

Riverwalk Natural Health Clinic
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Health Tips for weight loss

With the basics in mind, here are some tricks to help in your efforts to lose weight:

- Set a goal
- Decide how much you want to lose and when you want to start. Keep your expectations of yourself reasonable. 1–2 pounds a week is a reasonable amount to lose combining diet and exercise. With any goal in life, it can be helpful to plan it, envision it happening, see yourself as you'll be when you've achieved it, plan a reward for yourself, etc.
- Counseling and journaling
- Body image and food are huge emotional issues and weight loss is an intense process. Pay attention to what's happening with you, what your needs and issues are. Are you wanting to eat when uncomfortable feelings come up? Work on accepting and appreciating your appearance, your feelings, and your Self. Have a support system in addition to supporting yourself. Besides counseling and journaling, Overeaters Anonymous provides a place where one can get support any day of the week. This is a group for people of all sizes who want to address their relationship with food.
- Pamper yourself
- Incorporate nice things for yourself into your schedule—relaxing baths, massages, time outside in nature, whatever feels nurturing to you. Meeting your needs and enjoying your life are the best things you can do for yourself. You deserve it!
- Plan your meals and portion sizes. Leaving things up in the air can make it more difficult. Also, plan in healthful snacks so that you're not famished at meal time. Don't starve yourself!
- Chew thoroughly
- Many people feel they'll get more pleasure out of food by eating quickly and shoveling in more food, yet the opposite is not only true, but more healthful. Eating slowly allows you to savor each bite as well as helping you present your food to your digestive system in a more digestible form. Some foods even taste different. For example, there's a delicate, sweet taste to raw almonds when you chew them to the point that they're liquefied. Taking time with food will allow you to still experience your food as a delight.
- Don't be hard on yourself
- If you do feel like you're going to eat something you're trying to avoid, dish yourself up a small portion and enjoy it! You might want to even schedule in occasional small servings of favorite foods that would leave you feeling deprived if you gave them up completely. If you do eat one of these foods, try not to beat yourself up. Just go on from there. Being hard on yourself will only compound the matter, making you feel lousy and making it more likely you'll eat more things you're trying to avoid and on and on.

Remember: With diet, exercise, and the emotional work you do for yourself, even though this is a hard thing to do, it is also a chance for you to feel well and healthy and establish new patterns for taking care of and nurturing yourself. Be well!

EXERCISE

Exercise is helpful, not only in terms of burning calories, but in terms of increasing circulation, excretion of waste products, and well-being via stress reduction and endorphin release. The amount of exercise again needs to be tailored to you. It depends on what exercise you're currently doing and what types and amounts of exercise your body can handle. For the average person just starting out, incorporating a hour walk into your daily routine three to five times a week is a good way to begin. While gradually increasing speed is valuable for cardiovascular health and overall well-being, increasing frequency and duration are equally or more important for weight loss. Optimal fat burning is achieved at 60–70% of the maximum heart rate (maximal heart rate is 220 minus your age). A good goal to aim for is 30–60 minutes of exercise daily. Some muscle-toning and strength-building exercises are also beneficial to add 2–3 times a week.