

Jane's Guide to Achieving a Healthy Weight



Why is my weight important?

It is important to reach and maintain a healthy weight to prevent risk of diseases in adulthood. Possible diseases include hypertension, diabetes, stroke and heart disease.¹

What should I be eating and drinking?

- Swap orange juice, coke, and sugar sweetened tea for water.
- Eat whole wheat or whole grain bread, pasta and rice.
- Eat fruit for snacks.
- Limit fast food restaurants to an occasional treat. Read the menu and choose a low-calorie option if available.
- Make healthy choices at school and try to eat more fruit and vegetables.

(Images from pixabay)

- Choose fruit and vegetables that are colorful. Eat the rainbow.
- Choose low-fat or no fat milk, cheese or yoghurts.

How much should I eat?

You should be aiming for 1,600 calories per day. You can split the calories between breakfast, lunch, dinner and two small snacks.

What else can I do to be healthier?

- Spend less time online. Limit use of cell phone, tablets and computers.²
- Make sure you are getting enough sleep.
- How much you eat is as important as what you eat. Choose and eat smaller portions.³
- Walk each day with the family⁴ (or the dog!). Find fun activities that you enjoy and move your body more.

Find more tips at: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/teens>



Annotated bibliography:

1. Hoelscher DM, Kirk S, Ritchie L, Cunningham-Sabo L. Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: Interventions for the Prevention and Treatment of Pediatric Overweight and Obesity. *J Acad Nutr Diet.* 2013;113:1375-1394.

This article describes the interventions necessary to prevent or treat overweight and obese children. It recommends a systems-level approach to treatment and calls for the skills of a registered dietitian as well as environmental support across all sectors of society. The article addresses the need for intervention to prevent disease carrying into adulthood and describes primary, secondary, and tertiary treatment plans. The article provides diet and non-diet recommendations to address the issue.

2. Robinson TN, Banda JA, Hale L, et al. Screen Media and Obesity in Children and Adolescents. *Pediatr.* 2017;140:S97-S101.

This article suggests a direct link between the amount of time a child or adolescent spends online and the prevalence of that child or adolescent being overweight or obese. Probable causes identified include mindless eating in front of a screen, being subjected to marketing and advertisements designed to encourage you to consume foods and beverages, lack of sleep and reduced physical activity.

3. Wansink B, van Ittersum K. Portion size me: plate-size induced consumption norms and win-win solutions for reducing food intake and waste. *J Exp Psychol Appl.* 2013;19:320-332.

This article describes a study of plate sizes and portion control. Research indicates that the bigger the plate or bowl, the more food will be consumed. Since we tend to overeat from larger plates and bowls it makes sense to choose smaller plates and bowls when trying to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight. The paper also discusses the issue of food waste at all-you-can-eat buffets and suggests that reducing the size of the plates would

leave less waste. The authors suggest leaving smaller plates near the healthier food line (e.g. meat and cheese pizza) and larger plates near the salad or fruit lines.

4. Vittrup B, McClure D. Barriers to childhood obesity prevention: Parental knowledge and attitudes. *Pediatr Nurs.* 2018;44(2):81-87,94.

This article describes parents as the gatekeepers to the environmental exposure their children encounter. Parents are also role models for their children, and as such should lead by example. Parents need to be educated to help their obese child to make better choices. They can do this by offering healthy food at home and participating in regular exercise with their children. Parents have busy lives and sometimes limited budgets so it is important for a nutrition specialist to help them develop ways to provide simple healthy meals and promote healthy habits to their child. The article suggests that parents should also be educated in the societal cost of obesity in the US.