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# Wellness Matters

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Your Healthy Body

## Bust That Weight Loss Plateau

Picture this scenario: you begin a new exercise or healthier eating plan and immediately drop the pounds. But then the scale stops moving, even though you are sticking to your plan. Why?

When you first start a new routine, your body tends to shed excess water weight, so it appears as though you are really trimming the fat easily and quickly. But these “easy” pounds are the only ones to go fast. After the water-weight loss, your body builds muscle while also burning fat. So, although you may not see a change on your scale, your efforts are still facilitating many beneficial changes for your body.

**Beat That Plateau!** When the calories you burn are equal to the calories you eat, you reach a plateau. To lose more weight, you either need to increase

physical activity or decrease calories. The approach that initially worked may maintain weight loss, but it won't lead to additional slimming. Here's how



to tackle the weight game:

- Instead of a weight goal, strive to fit into a certain clothing size.
- Opt for taking your body measurements instead of weekly weigh-ins. As you build muscle, the scale may not move, but you will be losing inches as you tone up. By recording your measurements, you can better gauge your overall success. Be mindful to only measure yourself once per week, as your body can slightly fluctuate every day.
- Keep a food journal to determine exactly what you

are putting into your body. As you exercise more, you may feel hungrier and eat more without even realizing it.

Be sure to also record the portions of what you eat, keeping in mind that 1,200 calories a day is the minimum amount recommended for the average person.

- Watch out for little sweet “rewards” or treats. Avoid indulging in too many temptations as a way to congratulate yourself for a job well done.
- Increase your exercise regimen. As you drop the weight, you burn fewer calories in the same amount of time. In order to shrink your waistline, you will need to increase the amount of time you spend working out.

Learn more about weight loss at [eatright.org](http://eatright.org).

## Cholesterol & Your Heart

High cholesterol increases your chances of developing heart disease—the leading cause of death for adults in the United States. Cholesterol is a waxy substance found in fats in your blood which your body needs to function; too much, though, can be dangerous for your health.

**What's in a Number?** In the past, doctors thought total cholesterol was a good indicator of risk for heart disease, heart attack, diabetes, and stroke. However, many experts now believe that assessing the size of lipoprotein particles can also be beneficial.

**The Lipoprotein Link** Research indicates that the blockage of arteries (which often leads to heart disease) is caused by the number and size of the lipoprotein particles that carry cholesterol throughout your body. These lipoprotein particles can build up in your arteries.

Think of it this way: These lipoproteins are the “cars” that carry “passengers” (cholesterol) along the “highways” (arteries)—it’s not the number of passengers in a car that causes a traffic jam (blocked artery), it’s the number of cars.

**Your Particle Number** Measuring the number and particle size of lipoproteins in your blood can help your doctor determine your risk for heart attack, heart disease, and stroke. Generally, the lower your number of total LDL particles, and the larger the size of these particles, the lower your risk. Simple blood tests can provide a more detailed look at how your particles measure up.

**Getting Tested** The United States Preventive Services Task Force recommends routine cholesterol screenings for men over the age of 35 and women over the 45. Screenings may also be appropriate for younger adults with certain risk factors, such as a family history of cardiovascular disease. Talk with your doctor about what tests are right for you.



## Healthy & Delicious Memory and Healthy Diet

There are certain foods that can increase the chances of keeping your brain healthy as you age; the following are among those to try:

### Fish

Fish is rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which are essential for good brain function and development. Fish is also linked with a lower risk of dementia and stroke, slowing cognitive decline, and enhancing memory as you age.

### Nuts and Chocolate

Nuts are rich in vitamin E, which can slow cognitive decline; dark chocolate contains antioxidants, which can enhance concentration. Opt for an ounce of nuts and chocolate daily to reap the health benefits without consuming excess calories.

### Apples and Blueberries

Apples—eat the peel!—are rich in the antioxidant quercetin, which protects against Alzheimer’s disease. Blueberries protect the brain from stress and may reduce the effects of Alzheimer’s disease and dementia.

### Spinach

Some studies show spinach can prevent and even reverse memory loss.