

MAYO CLINIC HEALTHY WEIGHT PYRAMID: A guide for healthy eating

Mayo Clinic experts have developed an approach to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight — the Mayo Clinic Healthy Weight Pyramid.

The pyramid is based on the concept of energy density and emphasizes lower calorie foods that help you feel full.

Feeling full is determined in part by the volume and weight of the food you eat. By choosing foods with low energy density (few calories for their bulk), you can consume fewer calories while still eating the same amount of food you're accustomed to.

To use the pyramid:

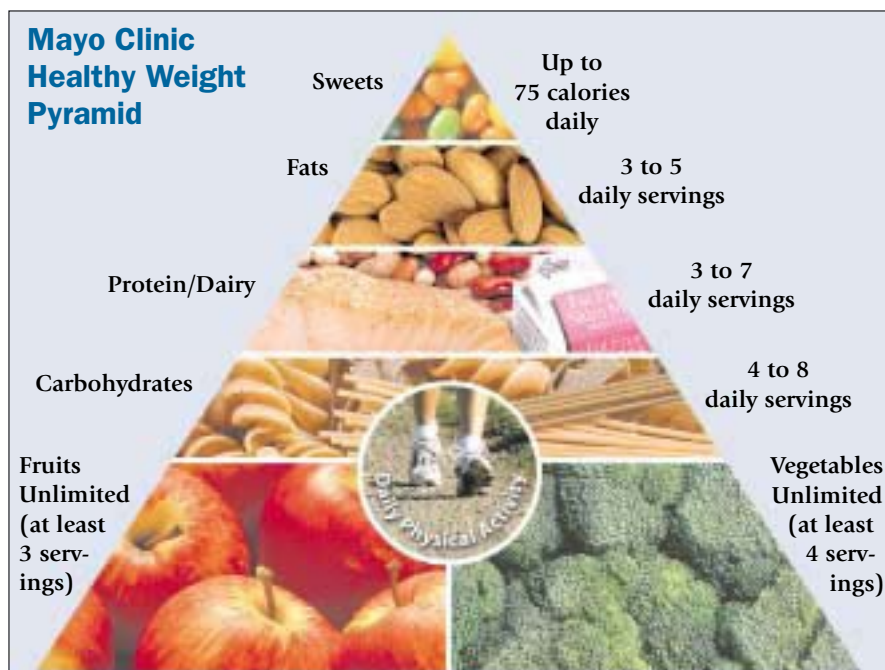
► Determine your calorie goal. To lose weight, the following daily calorie goals often work well:

Weight <i>Pounds</i>	Calorie Goal	
	Women	Men
250 or less	1,200	1,400
251 to 300	1,400	1,600
301 or more	1,600	1,800

Start at these goals. If you feel exceptionally hungry despite eating a lot of fruits and vegetables, or you're losing weight too quickly, move to the next calorie level.

Less than 1,200 calories for women and 1,400 for men is generally not recommended because you may not be getting enough nutrients.

► Determine the number of servings. Now that you have your calorie goal, you're ready to start planning your days. Use the table on this page to determine the number of servings each day. With this plan you count servings, not calories. The exception is sweets, which are limited to



The Mayo Clinic Healthy Weight Pyramid shows you where to focus when selecting foods that help promote healthy weight. And you'll never be hungry with this dining approach.

Daily Serving Recommendations for Various Calorie Levels

Food group	Starting calorie goals				
	1,200	1,400	1,600	1,800	2,000
Vegetables	4 or more	4 or more	5 or more	5 or more	5 or more
Fruits	3 or more	4 or more	5 or more	5 or more	5 or more
Carbohydrates	4	5	6	7	8
Protein/dairy	3	4	5	6	7
Fats	3	3	3	4	5

75 calories a day. The recommended numbers of servings from the carbohydrates, protein/dairy and fats groups are maximums, but the servings from fruits and vegetables are minimums. Eat as many fruits and vegetables as you'd like.

► Learn serving sizes. Here's a rough guide for one serving of some common foods: 2 ounces of meat or 3 ounces of chicken or fish (size of a deck of cards), 1 small apple (tennis-ball size), 1 cup of vegetables, 1/2 cup of

pasta, 1 1/2 ounces of cheese (size of a pair of dice), 1/2 cup of dry cereal, 1/2 a bagel, 1 slice of bread.

► Use a daily dining record. Write out the number of servings for each food group based on your calorie goal. Throughout the day, record the foods you eat, the number of servings of each and the food groups to which they belong.

Compare this with your plan. Then congratulate yourself or commit to adjustments. ■

Find more information on nutrition at <http://www.MayoClinic.com/goto/?topic=FN>