

MYTH: ALL SKINNY PEOPLE ARE HEALTHY AND OVERWEIGHT PEOPLE ARE NOT



REALITY: YOU CANNOT DETERMINE HEALTH BY LOOKING AT SOMEONE

Being “skinny” or “thin” doesn’t necessarily mean someone is healthy, just as being overweight does not mean a person has health problems. There are many factors that affect a person’s health; and weight and body fat percentage are just a couple of those factors. Scale Back Alabama encourages everyone, no matter their size and ability, to follow these tips to live a healthy lifestyle:

- **Get moving, often** – Your heart is a muscle, and just like your other muscles, it needs to be used to remain strong. People of all shapes, sizes, and abilities should strive for 30 minutes of physical activity per day for a healthy heart.
- **Veg out** – We’re talking about vegetables! Eat a variety of veggies such as broccoli, onions, bell peppers, zucchini, cucumber, tomatoes, and cabbage! Vegetables are low in calories and high in vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients that encourage a healthy body. They help fill you up and keep you full so you’re less likely to reach for a sugary, afternoon snack.
- **Got grains?** – Whole grains are a good source of fiber and protein, which help you maintain a healthy weight.
- **Go nuts** – “Healthy fats” found in nuts, seeds, and fish, help control cholesterol levels and reduce your risk of developing heart disease. In addition to eating a couple of servings of fish per week, try tossing nuts and seeds into salads, oatmeal, and yogurt.
- **Don’t be salty** – Too much salt (or sodium) increases your risk for high blood pressure (hypertension), which, in turn, can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. Sodium can be found in many foods that don’t seem overly salty, including processed meats like hot dogs, bologna, and spam; pickles; crackers; frozen meals; fast foods; and canned and frozen vegetables. Choose low and no sodium options when available, cook more foods at home, and choose leaner meats such as poultry and fish to reduce your intake of sodium.
- **Fill up on fiber** – Fiber rich foods include beans, whole grains, fruits and vegetables. Not only can these foods help you keep a healthy weight, they can also help to reduce your risk of developing diabetes. If you have diabetes, they can help you better manage your blood sugar. Be sure to drink plenty of water when you increase your fiber. You want to be full, not bloated.

INCLUSION TIPS: Healthy at every size can also translate to healthy at every ability. Disability and health is NOT an oxymoron. When health is viewed not as the absence of disability or chronic conditions, but as the ability to function effectively in given

environments, to fulfill needs and to adapt to major stresses, then, by definition, most people with disabilities are healthy. Read more in the article, [“Can Disability, Chronic Conditions, Health and Wellness Coexist?”](#)

FAMILY MATTERS: It’s true that kids hear all kinds of messages about how they “should” look from TV, magazines, social media, etc. But, did you know that your own words and actions have major impacts on how they feel about their body, too? If you feel like

you’ve got a little weight to lose, focus on things you can control such as drinking more water, moving more, eating more fruits and vegetables, etc. Don’t beat yourself up over what the scale says, especially not in front of kids. Every “body” is different, and that’s ok!

LINKS:

Healthy Eating the Whole Family Can Enjoy: everydayhealth.com/hs/family-nutrition-guide/healthy-eating-for-whole-family/

Maintaining A Healthy Weight: nia.nih.gov/health/maintaining-healthy-weight

Servings and Portion Sizes: nia.nih.gov/health/serving-and-portion-sizes-how-much-should-i-eat

Healthy Recipes: Quinoa and Black Beans: allrecipes.com/recipe/49552/quinoa-and-black-beans/?internalSource=hub%20recipe&referringId=782&referringContentType=Recipe%20Hub