

# National Weight Control Registry

The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) was founded in 1993 by Dr. James Hill of the University of Colorado and Dr. Rena Wing of Brown University and University of Pittsburgh to study a large group of individuals who have maintained a weight loss of at least 30 pounds and have kept it off for at least a year.

One of the most popular myths about weight loss is that everyone who loses weight will eventually gain it back. The Registry, with over 5,000 members, shows us that this simply isn't true. What IS true is about "long-time losers" is that they have made lifestyle changes they can live with and have developed a range of weight-related behaviors conducive to keeping their weight off.

Successful weight control is a long-term process and requires patience and a positive approach to all weight-related behaviors. Weight control involves diet modification and developing a healthy, positive attitude to food and exercise. Weight control usually means adopting new attitudes towards yourself, your weight and body shape, and developing more realistic expectations of how weight affects your life.

## **Weight Control Findings from over 5,000 registry members:**

- Average weight lost is about 70 pounds
- Average time the weight has been off is 6  $\frac{1}{2}$  years
- 14% of members have lost 100 pounds or more
- Two-thirds of successful weight losers were overweight as children and 60% report a family history of obesity
- Successful weight losers report making substantial changes in eating and exercise habits to lose weight and to maintain their losses
- On average, registrants' report consuming about 1400 calories/day, with 25% of calories coming from fat, 56% as carbohydrates and 19% as protein calories.

- They expend about 400 calories/day in physical exercise (roughly 2,800 calories a week or the equivalent of walking 4 miles a day)
- Walking is the most frequently cited physical activity
- Most all the registrants eat breakfast EVERY day.
- Have resting metabolic rates equal to their reference range weight, non-dieting counterparts
- The average registrant has lost an average of 271 pounds during their lifetime

### **In order to LOSE weight:**

- 89% modified BOTH food intake and physical activity
- 10 % used diet alone
- 1% modified ONLY physical activity
- 55% used a formal program or professional assistance
- Majority limited certain TYPES of food
- 44% ate all foods but limited QUANTITY
- Very few lost weight for the last time using fad diets
- Overwhelming majority said that the key was changing their lifestyle for good

### **To MAINTAIN Weight:**

- Registry members eat regular meals, including breakfast
- On average, eat 5 times per day
- On average eat one meal at a fast-food restaurant and 2.5 meals at non-fast food restaurants
- Continue to monitor their food intake in some way but do NOT feel deprived or feel like they are "dieting"
- 38% weigh themselves daily
- 75% weigh themselves once per week

85% of respondents reported that weight loss led to improvements in their general quality of life, mood, self-confidence, energy level, mobility and physical health.