

Getting Motivated

Making the Decision to Lose Weight

Becoming motivated to lose weight can be difficult, especially if you have tried to lose weight before and have struggled or regained the weight. Losing weight involves changing your eating habits and your level of physical activity; two things that can be very hard to do! It may help you to think about how ready you are to make these changes.

Maybe you think that a change would help but you're not ready or interested. You feel the change would be too hard to make.

Or, perhaps you are at a stage where you're thinking about making a change, but not right away. At this stage, the costs of making the change still outweigh the benefits.

On the other hand, perhaps you're ready to make the change within the month. Have you made a realistic plan and gathered what you need to carry out your plan? Then you're probably ready to take action and start your new routine! After more than six months of your new routine, you will be used to doing it and it will become a habit.

Finding Inspiration

Looking at the different stages described above, think about what fits your thoughts about beginning a weight loss plan. Do you feel that the costs of making a change outweigh the benefits of weight loss? What if you consider that being overweight can cause serious health problems, including diabetes and heart disease? Studies have shown that losing weight by eating right and exercising can help prevent or delay these health problems. Losing weight can also reduce your risk of heart disease or stroke if you already have diabetes.

Your weight affects your lifestyle as well as your health. Ask yourself how being overweight or obese has affected your life. Does being overweight prevent you from doing things that you want to do or could do if you lost weight? Losing weight will help you look and feel better, and give you more energy to do the things you enjoy.

Taking Action

Once you are ready to take action, you are more likely to succeed if you develop a plan and set realistic goals. Your weight loss goals need to be specific and attainable. This means that they specifically outline what you intend to achieve and are well within your reach to accomplish. For example, a goal of "walk more" is a good idea, but it is not specific. A goal of "run ten miles a day" is specific, but not may not be attainable. A goal of "walk 30 minutes a day, five days a week" is not only specific, it is attainable.

Rewards

Rewarding yourself for sticking to your weight loss program is an effective way to keep yourself motivated. Rewards need to be meaningful and realistic. Focus on giving yourself a reward for each step along the way. For example, reward yourself after sticking to the first week on your diet and exercise regimen by buying a new music CD or going to the movies. Bigger rewards, such as buying tickets to a concert or treating yourself to a vacation or a weekend trip, can be saved for reaching long-term goals.

Supported by an unrestricted
educational grant from:

 **Abbott Laboratories**
Abbott Park, IL 60064

03B-600-7000-5



**American Diabetes Association
Obesity Initiative**