

101 ways to lose weight naturally

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Introduction

Losing weight is the probably the biggest problem many of us face on a daily basis. It is possibly the favourite New Year's Resolution along with giving up smoking. It is one of the hardest things to achieve and stay positive at the same time. Losing weight naturally is better for you than any fad or crash dieting programs. Fads and crash diets make you lose fluid and muscle tone first, that is why it is so hard to keep the weight off. By changing your eating habits and doing more exercise the weight will gradually disappear. You don't have to do everything at once either. Cut some things back first; limit your chocolate bars to one or two a week instead of one or two every day. Little goals are easier to reach than that huge goal of twenty or thirty kilograms. Be nice to yourself and have a treat outside of the home instead of keeping tempting ice cream in the freezer.

Keep a food diary

When you want to lose weight one of the easiest to track when and where you are eating is to keep a food diary. If you write down everything you eat and drink every day, when you come to a plateau and can't seem to lose any more weight or inches, see if you are overeating at times of the day, or if there is some way to change your eating habits. Some people find it better to have the main meal at lunchtime and have a smaller meal at night. The afternoon gives you more time to use the energy from the food you have eaten.

Include more exercise

Exercise is the best way apart from eating less to lose weight naturally. There are many easy and quick ways to include more exercise into your day.

- Walk to work-if possible or walk to the next bus stop or hop off one stop sooner
- Use the stairs-even if you work on the 10th floor, you can walk up a couple of floors each day
- When you are going to park your car, make sure you are parking it on a long distance from a shopping spot that can also help you to lose your weight and make you healthy.
- Join a walking club-many towns have walking clubs that walk over the city or drive to a central place and walk from there
- Join a gym-some people thrive on going to the gym, others don't. If it suits your life style this can be a great starting point for more exercise
- Get an exercise partner-it is always easier to exercise with another person. You can keep each other motivated on those days you really don't feel like exercising

- Play with the kids-kick a ball around with the kids in the park, shoot some hoops, it all adds up and you will be surprised how much exercise you can get in half an hour of kicking a soccer ball
- Walk the dog-always a great treat for them. Get in the habit of a daily walk or ball game in the park



Shop better

Forget about packaged foods and go for fresh fruit and vegetables and unprocessed foods. If it has more than 5 ingredients or an ingredient you can't pronounce, put it back on the shelf.

- Eliminate all packaged bakery products-cakes, biscuits, cookies
- Buy fresh fruit and vegetables to snack on instead of cakes and cookies
- Shop on a full stomach
- Make a shopping list and stick to it
- Beware of low fat alternatives-a lot of low fat food products contain higher amounts of sugar and sodium. Many low fat dairy products are full of sugar to give you the same taste as full fat products. It is often better to eat less of the full fat product and skip the low fat alternative.



More sugar and more salt in low fat foods

Change eating habits

Eat breakfast

One of the most important ways to lose weight is to start eating breakfast every day. Skipping meals is not the way to lose weight. By all means eat less but eat regularly.

Eat slower

By eating slower it gives your brain time to recognise that you are getting full. You will find that you eat less and will still feel full.

Eat more fresh fruit and vegetables

The more colourful fruit and vegetables you eat the more vitamins and minerals you are getting. Fruit contains antioxidants that are good for us and it is found in colourful fruit like blueberries.



Eliminate processed foods

The processed foods we eat are full of fast acting carbohydrates that contain loads of sugar, sodium and sometimes fat. A lot of baked goods contain Trans fat that is not a good fat. Olive oil and the natural fats from lean meat are good for us. They keep our joints in good condition and we need a certain amount each day.



Eat more fish

Oily fish contains good omega fats that are important for our good health and they help to lower cholesterol.

Eat more fibre

Fibre is the stuff that makes you feel fuller longer and gives you a healthy bowel. It helps remove any excess fat from your system and is a vital part of a good healthy diet. If you don't think you are getting enough fibre add oats to your breakfast, sprinkle bran on cereal and add dried peas and lentils to soups and vegetable dishes.

Add vegetarian meals

Have a couple of vegetarian meals each week. You will be surprised at the variety of meals that you can make for the whole family. Avoid meat substitutes but have eggs instead of meat, include dried pulses or nuts for protein. Replace a meat meal with a hard cheese and fresh salad full of greens, fresh herbs, tomatoes, cucumber, celery and olives.

Eat less meat

Reduce the portion size of lean meat. Your plate should be $\frac{2}{3}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ vegetables and the rest lean protein. Meat is still important for iron and other minerals but you will notice that you will feel less bloated by eating less red meat. Try to eat red meat medium to rare as it is easier to digest.

Eat less saturated fats

Saturated fats are found in processed and packaged foods and stay as fat in our body. These are the fats that make the bad cholesterol and contribute to heart disease.

Reduce fast acting carbohydrates

By removing these from your diet you will feel fuller longer and have a lower chance of becoming a diabetic. These carbohydrates cause insulin levels to spike and raise your blood sugar.

- Replace rice and pasta in soups with barley and dried pulses like lentils, split peas, kidney beans, borlotti beans, haricot beans, lima beans or cannellini beans
- Choose grain bread products with higher fibre content
- Make a barley risotto, a lovely nutty flavour and add your favourite veggies like mushrooms and asparagus, some lean cooked chicken or prawns

Eat food with a lower GI

Food that has a lower GI will keep you satisfied longer as it takes your body longer to break it down. Most calorie counters have a GI list included and lots of supermarket products like yoghurt have a GI listed on the packaging.

Use less salt and more herbs and spices

Using less salt will lower your blood pressure and stop you from reaching for unsuitable fizzy drinks, sodas and cordials. Add flavour to food by using herbs and spices to make your taste buds zing. If you add chilli to meals it can increase your metabolism that aids in weight loss.



Healthy drinks

Choose healthy drinks in your eating plan. Water is great and sometimes if you feel hungry you are actually thirsty. So have a glass of water and see if you still feel hungry. If you can't come at drinking 2 litres of water every day you can drink other things.

- Iced tea-make a litre of black tea, add lemon juice or mint leaves and ice cubes for a refreshing drink
- Green tea is a great drink as it contains lots of antioxidants
- Clear broth made from meat and vegetables-this is like making stock and it can be flavoured with your favourite herbs and spices

Select from fat releasing foods

Indulge in fat releasing foods-they will stop you from feeling deprived and binging on higher-calorie foods. Some foods help more than others in eliminating fat from our diets and they are healthy alternatives. Food containing protein, fibre and vitamin C are a good start.

- Honey-at just 64 fat releasing calories in one tablespoon, drizzle over natural yoghurt and fresh fruit
- Eggs-have only 70 calories and are full of fat releasing protein. Sprinkle with chives for an even more elegant treat.
- Part-skim ricotta cheese-has just 39 calories in one ounce of this food, packed with fat releasing calcium. Dollop over a bowl of fresh fruit for dessert.
- Dark chocolate-has about 168 calories in a one-ounce square, but it's packed with fat releasing fibre
- Shrimp-good omega oils and just 60 calories in 12 large

Eat at home more

By eating at home you are more able to control what is on your plate and you won't be tempted by rich creamy sauces and calorie laden desserts. You can always use going out for a meal as a treat but you may find that the food is too rich and fatty and disagrees with you and makes you feel bloated and nauseous.

If you do pine for take away occasionally choose wisely and select the better choices.

- Choose from salads with oil free dressings
- Say no to mayonnaise and creamy dressings
- Pick a cheese free pizza or a low fat cheese one

Eat less more often

Use a smaller plate

Serve you meal on a bread and butter plate instead of a dinner plate. It looks like you are eating more as your plate is fuller. Don't heap your old size meal on the plate, it defeats the purpose. By eating less and using a smaller plate it does not look like you are depriving yourself.

Five small meals a day

Use the smaller plate and have 5 small meals a day.

- You will never be starving and eat more than you need
- Divide your calories over the 5 meals
- Have a bigger breakfast to start your day

Healthy snacks

Only buy healthy snacks to keep in the house.

- Replace ice cream with frozen yoghurt
- Replace crisps with raw nuts
- Make your popcorn that is butter free
- Make up a plate of fresh vegetables with a tasty no oil dressing. Choose from lettuces, red, green and yellow peppers, spring onions or shallots, carrot and celery sticks, sliced mushrooms,



Set goals

Set yourself goals that you will be able to achieve. Don't make your entire weight loss one goal. Split it up into achievable amounts. Attempt to lose 10 kilos at a time and you can start by setting smaller goals to gradually change your eating habits. If you set yourself goals that you are able to achieve with a little extra effort you will find yourself reaching them and setting more. Don't be over ambitious and set yourself goals that are unattainable and end up feeling discouraged and depressed and give up and go back to your old eating habits. It is all about eating the right foods and not starving yourself or exercising like a maniac and being sick to reach that goal.

Food

- One less biscuit with coffee
- An extra piece of fruit a day
- A colourful vegetable with dinner
- Less coffee
- Cut out one thing at a time

Exercise

- Walk around the block every day
- Do some gardening every week
- Walk the dog at the weekends
- 10 minutes more exercise each day
- Buy a pedometer and add 1000 steps to your day

Eating

- Eat breakfast every day
- Have 3 meals and 2 snacks each day
- Use a smaller plate for dinner at night
- Eat slower and savour the taste of your food
- Don't eat in front of the television

The power of positive thinking

Never underestimate the power of positive thought. It can turn your mood around and give you a jump start to weight loss. Start off by liking yourself regardless of your size. Find something you like about yourself, maybe you have beautiful long hair, gorgeous eyes, thin ankles, great legs. Whatever it is, turn your negative obesity into a positive fact about yourself. There are ways to keep positive.

- Find a mantra you like and repeat a number of times each day. Something like "I will lose weight", "I am getting healthier" and "I am feeling better".
- Find time to meditate or sit quietly each day and just be by yourself. Focus on yourself and not your partner and the kids. You will also sleep better by doing this.

Conclusion

Losing weight the natural way is never going to be easy or very fast but you will gradually lose weight, feel better and look at life from a different perspective. By changing a few aspects of your lifestyle at a time you won't feel like you are on a diet. You are starting to eat healthier and do more exercise and by doing this you will lose your weight.

You will find it easier to exercise with a partner, for motivation and encouragement. A person exercising with a partner will push themselves more too. So don't go on a diet, go on a healthy eating plan to get yourself fitter and stronger.