

I Know Mostly What I Need to Do...

You already have many **tips and tricks to make it easier for you** to avoid temptation and encourage healthier habits:

- prepping meals and snacks in advance;
- keeping healthy food options front and center in your fridge and cupboards;
- eating on smaller plates;
- and moving more and sitting less.

But sometimes “knowing” and “doing” are not fully in synch.

Try not to fall into the mindset of thinking everyone else can eat without thinking and you have to do all this extra work. Often, people who maintain a healthy weight put more work into it than you think – whether by chance or by conscious effort, they already do many of these same things that may be new to you: prepping food at the beginning of the week; cooking more at home; portion control; and being active.



Hone Your Healthy Habits!

Making healthy choices is not an accident. Although it may take some added thought at first, if you stick with it, those “new” ways of doing things will soon become the norm. As we mentioned earlier you can certainly research what works for others. People who have managed their weight successfully are often creatures of habit with regular routines, so talk to your friends and family whose healthful habits you admire and see if they have any pointers.

What has the research shown about people who’ve lost weight and kept it off?

Answer this true or false mini-quiz to find out their habits:

1. About 80% have joined a gym or other structured exercise program.
☐ True ☐ False
2. They skip meals when they aren’t hungry.
☐ True ☐ False
3. Most of them eat breakfast every day.
☐ True ☐ False
4. They replace 1-2 meals per day with a protein smoothie.
☐ True ☐ False
5. Almost all of them are active and/or exercise for about an hour daily.
☐ True ☐ False
6. They fast regularly to eliminate toxins that have built up.
☐ True ☐ False
7. They watch fewer than 10 hours of TV per week.
☐ True ☐ False

If you answered “True” to numbers 3, 5, and 7, you are correct! Those habits are what most successful weight managers have in common. Bearing that in mind, the most important thing to remember is that it is your health that you need to focus on and learning the steps that will work for you to get there. One day you may be one of those people others look to for inspiration; in fact, you may already be motivating someone to make some changes!



Maintain Motivation

Each day is an opportunity, and as HG Wells said,

“if you fell down yesterday, stand up today!”

At the beginning of the weight management journey, staying motivated isn't such a stretch. Your clothes get a bit looser, people may notice your efforts, and the changes are new and exciting. At certain points, you may find staying gung-ho a bit more challenging, such as when your weight levels off for a while, or if you have been working on your plan for a longer time.

Here are some tips to help you stay the course when your enthusiasm can use a shot in the arm:

- **Watch the way you speak to yourself.** Use could instead of should. Although the two words sound similar, should tends to feel like a chore and a scolding, while could keeps you open to your possibilities. Which sounds better: “I really should go for a walk” or “I really could go for a walk”? Just by substituting one little word, it can change your train of thought and help keep that train on track – with the second option “I really could go for a walk” the unsaid portion is likely to be, “it’s so nice out and I’d probably enjoy it!” Likewise, reframe the words have to with choose to: “I have to eat more vegetables” versus “I choose to eat more vegetables.” The sentence where you maintain it is your choice is much more empowering, isn’t it?
- **Write your reasons.** Keep a running list of your reasons for managing your weight and making healthy life choices.
- **Picture this!** Take a photo of yourself at or near the start of your journey and take a photo of yourself at 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months after you’ve stuck to your plan. Before and after pictures can show how far you’ve come in a way that’s easier to see compared with looking in the mirror every day where changes may be subtler.
- **Reap some rewards.** Set some short- and long-term goals, then treat yourself to some non-food rewards to help you stay on course. Some ideas could include:
 - Getting a massage or facial.
 - Buying a great book you’ve wanted to read.
 - Snagging a pair of sneakers that you’ve had your eye on.
 - Movie or concert tickets.
 - Booking a session with a personal trainer.
- **Recruit reinforcements.** You may want to enlist the help of a like-minded friend or family member to help you to stay on track and accountable. It sometimes helps to have an “angel on your shoulder” who can say, “instead of meeting for dessert why don’t we go for a walk?”



What Can I Do?

Empower yourself to adopt healthier habits as a way of life. Pretty soon it will be hard to remember that your former lifelong habits were the way that things used to be!

Where?

- Put reminders like your list of reasons why you're doing this or your before and after pictures in multiple places. That way, if you aren't at home and you feel your resolve begin to waver, you can just reach into your pocket or purse to get a quick recap of why sticking to the plan is the work that's worth it.

When?

- Be firm in sticking to your plan and remember that you are in charge! It will help if you prepare yourself for this fully expected challenge and know that a plateau does not mean you have failed. Focus on making healthy choices, bump up your activity another notch, and don't let anything throw you off track. Set some new short-term goals to get you headed in the right direction.
- Always have strategies like those we outlined in this and other newsletters at the ready to nip any moments of temptation in the bud before they lead you astray.

How?

- Realize that your body may need a little break and obtains that by a levelling-off period. What you may think of as a setback is actually quite an accomplishment! Your body does this because it's adjusted itself to adapt to your lower body weight. Your smaller size means the body doesn't need to work as hard to support it and reduces your metabolism to even things out. So take this as a sign of encouragement that you are on the right track!



Mind Shift



From here

"I am tired of being a hostage to this diet and regime. I just want to go about my day without putting thought into it like everyone else."

To here

"This is not a diet; rather, it's a healthy way of life."

How to get there

Apply small changes in a stepwise manner. If you try to change everything all at once, it will be overwhelming. Juggling too many new behaviours will make it difficult to keep so many balls in the air. Do one or two changes at a time and stick with them for a couple of weeks, then introduce another habit you'd like to adopt.



Food for Thought

Understand that healthy habits take time to develop... but once you have embraced them it will be easier to keep them for a lifetime. To play devil's advocate though, let's see what might happen if you just continued with your old patterns.



Pro

I don't need to write everything down and plan for everything. That will just stress me... and I tend to eat more when I'm stressed.



Con

If I just wing it, then I won't have a plan in place to counter less healthy behaviours and I'll be off track in no time.

One habit you would do well to leave behind is that old mindset of success and failure. Managing your weight is about adapting and readjusting as needed in response to how your body reacts to dietary changes, activity, stress, and even sleep and hydration. If you get off track for a day, just put that behind you and start fresh. Every day is a new opportunity.



With your healthier new habits, you'll be able to ride the waves and enjoy the journey.

And remember, if at any time you have questions about your **CONTRAVE** therapy and would like to speak to a nurse counsellor, call **1-855-CNTRAVE (1-855-268-7283)** from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday to Friday EST.

CONTRAVE is a prescription medicine that is used for weight management:

- in patients who have obesity or;
- in patients with overweight and at least one medical condition associated with their weight (such as high blood pressure that is controlled with medicine, Type 2 diabetes, or a high amount of lipids (cholesterol or other types of fat) in the blood)

CONTRAVE should be used along with a reduced-calorie diet and increased physical activity.

CONTRAVE should be taken exactly as your Healthcare Professional tells you to.

Please refer to the **Patient Medication Information** insert in your product package for important safety information.

Contrave **Support
program**