



YOUR AMERICAN HEART

Life's Simple 7: **LOSE WEIGHT!**

Obesity rates have reached epidemic proportions in this country! Being overweight puts strain on your heart and can lead to serious health problems. These problems include type 2 diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, sleep apnea, varicose veins and other chronic conditions. More than 300,000 lives could be saved in the U.S. each year if everyone maintained a healthy weight!

But where you carry your body fat may be as important as how many extra pounds you have. People who carry too much fat around the middle (the so-called “apple” body shape) rather than the hips and buttocks (the “pear” body shape) are more likely to have health problems. Too much abdominal fat puts you at risk for Type 2 Diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. In a study of more than 33,000 men, every 2-inch increase in waist size raised the risk of dying of cardiovascular disease by up to 17% over 10 years, independent of other risk factors. To properly measure your waist, just use a soft tape measure around your bare midsection about an inch above your belly button. The ideals are:



Ideal MEN < 40 inches

Ideal WOMEN < 35 inches

The 1st step toward shrinking your waistline is to start eating a healthier diet and start exercising. Preventing any further weight gain and slowly reducing weight into a healthier range should be the goal. Simply dropping 5-10% of your body weight can cause dramatic improvements in blood pressure, blood cholesterol and blood sugar. Remember . . . There is no quick fix to being overweight. To lose weight, you have to burn more calories than you take in. Our suggestion would be to focus on health, not a specific DIET (**D**oing, **I**diotic, **E**ating, **T**ricks).

- ♥ Make healthy food choices. If 80% of the time you're making the best food choice, 20% of the time you can indulge.
- ♥ Eat a little less. It's usually not what we eat...but how much we eat.
- ♥ Move more.
- ♥ Seek out support to keep you on track.



The Medical Center of Plano