

# PART 7

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## *Keep It Going: Weight Maintenance*

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This section will help you maintain a healthy lifestyle. The tools that got you to this point may be different than the tools you'll need to keep going. Your body has physiologically changed during weight loss. Your mind has also changed. This section will help you to:

- Understand why weight maintenance is difficult.
- Modify the strategies and skills you use daily, if needed.
- Further improve your eating habits.
- Seek out long-lasting motivation and connection to others.

## Weight Loss & Metabolism

As you have learned throughout this guide, losing weight can result in many positive changes for your body. One change, however, can make it tougher to maintain weight loss. When you lose weight, the body's natural reaction is to conserve energy by slowing your metabolism.

Your metabolism may be slower than before you lost weight.

- Your body changes to make it difficult to lose more weight.
- Your body changes to make it easier to put on weight.

Without changing your habits and lifestyle around food and exercise, being overweight can become a chronically relapsing condition. You may feel caught in a cycle of gaining and losing weight repeatedly. This pattern can be very hard on the body and mind.

You are not doomed to gain weight once you have worked hard to lose it. While a slower metabolism can make it harder, you have built many strengths to make this challenge easier.

- Easier to exercise (e.g., less joint pain, improved heart and lung function, more energy)
- More muscle tissue (this increases your metabolism)
- Enjoy an increased variety of healthy foods
- Stronger social support
- Kinder view of self and body image
- Strengthened values



# Overcome a Plateau

Weight loss can seem like a long, slow journey. Maintenance, when you are no longer trying to lose weight, can seem far away. It is important to remember that you won't lose weight at the same rate each week. Weight loss can slow down or speed up for many reasons, including illness, stress, and other hormonal changes (like a menstrual cycle).

- When you are ill, try your best to get your body the nutrients it needs. Seek a doctor's care if necessary.
- Don't add stress to stress. Manage the challenge that is causing you stress. Avoid feeling stressed about weight loss efforts on top of this.

If you have lost 10% of your initial body weight, aim to maintain that weight for at least 6 months. This helps stabilize your metabolism and makes it easier to lose weight in the future, if needed. It also gives you time to strengthen new, healthy habits. If you haven't reached your 10% goal yet and your weight hasn't changed for more than a week, you may be at a plateau. This is normal. Use the following strategies to overcome a plateau.

## 1. Reduce the Struggle

Imagine you are driving up a long, steep mountain road in top gear. The car struggles to get there and maybe stops moving altogether. This hill can be your weight loss goal. Expecting a lot of yourself may make it steeper. What worked when you started this journey may need to change.

### *Change gears to reduce the struggle.*

- Adjust your goals and expectations.
- Add cues to your environment that remind you to do the healthy behavior or make it easier to do it.
- Remove cues from your environment that are causing you to slip into old habits. Make it harder to do the unhealthy habit.

*Try This:* Close your eyes and visualize changing gears. Now imagine the car starting to move a little easier. You may have more turns ahead as you wind up the mountain, but you are moving forward.

## 2. Find the Missing Pieces

Look at the puzzle pieces that you have put together to get to this point. Look at your eating and exercise habits, social support, environmental cues, expectations, thoughts, and coping strategies.

### **What pieces are missing? List areas that may need attention.**

Example: I am buying healthy snacks, but unhealthy options are still available in my pantry.

Perhaps you skipped over a section because it didn't seem to apply to you or you felt you knew the information already. Go back. Read this section and do the activities. Just knowing things is only a small part of your success. Do the activities in each section.

## 3. Take Bigger Steps

Small steps help to build confidence and get you moving in the right direction. Many small steps can eventually get you to your goal. However, it may be time to take bigger steps, especially if the steps you have taken so far are now easy or boring. Success can be motivating when you are proud of the work it took to get there.

- Try a new healthy food or way of cooking.
- Exercise in a new way. Choose a new activity or add more metabolism-boosting resistance training.
- Tell others about what you are doing. Seek support from those who will build you up and hold you accountable.
- Address emotions that are affecting your health goals.

*Take a bigger leap.* Trust that you have built a foundation that will support this jump!

### **List a small step you have taken that now seems easy.**

**How can you take this one step forward?**

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### 4. Set Process Goals

Include the process of getting to your outcome as a goal. Deciding to make a change, committing to action, and enjoying foods are all worthy goals!

*Outcome Goal:* I will exercise every day!

*Process Goal:* I will commit to being more active each day and finding activities that I truly enjoy.

**Practice:** Write a goal statement that celebrates the process.

#### *Detach from Negative Motivation*

A negative experience may have gotten you started—bad news from your doctor, a break-up, a job loss, or a feeling of hitting “rock bottom.” Holding onto these negative feelings may keep you tied to your old self and your old way of thinking and doing things.

Instead of exercising because you “should” do it or doing it to make someone else happy, do it for your own reasons. Connect the things you are trying to do to your broader goals in life. You may find purpose-driven motivation lasts longer.

### 5. Celebrate Your “Wins”

What is a “win” for you today? At the end of each day, give yourself credit for something you’ve accomplished. Some days, this may be meeting your basic needs or getting to work on time. It may mean taking care of someone, like an aging parent or child. Also, give yourself credit for repeating a new habit. Life can be challenging. Give yourself credit.

**Find at least one part of your day to celebrate as a success.**

**List one of your “wins” for today.**

### 6. Reward Yourself

Any behavior that is followed by a reward is more likely to be done again. Behaviors that will help you manage your weight need to be repeated in order for them to become habits. Give yourself non-food rewards for meeting your goals. When was the last time you gave yourself a reward?

#### *Simple Ways to Reward Yourself*

1. Give yourself a pat on the back.
2. Hug yourself or wrap yourself tightly in a blanket.
3. Look at yourself in the mirror and say, “Yeah me!” or another affirmation.
4. Set aside time to do one of your favorite activities.
5. Reflect on changes in how you feel, including your mood, energy level, and physical comfort.
6. Buy flowers or a plant.
7. Buy something new to wear that fits you well.
8. Buy a new tool or piece of equipment for one of your favorite activities.
9. Buy something to brighten up your home or office.

**List rewards that are meaningful to you:**

**What do you need to do to earn this reward?**

#### *Rewards and Children*

Avoid rewarding children with eating in response to “good” or “bad” behavior (e.g., if you’re bad, you’re going to bed without dinner). This equates being able to eat freely with “good” behavior and limiting food consumption with “bad.” This can make it hard for children to develop a healthy relationship with eating.

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### 7. Do Something Right Now

What can you do to benefit your health right now? Set a self-care goal for something you can do in the next ten minutes. There is no time to procrastinate. Here are some ideas:

- Get up and move. Stretch, go for a short walk, do bodyweight squats, or do jumping jacks.
- Get a drink of water.
- Eat a healthy snack, if you are hungry.
- Write a meal plan for the week or a shopping list.
- Search for a local walking trail online. Make a plan to go there soon.
- Call a friend or write a card.
- Laugh.

**List your own ideas for “Do it Now” activities.**

**Pick one and do it right now. Then, reflect: How do you feel?**

Ten minutes may seem like a small part of your bigger goal that covers several days, weeks, and months. Success is built on what you do in shorter amounts of time—or right now. Don’t take the present for granted.

### 8. Build or Modify Support

It may have been enough to have one buddy to get you started. Connecting to a bigger community of healthy, like-minded people may help you keep going. You may need to go outside your current social network of family and friends to find these people.

- Have friends who like to do different things. Perhaps one friend likes to meet you for a morning walk and another friend likes to take a yoga class with you on the weekend.
- Start a club within your work place, religious group, or circle of friends. Make sure every gathering includes physical activity. If food is involved, make it the norm to eat at places that serve healthy options.
- Join a YMCA or community fitness center to meet other individuals who are also making healthy changes.
- Join an online community for weight management. Get advice from others on keeping exercise and healthy eating fresh and interesting.
- Follow inspirational fitness leaders and hashtags for daily tips and encouragement on social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.
- Communicate how your support needs have changed. The supportive things others said or did in the past may not be what you need now. Let them know.

Talk positively about your changes to others. Positive energy draws others toward you and makes you feel better about what you are doing.

#### **How do you need to build or change your social support?**

Example: Work demands have increased and you have less time to prepare meals. To adjust, split meal planning duties with a co-worker who shares your goals. You'll bring lunches for Monday and Tuesday, and they'll bring lunches Wednesday and Thursday.

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### 9. Avoid Processed Foods

There may be parts of the foods you eat that make it harder for your body to run smoothly. Just because you can chew and swallow something does not make it real food! Lifelong weight management is challenging if you eat too many processed foods.

Highly processed foods are designed to be tasty and addictive. Often, the pleasurable feeling ends when the foods and beverages are swallowed. This can lead to overeating to keep the flavor in your mouth.

Highly processed foods with lots of artificial ingredients can be harder to digest, slowing down your digestive system. This may cause headaches, sluggishness, stomach aches, constipation, diarrhea and other uncomfortable symptoms.

*Think of processed foods as slow moving “sludge” in your system.*

*Choose foods that:*

- Are not processed (as close to their natural source as possible).
- Do not contain added sugars or only contain minimal natural sugars.
- Do not contain artificial sweeteners, colors, or dyes.
- Do not contain artificial starches, emulsifiers, stabilizers, or other synthetic ingredients.
- Do not contain nitrates (often found in processed meats and “smoked” meat products).
- Contain flavors that come from the actual source. Avoid foods where the primary flavor is not actually in the food (e.g., fake strawberry bits in a cereal or bacon bits containing only a small amount of meat).

If you are used to eating these foods often, feeling tired and run down may seem “normal” to you. Choosing more natural, whole foods can open your eyes to a new way of energetic living!

### 10. Going “Free-From”

Some foods in your diet may be “healthy” on paper, but they are not working well with your body. For example, whole grain bread contains many important nutrients. However, your digestive system may react poorly to gluten, a protein found in wheat.

There are serious reasons to limit a food or part of a food from your diet.

*Tips for trying a “gluten free” or other “free-from” way of eating:*

- This is not an easy solution to weight loss. Going “gluten free” or “dairy free” will probably not make it easier for you to lose weight. If your body did not have a problem with these foods before, you may not notice a difference. You also still need to make healthy choices with the foods and portions you DO eat.
- Avoid “free-from” junk food. Read food labels and look at the ingredient list, just like you would do for any food. Processed gluten-free foods often add a lot of artificial ingredients and sugars.
- Whenever something has been removed from your diet, ask yourself these two important questions:
  1. *What nutrients did that food or food group provide?* Example: Cutting out dairy eliminates a major source of calcium. Cutting out meat takes away a source of protein, vitamin B12, zinc, iron, and calcium. You’ll need to get these nutrients from other sources.
  2. *What other foods can I eat that provide these nutrients?* Look for other sources of the nutrients you need. Find other choices within the food groups on MyPlate. Talk to a health coach or dietitian to help you modify your diet. Make sure your diet is meeting your body’s nutritional needs.

If you need to follow a “free-from” diet for medical reasons, be sure to follow your doctor or dietitian’s instructions. If you are following a “free-from” diet as a way to experiment with what works best for you, do this after you have made the changes covered in this guide. Following a restrictive diet can be hard to maintain over time if you don’t have to do it.

# Special Diets

## Vegetarian

Vegetarian diets are plant-based eating patterns. There are variations of the vegetarian diet:

- ***Vegan:*** includes only foods from plants (e.g., vegetables, fruits, legumes, grains, seeds, and nuts). No foods from animal sources are included.
- ***Lacto-vegetarian:*** includes plant foods plus cheese and other dairy products.
- ***Lacto-ovo-vegetarian:*** includes plant foods, cheese, other dairy products, and eggs.

Vegetarian diets are usually low in saturated fat because animal proteins, a source of saturated fat, are limited or eliminated. Eating a plant-based diet can lower your risk of obesity, coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and some forms of cancer.

The healthy eating patterns in this guide encourage you to make most of your food choices from plants. If you follow a vegetarian diet, you don't need to make many changes to the guidelines in this guide.

Choose a variety of foods to obtain necessary nutrients. Choose plant-based protein sources. If consuming some animal-based protein sources, choose eggs, seafood, and low-fat dairy.



Vegetarians are at higher risk for some vitamin and mineral deficiencies. You can obtain these nutrients by eating a variety of plant foods.

- ***Iron*** can be found in pumpkin seeds, dried beans, legumes, lentils, spinach, whole grains, and enriched products.
- ***Vitamin B12*** can be found in fortified breakfast cereals, fortified soy beverages, and some brands of nutritional yeast.
- ***Vitamin D*** can be found in some mushrooms and pasture-raised eggs. It can also be obtained by spending time in sunlight for at least 15 minutes each day with your arms exposed.
- ***Zinc*** can be found in whole grains, quinoa, pumpkin seeds, chia seeds, pecans, walnuts, legumes, and shellfish.
- ***Calcium*** can be found in green leafy vegetables (e.g., spinach, kale), nuts, broccoli, legumes, soybean products, and fortified foods.

If you are concerned about meeting nutrient requirements, have a dietitian take a closer look at your diet. You may need to take a supplement if you are struggling to meet nutritional requirements from food alone.

## Paleo Diet

The paleo diet, created by Dr. Loren Cordein, is described as a "caveman" diet that our Paleolithic ancestors would have followed. This is a controversial claim and diet. However, following a paleo diet can point you in the direction of healthy foods. This diet includes grass-fed meats, fish/seafood, fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, nuts, seeds, and healthy oils. These are all nutritious foods that fit into MyPlate.

The diet excludes processed foods, refined sugar, salt, and refined vegetable oils (this guide also suggests you limit them). However, the paleo diet also excludes cereal grains, legumes, dairy, and potatoes. These foods can be healthy choices and can be included in a healthy eating plan.

***Community:*** Following a restrictive diet like this can give you a sense of community with others following the same diet. A paleo-themed cookbook or blog may give you ideas for preparing vegetables in different ways or using less sugar. However, avoid strictly following a diet that limits good sources of nutrients, like grains and legumes.

# Food Labels 2.0

You have learned the clues on a food label that can point you toward a healthy choice or away from an unhealthy one. Here are some other common labels on food packaging and what they mean.

**ORGANIC PRODUCE** is grown without synthetic pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, ionizing radiation, or genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

**ORGANIC MEAT, POULTRY, EGGS, AND DAIRY PRODUCTS** are produced without antibiotics or growth hormones.

## Benefits of Organic Food

- Organic food may be tastier to you.
- Organic growing practices may be more sustainable and produce more nutritious food, though this is not always the case.
- You may avoid potentially harmful chemicals that may be added during conventional growing and processing.

The Environmental Working Group publishes a list each year of the “Dirty Dozen” and “Clean 15.” Many plants, like avocados and corn, are naturally disease resistant and hardy. This means fewer pesticides are used on these plants, even when conventionally grown. These plant foods make up the “Clean 15.” Other plants are less hardy and conventional growing tends to apply more synthetic pesticides. Prioritize buying the “Dirty Dozen” organically. Go to [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org) to learn more about organic farming and see the year’s list.

Clean all produce before use, whether it is grown organically or conventionally.

**MAKE YOUR OWN VEGGIE WASH:** Mix 2 cups cold tap water with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup white wine vinegar and 2 tbsp. lemon juice. Pour into a spray bottle. Squirt on your produce and let rest for 2 minutes. Rinse in tap water.

**NON-GMO PROJECT VERIFIED** foods do not contain GMOs. This means that the plant was not derived through genetic engineering. The most common products containing GMOs are corn, soy, sugar, and products made from these plants.

Few studies have been done testing the long-term effects of consuming GMOs. However, GMO farming practices have led to increased use of synthetic pesticides and herbicides. Labeling laws and regulations surrounding GMOs are in development at the time of this guide’s publishing.

**CAGE-FREE, FREE-RANGE, AND PASTURE-RAISED** labels refer to the living conditions of poultry. These labels indicate standards for animal welfare.

	Cage-Free	Free-Range	Pasture-Raised
	A cage-free bird is raised indoors, but not in a cage. They can move around more than a caged bird.	A free-range bird is permitted outside for at least part of the day. However, this may be in a screened enclosure and there are no rules for how long this has to be for.	Pasture-raised poultry is raised outdoors and given room to search for food.
Antibiotic Use	Allowed	Not allowed	Not allowed
Outdoor Access	No outdoor access	Limited outdoor access	Outdoor access all day, every day
Diet	100% corn-based diet, natural grasses not included	100% corn-based diet, natural grasses included	30-50% of diet comes from searching, natural grasses included

# Supplements

The term “dietary supplement” can be used for anything that you take orally to enhance your usual food intake. Dietary supplements include vitamins, minerals, amino acids, protein powders, and herbal products. Supplements do not have to be approved by the FDA.

## Reasons to Take a Supplement:

- Females who are pregnant or breast-feeding need more iron, folic acid, and calcium.
- Females with excessive menstrual bleeding may need to take an iron supplement.
- Some vegetarians may not get enough calcium, iron, zinc, and vitamin B12.
- Older adults and people with little exposure to sunlight may need a vitamin D supplement.
- People with certain disorders or diseases and people who take some medications may need a supplement. For example, people with high blood pressure who take a water pill may need to take a potassium supplement.

Ask your doctor if you need any vitamin and/or mineral supplement due to a medical condition or any medication(s) you take. Supplements can interact with food and other medications.



## HealthyLife® Weigh Guidelines:

1. Healthy adults and children can get the nutrients they need by choosing a variety of foods rather than taking supplements. This reduces the risk of deficiencies, as well as excesses.
  - a. Do not take supplements that contain more than 10 times the Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) for a nutrient, particularly fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E, and K). The mineral selenium can also be harmful if taken in large amounts.
  - b. The value of vitamins is in food rather than supplements. It's much better to get your vitamins and minerals from food rather than from pills. Unlike supplements, fruits, vegetables, and grains have dietary fiber that is beneficial, promotes regularity, and aids in the prevention of disease.
2. Some supplement ingredients can be seriously harmful. Examples include high potency doses of some vitamins, such as niacin, amino acids (e.g., L-tryptophan) and herbs (e.g., chaparral, comfrey, and germander).
3. Supplements may not be pure. If you have allergies, be sure to follow recommendations from your doctor or allergist before taking a supplement.

**Bottom Line:** You should eat healthy foods to get needed nutrients. Consult your doctor or registered dietitian if you think taking vitamin/mineral supplements could benefit you.

## Resources for Supplement Information:

*Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition*  
[www.cfsan.fda.gov](http://www.cfsan.fda.gov)

*Food and Nutrition Information Center*  
[www.nal.usda.gov/fnic](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic)

*National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH)*  
[www.nccih.nih.gov](http://www.nccih.nih.gov)

*National Institute of Health: Office of Dietary Supplements*  
<https://ods.od.nih.gov>



## Be A Wary Weight Loss Consumer

Be wary of miracle pills and quick fixes, even if offered by a “doctor” or someone claiming to be an expert. At many commercial weight loss centers, the staff may not have medical credentials or any advanced training in nutrition. They are often salespeople calling themselves “counselors,” without any medical training. Be wary of any center that pushes products and supplements over real food.

Avoid injections or pills that advertise being able to block certain nutrients, like fat or carbohydrates. Avoid “fat burners” and anything claiming to target specific parts of your body for fat loss. These are likely a waste of money and can be dangerous.

Having someone create your meal plan for you may help you get started, but be sure to learn how to do it yourself. Learn to make your own healthy choices. Avoid weight loss programs and schemes that encourage dependence on special products.

## Visit Farmers Markets

Farmers Markets are available year-round in many parts of the country. Some markets go beyond produce to offer meats, cheeses, bread, nuts, seeds, high quality chocolates, and homemade sweets. This may be a good time to treat yourself while helping your local economy!

- ***Get to Know Your Growers.*** Learn more about how and when the food was produced, how to test for ripeness, how to store, and how to prepare your favorite produce—or a new find!
- ***Know Your Seasons.*** Buying seasonally is better for the environment. Produce is at peak flavor and abundance when in-season. This usually makes it less expensive as well. Learn what fruits and vegetables are in season for where you live.
- ***Go Early or Go Late.*** This can help you avoid crowds. You may also find deals at the end of the day.
- ***BYOB—Bring Your Own Bag.*** Most producers will provide small plastic bags, but bringing your own sturdy bag helps the environment and cuts down on costs for the farmer. If you plan to pick up dairy or meat, bring a cooler or plan on taking your purchase directly home to maintain freshness.
- ***Small Bills.*** Most, if not all, vendors only accept cash. It is helpful to have small bills to pay for your purchases.
- ***Plan a List but Be Spontaneous!*** Find a recipe or two and write down what you need to get from the market. But don’t pass up a new food because it’s not on your list! Try something new each time you go.
- ***Keep It Simple.*** Start small. Buy fresh produce you plan to use within a week. Keep preparation and any cooking simple to allow the natural flavors to come through.

*Use the tips above to plan your visit to a local market:*

Market in my area:

When I will visit:

What I will bring (bag, cash, etc.):

# Grow a Garden

Growing your own food is a great way to know where your food comes from. Garden-fresh vegetables and fruits can have more flavor and nutrients than what is at the supermarket. You can also skip the drive to a store and get some sunshine and fresh air!

## Tips for Growing a Garden:

1. *Keep It Small.* Keep the size of your garden small and choose a few vegetables to grow. You'll need fewer supplies to get started. It'll also take less time to maintain and you'll have fewer issues to troubleshoot. Pick foods you like. Buy small seed packets at a grocery or gardening store.
2. *Use Containers.* Containers can be moved around as needed. Containers can be flower pots, buckets, wooden boxes, or leftover food containers. Cut off the top of a gallon milk jug and use the bottom for a planter. If you are starting from seeds, start plants indoors and move the containers outside when they have started to sprout. Many plants can also be planted directly in the ground outside.
3. *Allow Drainage.* Make sure water can drain from the containers. Poke holes in the bottom of containers that don't already have holes. If plants are indoors or on a patio, put a dish under the pot to catch the water.
4. *Use Quality Soil.* Fill the pots with dirt. Use organic potting soil to avoid chemical add-ins. Mix in peat moss to help the soil drain. Go to a store that carries garden supplies. Ask for advice. Or, talk to neighbors who have gardens to learn what works well for them.
5. *Season + Sunlight.* Read the label on the back of a seed packet. It will tell you the right time of year to start your seeds. It will also tell you how much sunshine is needed. Some plants may grow best in hot, direct sunlight. Others may prefer shade and cooler temperatures. Most vegetables, on average, need about 6 hours of sunlight per day.



6. *Give Plants Space.* Read the back of your seed packet. Plant your seeds according to package directions. Be sure to leave enough space between seeds. This will give plants enough room to develop strong root systems and produce healthy, tasty crops. If you are planting more than one vegetable in a container, look at tips on the seed packet for companion planting. Companion planting is putting plants next to each other that grow well together. Some vegetables, like tomatoes and kale, don't like sharing pots but tomatoes and spinach are quite happy sharing space.
7. *Water Regularly.* Give your plants the right amount of water. Check by sticking your finger in the dirt about an inch. If it feels wet or damp, the plant is probably getting enough water. If it feels dry, add some water. Don't leave your plants in standing water. If water came out the bottom into another container you're using to catch the water, empty this out. If the leaves are wilting or drooping, water may perk them up!
8. *Harvest When Ready.* Keep up the care of your seeds and plants and before you know it, you'll be eating what you grow!

## Visit these websites for more information:

*U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) People's Garden Project*  
[peoplesgarden.usda.gov/gardening](http://peoplesgarden.usda.gov/gardening)

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*  
[www.cdc.gov/features/gardeningtips](http://www.cdc.gov/features/gardeningtips)

# Look Beyond Your Weight Goal

A healthy lifestyle is not just about the number on the scale. Reflect on what got you motivated to lose weight and got you over hurdles. Strengthen your values by connecting more to the world around you.

**Share your story.** Share your struggles, your ideas, and your motivation. Share through your words and actions. You may have inspired someone already. Post to social media or comment on another post. Start a blog about your journey as you continue to learn and manage new challenges.

**Say thank you** to those who have helped you along the way and who continue to help you. This may be your healthcare professionals, health coach, coworkers, friends, family, or the stranger who makes your coffee every day. Let people know how much they mean to you. It could be the boost that person needs today.

**Address hunger in your community.** Millions of people worldwide struggle with food insecurity. Someone who is food insecure doesn't know where their next meal is coming from. Many are children. It may be you. Food banks, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and other community organizations appreciate volunteers or donations. Volunteer to teach a cooking class or lead a grocery store tour. Share your strengths.

**Care for the environment.** The global food system depends on a healthy planet. It is also one of the biggest contributors of greenhouse gases and global warming. Choose local, sustainably produced food when possible. In general, the negative environmental impact increases with how far the food traveled, how long it was stored, and how many chemicals were sprayed on it. Buy enough, but not too much, to reduce waste. Use reusable containers for eating and transporting meals and snacks.

**How can you look beyond your weight goal this week?**



## Be Persistent

You may be reading this page well before you reach your goal. That's okay. Understand that weight loss takes time. Continue to build on what you do each day. Remember, it isn't a single healthy meal or workout that will get you to your goal. It's also not a single poor choice or skipped workout that will derail you.

- Build trends of healthy choices.
- Know and live your values.
- Treat your thoughts and actions with compassion.
- Don't settle with just what you know now. Keep learning.
- Create a web of support.