

Ventura County Wellness Program

Weight Loss/Maintenance Challenge Recommendations

Purpose: To provide a framework of fun and friendly competition that will:

1. Promote healthier eating
2. Encourage physical activity
3. Create a supportive work environment

Disclaimer: The County of Ventura Wellness Program does not sponsor weight loss or maintenance challenges. These challenges are considered individually sponsored programs among friends. Participation is completely voluntary and not on County time.

Incentives or Prizes: It is the sole responsibility of the group sponsoring the challenge to determine whether prizes or incentives will be offered. The Wellness Program does not handle or distribute incentives or prizes for weight loss or maintenance challenges.

Weight Loss/Maintenance Challenge Kit: These modifiable support materials are provided on the following pages.

- Weight Loss/Maintenance Challenge Guidelines.....pg. 2
- Suggested Coordinator Guidelines.....pg. 3
- Suggested Participant Guidelines.....pg. 4
- Weight Loss/Maint Waiver Form.....pg.5
- Sample Invitation.....pg. 6
- Email Messages of Encouragement: 10 short weekly messages.....pg. 7 & 8
- Official Weight Check Record Form.....pg. 9
- Weight Control Card for Participants.....pg. 10-13

Additional Wellness Program Support: The Wellness Program may provide resources (below), to support your weight loss or maintenance challenge. To request participation of Wellness Program staff for “Weight Checks” and/or classes use the [Wellness Program Request Procedures packet](#).

- **Weight Checks:** Wellness Program staff may be available to confidentially record weights and determine total and overall weight loss results at your site. [Click here for Wellness Program Request Procedures.](#)
- **Classes:** Weight Loss and exercise classes may be offered at your site. [Click here for Wellness Program Request Procedures.](#)

We recommend that contest participants register for a Wellness Profile if they have not participated within the last year. All Regular Employees and their spouses are eligible for a Wellness Profile. To register visit: <http://ceo.countyofventura.org/wellness/registration> .

Weight Loss/Maintenance Challenge Guidelines

Weight loss should be the result of healthier eating and exercise habits. Participants are on the honor system and should participate in a healthy and fair manner.

Prohibited:

- Diet pills (herbal or prescription appetite suppressants, metabolism enhancers, etc.)
- Water pills (diuretics) unless prescribed for a medical condition such as high blood pressure
- Laxatives and colonics

Suggested Criteria for “Winning”:

- Weight loss challenge: “Winners” are determined by percentage of total weight loss. This is a fairer comparison than total pounds lost since heavier persons can safely lose weight more rapidly. A healthy rate of loss is 1% of beginning weight per week. So, a person weighing 280 pounds can lose 2-3 pounds per week while a person weighing 180 pounds would be expected to lose no more than 1-2 pounds per week.

Example calculation:

1. beginning weight – ending weight = pounds lost
 2. (pounds lost ÷ beginning weight) X 100 = percent weight lost
- Weight maintenance challenge: “Winners” are those that maintain a weight within 2 pounds of initial weight. Participants can lose weight but do not get “extra credit” for that loss.

Weight Challenge: Coordinator's Guide

Set Program Date(s): Schedule rooms for weight checks and any other support activities such as Wellness classes.

To request participation of Wellness Program staff for weight checks (see page 1), or to request a Wellness class, [click here to view the Wellness Program Request Procedures](#).

Four Weeks Prior to Challenge:

- **Establish Challenge Guidelines:** (See prior page for suggested guidelines.)
- **Advertise to Employees:** Publish program dates, participant guidelines and dates and times for special activities. (See sample invitation for Holiday Weight Maintenance Challenge.)

Start Date:

- Have employees complete Participant Waiver (page 5).
- Have employees acknowledge Challenge Guidelines (ex: Participant's Guide).
- Weigh participants and record initial weight. (See sample Record Form, page 9.)

Initial weigh-in and final weigh-out should be done at the same location and on the same scale by the Program Coordinator or their designee.

- Distribute any support materials.
- Produce and distribute weight control card for participants (if desired).
 - See pages 10 through 13 for two sample weight control cards for tracking weight changes. To produce the cards, print pages 10 and 11 (or pages 12 and 13) double-sided on card stock. Cut to printed area. Fold in thirds.

Weekly (after start date):

- Send e-mail encouragement. (See sample weekly e-mail messages, pages 7 and 8.)
- If available, provide incentives to those participating in designated activities.
- Offer healthy activities to complement the challenge.
 - Examples: walking clubs, healthy potlucks, Wellness classes, etc. See our website at <http://ceo.countyofventura.org/benefits/wellness> for ideas and information.

End Date:

- Weigh participants and record their final weight.
- Determine who is eligible to receive a prizes or incentives (if offered).
 - If this is a weight maintenance challenge, the winners will be those who maintained their weight within a certain range around initial weight (ie, no more than 2 pounds gain) or within a certain percent of initial weight (for example, within 1% of initial weight).
 - If this is a weight loss challenge, the winner(s) will be those who lost the greatest percent of their initial weight (figured by subtracting final weight from initial weight, dividing by initial weight and multiplying by 100).
 - Prizes or incentives may also be awarded for participation in designated activities, such as attending classes or completing food and/or activity records.

Within a week of end date:

- Advertise successes to the entire worksite and congratulate those who participated.

Review program evaluation forms and make notations for future planning.

Weight Challenge: Participant's Guide

Register:

- Register with your office challenge coordinator: [insert contact information]
- Register on-line with the Wellness Program if your group will be weighed by Wellness Program staff or will have onsite Wellness classes. Check with the group coordinator.
Register at: <http://www.ceocountyofventura.org/benefits/wellness>
Register for [insert name of contest as listed on WP registration site].

Participate:

- Even if you choose not to participate in the challenge, you are welcome to participate in any related educational activities.
- Throughout the program you will [Insert information about support activities planned such as e-mail message of encouragement, mid-point weight checks, dates of recommended Wellness Program classes, and other special programs and incentives. Include any official support offered by management.]
- The program begins with an initial weigh-in to get a starting weight. The initial weigh-in will be held in [insert location and times for weigh-in]. [Insert information about who will be conducting weight checks such as: *Weight checks will be provided by Wellness Program staff and kept completely confidential.*]
- Weight loss or maintenance should be the result of healthier eating and exercise habits. Please, no diet pills (herbal or prescription appetite suppressants, metabolism enhancers, etc.), laxatives, colonics, or water pills (diuretics) unless prescribed for a medical condition such as high blood pressure, etc. We are on the honor system. If you choose to join the program, please participate in a healthy and fair manner.
- Criteria for "winning"
 1. At the final weigh-out, subtract your final weight from your initial weight to determine any weight lost or gained.
 2. The program coordinator, or a Wellness Program designee, will calculate weight changes and determine "winners".
 3. [If the contest includes prizes, CLEARLY list criteria for receiving prizes. List the name of the person who will announce and distribute the prizes.]

***Remember, everyone who participates
wins better health!***

Weight Loss/Maintenance Waiver Form

I am participating on a voluntary basis in the Weight Loss/Maintenance Challenge. *My participation is on my own time and this activity is not work related or work required.*

I understand that weight challenge/recreational/athletic activities may result in injuries to the participants. I believe that I am in good enough health to safely participate in this activity. (If over 35, it is advisable that this activity is cleared with your doctor).

I have read and understand the labor Code section on the bottom of this form regarding off-duty recreational activities.

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

Labor Code Section 3600

(a) Liability for Worker's compensation exists....in those cases where the following conditions of compensation concur:

(9) Where the injury does not arise out of voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity not constituting part of the employee's work-related duties, except where these activities are a reasonable expectancy of, or any expressly or implied required by, the employment....

The Administrative Director of the State Department of Industrial Accidents has suggested the following wording to be used to inform employees of the intent of Section 3600 (a)(9) of the Labor Code:

"Your employer may not be liable for the payment of Worker's Compensation benefits for any injury which arises out of an employee's voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic injury which is not part of the employee's work related duties."

E-mail Messages of Encouragement (Weight Loss Challenge)

Cut and paste the messages below and send one per week to contest participants.

Week 1.

Weight control is all about creating a lean lifestyle that you can live with forever. Check your mailbox every week for ideas on small changes that can add up to big calorie savings and healthy weight loss.

If you fail to plan, plan to fail. You need a strategy for your meals and snacks. Pack healthful snacks for the times of day that you know you are typically hungry and can easily stray from your eating plan. Include a little protein with every meal and snack to up the satisfaction factor and boost appetite control.

Week 2.

Don't drink your calories. Food you chew makes a bigger impression on your appetite. Studies have shown that calories you drink do not curb your appetite for food later. Sweet beverages like soda, sports drinks, and fancy coffee drinks can add up to 300-500 extra calories. That's more than a pound of fat in 2 weeks!

Week 3.

Eat lots of produce. Half your plate should be colorful, fresh fruits and vegetables. They are filling with fewer calories—and loaded with healthful vitamins and minerals. Plus, eating more fruits and vegetables will help you to naturally eat more modest portions of the (often higher calorie) entrée and starchy side dishes.

Week 4.

Eat regular meals, starting with breakfast. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. After a long night's rest, your body needs fuel to get your metabolism going and give you energy for the rest of the day. If you can't eat at the crack of dawn, at least eat breakfast by mid-morning. Then, figure out the frequency of your meals that works best in your life and stick to it. Regular meals help prevent overeating.

Week 5.

Face the facts. Read labels and get nutrition information on your favorite foods from the restaurants you frequent. Starting in July 2009 chain restaurants in California must supply nutrition information including the calorie, sodium, saturated fat, and carbohydrate content of menu items. (By 2011 it has to be printed right on the menu). For weight loss your meal should be no more than 350-600 calories—including drinks, appetizers, and desserts! Check it out. Salad anyone?

Week 6.

***Eat slowly, chew every bite, and savor the taste of the food.** Try resting your fork between bites and swallowing before your next bite. Take a mid-meal pause. Sit back and consider how full you are. Do you really need to clean your plate or are you comfortably satisfied already?*

Week 7.

***Always shop with a full belly.** It's a recipe for disaster to go into the grocery store when you are hungry. Shop from a prepared list so impulse buying is kept to a minimum. Eating right starts with stocking healthy food in your pantry and refrigerator—and in your office and at your desk.*

Week 8.

***Evaluate your eating habits.** Are you eating late at night, finishing the kids' meals, hitting the vending machine at 3 pm? Take a look at your eating habits and you may identify a few behaviors you can change that will add up to big calorie savings. For example: Keep lower calorie, portion-controlled snacks on hand for late-night noshing (ex: 100 calorie packs, low fat frozen fudge bars), have the kids clear their own plates from the table, and pack a piece of fruit and a light yogurt for an afternoon pick-me-up that will help you avoid the candy machine.*

Week 9.

***Eat your food sitting down at a table, and from a plate.** Food eaten out of packages and while standing is forgettable. You can wind up eating lots more than if you sit down and consciously enjoy your meals. The same goes for day-long nibbling. Eat regular meals and planned snacks. Drink plenty of water so you don't confuse thirst with hunger.*

Week 10.

Serve food onto individual plates, and leave the extras back at the stove. Bowls of food on the table beg to be eaten, and it takes incredible will power not to dig in for seconds. Remember, it takes about 20 minutes for your mind to get the signal from your belly that you are full.

Weight Challenge

Weight Check Record Form

[Contest Dates]

[Department]



Participant's Name _____

Weight:

Measurers
Initials:

Participant
Initials:

First Day

Final

Weight Change:

Percent Weight Lost:

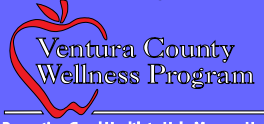
Within 2 pounds?
(Maintenance Challenge)

Date: _____

Name: _____ Starting Weight: _____ 10% Target: _____

Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight	
+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -	
Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:	
Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight	
+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -	
Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:	
Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight	
+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -	
Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:	
Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight		Date: Today's weight	
+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -		+ -	
Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:		Total lost:	

Supported by the
Ventura County Wellness Program



Promoting Good Health to Help Manage Health Care Costs

*You must begin to think of yourself
as becoming the person
you want to be."
David Viscott*

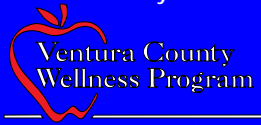


Date: _____

Name: _____ Starting Weight: _____ 10% Target: _____

Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight
+ -	+ -	+ -	+ -	+ -	+ -	+ -	+ -
Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:
Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight	Date: Today's weight
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Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:	Total lost:

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