

do not have any nutritive value.

III. EATING FOR WEIGHT CONTROL

If a person is overweight it becomes essential to lose weight in order to remain healthy and reduce chances of many diseases like heart diseases. To maintain a desirable body weight, one has to change his eating habits. Attempts to lose weight quickly often results in loss of water and proteins from the body. This is not a good way to reduce weight as once such practices are stopped then the body would regain the lost body weight.

A Healthy Weight

The ideal height and body weight chart is given below in Table 2.6.

Table 2.6: Ideal Height/Weight Chart

Height			Weight	
Ft	In	Cm	Lbs	Kg
Women over 25 years				
4	10	147.3	90-107	43.5-48.5
4	11	149.9	98-110	44.5-49.9
5	0	152.4	101-113	45.8-51.3
5	1	154.9	104-116	47.2-52.6
5	2	157.5	107-119	48.5-54.0
5	3	160.0	110-122	49.9-55.3
5	4	162.6	113-126	51.3-57.2
5	5	165.1	116-130	52.6-59.0
5	6	167.6	120-135	54.4-61.2
5	7	170.2	124-139	56.2-63.0
5	8	172.7	128-143	58.1-64.9
5	9	175.3	132-147	59.9-66.7
5	10	177.8	136-151	61.7-68.5
5	11	180.3	140-155	63.5-70.3
6	0	182.9	144-159	65.3-72.0

Height			Weight	
Ft	In	Cm	Lbs	Kg
Men over 25 years				
5	2	157.5	118-129	53.5-58.5
5	3	160.0	121-133	54.9-60.3
5	4	162.6	124-136	56.2-61.7
5	5	165.1	127-139	57.6-63.0
5	6	167.6	130-143	59.0-64.9
5	7	170.2	134-147	60.8-66.7
5	8	172.7	138-152	62.6-68.9
5	9	175.3	142-156	64.4-70.8
5	10	177.8	146-160	66.2-72.6
5	11	180.3	150-165	68.0-74.8
6	0	182.9	154-170	69.9-77.1
6	1	185.4	158-175	71.7-79.4
6	2	188.0	162-180	73.5-81.6

The following steps can help in controlling weight and consistent weight loss:

1. Reduce the calorie content of diet.
2. Reduce the intake of fat and cholesterol enhancing foods.
3. Stay away from fried food.
4. Avoid taking foods that contain too much sugar, specially refined sugar.
5. Develop a habit of drinking a glass of water before meals. This will make your stomach feel full and thus, you will eat less.
6. Increase the amount of cereals, fruits and vegetables in your diet.
7. Avoid snacks, including chocolates and nuts.
8. Be determined not to overeat even if the food is delicious.

Dieting

Individuals, especially young people want to look slim and smart. In spite of this, the number of obese people is increasing day-by-day. In fact, obesity is one of the major health problems of modern times. The major factors responsible for this problem are improper eating habits and lack of exercise. People living in the hills are rarely obese because they have to walk long distances and climb hills.

Due to the problem of obesity a new industry has become popular, *i.e.*, the slimming centres. In order to make money, such centres release attractive offers on weight control and slimming. They charge huge amounts from their clients with the assurance that they would lose weight and become slim. Such slimming centres put their clients on strict dieting schedules and sometimes also prescribe medicines. An example of such a crash diet schedule is eating *chana daal*, taking vegetable soups and drinking fruit juices or butter milk the whole day. They advise them to carry on this schedule for few days. Sometimes, they also advise oil and massage programmes. Such programmes may result in losing some overall weight. However, it has been observed that once the individuals stop following such diet schedules, they regain the lost weight within a few days. Such programmes are difficult to maintain and are harmful for an individual physically and mentally. Such programmes which only focus on weight loss are a failure.

The Pitfalls of Dieting

As has been mentioned above, dieting has harmful effects on our body. It is harmful not only physically but also from a mental point of view. Some harmful effects of dieting are:

- 1) Extreme reduction of calories
 - 2) Restriction on some nutrients
 - 3) Slipping muscles
 - 4) Swelling of colon through dehydration
 - 5) Not doing exercise
 - 6) Intake of labelled food
1. Dieting deprives an individual of vital nutrients that are essential for the body.
 2. Muscles become weak and lose muscle tone.
 3. Bone density decreases and this reduces joints and bone health.
 4. Not eating for long hours reduces blood-glucose levels.
 5. Sometimes, headaches are induced due to not eating enough or starving for a long time.
 6. Crash dieting takes the biggest toll on the water reserves of our body. Loss of water impairs (checks/reduces) circulation and therefore, overworks the heart and the kidneys.
 7. Dieting leaves stretch marks on the body especially, in the thighs and belly.
 8. At the end of the dieting programme, the metabolic rate of the body becomes lower than that before the programme.

As a matter of fact, all extreme diet plans are useless. Therefore, we should not go in for diet plans which deprive us of essential nutrients. Sticking to only right foods at the right time and exercise can help in checking obesity or being overweight. Our body is designed for continuous activity and therefore, leading a sedentary life is bad for our health.

Food Intolerance

Food intolerance is the inability of a person to consume a food of plant or animal origin without some adverse effects. In simple words, food intolerance refers to inability to digest any kind of food. This intolerance is often due to reaction to some chemical components of diet. Such chemicals occur in a wide variety of foods, both of animal and plant origin. Sometimes food additives, preservatives, colouring additives and flavouring materials can cause food intolerance. The influence of such materials is not as common as the influence of naturally occurring chemicals. Both natural and artificial ingredients, may cause adverse reactions in sensitive people, if consumed in large quantity. For example, if beet root is eaten in excess amount, fibres and chemical components present in it may cause food intolerance. Some of the naturally occurring food chemicals that are capable of provoking intolerance and reactions are:

1. **Salicylates:** These are salts of salicylic acid and occur in many foods including fruits like apples, citrus fruits, cherries and strawberries, juices, vegetables, spices, herbs, nuts, tea, etc. *→ Bananas Lime*
2. **Benzoates:** These are derived from benzoic acid and are used as preservatives in foods.
3. **Amine:** This is an organic compound containing nitrogen. *cheese, smoked*
4. **Nitrate ions:** The chemical formula of nitrate ions is NO_3^- . These are soluble in water. Excess amount of nitrate in food causes food intolerance. *fish, meats*
5. **Sulphites:** These are present in pizza, wine and beer. These are food preservatives. Sulphites can cause health related problems in Asthma patients. Excessive intake may cause food intolerance. *cheese, dairy products*
6. **Antioxidants:** Vitamin A, C and E falls in this category. Excessive use of antioxidants cause food intolerance. *spinach, peach, walnuts, & curries*
7. **Digestive enzymes:** A deficiency in digestive enzymes (soluble organic catalysts) can also cause some type of food intolerance. For example, lactose (milk sugar) intolerance is a result of the body not producing sufficient lactose to digest the lactose in milk. Another food intolerance called carbohydrate intolerance is caused by enzyme deficiency.

Symptoms of Food Intolerance

Some common symptoms of food intolerance are:

1. Gas cramps or Bloating
2. Headaches
3. Stomach pain
4. Heart-burn
5. Diarrhoea
6. Vomiting

Food Allergy

Food intolerance and food allergy may have some common symptoms but food allergy can be more serious.

Food allergy is a damaging immune response by the body to a food or substance to which the immune system of the body is hypersensitive. It is generally manifested in the form of skin reactions but can also cause:

- (a) shortness of breath (b) chest pains (c) sudden drop in blood pressure

Table 2.7: The distinguishing features of food allergy and food intolerance

Basic	Food Allergy	Food Intolerance
Sudden/gradual	(i) It usually occurs suddenly.	(i) It occurs gradually.
Cause	(ii) A small amount of food can trigger allergy.	(ii) It happens when the quantity of food taken is excessive.
Reaction	(iii) Its reaction happens every time a person eats a particular food.	(iii) This intolerance occurs when the food causing intolerance is taken often.
Risk of Life	(iv) It can be fatal.	(iv) Such an intolerance is not life-threatening.

Food Myths

There are many myths related to food. Some of these are:

1. Eating eggs raises the cholesterol levels and are therefore, bad for the heart (One egg a day is not harmful).
2. Carbohydrates cause obesity. In fact, excess amount of carbohydrates in diet causes obesity.
3. A raw food diet provides enzymes that are essential for digestion.
4. You crave or desire certain foods because you are deficient in one of the nutrients that the foods provide.
5. Heating or making food in microwave destroys its nutrients.
6. Radiations from microwave create dangerous compounds in your food.
7. Eating something throughout the day keeps the metabolism working and helps in controlling weight.
8. Added sugar is always bad for an individual.
9. All saturated fats raise blood cholesterol.
10. Adding salt in a food means adding sodium to the food.
11. Fried foods are always too fatty.
12. Grapefruit and cabbage soup can burn fat and make one lose weight.
13. Processed foods have no place in a healthy diet.
14. Pasteurisation destroys vitamins and minerals in milk.
15. A person needs vitamin and mineral supplements to be healthy.
16. Drinking tea causes dehydration.
17. It is important to fast periodically to cleanse toxins from your body.