



Chapter 11

Keeping a Healthy Weight

Maintaining a Healthy Weight

Directions: Read the following selection and study the chart. Then answer the questions under *Thinking Critically*, and complete the activities as directed by your teacher.

As with most lifestyle changes, there are usually safe and unsafe ways to make changes. When it comes to losing weight, skipping meals, eating only one or two types of food, taking diet pills, or making yourself vomit are all unsafe methods. These methods may seem to work for awhile and may even help you to lose weight, but keeping the weight off is unlikely. When you completely deprive yourself of the foods you enjoy, you will experience deep cravings for those foods and eventually break down and binge. You will most likely gain back more weight than you lost. Experts call this “yo-yo” dieting. Cycles of “yo-yo” dieting are frustrating. Also, low-calorie diets that allow only a few types of food do not provide enough of the vitamins and minerals you need each day. It is necessary to make lifelong changes in eating behaviors, diet, and physical activity to maintain a healthful weight.

The teen years are a time of rapid growth. Fad dieting can prevent teens from getting the calories and nutrients they need to grow properly.

For example, if the diet does not provide enough calcium, phosphorus, and vitamin D, bones will not be able to store enough calcium for growth. This may increase the risk of osteoporosis later in life.

The safe solution to losing weight involves implementing a behavioral change to healthier food

choices, eating low-nutrient foods in moderation, and exercising in moderation. *Balance* is the cornerstone of a good diet. Balance your favorite fatty foods with fruits and vegetables; eat a variety of foods; keep portion sizes reasonable; and make simple substitutions, such as nonfat milk instead of two-percent milk or pretzels instead of corn chips.

Choose one of the following activities:

Food record. Keeping a food record provides a way to analyze your eating habits and helps you to make healthful changes.

1. For three days, keep track of the amount of food you eat from each food group.
2. Use the food guidance system in MyPyramid.gov to calculate how well you met your daily food needs.

Reducing fat and calories. Analyzing your fat and calorie intake and the impact they have on menu plans provides a way for you to reduce your fat and calorie intake for maintaining and losing weight.

1. Create a low-calorie, low-fat version of the breakfast menu in the chart below. Write your alternate version in the space provided.
2. Develop a low-calorie lunch menu based on the Dietary Guidelines and MyPyramid on a separate sheet of paper and attach it to this activity.

| High-Fat, High-Calorie Breakfast Menu | | Low-Fat, Low-Calorie Breakfast Menu Alternative |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ¾ cup | Orange juice | |
| 1 oz. | Bran cereal with raisins | |
| 1 cup | Whole milk | |
| 1 slice | Whole-wheat toast | |
| 2 tsp. | Butter | |

(Continued on next page)

Thinking Critically

1. Explain how a balancing “teeter-totter” may be compared to a person maintaining a healthful weight.

2. How can teens increase their physical activity? What would best help you?

3. What do you believe is necessary to tell other teens about the importance of physical activity when maintaining a favorable weight? Why?

4. How can height/weight charts or BMI charts help or hinder making a decision about weight loss?

For Further Study

- ◆ On average, a person takes 3,000 to 4,000 steps a day. Increasing to 8,000 to 10,000 steps or 4 miles is recommended for good physical fitness. Purchase a step counter, and determine your average number of steps over a three-day period. Develop a plan to gradually increase your steps. How long will it take to reach 10,000 steps a day? How will you have to adjust your activity level to meet your goal(s)?
- ◆ Survey 15 teens and 15 adults to find out about their favorite fruits and their favorite vegetables. Using your data, create a brochure which features your data in a graph. Include ways that teens can increase the amount of fruits and vegetables in their diets, how fruits and vegetables help maintain a favorable weight, and at least one low-fat, low-calorie recipe using fruits or vegetables.
- ◆ Calculate your body mass index (BMI). Use the BMI calculator on the USDA Web site. Is this number an indicator of a healthy or favorable weight for you? Why or why not? Lead a small group discussion on the topic.
- ◆ Weight-control plans should include eating foods from all of the food groups comprising MyPyramid. Write an essay supporting this position and submit it to your teacher.