



LOSING WEIGHT PERMANENTLY

Many people think it's impossible to lose weight and keep it off. But research shows that at least 20 percent of overweight people are successful in losing the flab for the long term, and you can be one of them!

Lapses in healthy eating and exercise habits can be common after weight loss. However, they will lead to significant weight gain if you view them as a total loss of control, in which case you won't do anything to undo them and instead allow them to accumulate. While weight management is never easy, it's easier to correct small lapses and prevent them from turning into major relapses.

A key for permanent weight loss is to monitor your lifestyle habits regularly. The following suggestions will help you to keep a vigilant eye on your performance so that you know when to take action.

- ▶ **Weigh yourself at the same time each day.** That way you can compare the results, and you'll catch yourself when your weight starts creeping up.
- ▶ **Keep a food diary.** This will keep you accountable. Maintaining a record of everything you put in your mouth will impact how much and what you choose to consume, because you need to write it down. It will also allow you to see the

whole picture. For some people, snacks can add up to a quarter or even a third of their daily calories! Write it down as it happens, and track the fat grams, the calories, or simply the food you eat and drink.

- ▶ **Maintain an exercise log.** This will help you to make exercise a priority. Use a pedometer, then make a note of the minutes you spend walking or jogging each day and the distance you covered.
- ▶ **Do a weekly forecast.** At the beginning of each week, set one or two eating and exercise goals to focus on during the next few days. Anticipate obstacles, and plan solutions ahead of time so that you don't get caught off guard.
- ▶ **Get professional help.** If you're still struggling to keep weight off, keep in regular contact with a doctor or dietitian, whether in person, by telephone, or e-mail. These professionals will add significant support to your weight loss plan.
- ▶ **And keep trying!** Research shows that maintaining weight loss gets easier after two to five years.

Nutritionist Sue Radd is the award-winning author of *The Breakfast Book* and coauthor of *Eat To Live*, internationally acclaimed for showing how savvy eating can combat cancer and heart disease and improve well-being. See www.sueradd.com for more nutrition information.