

TEN STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOU ON THE “STRAIGHT AND NARROW”

1. GAIN THE SUPPORT OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS. You will feel more committed and they will be less likely to sabotage your efforts. You might also join a weight control group or program. Check with your doctor, of course, if you have any medical problems.
2. MAKE A FRIENDLY BET WITH A FEW OF YOUR FRIENDS. That you will still be on your program in four weeks. Better still, make a bet with a person to whom you would hate to lose.
3. STEER WELL AWAY FROM FAD OR CRASH DIETS. They do not re-educate eating habits and the weight will go right back on as soon as you stop dieting. Choose a moderate caloric eating plan of around 1,200 to 1,500 calories, depending on activity; and fat intake of 30 to 40 grams. An average weight loss of one pound weekly is ideal. Initial weight losses are generally heavier due to fluid losses.
4. EAT THREE MODERATE, WELL-BALANCED MEALS EACH DAY. Don't skip meals – you will only end up snacking on high fat items. Carefully plan each meal rather than just grabbing haphazardly whatever comes into your line of vision. Do not keep high fat snack foods in the house.
5. WORK OUT A STRATEGY. As to how you are going to avoid uncontrolled eating and drinking at social events when your emotions urge you to binge. Rehearse repeatedly in your mind exactly what you will do in such situations. Remind yourself several times each day that you are in charge of your actions, and that you can be strong-willed. Seek the guidance of a dietitian or a counselor to coach you on various strategies.
6. PROMISE YOURSELF THAT WHEN YOU FEEL THE URGE TO SNACK you will engage in some activity that will distract you away from food. For example, go for a walk, brush your teeth, or phone a friend. If you eat out of boredom, find some new hobby or interest that gets you out of the house, even enroll in adult education classes.
7. COMMENCE A WALKING PROGRAM TODAY! It can mean the difference between success and failure. Regular exercisers tend to maintain their weight losses far easier than those who do not exercise. You may hate it initially, but within a week or two as fitness builds, you may surprise yourself and find the ritual of a daily walk enjoyable and not to be missed. Not only can regular exercise re-shape your body, it can also be mentally refreshing. It enhances well-being by decreasing fatigue, tension, and anxiety, and boosting your self-image, confidence, and sense of control. Start with 20 minutes daily and build up to 40 to 60 minutes of brisk walking.
8. KEEP A FOOD AND EXERCISE DIARY. It is the most powerful and proven weight control aid. It forces you to focus on your eating habits and make wiser choices. You get to see exactly what you eat over a day! Having to record everything you eat makes you think twice before you cheat—particularly if you arrange for a friend or counselor to regularly review your diary. It also helps to prevent calorie amnesia—the forgetfulness that leads to rebound weight gain after successful weight loss.
9. BE PATIENT! Weight control is a life-time project, not one that you win or lose over a two week or even a two month period. Perseverance usually wins out. Even if your scale shows little progress on certain weeks, it is still possible that you have lost a few inches if you have been exercising.
10. DO NOT DWELL ON PAST FAILURES. Think only of achieving positive results. Write down your long-term and short-term goals. Plan carefully what you need to do, day by day, hour by hour, to achieve your goals.