

On any non-medically supervised weight-loss program, women should get at least 1,200 calories a day and men at least 1,600 a day, according to health experts at Johns Hopkins University. If you eat too few calories, your metabolism slows down and weight loss becomes even more difficult.

The most successful weight-loss strategies include calorie reduction combined with increased physical activity and behavior-modification therapy designed to improve eating and exercise habits



***In the U.S.  
approximately 127  
million adults are  
overweight,***

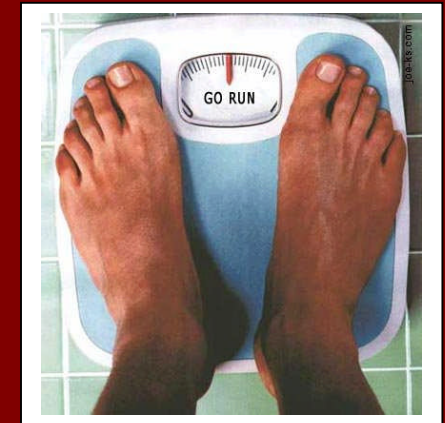
***60 million obese***

***and***

***9 million severely  
obese***

The contents of this brochure  
were taken from: [Obesity.org](http://Obesity.org)  
[HealthAtoZ.com](http://HealthAtoZ.com)

## Reversing Obesity



## Definition

Obesity is a chronic disease affecting millions of Americans. It is defined by excess body fat and is generally measured using a person's BMI (body mass index) calculation. If a person's BMI calculation is 30 or above, generally, they are considered to be obese. Being obese means that you're carrying too much weight for your height. The additional weight puts stress on your body that can affect your health.

Obesity is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes and some forms of cancer. Obese people are also at high risk for depression, job discrimination and other social problems. About \$100 billion in annual health care costs is attributed to obesity. After tobacco use, obesity is the second-leading cause of preventable deaths. About six out of 10 Americans are overweight or obese, and those numbers are rising. The number of children and teens who are overweight or obese is expected to worsen.

To determine if you are obese, use the body mass index (BMI) formula.

$$\text{BMI} = \left( \frac{\text{Weight in Pounds}}{(\text{Height in Inches})^2} \right) \times 703$$

BMI	Weight Status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 - 24.9	Normal
25 - 29.9	Overweight
30 and above	Obese

## Behavior Modification

The Institute of Medicine at the National Academy of Sciences offers these behavior modification tips to keep weight off for good and stay healthy: **Self-monitoring.** Track your eating and exercising habits by recording them.

**Stimulus control.** Eat only at specific times and places, go food shopping when you are not hungry, and lay out your exercise clothes to remind you to do physical activity.

**Contingency management.** Reward yourself for changes such as reducing grams of fat or increasing minutes of exercise.

**Stress management.** Reduce or cope with stress by exercising regularly, meditating or learning relaxation techniques.

**Cognitive-behavioral strategies.** Identify unrealistic expectations, and focus on changing your attitudes and beliefs. Talk about yourself positively.

**Social support.** Use family and friends as a source of support for encouragement and positive reinforcement of your goals.

## Physical Modification

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Cutting back on dietary fat can help reduce calories and is heart-healthy. Try to keep your daily fat intake to less than 30 percent of total calories.
- Reducing dietary fat alone -- without reducing calories -- won't cause weight loss. Some fat-free food products actually contain more calories than their fat-containing counterparts.
- Most regular sodas are at least 150 calories or more. So a six-pack of cola may contain as many as 1,000 calories. The same is true for 12 ounces of some juices. Learning to drink "diet" or sticking to water may reduce calories if you drink large amounts of sodas or juices.
- Don't give up just because you reached a plateau or ate too much last night.
- Keep junk food out of your room.
- Try to get in a total of at least 150 minutes of walking or other physical activity a week.
- After you can walk 30 solid minutes without feeling winded, begin to pick up the pace or find a hilly place to walk.
- Continue to step up the pace of your exercise program and add some other forms of low-impact exercise. Varying your exercise routine prevents boredom and burnout.
- If your schedule seems too jammed for exercise, give up something else. Wake up a half-hour early to exercise. Say no to the next person who asks you to volunteer somewhere.
- Set a series of short-term weight loss goals, such as 1 to 2 pounds a week or 8 pounds a month.