

## Make Energy Balance work for you!

Your energy balance is the balance of calories consumed through eating and drinking compared to calories burned through physical activity. What you eat and drink is ENERGY IN. What you burn through physical activity is ENERGY OUT.

You burn a certain number of calories just by breathing and digestion. You also burn calories (ENERGY OUT) through your daily routine. An important part of maintaining energy balance is the amount of ENERGY OUT (physical activity) that you do. People who are more **physically active** burn **more** calories than those who are not as physically active.

**Equal amounts of ENERGY IN (calories consumed) and ENERGY OUT (calories burned) over time = weight stays the same**

**More IN than OUT over time = weight gain**

**More OUT than IN over time = weight loss**

ENERGY IN and OUT don't have to balance every day; having a balance **over time** will help you stay at a healthy weight for the long term.

You can think of this as balancing a budget. For example, if you are going to an event and may eat more

high-calorie foods than usual, you may wish to increase your physical activity level for a few days before or after, so that you can burn off the extra energy. Or, eat fewer calories for a few days.

Eating just **150 extra calories a day** than you burn can lead to a **gain of 10 pounds a year**. If you don't want to gain weight, either reduce ENERGY IN or increase ENERGY OUT. Doing both is the best way to achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.

Many other factors affect how many calories our bodies use, such as body size, the amount of muscle in our bodies, age and prescription medicines. Research also suggests that after weight loss, the body may slow its rate of burning calories to preserve weight. This is thought to be an ancient mechanism to guard against famine. This means that maintaining weight loss may require more physical activity than the simple calories in-calories out equation.

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/healthy-weight-basics/balance.htm>. This web page includes more information on energy balance including a chart of estimated calorie requirements for children and adults that can help you maintain a healthy calorie balance.

### Recipe of the Week: Creamy Spinach Soup

serves 4

from Creamy, Brothy, Earthy, Hearty by Mark Bittman

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/06/magazine/06eat-t.html>

- 1 chopped onion
- 2 peeled garlic cloves
- 3 cups water
- salt and pepper
- 10 ounces fresh spinach, chopped
- ½ cup parsley leaves
- 1 cup Greek-style plain yogurt

1. Put onion, garlic, water and salt and pepper in a pot over high heat.

2. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat, cover and simmer until onion is tender, about 10 minutes.
3. Add spinach and parsley; cook till spinach is tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Add yogurt.
4. Purée mixture and serve. If soup needs to be reheated, do not allow to boil.

**Nutrition facts:**

Calories: 56    Total Fat 0.3g    Saturated Fat: 0.1g  
Sodium: 77mg    Carbohydrate 7g  
Dietary Fiber: 2g    Protein: 7g

**Tip of the Week:** Chunk light tuna, which comes from the smaller skipjack or yellowfin, has less mercury than canned white albacore tuna. The FDA/EPA advises that women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers and young children consume no more than 6 ounces of albacore a week; up to 12 ounces of canned light tuna is considered safe.

from [www.eatingwell.com](http://www.eatingwell.com)