



## Weight Loss- Myths and Facts

### Introduction

Canadians are at epidemic proportions when it comes to being overweight or obese according to Stats Canada. In a recent 2012 survey they report that 67% of men and 54% of women are either overweight or obese and sadly 31.5% of Canadian children and youth between the ages 5 and 17 are the same. According to the Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation, within the past 30 years, the prevalence of obesity has doubled among those ages 40 to 69 and tripled among those 20 to 39." In 2008, the annual economic cost of obesity in Canada was estimated at 4.6 billion dollars. Losing weight is the number one "self help" activity for most adult Canadians. In North America, the weight loss/obesity management market was estimated to be worth 104 billion dollars in 2012. Sadly, most of these dollars are spent on ill advised "quick fix or fad diets" and most weight loss efforts result in failure. This newsletter will review the myths surrounding weight loss and present the most recent scientific facts on how to lose weight and keep that weight off safely and effectively.

### Why Exercise May Not Lead to Weight Loss

Exercise burns calories (energy-producing potential in food ), so why does study after study often show only modest to average weight loss in some people even after they have followed a relatively intense exercise program? The most likely answer is that these people eat more to compensate for their workouts. But why do some people desire more food after their workouts than others? A possible explanation is the timing and protein content of meals. The longer the time between your last meal and your workout and the lack of protein (which is digested at a slower rate and not utilized as fuel during intense exercise) in the meal could affect your appetite for food after a workout. Eating a meal with protein two to three hours prior to exercising and then having a carbohydrate snack within an hour of your exercise session would be ideal.

Key Point: Exercise can really make a significant contribution to weight loss but it is important to plan ahead and be conscious of what you eat before, and especially in the vulnerable time after you exercise. Even if you don't lose significant weight, exercising contributes positively to other areas of your overall health such as lowering your blood pressure, improving your insulin sensitivity and cardiovascular fitness. In other words, the most valuable benefits of exercise can not just be measured on the scale.



### Did You Know

#### How are Canadians trying to Lose Weight?

In an effort to lose weight, a large number of Canadians report using dubious "quick fix" strategies:

1. 39% said they followed a diet that restricted certain foods (bread and pasta) or food groups such as carbohydrates.
2. 31% used meal replacement bars or shakes.
3. 23% used weight-loss supplements or herbs.
4. 21% tried fasting.
5. Only one quarter (24%) sought counselling from a dietician or doctor.

#### What Happens After you Lose Weight

The biggest challenge appears to be getting the support necessary to help keep the weight off.

1. 9 out of 10 reported there was no person or resource to help them maintain their weight loss.
2. 6 out of 10 people who are obese regain at least some weight.
3. 3 out of 10 regain all of it or even gain more.
4. The heavier you are, the more difficult it is to keep the weight off.

**(Canadian Heart and Stroke Foundation)**

## Canadian Guidelines for Body Weight Classifications in Adults

([www.healthcanada.ca/nutrition](http://www.healthcanada.ca/nutrition))

## Introduction

The Canadian Guidelines for Body Weight Classification in Adults use the Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist Circumference as indicators of health risk. It is important to note that weight classification should only be used as one component of a more comprehensive health assessment needed to identify health risk.

## Limitations:

These body weight classification systems may over or under estimate health risks in specific groups such as:

1. Young adults who have not reached full growth
  2. Adults who have a very lean body build
  3. Highly muscular athletes
  4. Adults over the age of 65

The classification system is not intended for use with;

1. Those under 18 years of age
  2. Pregnant and lactating women

### **Body Mass Index (BMI= Wt(kg)/Ht(m)<sup>2</sup>)**

BMI Is not a direct measure of body fat but is the most useful indicator of health risk associated with under and overweight.

<u>Classification</u>	<u>BMI</u>	<u>Risk of Developing Health Problems</u>
Underweight	<18.5	Increased
Normal Weight	18.5—24.9	Least
Overweight	25.0-29.9	Increased
Obese:		
Class I	30.0-34.9	High
Class II	35.0-39.9	Very high
Class III	>40.0	Extremely high

## **Waist Circumference (WC)**

This is an indicator of health risk associated with Abdominal fat.

## Measurement Technique;

Measure the circumference of the belly midway between the lowest rib and the top of the pelvis bone on the side. The tape measure should not compress any underlying soft tissues.

<u>WC Cut-off Points</u>	<u>Risk of Developing Health Problems such as :</u>
-Men > 94 cm	-Type 2 diabetes
-Women > 80 cm	-Coronary heart disease
	-high blood pressure

Men > 102 cm(40 inches)  
Women > 88 cm (35 inches)

# 5 Healthy Dieting and Eating Tips

1. Before you begin a diet consult your doctor or a registered dietician/nutritionist.

2. Incorporate a holistic approach in your efforts to lose weight;

Mentally— understand that there are no easy fixes to losing weight and keeping it off and it will take time and effort to be successful.

Emotionally— embrace the fact that losing weight and keeping it off is a life changing experience that is necessary for your health and well-being.

Physically— Exercise. Begin slowly and progress gradually under the supervision of a certified personal trainer. Exercise will complement the modifications you are making in your eating habits and by exercising under the supervision of a personal trainer you will minimize the chances of injuring yourself and slowing your progress.

3. Keep a food journal/diary. This will help you track what you are eating, makes you accountable and makes it easier to identify areas for change.

4. Eat a good breakfast. Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day. Make sure it is balanced with complex carbohydrates (60%) such as oatmeal or a whole grain bagel, protein (25-30%) such as cheese, 0% fat Greek yogurt, eggs and healthy fat (10-15%) such as flaxseed, fish, pecans or walnuts.

5. Small steps/mis-steps can add up to big permanent changes. Weight loss and weight control is all about math, how many calories you take in minus how many you expend. If the answer to this equation is a positive number you gain weight and if it is a negative number you lose weight. 3500 calories = 1 pound. If you ingest only 115 calories a day more than you burn you will gain 1 pound a month or 12 pounds over a year. The chart below illustrates how many calories are in some of our favourite foods and how many calories you burn doing various physical activities. It is easy to see how an extra snack a day or the lack of 30 minutes of physical activity a day can have a big impact on your weight.

<u>Food</u>	<u>Calories Ingested</u>	<u>Exercise (30 minutes)</u>	<u>Calories Burned</u>
1 beer	145	Step class	260
1 glass wine	100	X-C skiing	270
Kit Kat	250	Walking	250
10 potato chips	105	Jogging	410
Apple pie	250	Washing car	135