



Measuring Weight Loss Success Without the Scale

Do you dread getting on the scale every day? If so, you're not alone. Adopting a healthy diet is hard enough without obsessing about every pound gained or lost. What may be completely normal fluctuations in your weight can seriously mess with your head by impacting your confidence and even sabotaging all the hard work you've put into being healthier – just because the number you see isn't reflective of your efforts. Depending on the time of day or how much water your body has retained, the average adult's weight may fluctuate by five to six pounds per day.

That's why it's important to consider the many other ways your body may be trying to affirm that your efforts to lose weight and be healthier are actually working – even when the scale says otherwise. While weight is one indicator of your diet, it's certainly not the only measure of success. The good news is adopting a healthy diet affects so much more than your waistline. Here are just a few ways you may be able to tell how you're doing on your path to a healthier diet.

Muscle Up!

Are you noticing a new tone in your triceps? Particularly if you're doing strength training and weight-bearing exercise, the scale may not be the best way to measure the success of your diet. That's because muscle weighs more than fat – sort of. In reality, muscle is



more dense than fat, which means one pound of fat takes up more space than one pound of muscle. If you're lifting weights, you may be building muscle at a faster rate than you are losing pounds, but that's a good problem to have. Those new muscles will help your body burn more calories, even at rest, and can also increase your metabolism. Most likely, the scale will take a little while to catch up and reflect the efforts of your newfound strength

Energy Talks

How are your energy levels? Do you feel ready to take on whatever comes up throughout the day, or do you find yourself feeling tired or lethargic? Chances are, if your body is being fueled with the healthful foods you need to lose weight, your energy levels will rise. You may have greater strength or endurance at the gym. Even if the scale doesn't

reflect the benefits of your diet right away, increased energy levels can make it easier to get the exercise you need to shed those pounds... and also to focus on your new path to good health. Keep up the hard work and start tracking your energy levels in a simple journal alongside your food diary

Thinking Clearly?

Because the foods you eat can have a significant impact on your brain's ability to function properly, take a quick inventory of your cognitive competence. Does your brain feel fresh and ready to take on the world? According to nutrition experts, certain unhealthy foods can cause fluctuations in blood sugar that can lead to brain fog and other cognitive problems. So, even if your weight doesn't reflect the fruits of your labor, your brain may be telling you otherwise. If you're finally

avoiding the mid-afternoon brain fog, celebrate that success and keep going strong

Take Measure

Oftentimes, measuring your waist circumference, upper arms, abdomen, hips, and thighs will show you how far you've come before the scale. Using a basic tape measure can help you track these important metrics along your weight loss journey

Find Your Fit

Are your clothes fitting differently? If you can button the long-lost favorite pair of skinny jeans that was relegated to the back of your closet, that's a sign you're well on your way to a healthier you. Similarly, if you feel better and more confident when you check your outfit in the mirror, this is often a better gauge of your diet achievement than those silly numbers on the scale.

Rest Easy

If you wake up feeling well-rested and ready to go, you may be getting a better night's sleep. That's because a healthy diet may help improve the *quality* of sleep you get. According to the [American Society for Nutrition](#), "Studies provide some evidence for a role of certain dietary patterns and foods in the promotion of high quality sleep..." While experts say more research is needed, keeping tabs on how well-rested you feel after several weeks of healthy eating may be just the inspiration you need to maintain your diet plan

Check Your Camera Roll

When you start your diet, take a quick selfie wearing your favorite outfit (or your birthday suit, if that suits you!). Take a new selfie once a week and compare it with your previous you – this simple photo journal can help demonstrate changes in your body that you won't be able to see from the numbers on your scale.

Shifting Cravings

Did you go from craving cookies and carbs to dreaming of a plate of protein-rich foods? Just a few days or weeks of transitioning your fuel sources can have a serious effect on your cravings. If you notice your sugar cravings have subsided, you've made some significant progress. Eliminating added sugars and refined carbohydrates is one of the best ways to get on a successful path to long-term weight loss. RIP, sweet tooth.

Listen Up

Are your friends and family saying you look great? If you notice people complimenting you or your clothes more often, it's likely they are taking note of the new and improved you – even if your scale hasn't said a word.

If you find yourself battling with the scale, take a step back, literally. Put the scale away and listen to your body, mind and those around you. Chances are, these indicators are a far more accurate reflection of where you are on your journey to better health.



Weigh Better

If you can't bring yourself to part ways with your scale, follow these tips when weighing for best results.

Be consistent

Whether you choose to weigh yourself once a week or once a month, sticking to the schedule can help you avoid the mind games we love to play with our scales. Also, use the same scale – this means you can't weigh yourself at the gym, the doctor and at home – choose one and stick with it.

Weigh first

The best time of day to weigh yourself is first thing in the morning. Check this task off your list before you leave the house!

Tare it up

To make sure your scale is accurate, take a 5-pound barbell (or whatever weight you have) and make sure the scale reflects its actual weight. That can help you be sure your scale is telling the truth.