

# LIFESTYLE MATTERS

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## Take New Measures for Health



It's time to throw away the measuring tape and stop letting your scale weigh you down! Taking Healthy Measures is the way to go.

### What is Healthy Measures?

Healthy Measures is about taking "measures" or steps for better health. It's also about using different "measures" of success rather than focusing on the number on the scale. Increasing your activity level, eating well and building your self-esteem can be your "measures" of success.

### Why Not Focus on Weight?

Focusing on weight and trying to achieve the "perfect" size, may lead to unhealthy behaviours such as excessive exercising, weight preoccupation, poor self-esteem and possibly disordered eating. Although these behaviours may eventually lead to a "healthy" weight, you may have done your body more harm than good.

### Isn't Overweight and Obesity a Health Problem?

Overweight and obesity can increase your risk for diseases and conditions such as type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure. However, weight is only one indicator of health. Other factors such as genetics, age, activity levels, and eating habits can affect health as well. Moving toward a healthier lifestyle which includes eating well and being physically active will, for most people, result in a weight that is healthy for them.

### Are You Ready for Healthy Measures?

The weight-centred approach focuses on dieting, putting your body through excessive exercise programs and getting down on yourself for not meeting unrealistic goals for weight and size. It's time to take Healthy Measures and enjoy life by recognizing that healthy bodies come in different weights, shapes and sizes. Look on the backside of this page to read more about shifting from a weight-centred approach to a Healthy Measures approach.

**Remember:**

Be Active • Eat Well • Be Yourself

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**HealthyMeasures**

Be active • Eat well • Be yourself

# Weight-Centred Approach ➔ Healthy Measures Approach

## Dieting

Following a restrictive, boring eating plan

Counting calories, carbohydrate or fat grams

Skipping meals

Ignoring signals of hunger and fullness

Thinking of foods as “good” or “bad”

Focusing on the number on a scale as the only measure of success

## Eat Well

Taking pleasure in eating

Eating a variety of foods from Canada’s Food Guide to Healthy Eating to meet energy and nutrient needs

Eating three meals and snacks daily and taking the time to eat slowly

Listening to physical cues of hunger and fullness

Knowing how to balance “everyday” and “sometimes” foods. All foods can be a part of healthy eating

Achieving and maintaining healthy eating habits is one of the measures of success

## Exercise

Believing “no pain, no gain” during exercise

Focusing on burning calories or burning fat

Following rigorous exercise programs

Thinking that you need to sweat during a workout

Feeling like you “should” or “have to” be active which can lead to exercise resistance

## Be Active

Participating for the joy of feeling your body move

Valuing the health benefits of being active instead of focusing on weight loss or change of body shape

Practicing activities that are moderate and fun as well as those that are more vigorous

Enjoying physical activities as part of your daily lifestyle

Being active your way every day (e.g. walking the dog, gardening, taking the stairs)

## Dissatisfaction with Self

Setting unrealistic goals for body shape and size – striving to be a perfect “10”

Obsessing or being preoccupied with weight

Being fat phobic and discriminating against overweight and obese people

Accepting the fashion, diet and tobacco industries’ definition of the “ideal body”

Trusting the “diet” and ignoring your own sense of judgment

Thinking that self-esteem and body acceptance will always improve with weight loss

## Be Yourself

Accepting and recognizing that healthy bodies come in a range of weights, shapes and sizes

Appreciating your strengths and abilities

Relaxing and enjoying the unique characteristics you and others have to offer

Being critical of messages that focus on unrealistic images of thinness or muscularity as symbols of success and happiness

Trusting yourself and body by responding to internal cues without judgement or criticism

Participating in healthy eating and physical activity will increase self-esteem