

Weigh-in once a week or you'll gain weight

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Illustration of previous findings about weight by the research team. Credit: Daniel Miller

Stepping on the scale is common among dieters but how does the frequency of weigh-ins impact weight? A new study in *PLOS ONE* showed that the more frequently dieters weighed themselves the more weight they lost, and if participants went more than a week without weighing themselves, they gained weight.

The researchers analyzed 2,838 weight measurements (up to a years' worth of weigh-ins) from 40 overweight individuals (with a [body mass index](#) of 25 and over) who indicated that [weight loss](#) was a personal goal or concern. The researchers found that weight loss was related to how often individuals weighed themselves. "The more often you weigh yourself the more weight you lose," says to lead author Elina Helander from Tampere University of Technology in Finland. This observational study cannot prove causation - it may be that less serious [dieters](#) weigh themselves less or that dieters who stop losing weight stop weighing themselves. The average time that participants could go between weighting without gaining weight was 5.8 days or about a weekly weigh-in.

Weigh yourself at least once a week if you wish to lose weight, and weighing yourself everyday may help you stay on track. A previous study by the same research team found that your weight naturally fluctuates throughout the week and that most people weigh the least on Wednesday. To summarize both studies Brian Wansink, PhD, Director of the Cornell Food and Brand Lab and author of *Slim by Design: Mind Eating Solutions for Everyday Life* advises, "The bottom line is: If you want to lose weight, it's best to weigh yourself every day. But if you weigh yourself only once a week, do it on Wednesday because that will give you the most accurate reading."

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