THE BUZZ

DECEMBER 2021

What does a **Healthy Weight** mean to you?

What does "healthy weight" mean to you? Is it the weight you think you should be? Is it the same as you weighed 20 years ago?

You may not get down to the number you saw on the scale back then, but you can still get to a weight that enhances your health and your life. Here are some pointers on how to get to a weight that's healthy for you.

Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist Circumference

BMI and waist circumference are two ways to determine if your weight is healthy or not. BMI measures your height compared to your weight. For example, a person who is 5'7" and weighs 170 pounds has a BMI of 26.6, which is in the overweight range. Click **HERE** to calculate your BMI.

Experts note that BMI doesn't measure belly fat, and that's important. Waist circumference takes belly fat into account and helps predict your risk of health problems from being overweight. Women whose waist measures more than 35 inches and men whose waist measures more than 40 inches are at higher risk. Too much belly fat can increase your risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Losing weight can reduce belly fat and lower that risk! To measure your waist correctly, stand and place a tape measure around your middle, just above your hipbones. Measure your waist just after you breathe out.

Getting Started

Losing weight doesn't have to mean losing a lot of weight. Taking off just 5-10 percent - which is 10-20 pounds for a 200-pound person - can improve your health and well-being. If you have diabetes, you may find your blood sugar levels are easier to manage and that you need less diabetes medicine after you lose weight. Many people who lose weight notice that they have more energy and sleep better too.

A healthy weight goal is one thing - dropping the pounds is quite another. If there was an easy way to

Healthy Weight continued on next page...

Healthy Weight continued

lose weight and keep it off, everyone would be doing it. Here a few tips to get you started.

Create an eating plan that you can follow for life. This plan should be based on healthy foods, and you should be able to follow the plan long term. A healthy eating plan can include the following:

- **Fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables.** When shopping for frozen or canned fruits and vegetables, be careful to choose those without added sugar, syrup, cream sauces or other ingredients that will add calories. Canned foods can also be rinsed to decrease any added ingredients like sodium or sugar.
- **A variety of protein foods.** Examples include seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, legumes (beans and peas), soy products, nuts and seeds.
- **Whole grains that contain the entire grain kernel — the bran, germ, and endosperm.** Examples include whole-wheat flour, bulgur (cracked wheat), oatmeal, whole grain cornmeal and brown rice.

Include physical activity throughout your day. Physical activity can make you feel, function and sleep better. Combining movement with your healthy eating plan can improve weight management goals. Basic guidelines suggest activity should include 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week, such as brisk walking, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week, such as jogging, or an equivalent combination of the two.

Write it when you bite it. The Effect of Adherence to Dietary Tracking on Weight Loss study concluded that writing down what you eat was found to be an important component of successful weight loss. But most people don't do it because they think it will be too time-consuming. Food tracking apps make it less time consuming. Many of these apps have food databases that make it simple to log what you eat. Look for a free app on your Apple device in the App Store or Android device in the Play Store. MyFitnessPal and Lose It! are examples of free apps with optional in-app upgrade purchases.

Find your motivation. People who keep the weight off tend to be motivated by more than just being thinner. For some, it might be a health scare; others want more energy to play with their children or grandchildren. Focus on a goal that's meaningful to you, and you'll be more likely to keep the pounds off too.

Make the Most of Your Benefits

Employees and dependents enrolled in the City's medical plan have access to a variety of programs and technology to help reach your weight management goals. More information about these programs is featured in this newsletter.

BeeFit
A PARTNERSHIP OF THE City of St. Louis and BJC HealthCare

Provided by:
Department of Personnel and BJC HealthCare for the BeeFit Wellness Program

For more information:
Contact Employee Wellness at 314-622-4849 or EmployeeWellness@stlouis-mo.gov

BJC HealthCare