

Total Nutrition

Learning From Losers

(NAPSA)—On occasion, I have the opportunity to interview adults who have been successful at losing weight and keeping it off. Their stories are a great reminder that it is possible to maintain a healthy weight by eating right and getting physical activity every day, no matter what.



Mindy Hermann

My findings were similar to those of the National Weight Control Registry (NWCR), a database of several thousand individuals who have lost an average of about 70 pounds and kept the weight off for over six years. According to James O. Hill, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Human Nutrition at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, participants share several common success factors.

Average participants report that they eat about 1,400 calories per day. Even with a fudge factor of maybe 100 more calories, successful losers are eating fewer calories than most American adults do.

Participants have cut the fat long term. Even if they lost weight on a diet that was not low in fat, they're keeping the weight off by eating less fat on a daily basis.

Daily breakfast is important. Almost all participants say they eat breakfast at least five days a week, and close to 80 percent have breakfast every day. Among successful losers, cereal, like Whole Grain Total, is the most popular breakfast.

Share Your Success Story with NWCR

Requirements: 18+ years old; 30+-pound loss; keep off for 1+ years

Contact: www.nwcr.ws, 1-800-606-NWCR

Participants don't splurge on weekends. Most find that weight maintenance is easier when they eat similar foods and portions on weekends as well as weekdays. "In fact, we found that participants who dieted more strictly on weekdays than on weekends were more likely to gain weight," says Dr. Hill.

Physical activity is a part of every day. Participants burn several hundred calories every day by walking or doing other types of physical activity for at least 60 minutes on most days.

Participants watch their weight carefully. By weighing themselves often, participants can spot small changes in weight before weight gain gets out of control. Small changes—eating a bit less or exercising a bit more—may be all it takes to lose the extra pounds.

Ask Mindy

Q: Why is eating breakfast important? I don't have much time in the morning.

A: People who eat breakfast have a lower average body mass index (BMI). They are also less apt to snack impulsively during the morning because breakfast is satisfying. If you're a cereal eater, you are more likely to have a lower BMI and a better daily nutrient intake.

