



THE UNITED STATES OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

## Weight Loss in Sport

An athlete's desire to lose weight should be rooted in achieving the ideal body composition for performance. A realistic weight loss goal is one that does not compromise performance and maturation, but leads to a gradual decrease in weight of 0.5 – 1.5 pounds per week.



## Getting Started on Your Weight Loss Goals

1. **Consult a sport dietitian** to assist you with an individual plan to meet your goals while maximizing energy and performance.
2. **Get a baseline assessment** to determine current weight and body composition and to set realistic goals.
3. **Plan ahead** and outline meals and snacks for the week. Make a grocery list and stick to it while shopping at least once per week to ensure access to the appropriate foods.
4. **Manage portion sizes** using the Weight Management Athlete Plate as a guide.
5. **Listen to your body** and stop eating when you are satisfied rather than “stuffed”. Eat slowly to give your body time to recognize the feeling of fullness.
6. **Focus on meals** to avoid mindless eating and minimize distractions like the TV and reading.
7. **Logging your food and fluid intake** is a great way to create awareness, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability.
8. **Consistency is key** when making food choices. At each meal and snack choose foods that support your weight loss goals.
9. **Have a plan** when you enter a dining hall or buffet. Start by filling half your plate with veggies and then add a lean protein and grain or carb source.



# Weight Loss Checklist

- **Prioritize protein** by including an appropriate serving size in every meal and snack.
  - Skinless poultry, fish, lean meat, low-fat dairy products, eggs, tofu, beans
- **Make ½ your carbs whole grains** by including a ¼ to ½ cup or 1-2 slices at meals.
  - Brown/wild rice, quinoa, oatmeal, corn tortillas, whole wheat breads/pasta/crackers
- **Add color** by filling half your plate with veggies and snack on fruit and veggies.
  - ≥ 3 servings of veggies + 1-2 servings of fruit per day
- **Add healthy fats** in small amounts at meals to slow digestion and keep you full for longer.
  - Nuts, seeds, oily fish, avocado, plant oils
- **Rethink your drink** by choosing water, low-fat milk, or tea instead of sweetened drinks.
  - Always carry a water bottle
- **Minimize or avoid alcohol** to avoid unwanted calories.
  - ≤ 0-2 drinks per day
- **Avoid skipping meals** and include small snacks to help with recovery & avoid overeating at meals.
- **Nutrient-filled desserts** are an easy way to curb cravings while staying within a calorie budget.
- **When dining out** watch portion sizes. Include veggies and a lean protein, and ask for sauces on the side. Choose grilled, baked, roasted, broiled, and steamed foods to limit extra calories.

# Low Calorie Snacks & Ideas

- 1 cup baby carrots + 1-2 Tbsp. hummus
- ¼ cup dried mangos + 1-2 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 cup popcorn + 1 low-fat string cheese
- 8-12 oz. soy or low-fat milk
- ½ cup shelled sunflower seeds
- 1-2 oz. jerky + medium apple
- 6-8 oz. low-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 rice cake + 1 Tbsp. peanut/almond butter
- 2-4 oz. turkey/ham/roast beef + medium orange
- 1 ½ c Kefir
- 1 oz. almonds, peanuts, walnuts, pistachios
- 6 celery sticks + 1-2 Tbsp. peanut/almond butter
- ½ - 1 cup edamame
- ½ cup beans + ½ cup brown rice + salsa
- 1 cup low-fat chocolate milk
- ½ turkey & veggie wrap with ½ Tbsp. hummus
- ¼ cup trail mix
- ½ whole wheat English muffin + 1 Tbsp. peanut butter + 1 tsp. honey

## Easy Ways to Cut 100-200 Calories

- Choose water instead of juice or soda at meals
- Choose oil-based dressings over creamy
- Add only 1 Tbsp. of nut butter instead of 2 Tbsp.
- Choose fruit instead of candy for dessert
- Pick Greek yogurt over frozen yogurt or ice cream for dessert
- Pick an English muffin or toast in place of bagel
- ↓ Portion sizes of carbs from 1 cup to ⅔ cup

*Athlete Recommendations:*

