Chapter 5 DASH Your Way to Weight Loss

The DASH diet makes it easy to lose weight. A healthy diet, one that is based on fruits, vegetables, and other key DASH foods, will help you have satisfying meals, without overeating. And new research shows that including calcium-rich dairy foods in your diet can have special benefits for weight loss. So, DASH provides the perfect foundation for a weight loss plan.

Losing weight is recommended as one of the key lifestyle changes to help manage high blood pressure. Even greater advantages can be expected when weight loss is combined with the DASH diet plan. In this chapter, you will learn how to identify your healthy weight, calculate the calories you need to reach that goal, and learn specific weight loss strategies.

Research has shown that foods in the DASH diet can support weight loss. With a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, you can fill up without overdoing calories. Lean meat, fish and poultry provide satiating protein with fewer calories than higher fat meats. For example, 8 ounces of boiled shrimp has the same calories as 3 ounces of corned beef, while providing more satisfaction. Low-fat dairy foods have much fewer calories than the higher fat versions they replace. And research suggests that diets rich in dairy calcium promote weight loss,

especially with reducing extra fat around your waist.

Being overweight is a primary risk factor for developing high blood pressure. For children and teens, extra weight is even riskier. Parents with high blood pressure, who adopt the DASH diet, help their kids significantly by providing the right foods and avoiding calorie-laden meals. Children learn eating patterns by observing their parents. As a parent, you can model healthy behavior, and help your kids avoid a lifetime regimen of blood pressure medication. Knowing that your actions are important for the whole family can provide strong motivation to follow through on your own diet and lifestyle changes.

What is a healthy weight?

There are many ways to evaluate whether your weight is healthy for you. The Metropolitan Life Weight Tables were used for many years to identify healthy weights. Recently BMI (body mass index, which show the relation of weight to height) has become an important tool for assessing healthy weight. Body fat percentage is another indicator of fitness (or fatness). And some health professionals believe that a healthy weight is the weight at which you do not have health issues, or at least none related to your weight.

In 1998, the National Institutes of Health issued new guidelines for healthy weight, based on BMI. They were developed to provide information on the ratio of weight to height that was associated with lower risk of disease. BMI is based on a formula of weight in kilograms divided by height in meters, squared. The following table lets you find your BMI (without a calculator) and shows you where your weight falls in terms of health risks. It is important to realize that not everyone who is in the elevated risk category is truly at higher risk for disease. The BMI tables reflect generalized risk for large numbers of people, but not for each individual. For example, a sedentary person who is at a healthy weight might have higher risk for disease than someone who is overweight, but physically fit. And a football player would look overweight by the BMI tables, although he is probably not overfat.

A BMI of less than 19 is considered to be underweight, 19 - 25 is a healthy weight, 26 - 30 is overweight, 31 - 39 is obese, and BMI greater than 40 is considered to be very obese.

Fitness (or fatness) can be measured by looking at body fat percentage. Body fat percentage can be evaluated in several ways. In a research setting (and some physician offices), body fat can be measured by DEXA (dual emission X-ray analysis) which can be done on the same equipment that is used for performing bone mineral density scans. This is considered to be the best procedure. Inexpensive bio-electrical impedance analysis (BIA) devices

BMI (BC Find you	(Body Mass Index) your height in inche	Jass ight i	n ind	ndex) inches		f, fo	NO Mo	acro	ss to	noA	at left, follow across to your weight; the top of the column indicates your BM	aht; t	the to	ot ot	the	nlos	m i	ndiç	ates	nox	BM		
BMI	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	53	30	3	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
Height (inches)																							
28	86	9	96	100	105	110	115	120	124	129	134	139	144	148	153	158	163	167	172	177	182	187	191
26	89	8	66	104	109	114	119	124	129	134	139	44	. 641	153	158	163	168	173	178	183	188	193	198
09	92	6	102	108	113	118	123	128	133	138	143	148	154	159	164	169	174	179	184	189	195	200	205
61	92	101	106	1	116	122	127	132	138	143	148	153	159	164	169	175	180	185	191	196	201	206	212
62	98	104	109	115	120	126	131	137	142	148	153	159	. 491	169	175	180	186	191	197	202	208	213	219
63	102	107	113	119	124	130	135	4	147	152	158	164	. 691	175	181	186	192	198	203	209	215	220	226
49	105	11	117	122	128	134	140	146	151	157	163	169	175	181	186	192	198	204	210	216	221	227	233
92	108	114	120	126	132	138	1 4 4	150	156	162	168	174	180	186	192	198	204	210	216	222	228	234	240
99	112	118	124	130	136	142	149	155	161	167	173	180	. 981	192	198	204	211	217	223	229	235	242	248
29	115	121	128	134	140	147	153	160	166	172	179	185	192	198	204	211	217	223	230	236	243	249	255
89	118	125	132	138	145	151	158	164	171	178	184	191	197	204	210	217	224	230	237	243	250	256	263
69	122	129	135	142	149	156	163	169	176	183	190	196	203	210	217	223	230	237	244	251	257	264	271
2	125	132	139	146	153	160	167	174	181	188	195	202	209	216	223	230	237	244	251	258	265	272	279
7	129	136	143	151	158	165	172	179	186	194	201	208	215	222	229	237	244	251	258	265	272	280	287
72	133	140	147	155	162	170	177	184	192	199	206	214	221	229	236	243	251	258	265	273	280	288	295
73	136	4	152	159	167	174	182	189	197	205	212	220	227	235	243	250	258	265	273	280	288	296	303
74	140	148	156	164	171	179	187	195	203	210	218	226	234	241	249	257	265	273	280	288	296	304	312
75	144	152	160	168	176	184	192	200	208	216	224	232	240 ;	248	256	264	272	280	288	296	304	312	320
9/	148	156	164	173	181	189	197	202	214	222	230	238	246	255	263	271	279	288	296	304	312	320	329
22	152	160	169	177	186	194	202	211	219	228	236	245	253	261	270	278	287	295	304	312	320	329	337
78	156	164	173	182	190	199	208	216	225	234	242	251	260	268	277	286	294	303	312	320	329	337	346
26	160	169	178	186	195	204	213	222	231	240	249	257	266	275	284	293	302	311	320	328	337	346	355
80	164	173	182	191	200	209	218	228	237	246	255	264	273	282	291	300	309	319	328	337	346	355	364
8	168	177	187	196	205	215	224	233	243	252	261	271	280	289	299	308	317	327	336	345	355	364	373
82	172	182	191	201	210	220	230	239	249	258	268	277	287	296	306	316	325	335	344	354	363	373	383

for home use can provide useful information and are available in tools such as a hand-held device that is gripped like a steering wheel, or some home scales. Underwater weighing is another way to measure body fat and is performed at some health clubs. Healthy body fat percentages are shown in the table below. The average American man has a 24.5% body fat percentage, and the average woman has 33% body fat.

Suggested percent bod	y fat standard	s for adults.
	Men	Women
Lean	<8	<15
Optimal health	8-15	15-22
Slightly overweight	16-20	23-26
Fat	21-24	27-32
Obese or overfat	25+	32+

Waist size is another way healthy weight indicator. Waist circumference is used to evaluate whether you might be at increased risk for certain diseases. You may be familiar with the concept of apple versus pear physiques. People who carry most of their extra fat in their waist (apple-shaped) are at higher risk for heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain types of cancer, compared to people who carry extra weight in their hips (pear-shaped). If

waist circumference is larger than 35 inches for women or 40 inches for men, it is probably a good idea to lose weight and increase physical activity.

Another concept of a healthy weight holds that it is possible to be healthy and yet be heavier than normal. If you have high blood pressure and you are overweight, then this would not apply to you. You will most likely benefit from some weight reduction. As with everything, we need to use our judgement when deciding on a healthy weight for any specific person.

Deciding on your healthy weight goal

You can decide what your target weight will be. It will probably be somewhere in the healthy BMI zone. If you have a long way to go, you might set a short term goal to lose about 10% of your total weight. Many research studies have shown that people can significantly improve their health if they lose 7 to 10% of their weight.

Your starting weight	
Starting date	
Your target weight	
Date expected to reach	

Now that you have selected a target weight, you need to decide how much you can safely lose each week. Typically, nutrition professionals think that women can lose about 1- 2 pounds per week and men can lose 2 - 4 pounds per week (perhaps more at the beginning, for people who have more to lose). Your goal is to lose fat and maintain muscle. If you lose weight too fast, you may lose muscle and slow down your metabolism. The DASH diet plan which has plenty of low fat protein foods, calcium-rich dairy, high fiber fruits, vegetables, and whole grains will support healthy weight loss.

What are your calorie needs?

To lose 1 pound per week, you will need to reduce your calorie intake by 500 calories per day. In order to evaluate your diet plan, you need to estimate your daily calorie needs. We have many sophisticated formulas that will estimate your calorie needs. There are even machines that can directly evaluate your metabolic rate. For most people, it is practical to estimate needs based on the following guidelines.

Estimating c	alorie needs for weight	maintenance.
Activity level	Calories per pound body weight	Calories per kilogram body weight
Sedentary	13.5	30
Moderate	16	35
Heavy	18	40