

# Rebalance<sup>MD</sup>

## Weight Management

While we're talking about healthy eating, can we talk about healthy weight? This can be a difficult topic for many people, but there's no need for embarrassment or shame. In fact, being hard on yourself about overweight may make your weight worse. So, remember to be kind to yourself while we look at some information.

Overweight and obesity may seem like dirty words, but in fact they are medical terms with specific definitions. We use Body Mass Index (BMI) to define these terms. It's not a perfect measure, but it's one of the best and easiest we have. BMI is a number derived from your weight and height measurements. 19-25 is considered healthy, 26-29 is overweight, and 30 and above is obese.

If you don't already know your BMI, you can calculate it using your height and weight here:

<https://www.calculator.net/bmi-calculator.html?ctype=metric&age=25&csex=m&cheightfeet=5&cheightinch=10&cpound=160&cheightmeter=180&ckg=65&printit=0>

Elevated BMI increases your risk of several health issues including diabetes, heart disease, arthritis and many more. Did you know obesity damages your joints in two ways? Extra weight on your body does put extra stress directly on your joints. In fact, the way our bodies are shaped, 1 extra pound of increased body weight puts 4 extra pounds of force on your knees, and 6 pounds of force on your hips. Extra weight also has a metabolic effect by release of inflammatory chemicals from fatty tissue which contributes to the development of arthritis and ongoing arthritis pain. And extra weight significantly increases your complications from surgery including risk for prolonged surgery, increased blood loss, postoperative infections and blood clots.

The bright side is that losing weight will significantly improve your joint pain! Even losing 5-10% of your body weight decreases knee and hip arthritis pain, improves function, and improves quality of life.

So how to do it? There are many apps and online supports to help you achieve your goals. Tracking your food intake has been repeatedly shown to result in more moderate eating. You can track food and count calories yourself or use one of the many apps available. MyFitnessPal is a widely used app that is free for basic use and subscription for premium use. It is easily used and has a huge database of foods which makes it very easy to track whatever foods you choose. The WW app is based on the Weight Watchers program which has a long history of helping people lose weight and is supported by research studies. There is a monthly fee. Or check out [weightwatchers.com](http://weightwatchers.com). Noom is an app that supports healthy eating by coaching you for healthy choices and acknowledging emotional eating. There is a monthly subscription fee. And there are many other apps available that you may like. Explore and find one that works for you.

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Working with a registered dietician can be a great choice. You can start by accessing dietician services through HealthlinkBC for phone (811) or email advice:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/hlbc/files/dietitian-services.pdf>.

Enlisting the supports of trusted friends and family, or formal supports in a weight loss group (virtual or in person when available) greatly increases your ability to succeed.

Fad diets and crash diets are not a good way to prepare your body for surgery. These types of diets may result in rapid weight loss, but also rapid regain, worsening of metabolic rate, and nutritional deficiencies that may interfere with healthy recovery from surgery.

Aim for a good balance of vegetables and fruit, quality protein, healthy fats and high fibre carbohydrates. Losing about 1 lb per week will allow your body to adapt to the changes in a healthy way.

The DASH diet (Dietary Approach to Stop Hypertension) can lower your blood pressure, and help you lose weight in a healthy way. <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/get-healthy/healthy-eating/dash-diet>

Mindful eating can be a key learning. Have a look at these great books:

“Savor: Mindful Eating, Mindful Life” by Thich Nhat Hanh and Lilian Cheung

“The Weight Loss Prescription” by Dr Ali Zentner

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