



Fighting the Good Fight! The “Battle of the Bulge”

You’ve all heard the frustrations of both friends and family... “I just can’t seem to stay on my diet” or “All of the foods that are bad for me taste so good!” and “I am losing this ongoing battle with my weight”. Maintaining a healthy weight poses a significant challenge, particularly if you don’t have the right information, guidance, and/ or tools available to help you.

Healthy food choices remain one of the most important factors in maintaining a healthy weight. The month of March, as **National Nutrition Month**, presents the perfect time to arm yourself with the information, tools and skills you need to make good, nutritious food choices that will support your weight goals.

An invaluable tool for your use in pursuit of weight control is available at your base Health and Wellness Center (HAWC). Developed by both fitness and nutrition experts from across the Air Force, the *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™* campaign provides manageable “bites” of information designed to increase your awareness of weight gain and to help you prevent it. *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™* offers suggestions on lifestyle changes, as varied as individual needs, that impact both your current and future weight! The foundation of this program exists in its name: *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™*

Consider weight control as a balance. If you eat more calories/food than you need, you will gain weight. On the other hand, if you burn more calories than you eat, you will lose weight. Emphasizing nutritious foods allows you to find the right “balance” between your physical activity level and the calories you consume.

We associate many health benefits, including improved weight control and even weight loss, with a diet based on fruits, vegetables and grain foods—especially whole grains. Foods low in fat and high in fiber, such as those from plant sources, tend to be both nutritious and filling. A typical serving of vegetables or fruit has about 2 grams of fiber, less than 1 gram of fat and between 25 and 60 calories. An example of a serving might be ½ cup of steamed broccoli or 1 apple. Compare the calories to the same portion (1/2 cup) of a snack of M&Ms, with over 400 calories and over 10 grams of fat! Substituting fruits and vegetables for other higher calorie snacks provides you with notable benefits: cuts back on calories consumed, works to maintain a healthy weight, and celebrates National Nutrition Month!

For more information on food, nutrition and weight control, contact your base HAWC or Dietitian. Look for information on *Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™*, and spend some time this month to expand your knowledge of good nutrition, as well as improve your diet and overall wellness!

Shape Your Future...Your Weigh!™