Balance your eating with your physical activity. You can do this over several days. For example, if you overeat one day and do not have time for physical activity, you can make it up by eating less for a few days or by doing more physical activity.

Take charge of your weight. Balancing the calories you eat and drink with the calories you burn through physical activity puts you in control.

Know your number. Learning how many calories you should consume in a day is a critical first step in managing your weight. SuperTracker.usda.gov

Calories count. Calories are like a budget – you should only eat so many in a day. Eat wisely by choosing lower-calorie, nutrient rich foods first to help manage your weight. To find your balance, visit SuperTracker to find calorie recommendations based on your height, weight, gender, age, and level of activity and ChooseMyPlate.gov to learn more “how-tos” about controlling calories and portion size. Remember, it’s alright to “Enjoy your food, but eat less”, and “Avoid oversized portions”.

Enjoy your food, but eat less. Avoid oversized portions.
- Small steps = big changes.
- Serve smaller portions to help curb calories and keep your weight on the right track.
- Use a smaller plate, bowl and cup at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your plate and feel satisfied without overeating.
- Beverage calories count, too. Choose a smaller glass for beverages with calories, and cut calories by drinking water and low- or no-calorie beverages.
- Don’t pack on extra pounds during vacation. Balance out extra portions at special vacation meals, holiday or other meal splurges by working in plenty of walking, biking, hiking, volleyball and other activities.
- Be sure to read the Nutrition Facts label to find out the serving size of foods and beverages. Take note of the calories and nutrients that are provided per serving. Remember, there are multiple servings in some packages. Calories and other nutrients are based on each serving, not the whole container.
Family-focused tips

- Reward kids with love and attention, not food.
- Allow no more than 2 hours of TV and recreational computer screen time each day, whether at home or outside the home.
- Show by example. Be a role model for your kids. Eat vegetables, fruits, low-fat/fat-free dairy, and whole grains with meals or as snacks.
- Go grocery shopping with your kids. Make it a teachable moment about food and nutrition. Cooking together can also be fun.

Nutrition Facts Labels

You can gain useful information by reading labels on the foods you buy. The Nutrition Facts label provides information about many of the nutrients in foods. Foods containing 5% of a nutrient are considered low in that nutrient, while 20% or more is considered high. Nutrition Facts label information can be used to help you make healthy food choices.

Limit saturated fats, cholesterol, *trans* fat and sodium when making food choices.

Choose foods that are high in dietary fiber, calcium, vitamin D and potassium. The ingredients statement is also helpful to check for ingredients like whole grains and to limit added sugars. For a complete list of added sugars, please see page 75 of the DGA 2010: http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/PolicyDoc.pdf.