

## Weight Loss Through Wellness

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Live smarter, not harder: when you focus on losing weight you are more likely to gain weight in the long run. When you focus on living a healthy lifestyle, your weight will settle down to a healthy range. An easy way to visualize a healthy lifestyle is to picture three pillars supporting your life, much like a three-legged stool supports a person sitting on it. These wellness pillars are nutrition, exercise and sleep. If even one pillar is weak, the foundation of your life is wobbly, and you may experience weight gain as a side effect of less-than-optimum health.

The nutrition pillar consists of macro-nutrients and micro-nutrients. A healthy diet is comprised of the right types and proper proportions of three basic macro-nutrient building blocks: lean protein, low-glycemic carbohydrates and essential fatty acids. Micro-nutrients play a critical role in supporting the myriad biochemical processes going on in your body around the clock. In 2002 the American Medical Association recommended that we supplement our diet with micro-nutrients because our diets fall short of optimum levels. When you focus putting nutrients into your body you will avoid eating empty calories that add pounds and take years off your life.

The exercise wellness pillar consists of aerobic and weight bearing exercises. Both types of exercise are critical to living a long, healthy life, and they have a side effect of keeping your weight in a healthy range. The phrase, "Use it or Lose it" applies. If you want to be able to walk and move about freely in your golden years you must walk and move your body now.

The sleep pillar is the most paradoxical. Far from being a waste of time, a study conducted by the American Cancer Society revealed that sleep correlated with lifespan more than all other wellness factors. Those who slept 8 hours per night lived longest. Other studies have shown that those who regularly got a good night's sleep weigh less than those who did not. Why? Because your body's cellular repair processes kick into high gear when you sleep. Your body burns fat as an energy source to repair damaged cells, fight infections and correct DNA replication errors, nipping degenerative diseases in the bud.

Living well is easy. If you are not sure how to get started, consult with a wellness coach who specializes in helping people adopt healthy lifestyles.