



## **Nutrition and Weight Gain**

### **Nutrition**

It is important for people with disabilities to get proper nutrition. Some of the conditions that cause paralysis can also cause swallowing difficulties. Food may need to be pureed or made soft in those instances. While there are many fitness opportunities available to wheelchair users and people with paralysis, it may still be more difficult for people with mobility issues to maintain proper weight by exercising. People with mobility issues may also need specially adapted eating utensils.

### **What Are Overweight and Obesity?**

The terms "overweight" and "obesity" refer to a person's overall body weight and whether it's too high. Overweight is having extra body weight from muscle, bone, fat, and/or water. Obesity is having a high amount of extra body fat.

The most useful measure of overweight and obesity is body mass index (BMI). BMI is based on height and weight and is used for adults, children, and teens. For more information about BMI, go to ["How Are Overweight and Obesity Diagnosed?"](#)

### **Overview**

Millions of Americans and people worldwide are overweight or obese. Being overweight or obese puts you at risk for many diseases and conditions. The more body fat that you have and the more you weigh, the more likely you are to develop:

- Coronary heart disease (also called coronary artery disease)
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Gallstones
- Breathing problems
- Certain cancers

Your weight is the result of many factors. These factors include environment, family history and genetics, metabolism (the way your body changes food and oxygen into

energy), behavior or habits, and more. You can't change some factors, such as family history. However, you can change other factors, such as your lifestyle habits.

You can take steps to prevent or treat overweight or obesity. Follow a healthy eating plan and keep your calorie needs in mind. Do physical activity regularly and try to limit the amount of time that you're inactive.

Weight-loss medicines and surgery also are options for some people who need to lose weight if lifestyle changes aren't enough.

## **Outlook**

Reaching and staying at a healthy weight is a long-term challenge for people who are overweight or obese. But it also can be a chance to lower your risk of other serious health problems. With the right treatment and motivation, it's possible to lose weight and lower your long-term disease risk.

**Source:** [http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/obe/obe\\_whatare.html](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/obe/obe_whatare.html)  
National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute

## **University of Alabama at Birmingham Resources:**

Weight Management Following SCI – SCI InfoSheet #8  
[www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21481](http://www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21481)

Preventive Nutrition: Preventing Weight Gain from Pushin' On newsletter  
[www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21404&site=1021&return=24467](http://www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21404&site=1021&return=24467)

Go Your Own Weigh from Pushin' On newsletter  
<http://www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21402&site=1021&return=21583>

Nutrition Resources  
[www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21583&site=1021&return=24467](http://www.spinalcord.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=21583&site=1021&return=24467)

## **Craig Hospital**

Weight Gain: The Battle of the Bulge  
[www.craighospital.org/SCI/METS/weightGain.asp](http://www.craighospital.org/SCI/METS/weightGain.asp)

Cutting the Fat  
<http://www.craighospital.org/SCI/METS/fat.asp>

**University of Washington School of Medicine Dept. of Rehabilitation Medicine**  
Nutrition Guidelines for Individuals with SCI  
<http://sci.washington.edu/info/forums/reports/nutrition.asp>

## **National Center for Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD)**

### **Factsheet on Children with Disability and Obesity**

<http://www.ncpad.org/disability/factsheet.php?sheet=488>

### **Factsheets on Nutrition**

<http://www.ncpad.org/nutrition/>

Many articles on nutrition for people with disabilities.

## **Baylor College of Medicine and The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (TIRR)**

Spinal Cord Injury Nutrition Facts

[www.ilru.org/healthwellness/html/SCI1.htm](http://www.ilru.org/healthwellness/html/SCI1.htm)

### **Spinal Times**

Food and Nutrition

<http://spinaltimes.org/foodnutrition.html>

**Centers for Disease Control:** Tip Sheet on Obesity in People with Disabilities

[http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/documents/Obesity%20tip%20sheet%20%20PHPa\\_1.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/documents/Obesity%20tip%20sheet%20%20PHPa_1.pdf)

Obesity and People with Disabilities: A Tip Sheet for Public Health Professionals by State

## **Food and Nutrition Information Center: Weight Management and Obesity Resource List**

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/pubs/bibs/topics/weight/consumer.pdf>

U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

*Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 2010.

<http://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2010/DietaryGuidelines2010.pdf>

### **Easy to Swallow**

<http://www.easytoswallow.co.uk/>

Recipes for people who have swallowing difficulties.

### **Mealtime Partner: Powered Dining Device**

[www.mealtimepartners.com](http://www.mealtimepartners.com)

Enables people who cannot eat independently to feed themselves.

### **The Paraplegic Chef**

<http://www.theparaplegicchef.com/>

Megan is a paraplegic who continued to follow her passion to cook after her injury. The recipes are not necessarily for people who have physical limitations or swallowing disorders.

**Erin's Cookin'**

<http://erinscookin.com/>

Quadriplegic cook, a percentage of the proceeds of her e-book goes to the Reeve Foundation.

**How to Read Nutrition Labels**

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/foodlab.html>

How to Understand and Use the Nutrition Fact Labels

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/label.html>

Food Labeling and Nutrition

**U.S. Department of Agriculture: Food Pyramid**

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

**Health Canada - Santé Canada**

[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html)

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating

**Linus Pauling Institute – Oregon State University**

<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/infocenter/foods/grains/gigl.html>

Glycemic Index and Glycemic Load, Satiety

**American Heart Association: Fat**

<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4582>

Hydrogenated fats, Polyunsaturated vs. Monounsaturated, etc.

**U.S. Food and Drug Administration**

<http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/supplmnt.html>

Dietary Supplements

**For Children:**

**Kids Health**

[http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay\\_healthy/food/labels.html](http://www.kidshealth.org/kid/stay_healthy/food/labels.html)

Figuring Out Food Labels

The following books and videos are available for free loan from the PRC library. For more information, please see [www.paralysis.org](http://www.paralysis.org) and click the Lending Library tab.

**Books**

- Achilles, Elaine. **The Dysphagia Cookbook: Great Tasting and Nutritious Recipes For People With Swallowing Difficulties.** Nashville, TN: Cumberland House, 2004.
- Appel, Vicki, Sandy Calvin and Imelda Otte. **ALS: Maintaining Nutrition.** Houston, TX: MDA ALS Center, 1991.
- Appel, Vicki, Sandy Calvin, Gena Smith and Donna Woehr. **MeALS for Easy Swallowing.** New York, NY: Muscular Dystrophy Association, 1987.
- Blakeslee, Mary E. **The Wheelchair Gourmet: A Cookbook For The Disabled.** New York, NY: Beaufort Books, Inc., 1981.
- Boroch, Anne. **Healing Multiple Sclerosis: Diet, Detox & Nutritional Makeover for Total Recovery.** Los Angeles: Quintessential Healing Inc. Publishing, 2007.
- Davies, Ken. **Wheelchair Diet Plan.** Preston, UK: Help4U Publishing, 2001.
- **The Disabled Gourmet.** Orange Coast College Campus Colleagues Club. Costa Mesa, CA. Cookbooks by Morris Press, 1998.
- Edney, Eric. **Eric Is Winning: Beating A Terminal Illness With Nutrition, Avoiding Toxins And Common Sense.** Xlibris Corporation, 2004.
- Evans, Henry and Jane Evans. **The Pureed Gourmet.** Scott Publishing, 2004.
- Fitzgerald, Geraldine and Fenella Briscoe. **Recipes for Health: Multiple Sclerosis: Over 100 Recipes to Help Control Symptoms.** San Francisco: Thorsons, 1996.
- Greer, Rita. **Soft Options: For Adults Who Have Difficulty Chewing.** Great Britain: Souvenir Press, 1998.
- Klinger, Judith Lannefeld. **Mealtime Manual: For People With Disabilities And The Aging.** Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated, 1997.
- Sawyer, Ann D. and Judith E. Bachrach. **The MS Recovery Diet.** New York: Penguin, 2007.
- Schwier, Karin Melberg & Erin Schwier Stewart. **Breaking Bread, Nourishing Connections: People With And Without Disabilities Together At Mealtime.** Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing, Co., 2005.

- Swank, Roy Laver & Barbara Brewer. **The Multiple Sclerosis Diet Book.** New York, NY: Doubleday, 1977.
- Thomas, Charles C. **So What You Can't Chew, Eat Hearty: Recipes And A Guide For The Healthy And Happy Eating Of Soft Pureed Foods.** Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1980.
- Weihoffen, Donna. L., Jo Anne Robbins and Paula A. Sullivan. **Easy To Swallow, Easy To Chew Cookbook: Over 150 Tasty and Nutritious Recipes For People Who Have Difficulty Swallowing.** New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002.
- Williams, Montel. **Living Well: 21 Days to Transform Your Life, Supercharge Your Health, and Feel Spectacular.** New York: New American Library, 2008. Williams has MS and offers recipes in this book.
- Wilson, J. Randy. **I Can't Chew Cookbook: Delicious Soft-Diet Recipes For People With Chewing, Swallowing and Dry-Mouth Disorders.** Alameda, CA: Hunter House, Inc. Publishers, 2003.

### Videos

- **Living With ALS: Adjusting to Swallowing Difficulties and Maintaining Good Nutrition.** Calabasas Hills, CA: The ALS Association.

**The information contained in this message is presented for the purpose of educating and informing you about paralysis and its effects. Nothing contained in this message should be construed nor is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. It should not be used in place of the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider. Should you have any health care related questions, please call or see your physician or other qualified health care provider promptly. Always consult with your physician or other qualified health care provider before embarking on a new treatment, diet or fitness program. You should never disregard medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in this message.**