



Walk, Then Run to Lose Weight

You can walk your way to a healthy weight. But it might take longer than you would like to burn those excess calories and lose body fat. If you want to speed up the process, running can help, according to a study published in the journal, *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*.

In the study, researchers followed 47,000 overweight or obese runners and walkers for six years. They measured their weight, waist size, and total body fat at the start of the study. Then they tracked their exercise habits and compared the results. Even though the runners and walkers exercised the same amount of time each week, the runners

Get started with the Couch to 5K Program tinyurl.com/pemw6s

lost 90 percent more weight than the walkers.

Runners also showed greater reductions in waist size and total body fat.

Running increases your metabolism and requires more energy than walking. And once you're back from a run, it takes longer for your metabolism to return to normal compared to walking. Running also burns more calories in less time than walking. For the average overweight adult, a 3.2-mile run completed in 40 minutes burns the same amount of calories as an 80-minute walk.

If you're out of shape and ready to lose weight, start by walking and eating a healthy diet. Gradually, increase your walking intensity, distance, and duration. Then try running. Other forms of vigorous exercise like cycling, swimming, or aerobics can also boost your metabolism and aid in weight loss.

Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Decisions in the Dining Room

"I'll have what she's having."

Sometimes it's easier to make your choice from the menu by ordering the same things as others at the table. And despite your best intentions to eat healthy, new research suggests that the people you eat with play a role in the food choices you make.

Researchers looked at 15 studies on dietary choices and social behavior. And they found that people often made food choices based on what their peers were doing, even if it didn't match up with their usual eating habits. When people learned that their peers planned to eat large portions or double-plate their way through the buffet line, they were more likely to do the same.



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Slip This Fruit Into Your Diet

In the early 1900s, vaudeville performer "Sliding" Billy Watson saw a man on the street try to keep his balance after slipping on a banana peel. The man twisted and turned with arms flailing to try and stay on his feet. And Watson was thoroughly amused. Not long after that, he performed the banana-peel scene for his stage show and created a timeless comedy sketch that still finds its way into modern-day entertainment.

You don't want to slip on a banana peel. But go ahead and slip this fruit into your diet. Bananas are a delicious addition to cereal, yogurt, smoothies, or fruit salad. You may also enjoy bananas baked in muffins, or as a healthy snack.

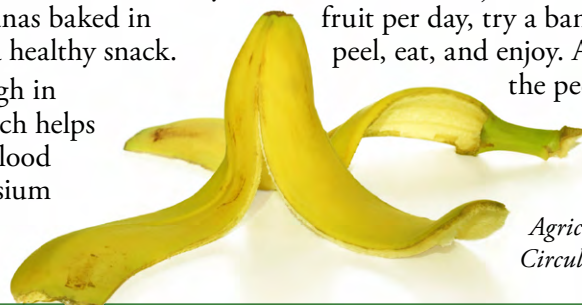
Bananas are high in potassium, which helps regulate your blood pressure. Potassium from bananas

can also support bone health by improving your body's ability to absorb calcium from the food you eat. And in a recent study, researchers found that people who had a diet rich in potassium were 50-percent less likely to have a stroke than those who didn't eat bananas and other foods high in potassium. Some foods even higher in potassium than bananas include beets, cabbage, spinach, mushrooms, and tomatoes.

The average American eats about 27 pounds of bananas a year. More than half of those are gobbled up at the breakfast table. But if you need to do a better job eating two cups of fruit per day, try a banana. Just peel, eat, and enjoy. And make sure the peel ends up in the garbage.

U.S. Department of Agriculture. Circulation.

Try these 100 banana recipes tinyurl.com/245prsd



Fiber-Rich Foods Reduce Heart Disease

Most people in the United States eat about 12 grams of fiber a day. And that's just not enough to ward off America's most serious health problem: Heart disease. It's the leading cause of death in the United States. But a recent study suggests that increasing the amount of fiber in your diet can improve heart health. Researchers tracked the fiber intake of 43,757 men for six years. They looked at fiber intake compared to risk for heart disease. They found that those who ate at least 28.9 grams of fiber a day cut their risk for heart disease by 40 percent. This group regularly ate steel-cut oats and other whole grains as part

of their diet. Researchers also found that a fiber-rich diet helped:

- Lower cholesterol levels
- Regulate blood sugar levels
- Reduce the risk for diabetes
- Aid in weight management

Women should eat at least 25 grams of fiber per day. Men should aim for 38 grams of fiber per day, according



to the Institute of Medicine. The best sources of fiber include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds, and legumes.

If you don't know how much fiber you are eating, track your intake for a few days. Read food labels to check for fiber content. Or use an online nutrition database or mobile app to find out how much fiber is in the foods you are eating.

*Harvard School of Public Health.
U.S. Department of Agriculture.
Institute of Medicine.*

Follow the
Full Plate Diet
[tinyurl.com/
pzg7hyw](http://tinyurl.com/pzg7hyw)

Dining Room Decisions

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And that's not going to help you control calories or manage your weight. Fortunately, researchers found that peer groups can also help people make healthy food choices.

If you've got a decision to make in the dining room, let your friends know what you plan to order and why. Order a smaller portion or low-calorie meal from the menu. Invite a friend to split an entrée with you. Let the server know you'll be drinking water. When your friends see that you're making healthy food choices, they'll be more likely to do the same, and sticking to a healthy eating plan will be a lot easier for you.

*Journal of
the Academy
of Nutrition and
Dietetics.
Center for Science in the Public Interest.*

Tips for
dining out
healthfully
[tinyurl.com/
l8r87ol](http://tinyurl.com/l8r87ol)

Get Your Zzzs to Lower Blood Pressure

Every time you visit the doctor, your arm is cuffed and a nurse takes your blood pressure. If it's less than 120/80, your blood pressure is normal. But if it's higher than that, new research suggests that lack of sleep may be to blame.

In the study, researchers identified 578 young adults who all had good blood pressure levels. Then they followed these people for five years and tracked their sleep habits. They found that for each hour of lost sleep, the risk of developing high blood pressure increased by 37 percent in both men and women.



Get a good
night's sleep
[tinyurl.com/
oombxpa](http://tinyurl.com/oombxpa)

If you want to keep your blood pressure in a healthy range (less than 120/80), maintain a healthy weight, eat healthy foods, and get regular exercise. You should also aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night, or take an afternoon nap to catch up on your Zzzs to keep your blood pressure under control.

*Archives of Internal Medicine.
Hypertension.
American Heart Association.*

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

Q: How can I increase my metabolism to lose weight?

A: Go to [www.wellsourc.info/
wn/ask-boost-metabolism.pdf](http://www.wellsourc.info/wn/ask-boost-metabolism.pdf) to read the answer from Don Hall, DrPH, CHES.

To ask your question, email: evan@wellsourc.com, subject line: Ask the Wellness Doctor. Emails with any other subject line will be directed to the spam folder.

Health Challenge: "Plan for Financial Wellness" available at: www.wellsourc.info/wn/hc-financial-wellness.pdf

Make smart money decisions.