

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Gaining weight is a concern for many people after quitting smoking. Often weight gain is cited as a reason people start smoking again. The best way to prevent or minimize weight gain is to be informed about it and make some simple changes in your diet and exercise.

The average weight gain is **7 – 9 lbs**. It is important to remember, however, that this is the average. Some people may gain more while others gain nothing or very little.



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Weight gain occurs for three reasons:

1. People ***eat more*** as a way of coping/distracting themselves from smoking.



People ***enjoy food*** more due to improved taste and smell.



2. ***Metabolism changes*** as a result of quitting nicotine because nicotine is a stimulant. This change is temporary.



## HOW DO I FIGHT WEIGHT GAIN?

### WAYS TO COMBAT WEIGHT GAIN

Talk to your doctor before changing their diet or increasing their activity level (especially if you have a history of heart disease, chest pain, cardiac arrhythmias, history of stroke, orthopedic disorders, renal disease, or kidney disease). Two basic changes people can make are to

1. **eat a healthy diet**
2. **get regular exercise**

## EAT A HEALTHY DIET



- ◆ Become a label reader and avoid high fat, high calorie foods (no more than 30% of your caloric intake should come from fat)
- ◆ Eat more fruits and vegetables (five servings a day are recommended)
- ◆ Do not clean your plate
- ◆ Slow down your eating
- ◆ Eat smaller portions
- ◆ Snack on low calorie, low fat foods (veggie sticks, air popped popcorn)
- ◆ Keep track of what you eat
- ◆ Make a grocery list before going to the store, only buy items on the list -- no impulse buying!

## GET REGULAR EXERCISE

### Benefits of Regular Exercise

- ◆ It burns calories.
- ◆ It helps control hunger → exercise actually decreases one's appetite.
- ◆ It increases metabolic rate → You'll burn more calories.
- ◆ It reduces stress.
- ◆ It improves appearance -- as you lose weight and tone up, you'll look better.
- ◆ It improves self-confidence.
- ◆ It reduces the risk of heart disease.



### Exercise Strategies

Even a modest increase in exercise can help prevent weight gain.

- ◆ Taking the stairs at work, in the mall, or anywhere you would normally use the elevator.
- ◆ Parking at the far end of the parking lot (as long as it is safe).
- ◆ Getting in the habit of taking a stroll after lunch or dinner -- do this whenever you get the urge to smoke.
- ◆ Make a list of activities you can do for 30 minutes to 1 hour a week (e.g., walking, swimming, jogging, aerobics, cycling).
- ◆ Gradually increase the time you exercise each day. Do not overdo it at the beginning!
- ◆ Make exercise fun. Get a group together and make it a social occasion.
- ◆ Use music to motivate yourself, if that helps.
- ◆ Monitor your weekly exercise.
- ◆ Use a tape measure once a month to see if you have lost inches and not focus too much on the number on the scale.