



GENERAL WELLNESS

SIX BIG BENEFITS OF LIVING AT A HEALTHY WEIGHT

— By Your Health Staff

Posted: July 1, 2024

It's probably not news that achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is a recommended goal for all Americans.

That said—nearly 3 out of 4 individuals in our Mid-South community are overweight (weighing more than a recommended healthy weight range). At least 1 in every 3 Mid-Southerners is affected by obesity (a chronic health condition that significantly increases our risk for high blood pressure, respiratory issues, certain cancers and other life-threatening conditions).

“While it's fairly common knowledge that carrying excess weight negatively impacts our health, what's *not* as widely known is that those negative effects begin in individuals who are just slightly overweight, and continue to rise exponentially with the addition of pounds above a healthy weight range,” says [Leigh Daigle, MD](#), at Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare.

At [Healthier 901](#), we understand that losing weight isn't easy—but we also believe a healthier, happier future is well within reach for us as individuals, and as a community. That's why we've challenged the Mid-South to lose one million pounds over the next three years, backed by free resources like [on-demand workouts](#), [healthy recipes](#), 30-day lifestyle challenges and more.

But why does living at a healthy weight matter so much, anyway?

“Our weight truly is connected to all other parts of our body,” said Daigle. “A healthy weight sets the stage for our muscles, bones, brain, heart and other parts to function efficiently and effectively for many years.”

Six Big Benefits of Living at a Healthy Weight

If the promise of lowered stroke risk, decreased blood pressure, improved heart health and reduced risk of type 2 diabetes still has you weighing the pros and cons of starting your own weight loss journey, read on for six more proven benefits to maintaining a healthy weight:

1 More Mobility

Losing weight takes the pressure off our knees, backs and other joints, which can have positive health effects for folks with arthritis and also makes it easier for you to do more of the physical activities you want to do (walking with loved ones, playing with little ones, living more independently or another movement goal you've set for yourself!).

2 Better Sleep

When we lose weight, our sleep quality tends to improve—especially for those of us with obesity-induced sleep apnea, a breathing issue that can cause us to wake up frequently throughout the night. Better sleep *also* translates to more energy during the day, which is a bonus benefit!

3 Increased Libido

That's right, we said it. Shedding pounds can give your sex drive a boost thanks to hormonal changes that result from weight loss.

4 Lower Cancer Risk

Did you know losing weight can actually reduce your risk of getting certain cancers? It's true! As you drop pounds, you also drop your risk for kidney, liver, endometrial and pancreatic cancer.

5 Sharper Brain Health

In addition to improving our mood and boosting self-esteem, having a healthy body weight has been linked to stronger cognitive function (read: better memory + thinking power) and a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease.

6 Stronger Taste

Strange but true: individuals who lose weight often report an improved or heightened sense of taste. That means the foods and flavors we love can actually become more enjoyable as we approach a healthier weight range for our body type.

“One of the best things about beginning a weight loss journey is that every small loss sets you up for your next big success,” said Daigle. “Losing just a few pounds will give you a little more energy, less pressure and pain around your joints and the confidence to know you can accomplish hard things.”

Take the First Step!

So, if you're carrying around some extra pounds but you've held off on the weight loss path because your goal feels out of reach, remember—when it comes to lifestyle changes, slow and steady wins the race. What's more? Healthier 901 is here to help you every step of the way. Join the [Healthier 901 movement](#) today and take the first critical step toward the healthy life you deserve!

