

## HEALING TIPS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

- **FIRST - DO AN HONEST SELF-ASSESSMENT OF YOUR HABITS.** What habits do you have that led to an unhealthy weight? Is it emotional eating when stressed, or over-doing sugar or sugary beverages throughout day? Do you skip a meal, such as breakfast then eat heavy later in the day and at night? Are your portion sizes too big, or are you confused on what foods to even be eating? Have you been extra sedentary? Are you getting adequate sleep?
- **GOAL SETTING IS KEY.** Once you have identified a few key habits that are leading to an unhealthy weight, begin to set 1-2 small reasonable goals you can work on. Make sure your goals are achievable, specific and you set a time period for reaching them. Having too many goals, or unrealistic goals is a recipe for defeat. Read more about S.M.A.R.T. goals for weight loss on general health sites such as WebMD. You can do this! Keep positive!
- **VOLUMETRIC EATING CAN BE YOUR SECRET WEAPON.** Research clearly shows that we get full from the amount of food we eat, not necessarily the number of calories. So eating fewer calories doesn't have to mean eating less food. Volumetric eating helps people lose weight because they replace higher calorie foods, with lower calorie foods that fill you up. That means you will steer clear of processed foods loaded with added fats (especially saturated fats), sugars and sodium. Zip out the rich and fatty main dishes, fried food, snack food, sugary deserts and drinks, refined grains, etc. and replace with vegetables, fruits, 100% whole grains, beans, lean protein foods and whole natural plant fats such as avocado and nuts and seeds. Reducing caloric density is where it's at!
- **READ LABELS** so you know what is in your food and have a mental picture of what your plate should look like: 1/2 plate of non-starchy vegetables (salad greens, broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, zucchini, cauliflower, cabbage, etc), then 1/4 portion of a whole grain or starchy veggie (baked sweet potato, green peas, brown rice, quinoa, butternut squash, whole grain bread, etc.) then 1/4 portion of a lean protein (veggie burger made with black beans, chicken breast, a garbanzo bean or lentil dish, baked fish, etc). Include fresh fruit and a small amount of healthy fat.



**PRACTICAL TIPS** - Eat a large salad before a meal! If not a salad, consider having a broth based soup loaded with non-starchy veggies, or even a full glass of low sodium tomato juice. Add non-starchy veggies to main dishes. Eat them as a snack with a small handful of nuts. Remember starchy veggies (such as potatoes, peas, corn, winter squash, etc.) should be a smaller amount of your meal as described in the next point.

- **PLAN YOUR MEALS!** This is instrumental! Get supper ideas ready for the whole week. Pack big salads for lunches with greens, assorted veggies, nuts/seeds, starchy beans or quinoa on top with a small amount of a healthy dressing.
- **SLOW DOWN AND EAT MINDFULLY.** After you prepare your meal, take it to the table and slow your mindset. No electronics where you are eating! Be thankful for the food you are providing you and your family, and begin to slowly savor each and every bite to get the most satisfaction from it. Wait 10 minutes before going back for second helpings. It takes 20 minutes from the first bite of food for you brain to receive signals that fullness is happening. Make sure to read the HEAL resources on mindfulness.
- **MOVE MORE!** Start with our HEAL resources on physical activity ideas! Reach out to community centers, your local YMCA, and the Parks and Recreation centers in your town.
- **WEIGH YOURSELF WEEKLY** and at the same time of the day, preferably first thing in morning. A realistic weight goal amount is 1% of your body weight per week. A 2-3 lb. of weight loss every week is desirable, but be careful not lose too quickly, or you will be losing muscle mass, which you want to keep! Know what your BMI is by checking a BMI chart. Know what your waist circumference is as well! When weight is carried around the middle, it lends itself to more risk of chronic disease. Even a 5-10% weight loss improves health!
- **REIGN IN WHAT YOU DRINK.** Wean off soda, fruit juices, lemonade and sweet tea! Get used to the taste of water, unsweetened green or black tea. Cut sugary soda. Find a carbonated flavored water that you like, if you need the fizz! Drink it plain or mix with a 1:1 ratio of 100% fruit juice for a fruit spritzer. Boost your water intake! Add cucumber, mint, or berries to your water for spa water!
- **GETTING ENOUGH ZZZ'S?** Most adults need 7-9 hours of sleep nightly. If you get less than that, or have disrupted sleep, you are likely producing more of the hormone 'cortisol', which is tied to metabolic issues and weight gain.
- **USE TECHNOLOGY TO YOUR ADVANTAGE.** A fitness app can not only help you track your behavior (exercise, food, water intake), but can also track how you are sleeping. Apps can also help you set goals, and guide you on what exercise to be doing daily. There are thousands of fitness apps!
- **MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL!** Surround yourself with a group of ENCOURAGING people that can help you with accountability! They help you but you help them as well! And more than anything, hitch your desires to get healthy and lose weight on WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND MEANINGFUL IN LIFE. FIND YOUR 'WHY' – IT WILL KEEP YOU GOING!