Summer Slim Down Challenge

Welcome Letter

Dear Participant,

This contest runs for 10-weeks, during which your goal is to maintain or lose weight. We recommend you speak with your doctor before beginning any weight loss program.

You will begin the program by participating in a weigh-in. You may either weigh-in at home on your own scale, or choose to participate in an on-site weigh-in offered at various work-site locations throughout the month of June. Visit the **Summer Slim Down Contest** webpage to view the schedule of work-site Weigh-ins for the month of June.

There will be optional weight checks offered mid-way through the contest, which you are encouraged to participate in, but not required. Please track your progress on the Weight Tracking Card throughout the contest.

To assist you in achieving your weight goals, we will e-mail you weekly tips and encourage you to develop strong support networks. At the end of the contest, you will be required to participate in a weigh-out either at home or at a participating work-site location. You will also need to submit your **Certificate of Completion Form** in order to receive credit for participating.

To assist you in achieving your weight goals, we will e-mail you weekly tips, guide and encourage you in developing strong support networks. At the end of the contest, you will complete a weigh-out and your host will submit your completed weight-card in.

You will be entered into the grand prize drawing of one of twenty $100 Corporate Rewards gift cards as long as you do not exceed your initial weight by more than 2 lbs through the 10-week contest. If you are already within a healthy BMI you may qualify for points by maintaining your weight throughout the contest. You will also earn Healthy Lifestyle Activity Points (HLAP's) based on your success:

- Maintain within 2 lbs. of initial weight and already be within a healthy BMI 25 or below (See BMI Chart): 20 HLAP's
- Lose 2 - 4.9% of initial weight: 25 HLAP's
- Lose 5% or greater of initial weight: 30 HLAP's

This welcome packet will provide you with some basic information about losing or maintaining your weight throughout the contest. We are here to help, so if you have any questions, please contact Employee Wellness. Good luck and have a healthy and happy summer!

- Jennifer Billa, Wellness Program Manager

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WEIGHT GOALS:

Current Weight:		5% Weight Loss Goal:	0	lbs
		2-4.9% Weight Loss Goal:	0 to 0	lbs
		Maintenance Weight Goal (Healthy BMI <25)	to 2	lbs

Congratulations on making the commitment to either lose weight or maintain a healthy weight this summer. Over the next 10 weeks you will work towards meeting the goal set at your weigh-in. We encourage you to recognize the many health benefits you may experience along the way as a result of working towards a consistent healthy weight through a variety of healthy living strategies. Throughout the program, we will provide some tips, suggestions, resources and activities to help you work towards your goal.

At Work

We encourage you to engage your participating co-workers and work together towards your goals. A support system at work can be a helpful way to stay on track. You may want to meet once a week for a walk or healthy lunch to discuss ideas and challenges, and motivate each other through more challenging weeks. If you need ideas or a speaker, let us know.

Getting Started with a Healthy Habits Inventory

To help you start out this program on a positive note and build confidence, take a few moments to recognize the many healthy things you are already doing. Building additional habits during this challenge will not only add to your success list, but help you reach your challenge goal.

Goal Setting

Now that you have set a weight loss or maintenance goal for this challenge, it is important to plan how you will achieve it by setting a series of short-term goals or objectives that you will track and modify over the next ten weeks. If your goal is to maintain a healthy weight, and it is already easy for you to do so, you may consider setting a separate health goal this summer. If you're not familiar with setting SMART goals, please review the section below to get started. Then, set one to three SMART goals for the next two weeks to get you started with the program. Your SMART goals may simply describe the addition of one or more healthy habits you will begin to put in place.

If you would like some extra help with your SMART goals, consider signing up with a program like habitforge.com (on your home e-mail) to receive daily reminders about staying on track with your goal.

Healthy Habits Inventory

The goal of this exercise is to recognize the many healthy habits you already have in place. As you begin to set SMART goals for this challenge, looking back to how you put an existing healthy habit in place may be helpful. You may also think of a behavior or action that you would like to be on your list and incorporate that into your SMART goals. There aren't any rules or formats to follow, but here are a few examples:

- I eat breakfast every day.
- I regularly exercise three days a week for 30 or more minutes.
- I practice several stress reduction strategies on a regular basis.
- When I dine out, I always pack up half to-go.
- My family and I enjoy time together every Friday with dinner and game night.

Think small and large among many focus areas and don't be shy. Use additional pages as needed.

_____*'s Healthy Habits*

SMART Goal Setting

To get where you want to go, you must have a plan - a plan that is detailed and specific and allows you to track progress – and celebrate success - along the way. A great way to structure your plan is to make one to three SMART goals that you track, modify and update on a regular basis. A SMART goal is usually one sentence that describes one specific, measurable thing you will do over a certain period of time.

A SMART goal should be:

Specific: An exact action or step you can take

Measureable: By amount or quantity

Attainable: Something that your knowledge, skills and available time and resources allows

Relevant: That is pertinent to your unique needs and abilities

Time-bound: Has an end in close sight (day, week, and month)

Here are some examples of **SMART goals:**

- Over the next week I will cut 250 calories each day by changing my afternoon snack.
- Over the next two weeks I will take a daily 30-minute walk.
- This week I will reduce my soda intake from 3 cans to 2 cans every day.
- I will keep a food log every day this week, including why I am eating each time.

It's important to choose goals that really work for you and to start out small when working towards a larger or more long-term goal. For example, if you want to exercise 150 minutes a week, but don't currently exercise, a goal of a daily 15-minute walk may be more appropriate. You can always exceed your goal, and then increase the time as you move forward.

For this program, try setting one to three SMART goals for the next two-weeks and then monitoring your progress and updating them every two weeks. (Look for more info on goal-setting in two weeks.) You may want to read further along in the Welcome Packet for ideas and then set your goals. You may also want to use the worksheet on the next page to make sure your goals are SMART.

My SMART goal(s) for the first two weeks of the Summer Slim Challenge are:

SMART Goal Worksheet

If you need more assistance with setting SMART goals, use this worksheet.

Today's Date: Target Date:

Start Date: Date Achieved:

Goal:

Verify that your goal is SMART

Specific: What exactly will you accomplish?

Measurable: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

Achievable: Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Do you have the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?

Relevant: Why is this goal significant to your life?

Timely: When will you achieve this goal?

Find someone who can support your efforts in attaining your goal!

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Healthy Weight Strategies

There are many ways of looking at weight loss, including utilizing the energy equation for planning purposes. Those that are working to lose weight or are successfully maintaining a healthy weight practice the following:

- Eat a balanced diet of whole foods in appropriate portions and quantities based on personal needs.
- Exercise regularly – 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity daily.
- Manage stress in a healthful way.
- Get *at least* 7 hours of restful sleep nightly.

2013 Summer Slim Challenge Success

Last summer, two main strategies were practiced by those that lost weight:

1. Kept a food log
2. Practiced portion control

In this short-term program, changing eating and exercise habits will most likely have the greatest effect on weight (and help you manage stress and sleep better). However if you are experiencing overwhelming stress or hardly sleeping, these might hold you back from meeting your weight goal and should be addressed first. (In those cases, you may want to make an appointment with a counselor through the Employee Assistance Program or with your physician.)

Strategy: Use the Energy Equation

Your weight is a direct relationship to the amount of energy (calories) you eat and the amount of energy you use.

Maintaining weight	*Energy In = Energy Out*	Your weight will stay the same when the calories you eat and drink equal the calories you burn.
Losing weight	*Energy In < Energy Out*	You will lose weight when the calories you eat and drink are less than the calories you burn.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Keep in mind that not all calories are equal. Someone who ate all their calories in donuts and refined carbohydrates would probably not have the same body composition (body fat vs. lean mass/muscle) as someone who ate a balanced, whole foods diet. A nutrient-poor or imbalanced diet can disrupt the equation.

Estimating Your Lifestyle Calorie Needs

Important Note: you may also not even need to use the equations below. Often times changing specific eating habits will lead to weight loss (such as making food substitutions, eating smaller portions or cutting out certain foods or eating times.) Likewise, adding exercise to your schedule or making improvements to your current exercise routine can lead to weight loss.

Otherwise, use the following as an estimate and remember that the more active you are, the more calories you need. Note that the equation changes over time as you lose weight.

Your total lifestyle calorie needs are based on your Resting Metabolic Rate and Activity Level.

Resting Metabolic Rate (RMR): Calories burned at rest / minimum number of calories needed for our bodies to function. It is important never to eat fewer calories than your RMR needs.

RMR = _____ X 10 = **0** _____ = Total calories
Your body weight

Lifestyle Calorie Needs: Daily calories needed to maintain current weight.

LCN = **0** _____ X _____ = Total daily calories **0**
Total calories (number above) — Activity level Number (see chart below)

Activity Level Number : (Calculate your target daily calories above using the activity levels below)

If you are **sedentary** (sit > 8hrs/day, very little activity): **1.3**

If you are **lightly active** (stairs, light housework, walking, light exercise 1-3 days per week): **1.4**

If you are **moderately active** (exercise 30-60 minutes most days during a week.): **1.5**

If you are **very active** (exercise intensely daily or for prolonged periods >90 minutes): **1.7**

If you perform additional exercise, your body will need additional calories.

Online Calculator: http://nutritiondata.self.com/tools/calories-burned

To lose weight, create a calorie deficit that is between your Lifestyle Calorie Needs and your Resting Metabolic Rate. The best way to do this is a combination of eating fewer calories and burning more calories through physical activity. **One pound of weight loss is equivalent to 3,500 calories.** (To lose one pound in a week, this could mean eating 500 calories less per day, adding an hour of daily vigorous exercise to burn off 500 calories, or a combination of both methods.)

Strategy: Move more!

A regular exercise routine can help you burn more calories. You don't have to belong to a gym to be more active. Walking is a great form of exercise that almost anyone can do. And there's no special equipment to buy – you just need a good pair of shoes. In addition to regular exercise, look for everyday opportunities to move more. It all counts and can really add up!

- Park your car a block or two away and walk
- Get off one or two bus stops early and walk the rest of the way
- Use the stairs
- Walk the dog
- Dance around the house to your favorite tunes
- Walk to a co-workers desk instead of using the phone or email
- Clean the house
- Play with the kid

Strategy: Practice Portion Control

Over the past 40 years, portion sizes have dramatically increased. A typical cheeseburger had about 300 calories years ago. Today's cheeseburgers can have 600 calories or more.

Try these tips to help keep your portion size in check:

- Use smaller plates, bowls, and glasses at home
- Don't go back for seconds
- Look for foods packaged in individual servings
- Eat only half of restaurant size portions and take the rest home
- Order kid sized portions

Sometimes it's difficult to know the right portion size.
Use these everyday items to help you approximate a serving.

Deck of cards = 3 ounce serving of meat

Checkbook = 3 ounce serving of fish

4 dice = 1 ounce of cheese

Baseball = 1 serving of fruits or vegetables

Golf ball = 2 tablespoons of peanut butter

½ of a tennis ball = ½ cup of rice or pasta

Medium fist = 1 cup of cereal

Strategy: Substitute lower calorie foods for higher calorie foods

Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories. Because fruits and vegetables are also good sources of fiber, they can help you feel full. Try adding more fruits and vegetables into each meal.

- Order a side salad, side of fruit, or steamed veggies instead of chips or fries
- Add veggies to casseroles, soups, and stews
- Toss in fresh fruit to your cereal or granola
- Dip cut vegetables instead of chips in hummus, salsa, or cottage cheese
- Ask for extra veggies on your pizza or sandwiches
- Snack on whole fruit or fresh cut vegetables

While all foods contain calories, fat has more calories per gram than protein and carbohydrates. That's why eating lower fat foods will help you eat fewer calories. Decreasing your intake of fat will also help reduce your risk for heart disease.

Try some of the substitutions below to help you lower your (saturated) fat intake:

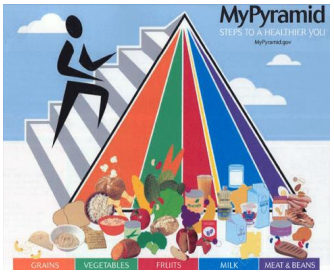
Instead of….	***Try….***
Fried chicken	*Grilled or baked chicken or fish*
Ground beef	Ground sirloin or lean ground turkey
Salami, bologna	Sliced turkey or chicken deli meat
Whole eggs	Egg whites
Whole milk	Skim or 1% milk
Cheddar cheese	Light cheddar or other light cheese varieties
Ice cream	Frozen yogurt
Cookies	Ginger snaps or graham crackers
French fries	Baked potato
Chips	Baked chips or whole wheat crackers
Cream sauces and soups	Vegetable based sauces and soups

Strategy: Food & Activity Journal…Or Food Photo Log

Recording what and how much you eat everyday along with your daily activity can help you identify areas for improvement. A journal also allows you to track your progress. You can purchase a food journal from the bookstore, record your calories online, or make copies of the attached food journal. Whatever you decide to use, it's important to capture these things:

- Write down everything that you eat and drink (even if it is just a bite)
- Track calories and fat of foods eaten
- Include how much you ate or drank – estimate if you are unsure the amount
- Record the time of day that you ate
- Record your physical activity everyday

Where can I keep track of how many calories I consume each day?



There are several free online tools are available to help you to keep track of how many calories you consume each day. Use the Adult Food Pyramid on www.myuhc.com or on www.mypyramid.gov to keep an online food journal. Other free food journal websites include:

- SparkPeople: www.sparkpeople.com (also offers a phone App)
- The DailyPlate: www.thedailyplate.com (also offers a phone App)

Also, look for free food journal apps on your cell phone if applicable; that way you can record what you eat instantly, without having to remember later on. Some programs will even let you scan any food with a barcode and automatically look it up for you – such as Fooducate. (If you have a free, favorite app, let us know!)

Food Photos

There has been more research recently on the practice of taking pictures of all the food you're eating throughout the day as an alternative to a written food log. With the widespread use of mobile phones with cameras and apps, it is a convenient and effective way to keep track of what you eat and keep some of your eating habits in check. Although this method wouldn't give you calorie and nutrient intake information, it gives you a great visual record of your choices and portion sizes. Again, look for apps on your phone, and/or download the photos to your computer where you may also use a food photo tracking program. You may even want to use a site that lets other's see it too, for extra accountability (such as a food photo blog). (And let us know if you have a favorite app!)

Daily Food and Activity Journal

Date:

Time	Food/Drink (include amount & type)	Calories	Notes (Emotions, hunger level, location)

My Activities

Exercise	Minutes	Calories Burned
Additional Daily Activities		

My Notes

Thoughts, Feelings, Challenges, Successes

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