

WEIGHT CHECK



Pic: Nay Micro/India Picture

We are always concerned about our body weight. We either want to lose, gain or maintain our weight. But have you ever wondered if you are targeting the right or healthy weight?

Hiteshi Dhama Shah, *clinical nutritionist*

To maintain a healthy weight, one must incorporate the right quantity and quality of food along with regular physical activity. Striking the right balance between the two will not only help us maintain a healthy weight but will also prevent further weight-related complications. When one wants to lose weight, it is essential to lose excess body fat and build more muscle mass. More the muscle mass, better your BMR, (basal metabolic rate), and the faster you will be able to lose weight and maintain your ideal weight.

► Diet Connection

You are what you eat! So a balanced diet should be a part of any weight control plan. A diet high in complex carbohydrates and moderate in protein and fat will complement an exercise program. It should include enough calories to satisfy your daily nutrient requirements and include the proper number of servings per day from the four basic food groups – vegetables and fruits (4 servings), cereals, which include wheat, *jowar*, *bajra*, *nachni*, barley, oats, brown rice (4 servings), low fat or skimmed milk and dairy products (2 - 4 depending on age) and lean meat, fish or legumes (2 servings). Your daily intake need not fall below 1200 calories unless you are under supervision by a dietician. Also, weekly weight loss should not exceed 900 grams.

Remarkable claims have been made for a variety of 'crash diets and diet pills. Some of these very restricted diets do result in noticeable weight loss in a short time. However, most of it

is water loss, which is regained quickly as soon as you return to your normal food and liquid intake. These diet plans are not only expensive but also detrimental to your health and metabolism. Moreover, they do not emphasise lifestyle changes that will help you maintain your desired weight. Dieting alone will result in loss of valuable body tissues such as muscle mass in addition to loss in fat.

► Exercise connection

Most people do not get enough exercise in their ordinary routines. Modern technology – from electric can-openers to power steering – have made life easier, more comfortable and less physically demanding. Yet our bodies need activity, especially if they are carrying around too much fat. You require a definite plan and a commitment to incorporate an exercise regime into your daily life. There are two steps to increase the number of calories you expend – beginning with a regular exercise program and increasing the level of physical activity in your daily routine.

► Maintenance

Maintaining weight is an equally important challenge and often elusive goal. The best way to control your weight is a combination of diet and exercise. The sum total of calories used over time will help regulate your weight as well as keep you physically fit. Weight regain is a common phenomenon following a weight loss program. Thereby, consistent and structured eating, regular self-weighing and a professionally planned exercise regime will prevent weight regain.

ARE YOU EATING THE RIGHT FOOD?

Chat with nutritionist **Hiteshi Dhama Shah**, as she gives you a lowdown on how to stay healthy by eating the right food. Log on to chat.timeswellness.com on Tuesday, January 24 at 11am and chat live.