

The weight loss plateau: What it means and how you can get past it

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You've been exercising daily. You've improved your diet. And you've seen the number on the scale decrease. Not only do you look better, you feel better, too. However, you reach a point where you no longer are seeing results, despite the effort you are making to do so. Throughout your weight loss journey, you may find yourself at a dead end. Although frustrating and sometimes discouraging, experiencing a weight loss plateau is a normal part of losing weight.

Instead of giving up on your goals, realize that experiencing a weight loss plateau doesn't mean you've reached the end of your weight loss journey. Reaching a weight loss plateau is simply a way for your body to tell you that losing weight means you're losing a little muscle, too. As a result, your metabolism starts to slow down, which is a key factor in weight loss.

"Even if you're eating the same amount of calories that helped you lose weight in the first place, your metabolism will most likely slow down after you lose fat and muscle," says Mary Green, Mayo Clinic Health System family nurse practitioner and certified nurse midwife. "When your metabolism slows, a weight loss plateau is expected."

Luckily, Green provides some helpful tips to help you revamp your weight loss journey:

- Re-evaluate your weight loss habits.

If you're recording your [food intake](#) and physical activity, it may be helpful to look back and see if you're bending your rules about eating and exercising.

- Cut more calories from your diet.

Unless it puts you below 1,200 calories a day, try cutting your [caloric intake](#) by 200.

- Intensify your workout.

A great way to add intensity to your workout is by adding weightlifting. Weightlifting is a great way to increase your muscle mass and burn extra calories at the same time. Also, adding 15 to 30 minutes to your workout will provide extra intensity.

- Think outside the gym.

When considering general physical activity, there are plenty of things you can do to burn extra calories. Take the stairs instead of the elevator. Walking or bike to work instead of driving. And take a break every hour to get up and walk around. These are just a few simple things you can do to get moving.

If these tips don't help you push through your [weight loss](#) plateau, talk with your doctor or dietitian about other possible solutions to help you achieve your goals. Even if you continue having a hard time seeing the desired number on the scale, remember the lifestyle changes you've made so far are going to impact your health significantly in a positive way. That's something worth celebrating.

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