

Calories: How Weight Loss Works

Calories are units that we use to measure the amount of energy in food. When you eat more calories than your body needs, it stores this excess energy as fat so that it can access it later. That's what fat is for! It's your body's way of storing extra energy so that it doesn't go to waste.

When you eat **more** calories than your body needs, you will **gain** weight



When you eat **less** calories than your body needs, you **lose** weight



It doesn't matter how many of these calories come from carbohydrates, fat, or protein - eat more than you need and you'll gain weight. Eat less than you need and you'll lose weight.

BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate)

So how do you know how many calories your body needs? Everyone is different. While the FDA estimates that the average person needs 2,000 calories, that may not be true for you. As part of your first visit, we use measurements to calculate the amount of calories your body needs to maintain your weight, which is called your **BMR (basal metabolic rate)**. This is also sometimes called your **maintenance calories**.

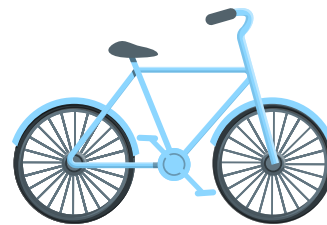
How Does Weight Loss Work?

All weight loss programs work by creating a *caloric deficit*: eating less calories than you burn. No exceptions! It doesn't matter whether you're doing low-carb, Atkins, paleo, Mediterranean, counting points or doing Keto. You may find that you manage hunger easier through specific diets, but ultimately all diets work by creating a caloric deficit.. **There are two ways to create a caloric deficit:**



Eat fewer calories

and/or



Burn more calories

That's it. Like most things, it's easier said than done. But we're here to help.

There are some conditions (like hypothyroidism) or certain medications that can make weight loss difficult, or even cause weight gain. We test for hypothyroidism as part of our initial bloodwork. Be sure to discuss any medications you're taking with your doctor or nurse practitioner before starting a weight loss program.