

Ways to track weight loss success

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(HealthDay)—Self-monitoring is part of virtually every weight loss plan, and weighing yourself is a key part of self-monitoring. After all, the one thing every dieter wants to see is results.

But how can you really tell if you're making progress? The most common method is to step on the [scale](#). Yet a big downside of the scale is that it doesn't tell you how much fat you've lost. Instead, it weighs everything. And that makes it easy for something like drinking more water to cause frustrating weight fluctuations.

Many weight loss plans recommend weighing yourself once a week or less to avoid getting discouraged. Others say weighing yourself every day can help you stay on track and prevent gaining back lost [weight](#). But what if all that stepping on and off the scale just leaves you discouraged?

A great alternative is tracking your progress with a tape measure. Once a week or once a month, measure your bust or chest, waist, hips, thighs, calves, and upper and lower arms.

Another simple way to measure your progress is how your clothes fit. Put on the same pair of pants and shirt every week or month to see how you're doing.

Whichever method you choose, make sure to have realistic goals—and aim for losing just 1 or 2 pounds a week.

More information: For more ideas on body measurements, visit the ["tools and calculators"](#) page on the American Council on Exercise website.

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