



Jeb Bush
Governor

M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D.
Secretary, Department of Health

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Wednesday, December 07, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:
Jeannine Mallory,
Public Information Director
PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT
727-824-6908 (for media use only)

Get an early start on your New Year's resolution

Tips for Reaching and Maintaining a Healthy Weight

Over the past 20 years, obesity among adults has risen significantly in the U.S. In fact, the latest data from the National Center for Health Statistics shows that 30 percent of U.S. adults age 20 years and older – that's more than 60 million people – are obese. And this increase is not limited to adults. The percentage of young people who are overweight has more than tripled since 1980. Among children and teens aged 6 to 19 years, 16 percent (more than nine million young people) are considered overweight.

Overweight and obesity are both labels for ranges of weight that are greater than what is generally considered healthy for a given height. **(See attachment)**

Understanding the Energy Equation

Whether you want to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight, it's important to understand the connection between the energy your body takes in (through the foods you eat and the beverages you drink) and the energy your body uses (through the activities you do). To lose weight, you need to use more calories than you take in. To maintain a healthy weight, you need to balance the calories you use with those you take in. No matter which results you want, eating a healthy diet and being physically active can help you reach your goal.

Getting the Most Nutrition Out of Calories

There is a "right" number of calories for you to eat each day. This number depends on your age, activity level and whether you're trying to gain, maintain or lose weight. You could use up the entire amount on a few high-calorie items. If you do that, chances are you won't get the full range of vitamins and nutrients your body needs to be healthy.

Choose the most nutritionally-rich foods you can from each food group each day – choose foods packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients, but lower in calories. Pick foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products more often.

(MORE)



Jeb Bush
Governor

M. Rony François, M.D., M.S.P.H., Ph.D.
Secretary, Department of Health

PINELLAS COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Tips for Reaching and Maintaining a Healthy Weight – Page 2

Finding the Balance between Food and Physical Activity

Becoming healthier isn't just about eating healthy — it's also about physical activity. Regular physical activity is important for your overall health and fitness. It also helps you control body weight by balancing the calories you take in as food with the calories you expend each day. Some suggestions:

- Be physically active, at a moderate intensity for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.
- Increasing the intensity or the amount of time that you are physically active can have even greater health benefits and may be needed to control body weight. About 60 minutes a day may be needed to prevent weight gain.
- Children and teenagers should be physically active 60 minutes every day, or most every day.

Getting Started

Not sure where to begin? It all depends on your current weight status. A good starting point is to find out your body mass index, or BMI. Knowing your BMI can help you decide what steps to take. If you're not sure what a healthy weight is for yourself (or others in your family), talk with your health care provider. To calculate your BMI or for more information, visit www.PinellasWellness.com or www.cdc.gov.

###

The mission of the Pinellas County Health Department is to promote, protect and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors through public and private community efforts.
www.PinellasHealth.com