

Physical Activity for Weight Management

Getting regular physical activity is a key component in helping you maintain a healthful weight. While Walk Kansas is not a weight loss program, many participants report that they lose weight after the 8-week program.

In general, the most effective way to lose weight is to reduce the number of calories you eat.

Physical activity helps you maintain a healthy weight and is essential for healthy aging. Studies show that physical activity can also help you prevent gaining back any weight you have lost.

Here are several ways that physical activity helps with weight maintenance and healthy aging.

- 1. Maintaining muscle mass. Around age 25 to 30 you begin to lose muscle, and the rate of muscle loss accelerates around age 50. Some muscle loss is part of the aging process, but inactivity accounts for the rest. When lean muscle disappears, your metabolism slows down. Exercise can help maintain your muscles and keep your metabolism higher.**
- 2. Muscle building and repair. Any type of exercise will tire your muscles. Strengthening exercises, in particular, will cause microscopic tears in your muscles that your body has to repair so the muscles can get stronger. This process of repairing and building muscle helps you burn more calories.**
- 3. Helps improve lifestyle choices. Regular exercise helps to reduce stress, improves your ability to think more clearly, helps you get better sleep, and makes you feel good. Practicing healthful lifestyle habits can also cut your risk for developing chronic health conditions such as heart disease and diabetes.**

If you already have chronic health conditions, regular exercise and maintaining a healthy weight can help you manage your illness more effectively.

As you continue to set goals for your health, focus on the changes you want to make in your habits and lifestyle.