

Now that the New Year is upon us many people want to lose weight as part of their New Year's resolution. The information below is provided by the CDC on what is a healthy weight loss and the benefits of weight loss.

What is healthy weight loss?

It's natural for anyone trying to lose weight to want to lose it very quickly. But evidence shows that people who lose weight gradually and steadily (about 1 to 2 pounds per week) are more successful at keeping weight off. Healthy weight loss isn't just about a "diet" or "program". It's about an ongoing lifestyle that includes long-term changes in daily eating and exercise habits.

To lose weight, you must use up more calories than you take in. Since one pound equals 3,500 calories, you need to reduce your caloric intake by 500—1000 calories per day to lose about 1 to 2 pounds per week.

Once you've achieved a healthy weight, by relying on healthful eating and physical activity most days of the week (about 60—90 minutes, moderate intensity), you are more likely to be successful at keeping the weight off over the long term.

Losing weight is not easy, and it takes commitment. But if you're ready to get started the CDC has a step-by-step guide to help get you on the road to weight loss and better health. Please visit: http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/index.html.

Even Modest Weight Loss Can Mean Big Benefits

The good news is that no matter what your weight loss goal is, even a modest weight loss, such as 5 to 10 percent of your total body weight, is likely to produce health benefits, such as improvements in blood pressure, blood cholesterol, and blood sugars.

For example, if you weigh 200 pounds, a 5 percent weight loss equals 10 pounds, bringing your weight down to 190 pounds. While this weight may still be in the "overweight" or "obese" range, this modest weight loss can decrease your risk factors for chronic diseases related to obesity.

So even if the overall goal seems large, see it as a journey rather than just a final destination. You'll learn new eating and physical activity habits that will help you live a healthier lifestyle. These habits may help you maintain your weight loss over time.

Have a Happy New Year and hopefully this information can be a new start to improve your overall health in 2012.

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