoes (especially with skin), sweet potatoes
  - Beans, peas and lentils (fresh or tinned)
- Eat at least two portions of fresh fruit (with skin where possible) each day.
- Eat lots of vegetables, cooked with minimal oil.

## Reduce Sugar Intake

Sugar provides very few nutrients, only calories, which can contribute to weight gain.

Take less sugar by:

- Not adding sugar to food and drinks.
- Artificial sweeteners are available for occasional use eg Hesmestas, Pal Sweet, Equal, Sweetex.
- Avoid sweetened condensed milk and sweetened milk powders.



For further enquiries, please contact CanHOPE at:

Tel: (65) 6738 9333

Email: enquiry@CanHOPE.org

www.CanHOPE.org

- Take fewer soft drinks, packet drinks, sweetened fruit drinks/cordials or sweetened local drinks. Choose to drink water more often.
- Avoid sweets, jam, honey, desserts, kueh, cakes, chocolates, pastries, sweet biscuits and ice-cream.
- Take fresh fruit as a dessert.

## Watch What You Drink

- Drink more water. Aim to drink at least 6-8 glasses each day.
- Use low calorie fluids eg tea, coffee (without sugar & dairy creamer), Chinese or herbal tea, "Diet" drinks, fresh or unsweetened fruit juices, low fat milk. Dilute fruit juices with water, mineral water or soda water.
- Alcohol is high in calories, drink little or none.
- Mix wine and spirits with plain mineral water or diet soft drinks. Dry white wine or spirits are preferable to sweet alcoholic drinks. Soft drink and fruit juice have as much calories as beer, so they are not a low calorie alternative.

## Look at Your Eating Habits

- Try not to skip meals (especially breakfast), you will just get hungry and eat more (or too much) at the next meal or snack more often. Skipping meals also slows down the rate you burn energy.
- Try to eat slowly and don't rush through a meal.
- Don't overeat at the evening meal and try not to eat in the late evenings.
- Don't fast or go on crash diets. These can cause weight loss in the short term (which is just water loss), but slow down the rate you burn energy in the long term – then you PUT ON WEIGHT.

## Exercise Daily

- Is good for your whole body.
- Helps you to relax.
- Keeps you looking good and feeling fit. Helps to maintain your correct weight by using up energy that comes from the food you eat. The amount of energy burned depends on the duration and intensity of your exercise.
- Will tone up your muscles, keeps your body strong and healthy.

## Ways to Increase Your Activity

- Walk for 20 minutes everyday.
- Take the stairs not the lift.
- Leave the car at home, walk to the nearby shops.
- Take up a sport you like which fits your lifestyle and do it regularly (more than three times a week). Maintain for 20 minutes or more at one occasion. You may need to consult the doctor before commencing any intensive exercise regime.

## Last Note

The Ideal Diet For You

- Must be nutritionally balanced including a variety of nutritious foods such as breads & cereals, rice, noodles, fruit and vegetables, lean meat and dairy products, with limited quantities of butter, margarine or oils.
- Moderate in energy – between 1500 to 2500 calories a day. Aim for the healthy weight range. An ideal rate of weight loss is 0.5 to 1.0kg per week. Even 1.0kg per month is a good weight loss. During the first two weeks, there is often a greater weight loss due to fluid loss.
- Is flexible and varied, which fits in with your lifestyle and family.
- Can be followed for long periods of time.
- Use ordinary food and does not require special diet food.
- **BE PATIENT.**