



Weight Management for Women

Controlling weight can seem like a constant struggle for many women. Is it true that women have a harder time losing weight than men? The answer is, “it depends,” and there *are* some gender differences that can add additional challenges for women.

Size

Men are usually bigger, and often have more muscle mass. This means higher calorie needs to start with, so it can be easier to cut more calories while still feeling satisfied. Women can also benefit from an increase in muscle mass. Adding strength training a few times a week can burn calories, increase the calories your burn at rest, as well as help strengthen your bones.

Food Responsibilities

Women may be around food more. While times are indeed changing, many women still shoulder most of the burden of meal planning and preparation, even if they work outside the home. This can lead to more stress, extra nibbling in the kitchen, and reliance on restaurants or convenience foods. If meal planning and cooking are a one-woman show in your house, consider enlisting the help of your family. Sit down together one night a week to plan meals. Figure out what tasks your partner or children can help with (like shopping, packing lunches, chopping, or cooking) and hold them to it.

Life events

Some women really struggle with weight loss after having children, while others have trouble after menopause. For many women, both of these hormone-changing events result in lasting weight gain. However, this does not have to be the case. Strive to gain a healthy amount of weight during pregnancy, as excess weight gain will leave you with more to lose. As you approach menopause, adjust your intake to meet your decreasing calorie needs. In both cases, increasing physical activity and making better diet choices can make a big difference. For more specific suggestions, see our information on [Pregnancy and Lactation](#) and [Menopause](#).

Emotional eating

Emotions affect the eating habits of both men and women, but for some women this can become a major problem, and studies indicate this may be more common in people who are overweight or obese. If you feel that your emotions (like stress, anxiety, or sadness) regularly affect your eating habits, then addressing these issues may be the missing piece to your weight loss program. Try writing in a journal, meditating, talking to a counselor, or taking steps to reduce stress in your life.

Women may have a few additional challenges when it comes to weight loss, but understanding and better managing these can help shift the balance in their favor. For more specific guidelines and weight loss help, visit our [Weight Management](#) section.