

# Study shows keys to successful long-term weight loss maintenance

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Researchers from The Miriam Hospital have published one of the first studies of its kind to follow weight loss maintenance for individuals over a 10-year period. The results show that long-term weight loss maintenance is possible if individuals adhere to key health behaviors. The study is published in the January 2014 issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

J. Graham Thomas, Ph.D., is the lead author on a 10-year observational study of self-reported weight loss and behavior change in nearly 3,000 participants. The participants had lost at least 30 pounds and had kept it off for at least one year when they were enrolled in the National Weight Control Registry (NWCR).

The participants were then followed for 10 years. Thomas explains that the goal of the study was to determine how well they kept the weight off and to identify predictors of successful weight loss maintenance.

Thomas says, "On average, participants maintained the majority of their weight loss over this extended follow-up period, and better success was related to continued performance of [physical activity](#), self-weighing, low-fat diets, and avoiding overeating."

Other findings from the study show that more than 87 percent of the participants were estimated to be still maintaining at least a 10 percent weight loss at years five and 10. The researchers found that a larger initial weight loss and longer duration of maintenance were associated

with better long-term outcomes. Conversely, they found that decreases in physical activity, dietary restraint and self-weighing along with increases in fat intake were associated with greater weight regain.

Thomas concludes, "This is one of the only studies to follow weight loss maintenance over such a long term. What the results tell us is that long-term [weight loss](#) maintenance is possible, but it requires persistent adherence to a few key health behaviors."

Provided by Lifespan

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