



# AUBURN PHARMACY

## Weight Loss Simplified

by Daniel Duclos

It should come as no surprise that shedding extra weight leads to better physical and mental health, but with all the methods and products for weight loss in the world today it's hard to decide how. There is no answer simpler than to diet and exercise (you guessed it)! However, if you are one of the two-thirds of Americans who are either obese or overweight, getting started is easier said than done.

You don't need to drastically change your diet to see results. Although, according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, we should consume more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and seafood, and less sodium (salt), saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, and refined grains, most of us are stuck in our routine of what we eat. What we can easily change is the size of our portions. A goal to shoot for is reducing your Calorie intake by 500 Calories per day, or the equivalent of about one McDonalds Big Mac (530 Calories). To put that amount into perspective, if a 185 lbs person wanted to burn off the Calories from eating a Big Mac he would have to walk at a pace of 4.5 mph for over 5 miles according to data from Harvard Health Publications. Generally, one pound of weight will be lost for every 3,500 Calories burned. With that said, it is much easier to prevent the weight gain by reducing your portions than it is to work it off later.

Exercise is the second key to reaching your weight loss goals. Not only will getting at least 2.5 hours of moderate intensity exercise a week help you manage your weight, but it significantly reduces your risk of the two leading causes of death in the US, heart disease and stroke. The benefits don't stop there as there is strong evidence that regular exercise reduces depression, and results in better cognitive function in older adults. You will know you are exercising with moderate intensity when there is a noticeable increase in your breathing rate, but you can still hold a conversation. Many find it difficult to start exercising regularly, but when you keep with it and start noticing the results it will be hard to stop.

If you take away anything from this article, it should be that working your way to a thinner, healthier you does not have to be difficult. Eat less, stay active, and monitor your progress. Monitoring your weight isn't the only way to judge your success, as you could gain muscle while losing fat. Pay attention to how your stamina, waistline, and confidence improves. Socrates put it best when he said, "It is a shame for a man to grow old without seeing the beauty and strength of which his body is capable."



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