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We're here to support you every step of the way!

mindset makeover

Your guide to a healthy weight loss state of mind

Welcome to the Program

Nutrisystem proudly presents this state-of-the-art behavior modification program as part of the comprehensive Nutrisystem® weight loss program.

This hands-on guide provides practical solutions and tactics for weight loss, and was created exclusively for Nutrisystem under the guidance of renowned weight management expert, Gary Foster, Ph.D., in collaboration with Jay Satz, Ph.D., Vice President of Program and Product Development for Nutrisystem, Inc.

Dr. Gary Foster is the Director of the Center for Obesity Research and Education and a Professor of Medicine and Public Health at Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. He has been conducting federally funded research on weight management and the prevention of obesity for more than 25 years. Dr. Foster has authored more than 100 scientific publications and book chapters and has edited two books on the causes and treatment of obesity. He has considerable clinical experience and has treated numerous overweight patients in individual and group settings over the last 25 years. Additionally, Dr. Foster has received numerous awards, including Outstanding Contribution to Health Psychology from the American Psychological Association, and he was named an Honorary Member of the American Dietetic Association. He was also recently elected President of the Obesity Society (2008).

Dr. Jay Satz joined Nutrisystem 1981, and has led the Nutrisystem research and development team in the development of numerous programs and products throughout the years, including the creation of the company's low Glycemic Index program—Nutrisystem® Nourish®—which launched in January of 2004, and the Nutrisystem® Advanced™ program for 2008. Dr. Satz and his team continue to lead Nutrisystem in its quest for healthy, balanced, and effective weight loss solutions.

Welcome!

Welcome to the *Nutrisystem® Mindset Makeover™*, and congratulations on making the decision to take control of your weight and your health! Nutrisystem offers you a variety of tools designed to help you reach your goals. These include:

- ✓ Portion-controlled meals that are pre-packaged for your convenience
- ✓ A meal planner that contains a Daily Diary, Serving Guide, and Dining Out Guide
- ✓ An interactive website
- ✓ Online and telephone counseling and support

In addition to these tools, you are receiving this *Mindset Makeover™* guide to help you make positive lifestyle changes.

Getting Started

13 Common Reasons for Losing Weight:

- Want to improve self-esteem and confidence
- Want to return to a pre-pregnancy weight
- Want to look good in a bathing suit
- Want to wear a greater variety of stylish clothes
- Want to look good for a special occasion (graduation, wedding, vacation, etc.)
- Want to feel more in control of food choices and/or life in general
- Want to have more energy
- Want to keep up with children or grandchildren
- Want to participate in various forms of physical activity (organized sports, dance, etc.)
- Want to have less shortness of breath going up steps or walking around town
- Want to feel more fit for retirement
- Want to improve health
- Want to decrease risk of health problems later in life

Just as each person has a different weight history, each person has specific reasons for wanting to lose weight. Take a minute to think about your own reasons right now. For most, weight loss won’t be about a particular number on the scale; it will be about the negative consequences that excess weight brings. It’s important to know what your driving force is so you can assess improvements over time. In the spaces below, list the most important reasons for you to lose weight at this time. As you progress through the program, refer back to these reasons in order to maintain your focus and motivation, and to assess your progress.

My Most Important Reasons for Losing Weight

Whether it’s health, appearance, energy, or a sense of control that drives your desire to lose weight, it can be a challenge to manage your weight in today’s world. Supersizing, all-you-can-eat buffets, remote controls and drive-thrus are just a few examples of how our modern lifestyle creates barriers to eating well and being active. In addition, our busy lives can make it hard to find the time to focus on good health. Whether it’s long days at the office or transporting the kids to various activities, it can be tough just to keep up.

Congratulations on taking the time to begin reading this lifestyle guide. It’s an important first step in establishing that you are a priority. With your commitment and the tools Nutrisystem provides, you CAN do it!

The Nutrisystem Difference

Nutrisystem takes the work out of meal planning and preparation and allows you to concentrate on changing behaviors that are critical for weight control. Without the burden of having to plan menus, prepare meals, and count calories (since you’re provided with an easy-to-follow meal plan and more than 125 delicious, pre-portioned, ready-to-go foods to choose from), you can concentrate on learning and practicing the skills that will help you keep off the weight you lose! Studies have shown that those who use portion-controlled meal plans lose more weight than those who are left to choose from thousands of foods that are not pre-portioned. ^{1,2,3,4,5}

The Lifestyle Guide: Teaching You How to Keep the Weight Off

The Nutrisystem program is about long-term weight control. Long-term weight control means making small, realistic (not extreme) changes in your behaviors that will last. This *Mindset Makeover™* guide is a step-by-step approach to effective weight control. It will help you identify WHAT behaviors you need to work on (for example, making better food choices, increasing physical activity, etc.), and teach you HOW to go about making these changes (i.e., use food records like the **Daily Diary in your Meal Planner** to monitor your eating habits, develop an eating schedule to manage hunger, and improve grocery shopping strategies to ensure your food inventory is “safe,” etc.).

It’s easy to say “I’m going to eat less” or “I’m going to exercise more,” but it’s harder to figure out *how* you will accomplish these goals week after week. By reading this guide, you’ll develop skills and strategies for dealing with a variety of barriers that get in the way of eating better and moving more. *Mindset Makeover™* will guide you and help you make changes that fit into your unique lifestyle. Consider this another form of support in your journey to a better you. Professional and personalized guidance--that’s what Nutrisystem is all about.

Benefits of this Guide:

This guide will help you:

- ✓ Identify what you need to change
- ✓ Learn how to make necessary changes
- ✓ Learn to problem solve and overcome barriers
- ✓ Stay on track through weekly “skill building” activities

In addition to this guide, you can contact a Nutrisystem® weight loss counselor for support. The purpose of the Nutrisystem weight loss counseling team is to serve your individual needs. They are well-versed in the program and can provide you guidance via phone (1-800-727-8046), email, or online chat at www.nutrisystem.com.

Some Reasons to Call a Weight Loss Counselor:

- Questions regarding rate of weight loss
- Help determining target weight
- Questions about portion size
- Questions about the meal plan and meal planner
- Questions about free foods
- Questions about food preparation
- Dealing with obstacles
- Tips for vacations
- Dining out suggestions
- Tips for dealing with plateaus
- Questions about food labels
- Questions about alcohol intake
- Questions about nutrition
- Customization of menus
- Inspiration and support
- Tips for holiday meals
- Exercise tips
- Questions about online tools

How the Program Works

You will be using Nutrisystem along with this manual for the first 12 weeks of your program. Each week, you’ll be introduced to one of 12 core skills related to successful weight control. You’ll work on developing specific skills, such as self-monitoring, managing different types of hunger, increasing your activity level, and managing triggers that lead to overeating. The weekly topics are listed in the table to follow. **Each week, you will read a brief new topic and be given a specific skill to work on during the week.** These weekly assignments or “Skill Builders” are essential for weight control. Just like learning to play a sport or an instrument, developing weight control takes practice. You wouldn’t expect to become an Olympic athlete after one lesson. Similarly, you shouldn’t expect to change habits after reading one section of this guide. Some skills will take more practice than others. The most important thing to realize is that learning weight management is a process, and it takes time to develop skills for dealing with various situations. Early success during the first 4-6 weeks of the program will lead to future success, so it’s important to get the best start possible.

Some of you may reach your goals in 12 weeks, while others may need more time. Don’t worry; this is not a race, so work at a pace that is appropriate for you. You should ask your weight loss counselor for help setting a realistic target weight and deciding how long it will take you to reach that goal. Whether you need more than 12 weeks to reach your goal weight or you achieve your goal in 12 weeks, it is recommended that you review your guide and continue to practice these core skills (even after you’ve met your weight loss goals). When practiced consistently, these core skills will take the place of negative behaviors and new, positive behaviors will be automatic. Keep this guide as a reference and keep in touch with a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor for additional help. Once you reach your goal, you can focus on the last chapter, which provides strategies for staying on track and keeping the weight off.

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Making the Most of the Program

As you already know, your Nutrisystem welcome kit came with a variety of helpful tools like pre-packaged foods and a meal planner. Here are some tips to make the most of your experience:

- ✓ **Make yourself a priority.** How many times have you thought that you don’t have time to take care of yourself because you are busy taking care of others or have too much work to do? Have you ever thought that if you don’t take care of yourself, you might not be able to take care of those who are important to you? Take time to take care of yourself mentally and physically. One way to ensure that you have time for yourself is to make yourself a priority. This may mean that you have to say “no” when asked to take on a new task or ask a friend or a family member to help you out. You deserve to be good to yourself. You’re worth it!

- ✓ **Practice, practice, practice.** Unfortunately, reading and talking about changing eating and activity habits isn't enough. That's why each week you'll get a Skill Builder to help you practice new skills. Remember, skill-power not just will-power leads to effective weight control.
- ✓ **Hang in there.** Neither Rome nor effective weight control was built in a day. Eating and activity habits develop over a lifetime, so don't expect to change them overnight. Take small steps and you will get to your destination. Remember that small changes in your behavior and weight are better than no change. Progress does not always take a direct path; there will be both victories and setbacks. You can learn from both. You should contact a counselor for help overcoming some of the difficulties and barriers you experience.

Preparing Your Environment

Changing and maintaining positive behaviors is made easier when you reduce triggers and barriers. It is considerably more difficult to make healthy choices when you're surrounded by high calorie foods! It's a good idea for you to prepare your environment for success. Follow these steps to get the best possible start.

- ✓ **Get rid of high risk foods.** Think about the high-fat foods (i.e., chips, cookies, whole milk) you have at your house and/or workplace. Replace these high calorie foods with satisfying Nutrisystem snacks (that were sent in your package) and stock up on other healthy low-fat foods (i.e., vegetables, fruits, low-fat dairy products) to complete your meal plan. Look in the back of your Nutrisystem meal planner for healthy food suggestions and make a list of what you need before you go food shopping.
- ✓ **Out of sight, out of mind.** If you must have unhealthy foods in your house, place them in areas that are out of the way or hard to get at, like a high cabinet or under other foods in the freezer. It is less likely that you will be triggered to eat a piece of cake that is hidden in your freezer than a piece of cake sitting on your countertop.
- ✓ **Talk to your family and/or close friends.** Changing behaviors is made easier with support from others. Most friends and family members want to be supportive but may be unsure how to help you—so help them help you. Discuss the program, your eating plan, and goals and be specific about how they can help you. For example, you could say, "Please buy vanilla ice cream instead of strawberry cheesecake ice cream since vanilla is a flavor I'm less likely to eat."
- ✓ **Buy small quantities.** Sometimes grocery stores make "bulk" offers that are hard to resist, but do you really need that much food lying around? Buy only as much as your household will reasonably eat. Buying foods in individual serving sizes is another good strategy for managing how much you eat. For example, it is less likely that you will overeat if you open up a single serving of crackers, which may have 2 crackers to a pack, than an entire box of crackers.

Well, you're ready to go! The next few months will be exciting as you develop skills for eating well, moving regularly and taking care of yourself. Reading these materials and working on specific behavioral skills each week is a great formula for successful weight management.

You can do this!

Week 1

Getting Started and Setting Goals

Following Your Nutrisystem® Meal Plan and Using the Nutrisystem Meal Planner

Did you know that “diet” comes from the Greek word “diaita” meaning “way of life?” It suggests that eating well is one part of a balanced lifestyle that can be maintained. The Nutrisystem® program isn’t just about what you eat, it’s also about how you live. The food and tools you received in your welcome kit (like the Nutrisystem Meal Planner that includes a daily diary, serving guide, etc.), as well as the Nutrisystem weight loss counseling team, will help you make small changes in your eating behaviors that you can live with. For example, when you eat Nutrisystem® pre-portioned meals and add-in the foods that accompany these meals, you will get a better sense of appropriate portion sizes. Our counselors often hear from people who have successfully finished the program that Nutrisystem taught them what a “real” portion size is. It’s quite different than the enormous portion sizes typically served at restaurants that leave you feeling stuffed and uncomfortable.

Unfortunately, what comes to the minds of many people when they hear the word “diet” isn’t pleasant. Being “on a diet” is usually associated with deprivation, hunger, irritability and, you guessed it, going “off a diet.” If at any time you feel deprived or hungry while you’re on Nutrisystem, you should call a weight loss counselor immediately because this program is not designed to make you feel this way. Your Nutrisystem meal plan is carefully designed so that you eat a variety of satisfying and tasty meals and snacks throughout the day. If followed correctly, you will probably be surprised by how satisfied you feel on this program. When you make smart food choices, you can eat more, not less. This approach to “dieting” is much more consistent with a long-term lifestyle than one that views dieting as something drastic and temporary (i.e., skipping meals, eating a limited number of foods). So, forget about restrictive, depriving diets that are doomed to fail. Let’s focus, instead, on an approach to eating that will last. The Nutrisystem® program will help you get on the right track by providing you with convenient, tasty foods you enjoy, and by teaching you how to make positive lifestyle changes at the same time.

Today is the day you begin your journey towards effective weight control! As you know, the focus is on establishing eating and activity habits that will help you achieve a healthy weight. Don’t expect to be perfect. One step at a time is the way to go. Make sure to reach out to a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor if you experience any difficulties. This week, you’ll learn how to use the tools that will help you lose weight—the Nutrisystem meal plan you received in your first kit and the Nutrisystem meal planner. You will also learn how to set realistic and appropriate goals and how to keep track of your progress.

Your Nutrisystem® Meal Plan

Nutrisystem has designed 8 meal plans, depending on the needs of the individual: **Women’s Program**, **Men’s Program**, **Silver for Women Program**, **Silver for Men Program**, **Nutrisystem D for women with type 2 diabetes**, **Nutrisystem D for men with type 2 diabetes**, and **Women’s and Men’s Vegetarian Programs**. Each plan is a little bit different; therefore, the suggested servings in the Nutrisystem meal planner may vary from meal plan to meal plan. However, no matter what Nutrisystem

meal plan you’re on, each day you select a Nutrisystem breakfast entree, lunch entree, dinner entrée, and dessert. (Those on the Men’s Program also receive an extra dessert each day to have as their afternoon snack). These entrees are supplemented at each meal time by servings of fruit, dairy, protein, vegetables, and/or low Glycemic Index (GI) carbohydrates depending on the program you are on.

Your Nutrisystem Meal Planner is a very helpful tool. Not only does it contain a Daily Diary (more on that to follow), it contains a Serving Guide that lets you know exactly what a serving of each of these grocery food additions is.

Setting Goals and Keeping Track

S.M.A.A.R.T Goal Setting

When beginning a new program, enthusiasm, motivation, and expectations are generally very high. This can be good and bad. Motivation and enthusiasm help you stay focused on the task at hand, whether it is eating better or exercising regularly, which is a good thing. However, many people fall into the trap of trying to change too many things at once or setting lofty goals that are hard to achieve. If goals are not met, most people experience feelings of frustration and failure. These feelings can lead to undesirable behaviors like giving up. To avoid this, let’s focus on effective goal setting strategies.

Through this program you will learn the skills necessary to manage your weight, but how will you know when you get there? A good way to determine if you are making progress in changing your eating and activity habits is to set goals and regularly check to see if you’ve met them. Effective goal setting is based on six basic “S.M.A.A.R.T” principles:

1. **Specific**. Define precisely what it is to be accomplished. Specific goals such as, "walk two times this week for 30 minutes after work on Tuesday and Thursday in the park” (describes how often, when, and where) are more likely to be accomplished than general ones such as, "walk more this week." Similarly, “eat one breakfast, lunch, and dinner entrée, plus one snack and dessert a day” is more likely to be accomplished than “eat better this week.” The second statement in each of these examples is vague and hard to evaluate, while the first statement allows you to assess your progress very easily.
2. **Moderate**. Select *no more than two* goals per week. Selecting several goals each week will decrease your focus and make it more difficult to stick to your goals. Once your goals have been accomplished and maintained, you can select new ones. In the first few weeks, you may want to focus only on the goals listed in the skill builder in this guide. Once you feel comfortable with the core skill builders (for example, following the Nutrisystem meal plan), you can add one or two of your own personal goals to the list.
3. **Attainable**. Make *small*, reasonable changes. If you're not walking at all, do not try to walk every day. The smaller the difference between your current behavior and your goal behavior, the greater the chances you will accomplish it. Small successes lead to big successes. Don’t set goals that require absolute perfection.

- 4. **Active.** Define your goals in terms of what “to do” rather than what “not to do.” “Follow the Nutrisystem meal plan” instead of “stop going all day without eating” or “walk after dinner” rather than “stop lying on the couch after dinner” are examples of active goals.
- 5. **Record.** It is helpful to keep a written record of your goals and progress each week. This record will increase awareness of your goal and provide an accurate record of your progress. Let’s use the goal, “walk two times this week for 30 minutes after work on Tuesday and Thursday in the park” as an example. If you check off an activity in your exercise log each time you do it, then you can easily go back and evaluate how well you were able to meet your exercise goal that week. The records can also be used to track your progress incorporating more physical activity over time. We will discuss record keeping in further detail in the next Monitoring Your Behavior section.
- 6. **Time-limited.** Assess your goals over short intervals of time (i.e., once a week). Sometimes, even shorter intervals are helpful (day by day). Reviewing your progress after short periods will enable you to review your accomplishments and troubleshoot difficulties early. We encourage you to call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor once a week to review your goals and progress following the Nutrisystem meal plan. Have your meal planner handy so you can discuss details related to your meal plan.

Monitoring Your Behaviors

You can’t change your behaviors or eating habits without knowing what they are in the first place. Keeping track of what and how much you eat (also known as self-monitoring) has many benefits (as described in the “R” section of S.M.A.A.R.T above).

Self-monitoring can help you identify unfavorable eating patterns, like how often you skip meals or how long you go between meals or snacks. Certain factors like time, locations, or activities can also affect what and how much you eat, whether you realize it or not. For example, certain times of the day may trigger feelings of hunger or watching TV may trigger a desire to snack. With this information you can modify your habits and make changes in your behavior. The act of writing down what you eat and drink not only helps you become more aware of how often you eat and drink, it also makes you more aware of what you put into your body and whether it is appropriate or not. Although you don’t have to worry too much about the quality of your meals right now because Nutrisystem is providing you with meals, you need to develop this skill because you are responsible for supplementing these meals with various foods, and you will eventually be selecting more foods and beverages on your own.

Tips for a Positive Start

- ✓ **Stick to the plan.** In order to be as successful as possible, it is critical that you follow your Nutrisystem plan carefully from the very beginning and know exactly what and how much you are eating. Small departures early on tend to lead to bigger departures over time. Work hard to get the best possible start. Call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor within the first week to make sure you are following the plan correctly and for food preparation tips.

Call a weight loss counselor within the first week of the program.

- ✓ **Weigh yourself.** You should weigh yourself at the start of your program and once a week on the same day after that, using the same scale each time. (It is best to weigh yourself in the morning with minimal clothing after you go to the bathroom).

Weigh yourself one time a week.

- ✓ **Keep track.** Record what you eat and drink as soon after you do so as possible. People who keep track lose more weight than those who don’t. It’s tough to change habits without knowing what they are. Use the Daily Diary in your Meal Planner to make keeping track easier.

Your meal planner is a helpful tool.

Let’s take a few minutes to take a closer look at your Meal Planner. It contains a Daily Diary for monitoring your adherence to the Nutrisystem meal plan. The best way to use this food diary is to make a check mark in the circles next to each food category as soon as you’ve finished eating, rather than at the end of the day or week. Trying to think back about what and how much you ate at the end of the day is not a good idea because you will forget details regarding what you ate. Many times these details translate to extra calories, which can add up. Your Daily Diary also gives you the opportunity to track your water intake (at least 8, 8-oz. glasses of water a day) body weight, and amount of physical activity. This is an important tool to have handy when you contact a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor during the program. If you are unclear about how to use the Meal Planner, call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor for help.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

As you know, each week you will be assigned a Skill Builder, which is a specific skill to work on during the week. Your skill builder for this week is to follow the Nutrisystem meal plan that has been established for you and monitor your progress while following the plan. The burden of deciding how many calories you should eat at each meal and what foods to prepare has been lifted. The Nutrisystem® program makes it easier for you to evaluate your progress towards this goal by providing you with a Meal Planner. The Daily Diary contained in the Planner helps you keep track of what you have eaten. It is highly recommended that you call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor the first week for help following your meal plan, recording in your diary, meal prep ideas, and/or help with obstacles you may encounter during the first week.

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow the Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Place a check next to every food you ate and the water you drank in your Daily Diary. Record the time you eat or drink each item in your Daily Diary.

Week 2
Internal vs.
External Hunger—
What's Eating You?

Way To Go!

You completed your first week of the Nutrisystem® program. The first week is the hardest, so well done! Remember, it’s important to get off to a good start so if you’re having difficulty, make sure to contact a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor. Last week, you focused on sticking to your meal plan and keeping track of what you ate and drank. Remember, keeping track is a critical skill so make sure you’re using your Daily Diary throughout the day. (As you reorder, you’ll get a new meal planner so you can continue to keep track). This week, we’ll examine different types of hunger and how to manage them.

Internal Hunger vs. External Hunger

What is hunger? Hunger means different things to different people. If you were trying to describe the experience of hunger to someone who had never experienced it, what would you say? More than likely, you’d say it included the desire to eat. When trying to eat right, it’s important to learn about this desire and how to manage it. In general, there are two types of hunger: internal and external. Both will be described here. The good news is that both types of hunger can be managed!

Defining Characteristic	Internal Hunger	External Hunger
Physical symptoms	Stomach pangs, headache, dizziness	None
Food preference	General and not specific; there is a desire to eat something, almost anything	A very specific craving, such as pizza after watching a pizza commercial
Timing	3-5 hours after last eating episode	1-2 hours after last eating episode
Cause	Physical events within the body, such as low blood sugar	Environmental events outside the body, such as times, places
Management	Eat regularly to avoid physical deprivation	Change environment to limit factors that can trigger hunger

Internal Hunger

Internal hunger is almost always triggered by going long intervals without eating. By contrast, external hunger can be prompted by a variety of sources like place, activity, and emotions. Internal hunger will undermine even the best efforts to manage external hunger, so let’s focus first on internal hunger. We’ll start with developing an eating schedule.

Regular intervals. It is likely that any internal hunger you experience is associated with long intervals between meals. So, to prevent internal hunger, go no longer than 4 hours without eating something. The

Schedule main entrees 4-5 hours apart to increase satiety.

best way to accomplish this goal is to develop an eating schedule so you eat at roughly the same times each day. Space your main entrees about 4 -5 hours apart and have your snack about 2 hours between main entrees (more to come under “Making a Schedule”). Grocery food additions can also be fit in to avoid internal hunger. After you’ve done this for a few weeks, your body will become accustomed to eating at regular times, and it will prompt you when you don’t.

The notion of eating 5-6 times a day may sound strange to some veteran dieters, but you’ll find that eating more regularly and avoiding long periods without eating will help you eat less in the long run—no more. Eating on a schedule will help you avoid periods of extreme hunger that often lead to undesirable food choices.

Eating at regular intervals also reinforces that food is not an enemy to be avoided, but rather, a regular part of taking care of yourself.

Making a schedule. Think about your daily schedule and when you can plan to have your meals, snacks, and dessert. Make use of your experiences last week; if you were hungry between meals last week, call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor for help reworking your eating schedule. As you know, your schedule may vary because of life events so you need to be flexible. For example, if you wake up later, adjust your schedule accordingly. If your schedule seems too hectic to eat at regular times, you’ll need to look at your priorities. You deserve to eat on a regular basis!

How long will it take you to eat? Does it really take that much time out of your day? Pay attention to what works for you. As an example, suppose you have breakfast at 8:00 a.m., lunch at 12:00 p.m., snack at 2:00 p.m., dinner at 7:30 p.m., and dessert at 9:00 p.m., and you notice that by the time dinnertime rolls around, you’re starving. Perhaps a 2:00 p.m. snack is too early. You might want to try having your afternoon snack closer to 3:00 p.m. to minimize the long interval of time between snack and dinner (5 ½ hours!) or you may try to have dinner a little earlier. If you feel hungry at 2:00 p.m., perhaps you could have part of your afternoon snack at 2:00 p.m. (fruit serving) and the rest at 4:00 p.m. (dairy or protein serving). It is very important that you stick to the meal plan that has been designed for you (i.e., what you eat) every day; however, you have the freedom to make decisions about when you eat these foods (i.e., how you get the foods in during the day).

The goal is to be between ¼ and ¾ full. You don’t want to run on empty or be overfilled. Remember, your goal is to develop a satisfying way of eating that you can follow over the years, rather than an overly strict regimen that will only last a few weeks or months. Use the worksheet that follows to create a schedule that works for you. Take into account if you have a different schedule on the weekend.

Eating on a regular schedule will help you avoid periods of extreme hunger.

You deserve to eat on a regular basis!

My Eating Schedule

Shown here is a sample meal plan. Please take the time to adjust based on your unique meal planner:

	Weekdays	Weekends
	Time Eaten	Time Eaten
Breakfast:	_____	_____
Snack: (if applicable)	_____	_____
Lunch:	_____	_____
Afternoon Snack:	_____	_____
Dinner:	_____	_____
Dessert:	_____	_____

External Hunger

By eating at regular intervals you’ll be taking the single most important step in controlling internal hunger. Now, let’s turn our attention to external hunger and briefly examine how it develops. You’ve probably heard about classical conditioning and the experiments of Dr. Pavlov, which helped him to formulate a basic law of learning. This law states that when two things are paired together frequently, they become linked; one triggers the other. For example, if your Aunt Helen always wears a distinctive perfume, smelling that perfume in a department store will probably trigger thoughts of Aunt Helen.

Many habits are formed based on this type of pairing. For example, if you frequently eat while watching TV, talking on the phone, reading the mail, or driving in the car, these events will trigger the desire to eat whether you realize it or not. These triggers form the basis of external hunger.

You can see the problem—the more things you pair with eating, the more triggers you have to contend with. These triggers will prompt you to eat, even when you’re not internally hungry. Your challenge is to limit the behaviors you pair with eating, so you’ll have fewer prompts to eat. Listed on the following page are common triggers of external hunger and how to manage them.

These are just a few ways to combat external hunger. Think about your triggers and ways to decrease your exposure to them. The good news is that every time you don’t eat in response to a trigger, such as not eating while watching your favorite show, the **trigger becomes weaker and eventually loses its power**.

Slow Eating

Eating slowly is a great way to limit external hunger. Let’s see why. As you already know, external hunger is caused by triggers that make eating automatic. Slowing down your eating rate makes you more aware and less likely to overeat in response to triggers. Eating slowly has several other advantages:

- ✓ **Enjoy the good taste of foods.** The faster you eat, the less you taste your foods. Taste buds are only on your tongue, and each area of your tongue is sensitive for different tastes such as bitter, sweet, and salty. Eating quickly will prevent you from fully tasting your favorite foods. If you were sitting down

Trigger	Strategy
Places	Limit eating to rooms already associated with food, such as the kitchen and dining room. Avoid eating in “non-food” places, such as the family room and bedroom.
Activities	Do nothing else while eating. This will decrease your triggers and increase awareness of what you’re eating. This is especially important when having foods that you enjoy.
Sight and Smell	Store foods out of sight. Avoid family style serving, so foods aren’t left on the table for the entire meal. Eat all foods from a plate or napkin rather than from bags or containers.
Times	Eat at set times during the day. Sticking to a regular schedule will limit trigger eating, while preventing physical deprivation and internal hunger.

to watch a favorite movie, you wouldn’t “fast forward” through it. Similarly, take time to savor the good taste of the foods that you enjoy.

- ✓ **Put yourself in control.** Eating slowly gives you more time to think about your food choices. It takes about 20 minutes for your stomach to get the signal that you’ve eaten. So, if you finish your meal in 10 minutes, your stomach hasn’t had time to give you the message. If you eat slowly, you can make decisions about what you’ll eat based on portion size, taste, and fullness. Eating slowly puts you, not the environment, in control.
- ✓ **Decrease unpleasant feelings.** Eating quickly can often be associated with heartburn, gas, hiccups, and feeling stuffed. Eating slowly will help you avoid these unpleasant effects and allow you to fully enjoy your meal.

Slowing Down in a Fast Paced World

Now that you know why to eat slowly, how can you do it? Here are variety of methods:

1. **Put down your utensils.** Occasionally putting down your fork during a meal will prevent you from eating in a non-stop manner.
2. **Take a pause.** Take a short break from eating about 5-10 minutes into the meal. This will give your stomach time to get the message that you’re filling up.
3. **Cut food into smaller pieces.** Your food will be easier to digest, and you’ll feel like you’re eating more food.
4. **Increase the number of chews.** Remember, once it passes your tongue, the taste is gone. Take a few extra chews and savor the taste.

5. **Pace yourself with a slower eater.** Compare your rate of eating to someone who isn’t a fast eater. If you’re almost done and they’re not even half finished, try to adjust your pace to theirs. You don’t need to be the slowest eater at the table, but the more you slow down, the better.

If you’re a fast eater, you probably know it. Either people have told you or you notice that you’re finished earlier than others. If so, this skill is a very important one to work on. If you’re not a fast eater, you won’t need to spend as much time on it. All types of eaters, however, will benefit from slowing their pace when eating their favorite foods. Remember, foods have the same number of calories and fat grams whether you eat them fast or slow. So, slow down and enjoy!

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Your skill builder for this week is to determine what type of hunger you experience across the day. Using a 1 (not at all)-to-10 (extremely) scale, monitor times when your hunger reaches a level of 7 or above this week and then decide what type of hunger you experienced (internal or external) using the characteristics previously listed.

Note these things each day this week in your daily diary. If you notice that you are regularly experiencing internal hunger, evaluate and modify your eating schedule. However, if you notice that you are experiencing external hunger rather than internal hunger, evaluate the conditions associated with this type of hunger. In other words, what triggered you to feel “hungry” (i.e., a place, activity, sight/smell of food, time, other)?

Once you’ve determined the trigger, briefly describe it in the worksheet on the next page. Brainstorm ways to decrease your exposure to that trigger and record them in the “strategy” column in the table. For example, if seeing cookies on the counter triggers you to eat them when you come home from work, put the cookies where you don’t see them (or ask a family member to do this for you).

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Use the Daily Diary to track what you eat and drink each day.
- 3. If you find yourself hungry, determine what type of hunger you are experiencing. If you are experiencing external hunger levels of 7 or greater, complete the worksheet on page 19.
- 4. Increase the length of your dinner meal by 5-10 minutes using the tips suggested above.

Managing Hunger Worksheet

Instructions: As you keep track of your hunger this week, any time you experience an external hunger level above 7, use this worksheet to work through it. Describe your trigger (place, activity, sight/smell of food, time, etc). Include in your description the thoughts and/or circumstances surrounding the desire to eat. Record the strategy or strategies you plan to use to reduce the external hunger next time it occurs.

Experience	Strategy
<p>Example:</p> <p>External Hunger Rating = 10</p> <p>Time: 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>Type of Trigger: Sight and smell of cookies</p> <p>Went to the mall after work. I walked by a cookie counter and craved chocolate chip cookies. I had a stressful day and thought that I deserved to have a cookie. I ended up eating 3 large cookies.</p>	<p>1.Have a NS snack before leaving work.</p> <p>2.Do not walk by the cookie store. Take an alternate route in the mall.</p> <p>3.Go to the mall after dinner.</p> <p>4.Instead of cookies, comfort myself by taking a long bath.</p>
<p>External Hunger Rating (1-10):</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Type of Trigger:</p>	
<p>External Hunger Rating (1-10):</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Type of Trigger:</p>	
<p>External Hunger Rating (1-10):</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Type of Trigger:</p>	
<p>External Hunger Rating (1-10):</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Type of Trigger:</p>	
<p>External Hunger Rating (1-10):</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Type of Trigger:</p>	

Week 3
***Working Out—Overcoming
Your Activity Obstacles***

Getting Active

Welcome to week 3 of your Mindset Makeover! Last week you learned about the importance of distinguishing between internal and external hunger. How did it go? What type of hunger did you experience? What changes did you make to deal with the different forms of hunger? Were you able to slow down your eating rate? Did it improve your eating experience (i.e., enjoy the taste of foods more, feel more in control, reduce unpleasant feelings like gas, heartburn, etc.)? Slowing your eating rate is also very important because it makes you more aware of what and how much you are eating and makes it less likely that you will overeat. Remember that you need to practice the skills you are learning; therefore, it is very important that you work on your Skill Builders every week. Skills are like muscles; you can use them or lose them.

Skills are like muscles:
you can use them or
lose them.

Some skills will be easier for you to learn than others. You should continue to work on the skills that are most challenging for you. You may have found that there are several external triggers that cause you to feel hungry. Work on one trigger, and when you feel that you have that one under control, work on another.

This week we introduce the second ingredient of an effective weight control program – physical activity. As you concentrate on skills related to physical activity this week, don’t forget about the skills you learned last week. Behavior change is a process that takes time. You’re worth the effort, so hang in there!

Structured vs. Lifestyle Activity

Physical activity can be divided into two general types—structured and lifestyle activity. Structured activity involves setting aside a certain amount of time (usually 20 minutes or more) on given days to walk, jog, swim, play tennis, or whatever else you like. Usually, people try to schedule their activity three to five times a week. Lifestyle exercise involves increasing your movement during the course of each day by things such as walking rather than riding in a car or bus, using the stairs instead of elevators or escalators, and otherwise burning a few extra calories whenever you get the chance. You don't have to set aside time for lifestyle activity; all you have to do is choose it over a less active alternative.

This week will focus on **structured** activity. We’ll talk about lifestyle activity in further detail later in the booklet.

Increasing Structured Physical Activity

Benefits of Physical Activity Why is physical activity so important for effective weight control and health? There are lots of reasons. First, being active enhances your physical health. Regular physical activity improves blood pressure, diabetes control, cholesterol, and other markers of health complications. Second, regular activity confers significant psychological benefits. People who are active report increased energy, better sleep, improved mood and greater mobility. Simply put, exercise makes you feel good and can help you look great, too! Third, regular physical activity is the single best predictor of who will maintain their weight loss. Study after study shows that people who are regularly active maintain their weight losses much better than those who are not active.^{6,7,8} So, if you’re serious about losing weight and keeping it off, you’ll want to develop a regular program of physical activity.

Sounds Great, But.... If exercise is so great, why are so few people doing it? Only a small percentage of Americans engage in regular physical activity. Despite the clear benefits of being active, a variety of barriers sometimes prevent people from being as active as they would like. Take a minute to think about and list the factors that make it difficult for you to become more active.

Regular physical
activity helps you
maintain weight loss.

What three specific things disrupt your plans to increase your activity?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Removing Roadblocks How can you remove these roadblocks? One way is to abandon outdated notions of what it means to be active. For many years, scientists believed that people had to exercise at very intense levels in order to get the benefits of physical activity. This sentiment is captured by sayings such as, “no pain, no gain,” “feel the burn,” and “it has to hurt to help.” This view of exercise-as-pain was coupled with the all-or-nothing mentality that exercise was worthless if not done for long periods at a time. Given these beliefs, it’s easy to understand why exercise—a painful experience that lasted a long time—would be avoided.

Fortunately, studies made over the last 10 years have shown that moderate activity produces significant health benefits. In fact, people who make the transition from no activity to moderate activity experience the biggest health benefits. Even better, research has shown that the benefits of exercise are the same whether the exercise is done all at once, such as 30 continuous minutes, or in smaller intervals, such as two 15-minute bouts or three 10-minute bouts^{9,10}. So, if one of your roadblocks to activity is the belief that it has to be unpleasant and require large blocks of time, think again. The new activity mottos are “if there’s pain, there is no gain,” and “some is better than none.”

Another common roadblock is the belief that you have to exercise in clubs or with expensive equipment. Although this can be helpful for many, the truth is you don’t need a club membership or expensive gadgets to become more active. **Walking is one of the best forms of activity, and it doesn’t cost a thing.**

Make sure whatever you do is something you’ll enjoy and can do easily. Physical difficulties, such as joint pain, breathing trouble, or a permanent injury can pose challenges to increasing your activity in the typical ways. To remove these roadblocks, think about options that match your personal preferences and physical needs.

Time can also be a barrier. Busy lifestyles don’t leave much time for physical activity. If you’re too busy to be active on a regular basis, you may need to rethink how you spend your time. Try scheduling a time to exercise and keep that appointment with yourself. Self-care means taking yourself and your health seriously; setting aside time for activity is great way to start.

Starting to Become More Active

This week, your focus will be on starting an ongoing program of physical activity. If you are already active, terrific! If not, be sure to use the guidelines below to get a good start. If you haven't been active for a while, you may be less fit than you would like. Resist the temptation to push yourself and overdo it. You'll reduce the risk of injuries and develop a plan that will last. Remember, dramatic changes are usually short-lived.

- ✓ **Get medical clearance.** Before increasing your physical activity, make sure that you have your doctor's ok. Your doctor can let you know if your specific plans are safe and fit in with your specific medical conditions
- ✓ **Start slowly.** Make small changes in your activity that you can build upon, rather than dramatic changes that may lead to injury, soreness or excessive fatigue. Remember, some activity is better than none. There's no need to rush it. The intensity level of your activity should be moderate (similar to a brisk walk). The "talk test" provides an easy way to assess whether you're exercising too intensely. While exercising, you should be able to hold a conversation without gasping for breath. If you can't, slow down.
- ✓ **Pick an activity that you enjoy.** Walking works best for most people, but if walking is not your thing, pick another activity that you enjoy. Find something that lets you move your body in a way that you enjoy. If you hate the stationary bike, don't use it. At a minimum, pick an activity that is neutral and pair it with something you like, such as listening to music or watching a favorite show.
- ✓ **Make a specific plan for accomplishing your goal.** Rather than planning to "get more exercise this week," make a specific plan, such as "After I drop off my son at soccer practice on Saturday, I'll stop at the field and walk once around the track." You're more likely to follow through on specific plans like these than on general intentions like "I'll exercise this weekend." Making specific plans also allows you to think through any possible roadblocks, such as a phone call from a friend or bad weather.

This Week's Skill Builder:

Start your individual fitness program. Determine specific workout times (e.g., Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6 a.m. and Saturday at 8 a.m.). Remember the tips for S.M.A.A.R.T goal setting when setting your exercise goals. Think of ways to reduce your barriers to exercise so you can enjoy some of its benefits. As you now know, the benefits of structured physical activity are impressive for physical and psychological health. You deserve these benefits!

The way to start and assess your progress with structured activity is through monitoring the number of minutes you're active each week. Each week you will be given an exercise prescription in your skill builder. You will build gradually toward a goal of 180 minutes per week, which is equivalent to 30 minutes of activity a day, six days of the week (see the chart on the next page). Not everyone can exercise 180 minutes a week; some people exercise three times a week for 30 minutes at a time while others enjoy the challenge of exercising more. The target, in minutes of activity, is more important than the specific schedule we provide (i.e., instead of 30 minutes, 6 days a week, it's ok to do 45 minutes, 4 days a week) or the type of activity you choose to do (i.e., follow an exercise DVD , walk, swim, etc). Just find an activity that works for you. Make physical activity fun.

Skill Builder at a Glance

1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.

2. Be physically active for at least 20 minutes, 4 times a week.

Week of the Program	Activity Plan
3	Be active a minimum of 4 x 20 minutes or 80 minutes/week
4	Be active a minimum of 4 x 20 minutes or 80 minutes/week
5	Be active a minimum of 4 x 25 minutes or 100 minutes/week
6	Be active a minimum of 4 x 25 minutes or 100 minutes/week
7	Be active a minimum of 4 x 30 minutes or 120 minutes/week
8	Be active a minimum of 4 x 30 minutes or 120 minutes/week
9	Be active a minimum of 5 x 30 minutes or 150 minutes/week
10	Be active a minimum of 5 x 30 minutes or 150 minutes/week
11	Be active a minimum of 6 x 30 minutes or 180 minutes/week
12	Be active a minimum of 6 x 30 minutes or 180 minutes/week

Week 4
Curbing Cravings

Confronting Your Cravings

Congratulations! You’ve completed 3 weeks of the Nutrisystem® program. During these 3 weeks, you focused on self-monitoring, goal setting, hunger management, and adding activity into your week. You began a physical activity program last week. How did it go? How were you able to fit 20 minutes of activity into your day four times last week? Did you walk for 20 minutes at one time or did you break up your activity into two 10-minute bouts? If you were not able to meet your goal, what got in the way? What can you do differently this week to get around that barrier? If you are having trouble coming up with ideas, contact a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor.

Call a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor if you have not started to exercise yet and let them help you to get started!

By learning to manage your eating, becoming more active, and changing your routines you’re on your way to long-term weight control. Wow, you’ve accomplished a lot in a short period of time! You should be proud of the changes you’ve made (like becoming more aware of your eating and activity) and the methods you’ve learned to assess your progress (i.e., goal setting). Well done!

You already know that certain times, places, and activities can trigger your desire to eat. Thoughts and images of food can also be powerful triggers to eat, even when you’re not physically hungry. For example, if you eat a brownie every time you think about brownies, the thought alone of the delicious square morsels can become a trigger to eat. So, as soon as visions of brownies enter your head, you start for the kitchen to look for one! It’s important for you to recognize the thoughts and images that lead to hunger because they are the basis of food cravings. Your goal this week is to break the link between these thoughts and the act of eating. Try some of the following strategies:

- ✓ **Confront the thought or craving.** Ask yourself whether you are really hungry or instead simply “have to have” the food that has popped into your mind. Talk to yourself and try to stop the craving. Try statements such as: “I know I’m not hungry. Just because I’m thinking about chocolate chip cookies doesn’t mean that I have to eat them” or “Every time I don’t eat when I think about food, the easier it will be to stop unhealthy snacking.”
- ✓ **Use thought substitution.** Replace images of food with images of other pleasant events. Such images might include a soothing sunset, your weight loss, or the compliments you received yesterday. You can also focus on what you’ll look like after weight loss. Try to imagine the many pleasures that weight loss will bring you.
- ✓ **Use behavioral substitution.** Distract yourself from thoughts of food by doing something you enjoy. Choose activities that keep your hands busy, such as knitting, repairs around the house or writing a letter. You may also try calling a friend, taking a walk, taking a bath, or brushing your teeth. All of these activities are usually distracting enough to stop thoughts of eating.

Confront your craving!

This week’s key skill builder is to record the thoughts and images that trigger your hunger on the following form. Also record what you did in response to the trigger (strategy used) and what happened as a consequence of your action (result). The goal is to identify those strategies which work best for you.

Example:

Thought or Image (what was the thought or image?): Thought about having a bowl of ice cream.

Strategy Used (list all potential strategies that come to mind): Call a friend, clean the house, or go to the gym.

Result (what strategy did you select and how did it work?):

Called a friend and forgot about the bowl of ice cream.
or
Stayed home, went to the kitchen, and had a bowl of ice cream.

Countering Thoughts and Images

Thought or Image	Strategy Used	Result

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Use the Countering Thoughts and Images worksheet to identify thoughts and images that trigger eating. Use your worksheet any time you have a thought that triggers external eating. Brainstorm ways to break these chains at their weakest links.

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Be physically active for 20 minutes 4 days a week.
- 3. Use a strategy to counter a thought that triggers external eating.

Week 5

***Risky Behaviors—
A Self-Assessment***

What Changes Have You Made?

Congratulations! You’ve completed 4 weeks of the Nutrisystem® program. It’s been quite a month. Last week you worked on dealing with cravings. Were you able to come up with some strategies for dealing with cravings? If you were successful, that’s great! Keep up the good work. If you weren’t so successful, what kind of thoughts ran through your mind? Did you come up with alternative plans to deal with future cravings?

During the last month, you’ve also focused on improving your eating habits by following your Nutrisystem® meal plan, keeping track of your eating and activities in your Meal Planner, and leading a more active lifestyle by increasing your physical activity during the week. Take a few minutes and think about the specific changes you’ve made in your daily routine that make it possible for you to follow your meal plan, exercise more, and deal with cravings.

Positive Changes I’ve Made

Congratulations on the changes you’ve made! As you already know, effective weight control is a process with both successes and setbacks. Performing regular assessments of your progress is an important skill for improving your lifestyle. Remember, effective weight control involves both WHAT you do and HOW you do it; therefore, it’s important to pay attention to the steps that lead to both desired and undesired outcomes. Be sure to let a weight loss counselor know on a regular basis how things are going, and talk about what you want to change in the future. As you review your progress, keep the following things in mind:

- ✓ **Keep your balance.** View your progress over time and don’t let any one day or week become too important; focus instead on the big picture. Too often we focus on what we didn’t accomplish rather than on what we did. You’re doing well even if you walked 2 days instead of the 4 you had planned. That’s two more than you were doing 4 weeks ago.

Many people use the scale as a way to measure progress. Indeed, weight loss is one way of assessing your progress. After all, you joined Nutrisystem to lose weight; however, success can also be measured by a variety of other methods. Have you experienced any changes in:

- blood pressure, cholesterol, or triglyceride levels
- how you feel physically while walking up steps, walking in the mall, carrying groceries, or keeping up with children
- your energy level or the amount of sleep needed to feel refreshed
- your feeling of control over your eating, weight and health
- your overall appearance, the way clothes fit, the type of clothes you wear, or how certain areas of your body look

- how often you go out, how you feel when meeting new people, how often you accept or decline invitations for social events, or the types of activities that you participate in

Take a minute now to list what’s changed as a result of your weight loss.

What Has Changed as a Result of My Weight Loss?

- ✓ **Ask how, not why.** When your plans don’t go as expected, find out how it happened rather than why. Focus on what happened, or where and how your plans (to eat Nutrisystem desserts rather than high-calorie desserts, for example) were disrupted. “Why” questions often lead to self-criticism (e.g., I gave in to temptation, I’m lazy, I’m forgetful) and provide no plans for the future. Describe how the situation developed and what specific steps you can take to prevent it from happening in the future. Use the Behavior Chain (this week’s Skill Builder) to examine the contributing factors and how they could be changed.
- ✓ **Be patient.** Nobody’s perfect, so expect to have days that aren’t as successful as you’d like. It’s not reasonable to expect your new skills to be perfected in only 4 weeks. Rather than growing discouraged, take your minor slips for what they are—opportunities to learn about your habits. Examine how your slips occurred and how you can prevent them in the future. This week, the focus is on skills that will help you identify triggers for overeating and help you work your way through difficult eating situations.

Dealing with High-Risk Situations

Lapse vs. Relapse

It would be great if you never experienced any setbacks in your efforts to develop a positive lifestyle; unfortunately, that just isn’t realistic. Like any other area of your life, nothing’s perfect. So, it’s important to deal with the reality of setbacks—how to try to prevent them, and how to manage them rather than pretending that they won’t happen. The first step is to evaluate your behavior in a realistic way. It’s what you think about your setbacks that affects your ability to recover.

Lapse When thinking about setbacks, it’s important to recognize the difference between a lapse and a relapse. A lapse is a temporary, minor slip from which you can recover. A lapse, by itself, tells very little about one’s skill level. Even the best skaters sometimes fall, and the best accountants make occasional mathematical errors. Skaters continue their routine and then review their performance to correct the slip; accountants detect their error and adjust their calculations. A lapse is simply a mistake. Lapses happen across all types of human behavior, including eating and physical activity. One mistake doesn’t mean that the person is a bad skater, an incompetent accountant or an unhealthy eater. An important characteristic of

A lapse allows you to make mistakes, accept imperfection and allows you the flexibility to learn from your mistakes.

A relapse is when someone feels hopeless from a lapse and is no longer utilizing their skills.

a lapse is that you can recover from it. One fall, one error, one missed exercise session or one high-fat meal does not signal the beginning of the end. They’re simply lapses which should be taken for what they are—temporary setbacks.

Relapse A relapse, on the other hand, means a return to a previous state or condition. In medicine, it means to regress after a partial recovery from an illness. For those managing their weight, it means that they fall back to bad habits and abandon the weight control strategies they’ve learned. In a relapse, people no longer retain their original state of health or skill, and it’s unclear if they will recover.

The way you view your setbacks makes a big difference in how you respond to them.

Because of the things people say to themselves, they often confuse lapse and relapse. If you have an overeating episode, or even several, it does not mean that you’ve lost your ability to manage your eating—that would be a relapse. It means that you’ve made a mistake than you can recover from—that’s a lapse.

Why is the lapse versus relapse distinction so important? Because how you view your setbacks makes a big difference in how you respond to them. Suppose that you’re watching TV, and you have the desire for something sweet. You go to the kitchen and get a bag of cookies. While watching TV, you eat more cookies than you had planned. If you view this overeating as a relapse—a loss of skill that you can’t recover from—you’ll probably feel hopeless and continue eating. If you realistically assess this episode as a lapse—a temporary setback—you can stop the episode there. Then you’ll be able to analyze the factors that led to overeating so you prevent it in the future.

Although the difference between lapse and relapse may seem logical, it’s not so easy to be rational when you’re not doing as well as you would like. It takes time and practice to change the way you think about your eating and activity. The following suggestions will help you think clearly and realistically about setbacks when they occur.

- ✓ **Expect to make mistakes.** No one’s perfect. From time to time, you’ll eat foods that you didn’t plan on or not exercise on a day that you planned to. The idea isn’t to be mistake free; instead, it’s to recover from mistakes quickly.
- ✓ **Accept the mistake for what it is—a lapse.** Eating an extra serving of dessert doesn’t mean that you’ve lost your ability to control your eating. You’ve had a temporary setback from which you can recover.
- ✓ **Focus on what happens after the slip.** Everyone overeats at times. It’s what you say to yourself and what you do after a setback that makes the difference. Statements like, “This isn’t the end of the world. If I get back on the track now, what I’ve eaten won’t affect my health,” will help you avoid feelings of hopelessness. Then, you can analyze your lapse in a realistic manner.
- ✓ **Use lapses to learn something about your eating and activity behavior.** An effective way to cope with high-risk situations is to examine the factors that led to overeating or not being active, and then to analyze each link to figure out a way of doing things differently to prevent the undesirable behavior from happening again. Behavior chains can be effective tools for identifying dangerous patterns. Behavior chains allow you the opportunity to think through the steps that lead to undesirable eating.

For example, how much and what type of food had you eaten prior to your overeating episode? Was the interval of time between your last meal greater than 4 hours? How hungry did you feel before the overeating episode? Armed with this information, what could you do differently if you were in the same situation again?

- ✓ **Be sure not to ignore the lapse.** The “don’t worry, be happy” approach is no more realistic than one that is overly critical. Review the example described on the next page and then follow the steps listed to complete the “My Eating Chain” worksheet.
- ✓ **Ask others for help.** Sometimes it’s easier to deal with a setback if you talk to someone like a friend, family member, or especially a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor who is familiar with the program and a variety of common weight loss issues. They can help you think through the situation objectively and help you come up with a plan that will reduce the risk of another setback in the future.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

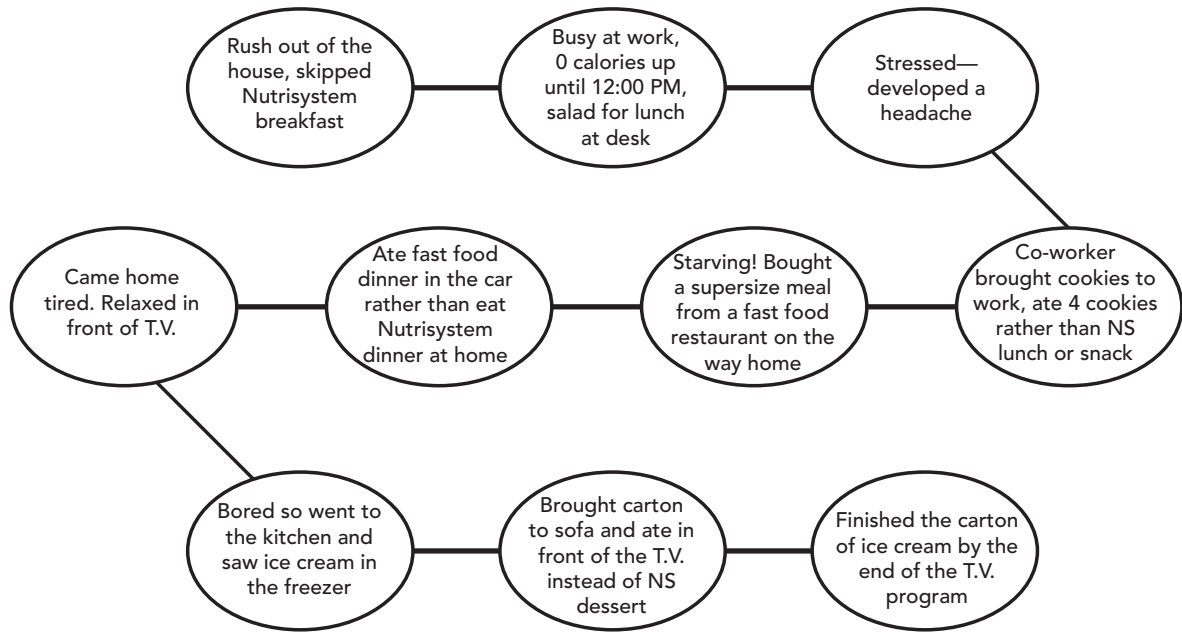
Use the eating chains to identify patterns or behaviors that may lead to undesirable eating. Use your eating chain whenever you have trouble following your weekly meal plan. Brainstorm ways to break these chains at their weakest links.

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Increase exercise this week. Be physically active for 25 minutes, 4 days a week.
- 3. Complete the behavior chain each time you have trouble following your weekly meal plan.

EXAMPLE:

1. Describe the events that led up to undesirable eating. What were the circumstances?

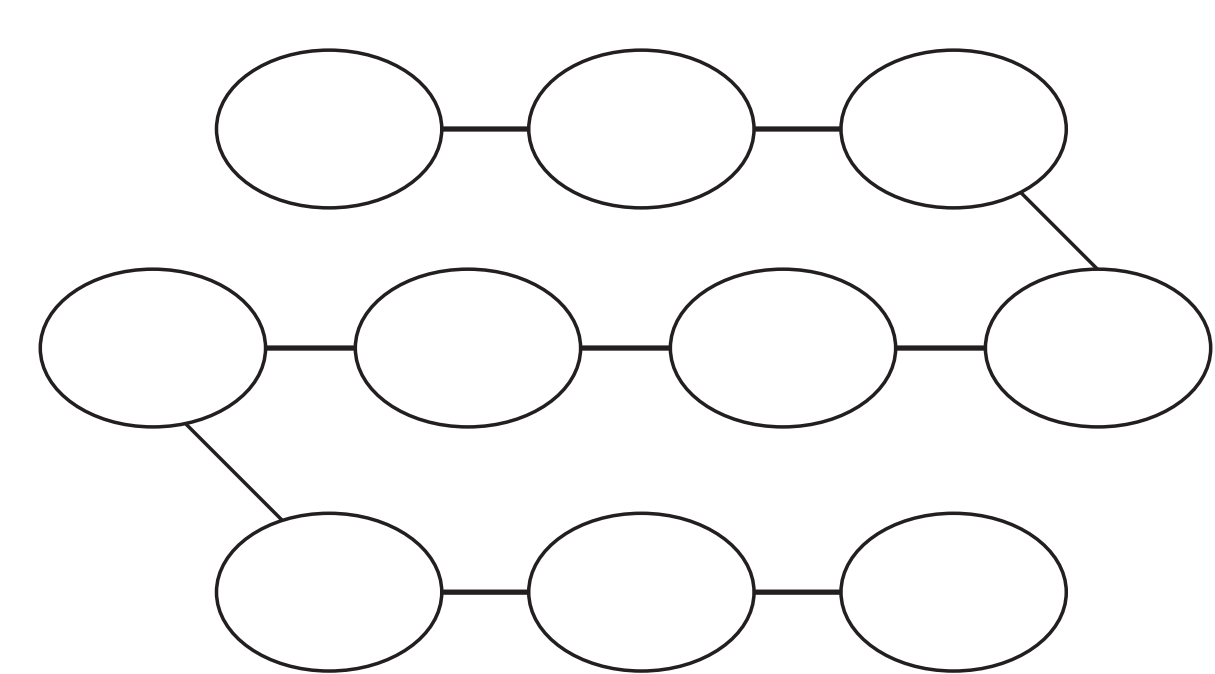


2. Describe how you can plan to break the link to undesirable eating:

Link	Strategy to Break Link
Skipped Breakfast	Eat your NS breakfast entrée, fruit, and dairy/protein at work.
Salad only for lunch at desk	Pack lunch including NS entrée the night before to bring to work . Store NS entrees in office and stock up on dairy/protein items for busy days.
Developed a headache Ate four cookies	Keep healthy snacks in the office to prevent going long hours without eating or eating unhealthy foods that can be found in your working environment.
Bought a supersize meal	Take a scenic route home to avoid passing by fast food restaurants. Use pre-packaged salad so that preparation time at home is kept to a minimum.
Ate dinner in car	Do not eat in the car.
Finished ice cream carton while watching TV	Limit eating to kitchen or dining room table. Keep NS desserts handy and limit your inventory of tempting treats. If other family members request ice cream, buy a small container of ice cream or a lower calorie frozen treat in single serving sizes.

My Eating Chain

1. Describe the events that led up to undesirable eating.

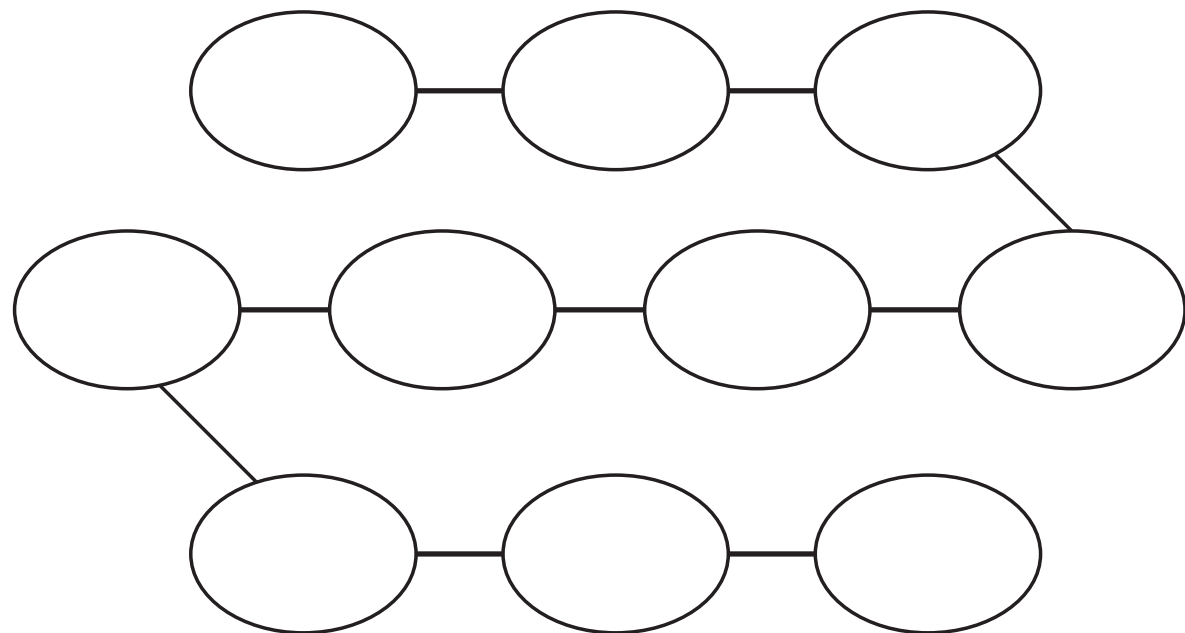


2. Describe how you can plan to break the link to undesirable eating

Link	Strategy to Break Link
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

My Eating Chain

1. Describe the events that led up to undesirable eating.



2. Describe how you can plan to break the link to undesirable eating.

Link	Strategy to Break Link

Week 6
Mind Over Matter

Changing Thoughts

Congratulations! You’ve completed 5 weeks of the Nutrisystem® program. Last week, you learned how to manage and modify situations that lead to undesirable eating with behavior chains. The eating chain worksheet can help with planning for any anticipated high-risk situations. If you overeat, the worksheet can be used to figure out what happened and how to prevent it in the future. Like we’ve said before, making positive long-term changes takes time. You need to continually use the tools in this lifestyle guide like the eating chain to improve your weight control skills.

In addition to using the eating chain to modify behaviors that lead to undesirable eating, it’s also important to examine how you think about situations. It may seem a bit odd that your thoughts can be as important as your behaviors for long-term weight management, but they are. That’s because what you think determines how you feel, and how you feel determines what you do. For example, imagine that last night you ate while watching TV when you knew you were experiencing external hunger. If you thought, “I have no willpower; I’ve blown it again,” you’d probably feel disappointed and discouraged. Such feelings usually lead to eating more or giving up on your weight loss efforts. Alternatively, you may have thought, “I gave into my craving and overate, but it’s not the end of the world. Let me figure out how it happened so I can prevent it from happening in the future.” Thinking this way, you’d feel concerned and hopeful. These emotions lead to taking steps to refine your skills rather than abandoning them. This means that how you think about your eating and exercise habits can make a difference. Part of effective weight management, then, is examining the way you think.

Your thoughts are as important as your behaviors for long-term weight management.

Thinking Styles

Thinking realistically about your efforts to decrease your weight and improve health will enhance your success. In order to do this, you’ll need to identify any styles of thinking that are unrealistic and actively counter them. There are several types of thinking that can make healthy changes more difficult: “all-or-none,” “negative lens,” and “don’t worry be happy.”

All-or-None All-or-none thinkers view things as either good or bad, healthy or unhealthy, allowed or forbidden. Just one mistake is viewed as a total failure. Countering these thoughts includes allowing for mistakes as an expected part of the process. It’s better to expect slips and recover from them quickly than to have no plan for dealing with them when they do occur. Learn from your lapses, and contact a weight loss counselor to help you avoid all-or-none thinking.

Negative Lens This type of thinking focuses only on negative events and exaggerates their importance. Even one negative event is given more importance than the overall pattern of positive events. For example, after missing an exercise session this week, a negative lens thinker would think, “I’m right back where I started; I’ll never be able to exercise regularly.” This person would ignore that (s) he exercised on three days this week. If you think like this, focus on identifying any problematic behavior and planning ways to correct it, rather than letting isolated negative events overshadow the many positive changes that occur. Use your Meal Planner to help remind yourself about the overall progress you’ve made in your food (following your meal plan) and beverage intake (see your water log) and exercise habits (see your activity log).

Don’t Worry, Be Happy When confronted with difficulties, a “don’t-worry, be-happy” thinker would say, “This was a rough week, next week will be better.” Although that’s a positive outlook, there’s no plan for turning things around. Unfortunately, positive thoughts alone don’t lead to weight loss or maintenance. It’s useful to recognize that setbacks are not the end of the world, but, when it comes to weight control, plans work better than platitudes. Review the steps for S.M.A.A.R.T goal setting in chapter 1.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

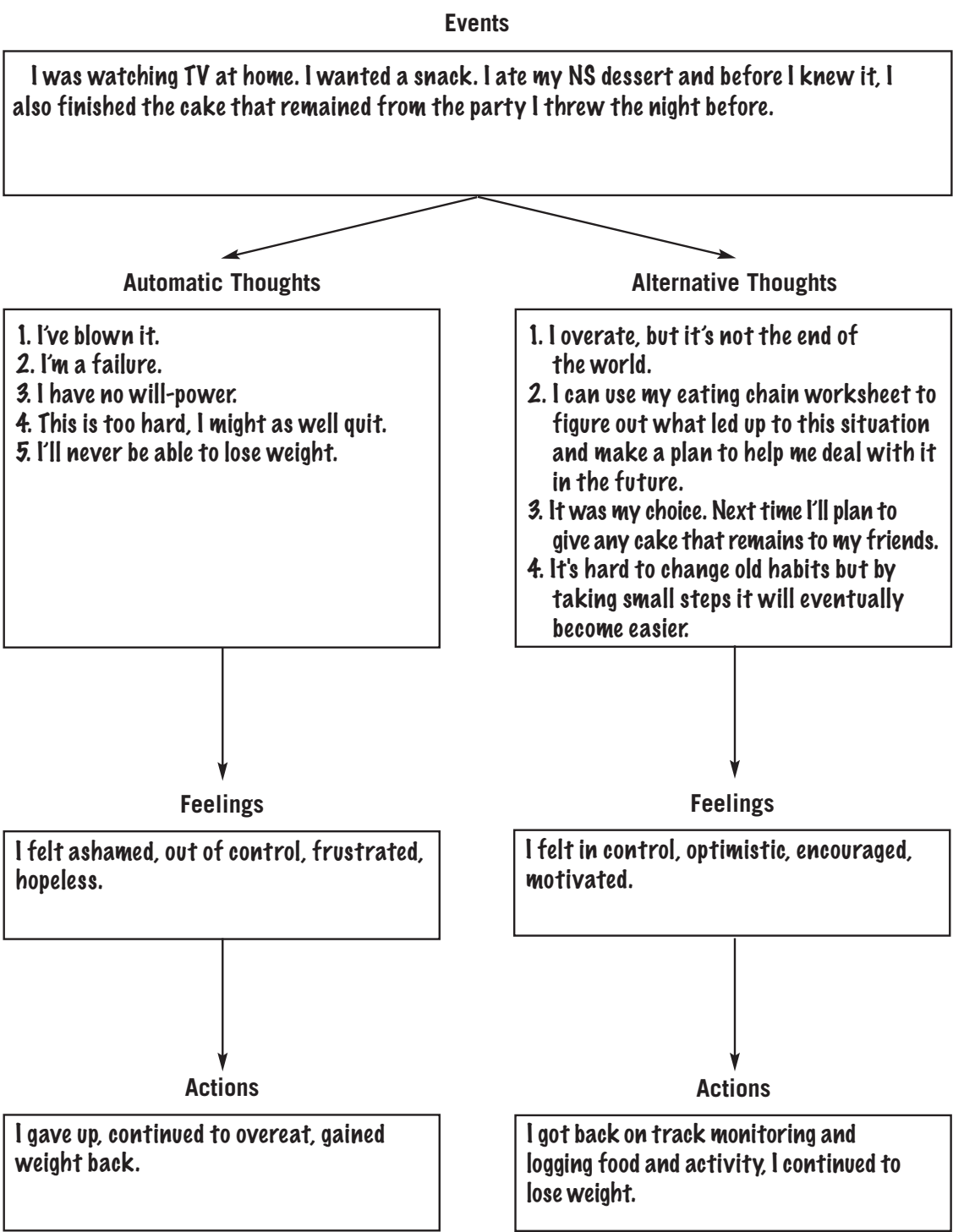
Since healthy behaviors are directly influenced by how you think and feel, we encourage you to examine your thinking styles and develop more realistic evaluations of your eating and exercise behavior. It’s important to note that effective lifestyle change is based on being realistic, not just being positive. Thinking realistically about your eating and activity will allow you to address problems as they occur and prevent the extremes of indifference or self-criticism.

Use the “Evaluating Negative Thoughts” worksheet on the next page to help identify negative thoughts and feelings associated with specific incidents. Describe the event that triggered the negative thought and the automatic thoughts that popped into your mind on the left side of the page. Sometimes it’s easier to identify feelings. If so, record the feeling you experienced and then think about the thought that lead you to feel this way. Once these thoughts and feelings have been pinpointed, record what happened as a result of these thoughts and feelings. Run through the sequence of events again on the right side of your worksheet. Determine whether there are other means of evaluating the situation (i.e., how else could you think about it?). Sometimes it helps to pretend that a friend has shared his/her thoughts with you. How would you advise your friend? Once you have completed the “Alternative Thoughts” section, think about how those thoughts would make you feel, and what your actions would likely be based on those feelings. If you have difficulty with this exercise, contact a counselor, who will help you think through this process.

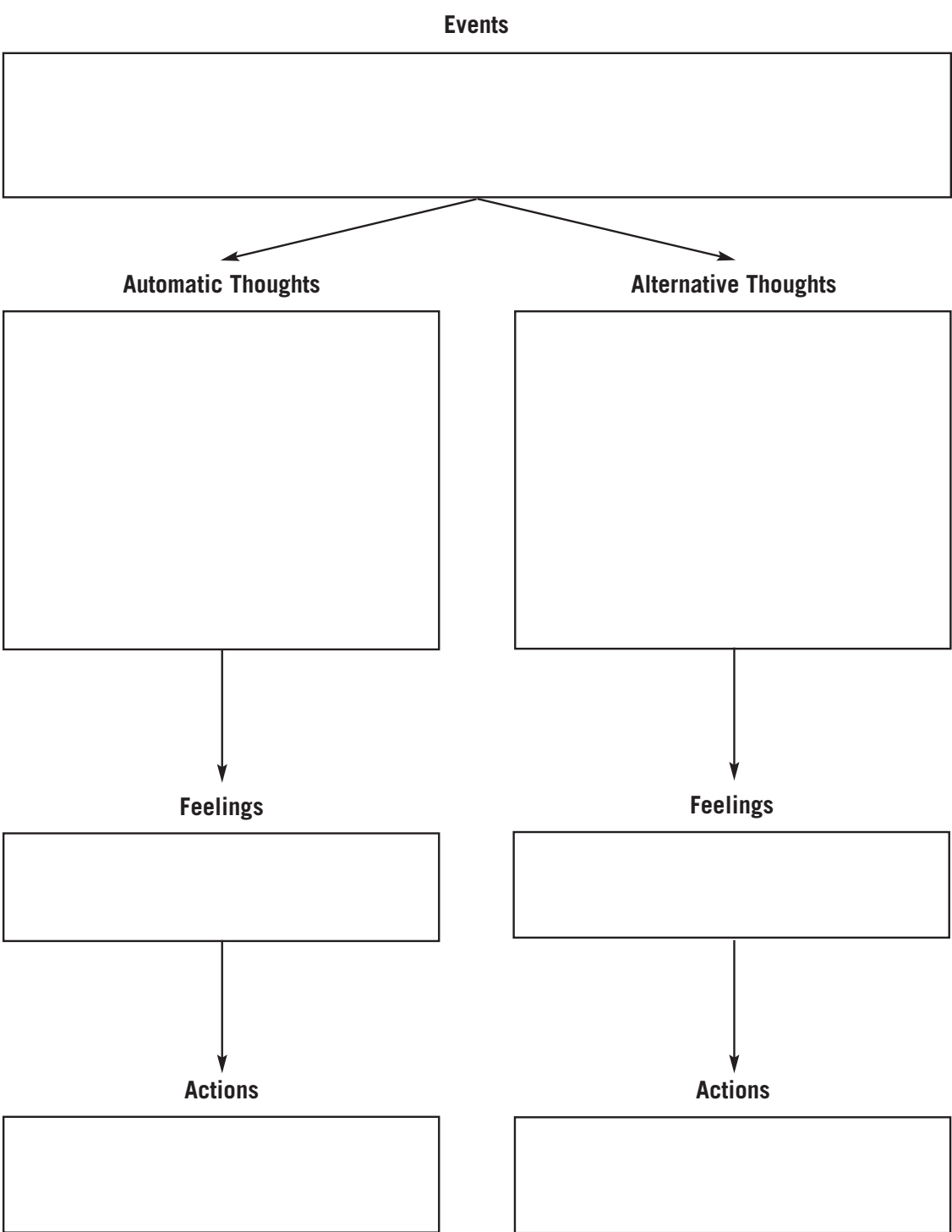
Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Be physically active for 25 minutes, 4 days a week.
- 3. Record negative thoughts and feelings on your “Evaluating Negative Thoughts” worksheet and counter these thoughts with more realistic thoughts.

Evaluating Negative Thoughts



Evaluating Negative Thoughts



Week 7

Eating Out, Eating Smart

Congratulations!

You’ve completed 6 weeks of the Nutrisystem® program. How do you feel about your progress? During the last week, you learned and practiced skills for overcoming negative thoughts that get in the way of effective weight control. Were you surprised by the number of negative thoughts that ran through your mind? Were you able to come up with alternative thoughts? Remember that successful weight management, including thinking in a realistic manner, doesn’t just happen; it requires practice. Changing your thought patterns is a challenging task but make sure to work on this exercise to hone your skills. Another common challenge individuals face is eating reasonably when eating out. This week we will focus on how to manage your eating when dining out.

Eating Out

You are now enjoying tasty and convenient Nutrisystem entrees for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and dessert; however, as you get closer to meeting your weight loss goals, you will be eating fewer Nutrisystem meals and more meals, on your own. Given our busy lifestyles, it is sometimes difficult to prepare home-cooked meals, so many people turn to restaurants. Americans now eat about one fourth of their meals outside of the home; therefore, it is important to learn how to manage your eating and drinking when eating out. Not all of this is elegant dining, to be sure. It's picking up a pizza on the way home from work, piling the kids into the car for a night of burgers and fries, eating lunch with co-workers in a cafeteria or casual restaurant, or eating several courses at weddings or holiday parties.

Eating out presents special challenges to healthy eating for two reasons. First, unless you're eating fine French cuisine, most restaurants generally serve large portions and foods that are high in fat. If you're not careful, for example, your fast-food meal can easily contain 1,000 calories, with 40% or more calories from fat. The second problem is that we “let our guard down” when eating out. This is particularly true of special occasions, such as birthdays and anniversaries, when a three- or four-course meal is the order of the night. With alcohol, appetizers and desserts, it's easy to eat in a less-than-healthy manner. Since restaurant eating is a part of life, let’s think about ways to enjoy it without sacrificing your weight control plan. Preparation is the key.

Tips to Consider When Eating Out

- **Avoid restaurants that encourage high-fat choices.** Don’t be taken in by restaurants that only serve high-fat choices. Patronize those offering a variety of good-tasting, low-fat items. Also, beware of buffets and all-you-can-eat offers that entice you to get your money’s worth by overeating.
- **Select a restaurant that you know.** It’s easier to plan ahead if you know what to expect, such as typical portion sizes and any “extras” that are included. If you’re not familiar with a restaurant, call ahead and ask about the methods of food preparation and menu items.
- **Eat something 2-3 hours before your restaurant meal.** Don’t starve yourself in preparation for a restaurant meal. If you do, you’re likely to be hungry, eat quickly, enjoy your food less, and eat too much. Follow your meal plan as usual, with the exception of the meal that you eat out.
- **Have a plan.** Think about what you’ll eat before you go out, so you can work the restaurant meal

**Eat something from
your meal plan
2-3 hours prior
to dining out.**

into your overall plan. If you’re eating out for routine reasons, such as taking a break from cooking or conducting business, you may want to plan a meal that is more fail-safe. In other words, you may want to eat something similar to what is offered for a meal in the Nutrisystem® program or simply portion out an appropriate amount and place the balance in a doggie bag for someone else in your family to enjoy at home. You can also share leftovers with co-workers or give the doggie bag to your dining companion to take home.

Distinguish between special and ordinary meals, especially if you eat out frequently. If you’re celebrating a special occasion, you may decide to include some special foods as part of your meal. In this case you may want to limit the portion of the special food you’re eating or increase your exercise that day to make up for the extra food you’re eating. A Nutrisystem weight loss counselor can help you come up with a plan.

At the Restaurant

- ✓ **Request a glass of water upon being seated.** Sip water instead of nibbling on bread or having a cocktail. Keep your glass full throughout the meal.
- ✓ **Be the first to order.** Ordering first, whether for the main course or dessert, will prevent you from being swayed by others. If you know exactly what you want, then just skip the menu.
- ✓ **Eat slowly.** Eat slowly to fully enjoy your meal and the atmosphere. For instance, eat half of your entree, then take a break for a few minutes and return to it. If you're full after your break, take the rest home and have it for tomorrow's dinner.
- ✓ **Stop when you’re satisfied, not stuffed.** Restaurants serve larger portions than you might typically eat at home. Remember that you, not the cook, should decide what portion is right for you. Pause throughout your meal to assess whether you’re satisfied. If you are, ask the server to remove what’s left, so you can take it home and enjoy it at a later time. Another idea is to ask for a doggie bag as soon as the food comes to the table so that you divide the portion and be less tempted to eat everything that’s served on the plate.
- ✓ **Trim the fat.** There are lots of ways to reduce your fat and calorie intake while eating in restaurants. These include selecting baked and broiled items, asking for dressing on the side (even if you select fat-free or low-fat dressings), using vinegar or squeezing lemon on salad or steamed vegetables for flavor, sharing appetizers and desserts, and avoiding cream and cheese sauces.
- ✓ **Customize your meal.** Order what you want, prepared the way you want it. This can include asking for an appetizer as your main course or requesting that the chef use little oil in cooking your meal. This also means holding the salad dressing or cream or cheese sauces or requesting them on the side.
- ✓ **Share an appetizer, meal, or dessert.** A special dinner sometimes doesn't feel complete without dessert; so, have one. But you can cut the fat and/or calories in half by sharing it with someone. After all, the first bites of dessert taste the best! If it isn’t a special occasion, wait and have a Nutrisystem dessert when you get home instead of having dessert at the restaurant.
- ✓ **Enjoy the experience.** Be sure to focus on the many non-food aspects of the restaurant experience, such as the company of others, being waited on, and the lack of preparation or clean-up.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Remember, healthy eating consists of a set of skills that need to be practiced. So, first decide whether you're having an ordinary or a special meal when eating out. Once you've decided, use the tips for eating out found here and in your Dining Out Guide in your Meal Planner to enjoy your meal and protect your health. Bon appetit!

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.**
- 2. Increase exercise this week. Be physically active for 30 minutes 4 days a week.**
- 3. Try at least one of the above tips for eating reasonably at a restaurant you enjoy.**

Week 8

More Movement in Your Life

Increasing Lifestyle Activity

Welcome to week 8 of the Nutrisystem® program. You’ve made lots of changes in your behaviors. Last week you learned about the importance of staying in control during meals eaten out. Planning ahead, making smart choices, eating reasonable portions, and taking charge when you order are all things you need to think about when eating out. Were you able to try some of the strategies suggested for managing your eating at restaurants? How did it go? Did you enjoy the meal you selected? How did you feel about the experience after you left the restaurant? Did you feel in control? Keep practicing the skills you learned last week so that you can enjoy your meals and avoid eating more than you had planned.

More Technology, Less Activity

So far you’ve been increasing your physical activity through structured activity. This week we will discuss adding lifestyle activity to increase the amount of physical activity you get each day. Lifestyle activity consists of taking opportunities during your day to be more active. These activities can be done in a moment’s notice and require little or no advance planning. Americans have become heavier over the decades. One of the reasons is that our day-to-day lives are much less active than our grandparents, so we burn fewer calories. Rather than the physically demanding tasks of farming and manufacturing, many of today’s jobs keep you at a desk all day and encourage you to take advantage of labor-saving devices. As technology saves time and energy, it also decreases activity and fitness. Here are some examples of labor saving devices:

Personal Computers	Remote Control
Cellular Phones	Telecommuting
Shopping by Phone	Email/Internet
Phone Extensions	Food Delivery Services
Escalators/Elevators	Direct Deposit
Drive-Thru Windows	In-Home Movies
Intercoms	Computer Games
Moving Sidewalks	Garage Door Openers

When was the last time you switched a TV channel by walking to the TV or elected to take the stairs instead of the escalator at the mall? These seem like small changes, but they can add up. For example, the phone company estimates that each phone extension in a house saves 70 miles of walking a year. Does that mean you have to remove your phone extensions, throw out your personal computer, give up your remote control and walk to work? Of course not! These modern conveniences are great, but you’ll need to find ways to offset the decreases in activity that they create. Let’s see how.

Small Changes There are lots of ways to increase activity throughout the day. The key is to think about how you can make anything that you do more active. Simply put, how can you move your body more than you would otherwise? Don’t worry if it’s 10 seconds more or 10 minutes more. The bottom line is...how can you become more active? Let’s count the ways.

- ✓ **Get in step.** Use steps instead of escalators or elevators to increase your daily activity. If there are too many flights to climb, just use steps for one or two flights.
- ✓ **Let your legs do the talking.** Rather than using the intercom, phone or email to contact co-workers, communicate your message in person.
- ✓ **Get out of your seat.** While you’re on the phone, who says you have to be seated? Stand up while you’re talking or walk back and forth. The less time you spend sitting, the better.
- ✓ **Take a 1- or 2-minute walk.** Take several mini-walks during the day to make you more active and your mind more alert. It just takes a minute.
- ✓ **Surrender the sacred spot.** Rather than hovering to get the closest parking spot at the office or mall, choose one a little further away. Those extra yards will turn into miles over the year. In addition, you’ll arrive less stressed without the battle scars of parking lot confrontations.
- ✓ **Get off the bus.** Get off the bus at a stop earlier than your usual one, and walk the rest of the way.
- ✓ **Avoid using your children as “gofers.”** Rather than asking your children to get you this or that, get it yourself. This is another opportunity to become more active.
- ✓ **Take a trip.** Rather than piling things at the bottom of the steps, take multiple trips upstairs. Each trip makes you more active and prevents you from having to juggle a large bulky load.
- ✓ **Avoid short-cuts.** Short-cuts are great if you’re in a hurry, but on most days it makes sense to take the long way. Try crossing at the light rather than at the middle of the street, or using the front rather than side entrance to your house.
- ✓ **Be a mail carrier.** If your mailbox isn’t right at your door, walk to the end of the drive to get it rather than retrieving it by car on your way home.

As you can see, there are lots of ways to increase your day-to-day activity. I’m sure you can think of additional ways to squeeze more activity into your day (i.e., mow the lawn, make multiple trips from the laundry room, get up to change the channel on the TV, etc.). In the spaces below, select two ways to add lifestyle activity to your days this week. Use the suggestions from above or, better yet, choose one of your own. You'll have to concentrate on these behaviors at first, but they shouldn't be physically taxing. Try to practice these behaviors daily until they become habits.

How I’ll Be More Active

Pick two things you’ll do this week to increase the activity in your day-to-day routine.

1. _____
2. _____

Monitoring Activity

Unlike keeping track of structured activity, keeping track of lifestyle activity is a little harder because it is done multiple times throughout the day and is not a separate, pre-planned event. One way of knowing how much you move across the day is by tracking your steps with a pedometer. Just as an odometer tracks the miles on your car, a pedometer tracks the number of steps you take each day. It is a small device (less than 2 square inches) that you attach to your clothes or belt at the hip level. It provides a digital readout of

the number of steps you have taken. Some step counters include mileage, calories burned and other features, but the most important information is steps. If you choose to track your lifestyle activity with a pedometer, we recommend that you wear the pedometer for a few days to see how many steps you usually take each day. Most people who are inactive take 3,000 to 5,000 steps on a typical day. If you take less than 10,000 steps a day, try to gradually increase this number. A reasonable goal is to take 500 extra steps a day each month. Once you’ve reached 5000 extra steps (or a total of 10,000 steps/day) you will have added over 2 miles per day to your physical activity!

If you’re interested in learning about ways to increase your activity, you can visit the following website for ideas: www.americaonthemove.org.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Remember, in order to lose weight, you must burn more calories than you take in from food. In addition to limiting the number of calories you eat (by sticking to Nutrisystem meal plan), which is critical, you can tip the scale further by increasing the number of calories you burn through activity. Both structured and lifestyle activity can contribute to your weight loss goals. This week add more physical activity through lifestyle activity.

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.**
- 2. Be physically active for 30 minutes 4 days a week.**
- 3. Pick two things you’ll do this week to increase the activity in your day.**

Week 9

Dealing with the Holidays and Special Occasions

How Are You Progressing?

Welcome to week 9 of the Nutrisystem® program. It’s been a month since your last self-assessment. Performing regular assessments of your progress is an important skill for effective weight control. Take a few minutes and think about your progress this past month. What positive behaviors have you incorporated into your lifestyle?

New Positive Behaviors

Dealing with Holidays and Special Occasions

Part of a realistic, long-term approach to healthy eating is to realize that your eating won’t be the same every day, particularly when you transition to eating fewer Nutrisystem entrees and snacks. This is especially true on holidays and special occasions. Does eating healthy mean sitting alone in the corner with a plate of lettuce and carrots? Absolutely not! The tips below describe how to make your holiday and special occasions happy and healthy. These tips can also be applied to eating when on vacation.

- ✓

Avoid extremes. Expect to eat more than usual at social events and plan accordingly, rather than beating yourself up afterwards. In addition, avoid the other extreme of “going off my diet” and abandoning any efforts at healthy eating. Parties don’t have to be associated with overeating and feeling stuffed. You’ll feel better afterwards if you take the middle ground and avoid the extremes of severe restriction or mindless overeating.

✓ **Don’t come with an appetite.** Depriving yourself all day so you can “enjoy” the party will lead you to eat whatever is in reach rather than what you truly enjoy. When hungry, you’ll tend to eat more quickly, which will lead you to feel stuffed. Eat something from the Nutrisystem meal plan 2-3 hours before the party, so you’ll be wise about your choices and enjoy them. Follow your meal plan as usual throughout the day and plan ahead about what you’ll eat at the party. Don’t deviate too much from the norm. Speak with your counselor prior to the event to avoid a set back.

✓ **What’s the occasion?** Whether it’s a holiday or a special celebration, or vacation, remember why you’re there. Food is part of the celebration, but it doesn’t have to be the main focus. Spend time with your friends and family, and take time to catch up with those you haven’t seen in a while. Have a specific plan before you go to the party or on vacation. Depending on what type of party or occasion this is, you can bring a
- Don’t think that you need to go off your diet plan to have fun at the special occasion.

Eat something from the Nutrisystem meal plan 2-3 hours before the party.

Don’t waste your calories on just any food at the party; be a picky eater.

board game or an outdoor game that gets family or friends moving and away from the food. Games take the focus off the food.

- ✓

Be picky. Don’t waste your calories on just any food. Stick to ones that you really like, especially those only available at certain times of the year. You may even want to bring your own healthy Nutrisystem entrée or dessert that you enjoy, or fruit or salad, to the party so that you have more choices to select from.

✓ **Keep your distance from appetizers and the buffet table.** When at a buffet, select the food you want to eat and move far away from buffet table. The further away you are from the food source, the less likely you will be to make the effort for multiple helpings. Focus on the main course and not on appetizers or finger foods.

✓ **Use a small plate.** Rather than fill up a large plate, use a smaller (salad) plate for your meal. After finishing that plate of food and taking some time to talk to friends and family, you may discover that the portion was just what you needed!

✓ **Easy does it.** Alcohol not only contains calories, it loosens your inhibitions about many things, including eating. So, if you drink, limit the number of drinks you have to keep the extra calories to a minimum to minimize alcohol’s effects on your eating.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Restructure your thoughts and approach to eating during special occasions and on vacation. If a special occasion (wedding, birthday, vacation, buffet) is coming up, plan ahead for the event. Use the following “Handling Special Occasions” worksheet to think through some strategies to use to decrease the focus on eating (e.g., focus on socializing, gift giving, decorating, games) and leave you feeling in control and good about yourself after the event. If you are not anticipating a special occasion, think about the last time you were at a special event and use the worksheet to think through how you would do things differently.

Skill Builder at a Glance

1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.

2. Increase exercise this week. Be physically active for 30 minutes, 5 days a week.

3. Complete the Handling Special Occasions worksheet to help you come up with a plan for staying on track when eating at a special event.

Handling Special Occasions Worksheet

1. Describe the special occasion.

2. What activities and traditions at this event are the most meaningful and enjoyable to you?
What pleasurable activities, other than food and drink, can you focus on during this event?

3. What are the pros and cons of maintaining positive behaviors like eating healthy during this event?

Pros:

Cons:

4. What strategies will you use to eat healthy at the event (for example, make a plan with family members, plan what foods you will eat, increase your physical activity that day or week, focus on socializing, bring healthy food, etc)?

5. Take time to think about potential problems in advance. What problems might come up?

6. List some possible solutions to each problem. Choose the best solution. What will you need to do to make that happen?

7. After the event is over, assess the plan. How did it work?

Week 10 Social Support

Getting the Support You Need

Congratulations! You’ve reached the 10th week of the Nutrisystem® program. You’ve made lots of changes in your eating and activity and have learned how to deal with triggers and situations that lead to overeating. Last week you learned how to manage holidays and special occasions. Eating right and controlling your weight is important for enjoying future holidays and special occasions with your family and friends.

When making long-term lifestyle changes, you may like the support of family and friends; so you tell them about your progress and listen to their suggestions. On the other hand, you may prefer to “go it alone” and keep your changes to yourself. Whether you like support from others or not, you probably don’t like it when other people hinder your weight loss efforts. Some may make negative comments about your food choices, others may offer you high-fat foods, while others are just downright nasty with comments such as, “I hope you’ll keep the weight off this time,” or “It’ll never work.” Whether you need others to support you or you need them to stop hindering you, there are several steps to getting what you need.

How Do I Ask for Support?

- 1. **Decide what you need.** The first step in getting the cooperation of others is to decide what would be most helpful to you. Take some time to think about this because some of the things you think might be helpful (such as, “Tell me when you see me eating something that isn’t healthy”) may actually turn out to do more harm than good. Using the spaces below, list the specific things that others do to help or hinder your efforts to eat healthy and be more active. A key here is to be specific; what exactly would you like others to do or stop doing?

How Others Can Help My Weight Loss Efforts

Things I’d Like Them To Do	Things I’d Like Them NOT To Do

- 2. **Make a specific request.** Now that you’ve decided what you need, make that clear to others. For example, you’ll get better results by saying, “It would really help me if you watched the kids for 30 minutes while I exercise after dinner,” rather than, “I need you to be more supportive of my exercising more.” Your friend or family member won’t get a specific message with the second statement. Focus on the behavior that you want the person to change rather than asking for kindness, understanding, or sensitivity.

- 3. **Give feedback.** The benefit of asking for something specific is that it makes providing feedback easier. Although it might be difficult to decide if someone has been supportive, it’s pretty clear whether you’re getting help with the kids so you can exercise. If the specific behavior you asked for happened, don’t ignore it. Be generous with your thanks, and give specific examples of the change that helped. If the behavior hasn’t changed, give examples of how it has not changed, along with a second request that focuses on what you would like them to do. In general, it’s safe to believe that people around you want to help but don’t know how. So, be patient as they learn the ways that are most helpful to you. If their behaviors don’t change after you’ve asked several times, it may be necessary to talk about the issue in more detail.
- 4. **Tailor your message.** If you’re close to the people involved in these situations, such as family members, you may spend more time discussing how important your weight and health is to you, how their behaviors make a difference, and how they can help you. If those involved are more distant, such as co-workers or family who you don’t see as often, you may want to simply ask them to do something easy or less demanding and it will probably do the trick.

Nutrisystem weight loss counselors are available not only to give you support but also to help you ask for support from others. In addition to calling your counselor, you can go to the Nutrisystem discussion boards or join online chats with a counselor for more support options, especially when you may feel discouraged by the actions or comments made by family and friends. These situations are hard to deal with so don’t be embarrassed to reach out to a Nutrisystem weight loss counselor for help. You can reach a counselor at 1-800-727-8046 or at <http://members.nutrisystem.com/Counseling/Contact-a-Counselor.aspx>.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

We could all use a little help from our friends and family. Most friends and family members want to support your weight loss efforts but may not know exactly how to help you. So help them help you! Teach those closest to you how to provide the type of help you need to be successful now (while you’re in the process of losing weight) and in the future (when you work on maintaining your weight loss).

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Be physically active for 30 minutes, 5 days a week.
- 3. Follow the steps above to ask a friend or family member to do something specific to support your weight loss efforts. Decide if the specific behavior you asked for happened and make sure to give this person helpful feedback.

Week 11

Nutrition For Life

Carbs, Fat, and Protein: Fact & Fiction

Welcome to week 11 of the program! Last week you worked on asking for support from your family and friends. How did it go? Were you able to get your needs met? Certain social situations can often lead to unwanted eating, so contact your Nutrisystem weight loss counselor for help if you're having difficulty asking for support from your friends and family.

Many of you probably chose the Nutrisystem® program because of its convenient approach to meal planning and weight loss. The Nutrisystem entrees are prepared and pre-portioned for you, and the meal plan has been designed for you to promote weight loss and good nutrition. Your Meal Planner advises you what grocery foods to include in the appropriate amounts in order to incorporate the correct amounts of protein, carbohydrates, and fat as well as nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fiber. As you make the transition from eating Nutrisystem meals to preparing more of your own meals, you will need to have some basic knowledge of nutrition in order for you to put together a healthy, well-balanced meal plan to help your control your weight.

You may have read frightening statistics that report a large number of dieters regain the weight they lost. This may happen when dieters look at weight loss as a structured temporary “diet” rather than a way of eating for life. When they return to their normal patterns and traditional foods, the weight naturally returns. We want to stress the importance of continuing the beneficial eating and exercise habits that you practiced on the Nutrisystem® program after you have reached your goal weight. You may not realize this, but the skills you learned are necessary for weight maintenance as well as weight loss. Let's now take a look at some basic nutrition concepts that you will need to consider in order to make wise food choices and control your weight.

Calories Count!

During weight loss, you no doubt heard the word “calorie” dozens of times. But **what is a calorie** anyway? A calorie is a measure of energy, whether it's the energy contained in foods or the energy required to perform various activities. Foods differ in the number of calories or energy they contain. The difference depends upon the amount of carbohydrate, protein, fat, and alcohol contained in a food or beverage. Protein and carbohydrate each contain approximately 4 calories per gram, fat contains 9 calories per gram, and alcohol weighs in at 7 calories per gram.

Weight management is based on balancing the number of calories you eat against the number of calories you burn. Changes in body weight are determined by the difference between the energy we take in and the energy we use. There are three possibilities:

1. When the energy we eat is equal to the energy we burn, body weight does not change.
2. When we consume more energy (calories) than our bodies burn, weight goes up.
3. When we consume less than our body burns, weight goes down.

That's why cutting calories and making more healthy eating choices is necessary for weight loss. In other words, weight loss is the process of tipping the energy balance equation in favor of less energy in and more energy out. The degree to which you tip the scale will determine how much weight you will lose and how fast you will lose it. In order to lose 1 pound in a week, the energy balance equation must be tipped 3,500 calories. This can be achieved one of three ways: 1) you can burn 3,500 calories per week by exercising more (working off 500 calories/day, 7 days a week), 2) you can create a 3,500 calorie shortage by reducing the amount of calories you eat (lowering intake 500 calories/day, 7 days a week), or 3) you can both increase the amount of exercise (work off 250 calories/day, 7 days a week) and decrease the amount of calories you eat (eat 250 calories/day less, 7 days a week) at the same time.

Counting calories is time-consuming, but it will become a very important activity when you are transitioning from following the Nutrisystem® plan to selecting more foods and meals on your own. Let's now take a closer look at the food components that give us calories, specifically carbohydrate, protein, fat, and alcohol, and discuss the effects they have on your weight and health.

Carbohydrates

You may have heard that some carbohydrates are “good” or “bad” but do you know what they are? Although certain forms of carbohydrate (i.e., simple sugars) are frequently consumed in the form of table sugar, soft drinks, and baked goods, they are also found in healthier foods like fruits, vegetables, beans, and products made from grains like bread and pasta. Carbohydrates can also be found in some animal products like milk, cheese, and yogurt.

Carbohydrates are a direct source of energy and your body needs them to fuel its metabolism. Carbohydrate foods provide fiber and health-promoting phytonutrients found only in plant foods. Shop for whole-grain products like whole-wheat bread, whole-grain pasta, and brown rice and fruits and vegetables with distinctive colors that indicate powerful phytonutrients such as deep red cherries and tomatoes, blue-purple blueberries and blackberries, and orange carrots and squash. These fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of the antioxidant vitamins including vitamins C, E, and beta-carotene.¹¹

Types of Carbohydrates

Traditionally, you may have learned to divide carbohydrates into the categories of digestible (sugars and starches that are broken down into smaller units, absorbed into your bloodstream, and used to generate energy in cells) and indigestible (fiber, which is not broken down by your body). Or you may think of them as simple and complex carbohydrates. Recently, you may have also heard carbohydrates classified as low and high Glycemic Index (GI) carbohydrates. GI refers to how fast carbohydrates raise blood sugars. Although GI is influenced by a variety of factors like the amount and type of fiber in the food, degree of processing, cooking, storage, and acidity, in general low GI carbohydrate foods do not raise blood sugars as quickly as high GI carbohydrate foods.

Research suggests that with equivalent weight loss, low GI diets may have more beneficial health effects (like lower triglycerides, LDL-cholesterol levels, and glucose and insulin levels) than high GI diets.^{12,13} Your Nutrisystem Meal Planner contains a list of many low GI carbohydrate foods that you are now familiar with. Continue to select from these lists to incorporate low GI foods in your menus.

Fiber

Fiber is not a single food or substance. It is the portion of plant foods that gives structure to plants. Most fiber is concentrated in outer layers (called bran layers) that protect seeds and grains. Fiber is also found in legumes, fruits, and vegetables. Fiber is not found in animal products like meats and dairy. Fiber in itself has minimal calories because the body cannot break the links between sugar units and cannot absorb it well.

There are two general types of fiber:

- **Water Soluble Fiber** attracts water and gels during the digestion process. Soluble fibers, specifically from fruit, oats and vegetables are known to lower blood cholesterol levels and promote feelings of fullness.
- **Water Insoluble Fiber** adds bulk to and softens the stool, thus stimulating movement which in turn cleanses your colon. It moves unwanted food out of the digestive tract in the form of waste. This fiber is found in veggies, wheat bran, brown rice, whole-grain breads, cereals and pastas, since it aids in overall eating satisfaction since it creates a feeling of fullness.

How much carbohydrate and fiber should I be getting?

Most likely the largest percentage of your calories will come from carbohydrates. A widely-accepted range is 40-60% of your total daily calories in the form of carbohydrates; the Nutrisystem meal plan included about 50-55% calories from carbs. This wide range gives you flexibility to include more or less depending on your taste preferences, exercise levels, and fluctuations in one day’s menu to the next.

The U.S Dietary Guidelines and many health organizations recommend 25-35 grams of fiber per day. Amazingly, the average American currently consumes about 10-15 grams of fiber daily. While following the Nutrisystem plan, you were consuming approximately this amount, so you see that with planning, it is easy to achieve this goal. If a variety of foods from each food group are eaten and the grains are whole grains as opposed to processed grains (for example, whole-wheat bread and pasta rather than white bread and pasta), individuals can easily get the recommended amount of fiber they need each day. Increase your fiber gradually (i.e., add 5 grams of fiber per day to your diet each week) to limit unpleasant symptoms, like flatulence.

Helpful tips to add fiber to your diet:

- Eat raw fruits and vegetables instead of drinking juices.
- Eat the skin of fruit and vegetables.
- Add cooked dried beans to your meal plan.
- Select whole grains such as brown rice and barley and whole-grain bread products and cereals.

Protein

Our tissue cells are constantly turning over and replacing themselves; our bodies use protein to build and repair these tissue cells. Protein contributes to the function of muscle, bones, cartilage, skin and blood. Protein also helps your physical appearance because your hair and nails are made up of mostly protein.

Types of Protein

- Animal (beef, chicken, eggs, fish, cheese)

- Vegetable based (beans, grains, nuts, vegetables)
- Soy based (tofu, soy milk)

With the exception of soy protein, proteins from animal sources (dairy products, meats, poultry, fish, and eggs) are generally of higher quality than proteins from plant sources (beans, peas, grains, seeds and nuts) since they contain all of the essential amino acids, the building blocks of protein. But grains and beans can also contribute significant protein to your diet. Some animal protein sources contain a high amount of unhealthy saturated fat and cholesterol, so when selecting meats and dairy foods, note the number of grams of fat per serving. Look for low-fat cheese and fat-free milk, and lean meats and skinless poultry.

You became familiar with some low-fat proteins when selecting your dairy and protein additions during your weight loss phase. You also may have noted that Nutrisystem included protein at each meal and each snack. Protein helps to control appetite and also controls blood sugar. A moderate amount of protein is important in creating low GI meals. This is why Nutrisystem incorporates protein into each entrée.

How much protein should I be getting?

How much protein do you need? Maybe not as much as you think. Americans in general tend to consume much more meat than the body requires. If you limit meat, chicken or fish portions to about the size of a deck of cards, you will be getting all the protein that you need at a meal. The Recommended Daily Value for protein is 50 grams for most adults. During weight loss it is important to consume more protein for several reasons, including helping you to feel fuller longer and helping you build up lean body mass and repair muscles from exercise during weight loss.

Fats

Before carbohydrates got a bad name, fat was singled out as the cause of obesity in the American diet. A few years ago, many fat-free products were created by food manufacturers to convince consumers that all they had to do was eliminate fat from their diets to lose weight. Those fat-free products were often very high in sugar and calories, and we know now that it is the total number of calories, not only the number of fat grams, that contributes to weight gain or loss.

Fats, specifically fatty acids, perform a variety of vital bodily functions. They act as a source of energy and carry fat-soluble vitamins (Vitamins A, D, E and K). Fats also aid in hormone production and are necessary for the maintenance of healthy skin, nails and hair. Fat deficiencies can cause a decrease in energy and metabolism, emotional and mental challenges, brittle nails and hair, and premature aging of the skin.

But as with most nutrients, too much fat can cause problems. All fats are a concentrated source of calories; by that, we mean that each gram of fat has 9 calories while each gram of carbohydrate and protein has 4 calories. Fat calories add up quickly, and for this reason, your meal plan included only one or two additional fat servings each day.

Types of Fat

Let’s look at the different types of fat and how they affect your health. It turns out that not all types of fat are the same. There are two basic types: saturated and unsaturated. You may have also heard of trans fat. Saturated and trans fat are associated with an increased risk of heart disease because they raise blood cholesterol levels, which can clog the arteries in your heart. Unsaturated fats (monounsaturated like olive oil, canola oils and polyunsaturated like corn and soybean oils) are healthier for your heart and should be chosen in place of saturated and trans fat. These are the fats that were emphasized and included in your

Nutrisystem entrees and your fat serving choices. Remember, however, that whenever you eat fat of any kind, you are consuming a high-calorie food with 9 calories per gram (as compared to 4 calories per gram for carbohydrate and protein). Unsaturated, Saturated, and trans fats, are discussed in more detail below.

Unsaturated fats

Omega-3 (fish and fish oil, flaxseed, walnuts): Omega-3 fatty acids are considered essential fatty acids which mean that they are essential to human health but cannot be made in the body. Research indicates that omega-3 fatty acids aid in the prevention of hardening of the arteries, a condition that can lead to hypertension, heart attack and stroke. Omega-3 fatty acids reduce inflammation and keep blood from clotting excessively. They may lower cholesterol and also help your mind fight memory loss and depression. Since fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, and sardines is the best source of omega-3 fats, the American Heart Association is now recommending that Americans eat two servings of fish weekly. The good news is that throughout your Nutrisystem® program you are getting a good amount of these heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids from the highest quality! And that’s what’s so great about Nutrisystem!

Omega-6 (corn, soybean, sunflower, peanut, safflower oils): Omega-6 fatty acids are also considered essential fatty acids. For this reason, they must be obtained from food. While these are necessary for good health, the typical American diet contains an over-abundance of these polyunsaturated fats which can contribute to weight gain from excessive total calories.

Saturated fats

Saturated fats (butter, sour cream, lard, meat fats): Saturated fats, which are found primarily in animal products, tend to increase LDL (bad) cholesterol and can contribute to heart disease. For this reason, Nutrisystem limited saturated fat to less than 5% of your total calories. Continue to limit saturated fat by avoiding fatty meats, butter, cream and sour cream, high-fat cheeses and whole-fat milk.

Trans fats

Trans fats (margarine, processed fried foods, partially hydrogenated oils): The last type of fat that you need to be cautious of is trans fats which can raise LDL cholesterol levels and lower HDL cholesterol (the good type of cholesterol). These man-made fats are found primarily in foods that contain partially hydrogenated oils. You may have noticed that all of your Nutrisystem entrees were labeled “0” trans fats. Nutrisystem feels strongly about not using trans fats in their foods due to these serious health outcomes.

How much fat should I be getting?

The American Heart Association’s recommendation for heart health is no more than 30% of your total calories in the form of total fat and no more than 7% of your total calories in the form of saturated fat. If your calorie intake now is about 1500, your fat goal is 50 grams or less per day. If your calorie intake is about 1800, your fat goal is 60 grams or less per day. The solution to the bad fat dilemma is to read food labels and know your heart-healthy fats, which include olive oil, canola oil, flaxseed oil and avocado! (Note: see your meal planner for the appropriate serving size).

Alcohol

Although alcohol is not considered a nutrient because it does not perform a specific function in the body,

we would like to briefly mention alcohol since alcohol is another source of calories. If you chose to add alcoholic beverages to your lifestyle, you need to be aware that, in excess, they may make it more difficult for you to maintain your weight loss. Each gram of alcohol provides 7 calories, and some drinks also include mixers that contribute sugar. A typical alcoholic drink will have anywhere from 100 to 300 calories. Research indicates that alcohol can stimulate your appetite and cause you to eat more than you normally would. We recommend that you limit alcoholic drinks to one or two per week until your weight is stabilized. There is research that indicates that red wine may offer heart health benefits, but consult your personal physician before starting to drink, especially if you have any health concerns.

Water

While water is not a calorie source, it is a vital nutrient that is involved in every function of the body. It moistens and lubricates our tissues and joints, helps eliminate wastes and toxins from our tissues, and is crucial in our body’s ability to transport vital nutrients like proteins, sugars, electrolytes and vitamins so that the body can perform normally. Water is necessary to assure that fiber can pass easily through your system. Water binds with the fiber in your meals, making it more bulky and keeping you regular. Continue with a goal of drinking eight, 8 oz. glasses of water daily.

Caffeine

Is caffeine safe? How much is too much? You may have limited your caffeine intake on the Nutrisystem® program because you were reducing your consumption of calorie-laden (and caffeine-containing) beverages. If you are now considering increasing your intake of these beverages, keep in mind that caffeine is a stimulant that can increase heart rate and temporarily elevate blood pressure. People differ greatly in their sensitivity to caffeine. Some can drink several cups of coffee, tea or cola and not feel any effects, while others feel the influence after only one serving. The key to caffeine, like most other foods, is moderation. A good recommendation is no more than 300 mg a day; an 8 oz. cup of coffee contains about 100 mg and 8 oz. of tea about 40 mg.

In addition to caffeine, remember that coffee-house beverages topped with whipped cream and sugary syrups, as well as regular soft drinks, are high in calories that will be detrimental to your weight maintenance efforts.

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Eating a varied diet is an important way of getting all the nutrients you need and managing your weight. Nutrisystem has provided you with a meal plan to help you eat a balanced diet; however, as you come closer to meeting your weight loss goals, you will become increasingly responsible for coming up with your own meals. Now is the time to think about how you can continue to improve your diet. Use the tips suggested in this chapter (or your own ideas) to increase your intake of fiber and lower your intake of fat. Take the Nutrition Quiz on the next page – Test Your Knowledge!

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.
- 2. Increase exercise this week. Be physically active for 30 minutes, 6 days a week.
- 3. Select one strategy to increase your intake of fiber and one strategy to decrease your intake of fat, particularly saturated and trans fat. Complete worksheet.

Nutrition Quiz – Test Your Knowledge!

1. The same product may be made a few different ways such as fat free milk, 1% milk, 2% milk and whole milk. This is an example of how foods differ in the amount of calories they have in them. What three nutrients change the calorie count of a product?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
2. List three foods that you like that are low Glycemic Index carbohydrates.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
3. List three foods that are high Glycemic Index carbohydrates.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
4. What are 3 benefits your body can experience by losing weight and eating foods that are low Glycemic Index carbohydrates?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
5. Some carbohydrates contain fiber and phytonutrients. What two foods can you add to your diet to increase your fiber and phytonutrient intake?
 - 1)
 - 2)
6. Protein is found in many forms; give an example of a(n):
 - a. Animal protein
 - b. Veggie protein
 - c. Soy-based protein
7. You should always incorporate a limited amount of healthy fat choices into your diet. What are two healthy fats that you enjoy?
 - 1)
 - 2)
8. Certain fats are considered healthy for your body. What are two benefits of eating healthy fats in a limited amount?
 - 1)
 - 2)
9. List two reasons why it may be difficult to maintain weight loss while consuming alcohol.
 - 1)
 - 2)
10. You should drink at least _____ ounces of water a day!

Answers on page 72.

Week 12

Shopping Smarts and Label Literacy

Practical Lifestyle Skills

Congratulations – Take a Bow!

You’ve successfully completed 11 weeks of the program! You’ve learned many skills for effective weight control. We hope that you’re proud of the commitment you’ve made to yourself and your health. You’ve made lifestyle changes that bode well for you now and in the future.

During the last week, you learned about energy providing nutrients that provide calories (carbohydrate, fat, and protein) and their effects on your weight and health. Keep this information in mind when you eat fewer Nutrisystem® meals and begin to create more of your own meals. You’ll have to practice eating in a healthier manner (like eating less fat and more nutrient rich carbohydrates) just like you practice the skills for being more physically active and overcoming barriers to leading a healthy lifestyle. Remember that a healthy lifestyle doesn’t just happen; it requires practice. Be sure to track your progress in your Meal Planner.

Understanding Food Labels

No matter what your specific goals for healthy eating are, you’ll need to become familiar with food labels. Federal law requires the disclosure of nutritional information on processed foods, although there are no requirements for fresh foods such as meat, poultry, vegetables and fruits. Here are a few important points to remember:

- ✓ **Know your serving size.** This first line of the label is the most important, because all of the nutrition facts below it are based on this serving size. So, it’s important to compare the amount that you eat to the serving size on the label. If you eat more than the serving size, make sure to account for the calories you consumed. For example, if a serving of ice cream (1/2 a cup) is 250 calories and you had one cup of ice cream, you ate 500 calories, not 250 calories. This seems pretty obvious, but it’s easy to be misled if products that appear to be one serving, such as a 16 oz. bottle of juice or soda or a small bag of chips, actually contain 2 or more servings.
- ✓ **Don’t be overwhelmed.** You don’t need to evaluate every part of the food label in order to make a healthy choice. Focus on what’s important to you and don’t try to do too much at one time. Right now your goal is weight loss (or maintenance, depending on where you are with your program), so you need to **focus on calories**. Maintaining a calorie budget is hard work but it’s a critical component of weight management. Once you feel that your calorie intake is under control, you can make healthy changes in other areas like eating more fiber, vitamins, and minerals and eating less fat and sodium.
- ✓ **When in doubt, read the label.** When it comes to product claims, be a skeptic. Rather than trying to decipher the difference between “low fat,” “reduced fat,” and “light,” read the label. Remember that even factual claims can be misleading. For example, many snack foods, such as potato chips, are labeled “no cholesterol.” If you’re watching your cholesterol, you might think that’s a healthy buy. However, “no cholesterol” chips may have large amounts of saturated fat that significantly raise blood cholesterol levels and contain a lot of calories. So, be cautious and read the label carefully!

Shopping Skills

As you’ve changed your eating habits over the last few weeks, you’ve probably also made some changes in how you shop. There’s no doubt that sensible shopping habits will make eating a healthy diet easier. Having fewer high-fat, high-calorie foods in your house will increase your ability to eat in a healthy way.

Supermarket Savvy Before reviewing specific strategies for healthy shopping, let’s review how supermarkets try to influence what you buy. Very little is left to chance. For example, sweetened cereals are displayed at children’s eye levels, because children make 50% of cereal decisions. Supermarkets also use more obvious tactics to persuade you to buy certain products, such as overhead announcements of manager’s specials and prominent displays of sale items at the ends of aisles. This “point of purchase” advertising is popular because it leads to impulse buying. In fact, more than 50% of purchasing decisions are made in the store.

Sensible Shopping Since many impulse items are high in calories and fat, you’ll need strategies to shop with your health in mind. Listed below are some tips for sensible, healthy shopping.

- ✓ **Bring a list.** Make a list at home when you’re not hungry. Plan your meals and snacks for the upcoming week, so you can get the necessary foods. With this information you can decide whether you can make some modifications in the foods your purchase before you go to the grocery store (i.e., buy a lower calorie version of the same food like skim milk rather than whole milk, substitute a food in a recipe that is high in fat like certain cuts of beef with a food that is lower in fat like chicken breast, etc.). The same approach can be used to improve other areas of your diet (i.e., fiber, fat, vitamins and minerals).
- ✓ **Avoid unnecessary aisles.** If you’re not buying cookies, there’s no need to go down the cookie aisle. If you need something in the first part of the aisle but the rest of the aisle contains high-fat foods, reverse your path to reach the next aisle. There’s no rule that you have to go up and down the entire length of every aisle.
- ✓ **Shop on a full stomach.** If you’re hungry, you’ll be even more influenced by the point-of-purchase advertising. The supermarket environment is already a challenge to manage; being hungry only makes it harder.
- ✓ **Leave the kids at home.** If possible, it’s best to shop without children. They can influence you to buy items that you normally would not.
- ✓ **Avoid convenience stores.** Convenience stores are full of prompts to increase impulse buying. The less you shop there, the better.
- ✓ **Beware of bargains.** Even the best-intentioned shoppers can end up leaving with items they never intended to purchase but did so because they were on sale. More for less is not always better, especially if it’s more fat. You might save a few dollars but what you get is an increased chance to eat unhealthy foods. If you want a particular food, plan to buy it in a portion that will limit overeating, and then enjoy it. Buying high-fat, high-calorie foods just because they’re on sale undermines your efforts to improve your health. Your health is certainly worth more than a few dollars. Remember, your health is not for sale.
- ✓ **Review your list.** When at the check-out line, review your list to be sure you purchased what you had planned. This will distract you from impulse buys of high-fat, high-sugar candy bars. If you’re

- finished with your list, pick up a tabloid and check out the latest crazy diet, and be pleased that you've chosen an approach that is sensible, safe and long-term.
- ✔ **Store food appropriately.** When you get home, be sure to store foods out of sight. Out of sight is out of mind!

This Week’s Skill Builder:

Becoming more familiar with food labels and using smart shopping techniques will help you bring healthier foods into your home and will, ultimately, lead to effective weight control. Remember to make small and gradual changes in the foods you choose when you transition to eating more self-selected meals. You may want to first focus on eating lower calorie foods and once you have that under your belt you may want to work on selecting products lower in saturated fat, higher in fiber, or higher in nutrients. Remember effective weight control is not a race. The smaller the changes you make, the easier it will be to become accustomed to those changes and to maintain them in the future.

Next time you go grocery shopping take the a few blank food labels (samples on page 80) with you. As you read the labels of various products, fill in the blank spaces next to serving size, servings per container, calories, fat, and fiber on the blank food label (don’t forget to write the product name on the label). When you go home, compare these labels to the labels of similar Nutrisystem foods. Check to see how closely these foods compare to the Nutrisystem foods that are designed to provide a balance of healthy nutrients.

Week 13
You’re On Your Way!

Skill Builder at a Glance

- 1. Follow your Nutrisystem meal plan.**
- 2. Be physically active for 30 minutes, 6 days a week.**
- 3. Compare Nutrisystem labels to labels of similar foods at the grocery store to decide which foods you would like to incorporate into your daily meal plan once you meet your weight loss goals.**
- 4. Use at least one smart shopping technique to make sure you buy the foods that fit into your healthy lifestyle.**

- Answers for Nutrition Quiz on page 68.
- 1. Carbohydrates, Protein and Fat
 - 2. Brown rice, whole wheat bread, green beans, yams, etc.
 - 3. White rice, white bread and pizza with white dough, etc.
 - 4. Improvement in glucose and insulin levels, lower triglycerides and LDL – cholesterol levels.
 - 5. Strawberries, apple with skin, broccoli, wheat bran, brown rice, etc.
 - 6. Animal protein – lean beef, salmon, tuna, turkey, Canadian bacon, hard boiled egg, etc. Veggie protein – garbanzo beans, almonds, cauliflower, rolled oats, etc. Soy protein – tofu, soy milk, etc.
 - 7. Olive oil, natural peanut butter, unsalted peanuts, avocado, etc.
 - 8. Source of energy, carry vitamins through body, help maintain healthy skin and nails, help prevent hardening of the arteries, etc.
 - 9. Contains empty calories and stimulates appetite
 - 10. 64 ounces

Now What?

Congratulations! You’ve followed the program for the past three months, and you’ve gotten into a pattern of eating well and moving more. You probably experienced significant improvements in your weight, health, appearance, and feelings of well-being. Well done!

You will now begin a phase of long-term weight control. Over the course of the 12 week program, you learned many important skills. Because weight control is an ongoing process that has no beginning and no end, it is important that you continue to practice those skills but you must also continue to build your skill set. At this point you may be thinking, “After all I’ve done to lose this weight, you mean there’s still more work ahead?” The answer is “Yes.” It’s a lot like other things in your life that you have invested in. Think about the friends you’ve made and the relationships you’ve developed. In order for any relationship to last, you need to nourish it from beginning to end. To protect the investment in your friendship, you spend time together, help one another, and work through difficult situations rather than ignore them. All of these efforts strengthen the bond you’ve created and provide an opportunity to identify and deal with small problems before they become big ones that are even harder to manage.

Weight control is no different. You’ve worked hard to lose weight. Now your challenge is to protect your investment. This time the investment is YOU and the positive changes you’ve experienced in health, appearance, energy level, sense of control, and a host of other things. It might take additional work but you’re worth it! Below are some key skills that will help you protect your weight loss and strengthen your weight control skills.

How Do I Make Sure I Stay on the Right Path?

- ✓ **Be active.** It doesn’t matter what you do—bike, swim, spin, walk, or add more lifestyle activity into your day—what matters is that you continue to move your body. Research shows that active people maintain their weight better than those who are not active. You’ve learned how to fit 180 minutes of physical activity into your week. Can you do more? Keep it interesting and challenge yourself to a new goal. How about 200 minutes per week?
- ✓ **Watch portions.** Many people think that bigger is better. We’re so used to the portions served today that we easily forget what a reasonable portion should be and end up eating more than our bodies need. You don’t even have to order a super-sized meal to get a large portion of food. A bagel 20 years ago was 3 inches in diameter and had 140 calories. Today’s 6-inch bagel has 350 calories. Even though you only ate 1 bagel, you ate 210 more calories than you would have in the past! If this happens several times across the day, you’ll end up eating many more calories than you need. If you don’t burn these extra calories across the day, you’ll end up gaining weight. Just out of curiosity, how long do you think you would have to rake leaves in order to burn those extra bagel calories? You would have to rake leaves for about 50 minutes to burn approximately 210 calories. This example came from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s Portion Distortion Quiz. Go to: <http://hp2010.nhlbi.nih.gov/portion/> to see how well you know how today’s portions compare to the portions available 20 years ago.

The American Cancer Society provides some great tips for portion size at http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_3_2x_Portion_Control.asp. And for your convenience, here are a few quick references for portion sizes that come from directly from their site:

- 1 oz. cheese: size of 4 dice
- 3 oz. meat: size of a deck of cards or bar of soap
- 3 oz. fish: size of a checkbook
- Medium potato: size of a computer mouse
- 2 Tbs. peanut butter: size of a ping pong ball
- 1/2 cup pasta: size of a tennis ball
- 1 cup chopped raw vegetables or fruit: size of a baseball
- 1/4 cup dried fruit (raisins, apricots, mango): a small handful

- ✓ **Check-in with yourself.** To make sure you are eating and exercising appropriately, you should check-in with yourself (i.e., self-monitor) once a week with the “Weekly Review” worksheet on page 77. The Weekly Review will provide you a structure for identifying weekly goals and assessing your progress on a regular basis. At the beginning of the week, set one eating (i.e., energy-in) and exercise (i.e., energy-out) goal. When you check-in at the end of the week, you should describe whether you were able to meet your goals during the week. If you were able to do these things, describe how you were able to do it and if not, describe what got in the way and problem-solve.
- ✓ **Weigh yourself at least once a week.** You should also continue to weigh yourself each week, compare your weight to the previous week, and determine whether you are losing, maintaining, or gaining weight from week to week. You’ll notice that your weight may increase, stay the same, or decrease from week to week. Don’t get concerned if your weight doesn’t stay the same each week. There are a variety of reasons why this may not occur (e.g., high salt intake, water retention, etc.). What is important is that your weight stays steady from month to month. If your goal is to maintain your weight loss, you should be sure that your weight isn’t slowly creeping up. If you notice that you are slowly gaining weight, you can promptly make changes in the way you eat and/or move to reverse this trend.
- ✓ **Reverse small weight gains immediately.** It is tempting to think that you will never gain weight but you will. Expect small weight gains (3-5 pounds over your current weight) and have a specific plan to reverse them. A Nutrisystem counselor is a great resource in situations like these. (S)he can give you a plan to follow to help you get back on track. Like relationships, you should address issues early before they become hard to manage. A 5-pound weight gain is much easier to manage than a 20-pound weight gain!

Strategies Used by Successful Weight Losers

Because the process of weight maintenance is difficult, it is helpful to look at the strategies used by those who have succeeded at losing weight and keeping it off. Research from people who have been successful in keeping the weight off suggests that successful weight losers:

- 1. **Watch calories and fat closely.** On average, they eat 27% of calories from fat.
- 2. **Eat breakfast.** Over 75% eat breakfast (like cereal and fruit) every day of the week.
- 3. **Eat regularly.** On average, they eat 5 times a day.
- 4. **Limit how often they eat out.** On average, they eat out less than 3 times a week and less than 1 meal per week in fast food restaurants.
- 5. **Self-monitor.** Not only do they track their calorie and fat intake closely, 75% weigh themselves at least once a week.
- 6. **Exercise regularly.** On average, they burned 3,000 calories/week through exercise (approximately 60 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each day).
- 7. **Limit sedentary activities.** The majority watch 10 or fewer hours of TV per week (the average number of hours of TV viewing/week by American adults is 28 hrs/week).

Congratulations for getting this far. You’ve done well to lose weight. Now it’s time to continue your journey and practice skills that protect your biggest investment—YOU!

Date: 5/12

WEEKLY REVIEW (Example)

Self-Monitoring

Did you monitor your food intake and exercise this week? Yes No

If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

I bought a pocket sized notebook and wrote down what I ate and drank after each meal and snack. I also recorded my physical activity at the bottom of the page.

Energy In

My eating goal for the week is to:

Eat one serving of fruit as an afternoon snack rather than a candy bar from the vending machine.

Were you able to meet your eating goal this week? Yes No

If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

I made a grocery list at the beginning of the week and bought enough fruit for each snack. I also brought a few pieces of fruit to work so I wouldn’t have to remember to bring fruit with me to work every morning.

Exercise

My exercise goal for the week is to:

Walk 30 minutes during my lunch break on Mon, Wed, and Fri, go to spin class Saturday morning (60 min), and go for a 30 min walk around the neighborhood with my husband Sunday evening after dinner.

Were you able to meet your exercise goal this week? Yes No

If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

I didn’t go for a walk Sunday evening. I felt tired after dinner and watched TV instead. Next week I will plan to walk with my husband after lunch.

Total number of minutes of physical activity this week: 150 min

Weight

This week’s weight: 135 lbs, weight change from last week: + / - .5 lbs

WEEKLY REVIEW

Self-Monitoring

Did you monitor your food intake and exercise this week? Yes No
If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

Energy In

My eating goal for the week is to:

Were you able to meet your eating goal this week? Yes No
If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

Exercise

My exercise goal for the week is to:

Were you able to meet your exercise goal this week? Yes No
If so, how did you do it? If not, what got in the way?

Total number of minutes of physical activity this week: min

Weight

This week’s weight: ____ lbs., weight change from last week: + / - lbs.

Sources

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Nutrition Facts

Serving Size
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat
% Daily Value*	

Total Fat	
Saturated Fat	
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	
Sugars	

Protein	
Vitamin A	Vitamin C
Calcium	Iron

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

Calories:	
Total Fat	
Saturated Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	

Calories per gram:
Fat • Carbohydrate • Protein

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat
% Daily Value*	

Total Fat	
Saturated Fat	
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	
Sugars	

Protein	
Vitamin A	Vitamin C
Calcium	Iron

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

Calories:	
Total Fat	
Saturated Fat	
Cholesterol	
Sodium	
Total Carbohydrate	
Dietary Fiber	

Calories per gram:
Fat • Carbohydrate • Protein

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (67g)
Servings Per Container 2

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat
% Daily Value*	

Total Fat 4.5g	7%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Sodium 750mg	31%
Total Carbohydrate 41g	14%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 5g	

Protein	
Vitamin A 2%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 8%	Iron 8%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

Calories:	
Total Fat	Less than 65g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g
Dietary Fiber	25g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4