



Do I Need to Lose Weight?

Joe Steckler, President
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Today's column will probably upset my readers as much as anything else I could write about. However, it affects more Americans than many other health issues. It takes a brave writer to even mention the topic, but once mentioned brings a sigh of relief from most, as it is a growing concern among many Americans.

When I was 12 years old I weighed 210 pounds and wore a size 44 man's suite. I was pretty hefty. My idea of pie a la mode was to surround a large slice of pie with about 8 scoops of ice cream. We had a restaurant, and my mother said I ate the profits off a 5-gallon container of ice cream. This all changed after my first high school dance when I found out that girls did not like fat boys; hence I lost 30 pounds the first month of my diet. Until lately I have been pretty successful in keeping it off, but a combination of age, health issues, and inability to exercise have all contributed to the rise (but not fall) of my weight issue. Now – what to do about it.

Years ago I could cut back my food intake, head to the gym at Patrick AFB, do some walking around the block, and fix the problem. Sadly, declining health and the accumulation of issues that affect most of us as we age make it harder to lose weight. Most important, we have to be careful about whatever we do, for our bodies do not respond as quickly as they did years ago. Our well-intended actions may cause

more harm than good. So be sure to consult your family doctor before you begin a planned weight loss or exercise regimen.

I talked to my doctor, rather he said to me, "Have you gained this much weight?" to which I had to say yes. He knew I had resolved on a corrective course of action, so he was nice and reminded me to take it slow and easy on new exercises. I assured him that I would do so. And, with fibromyalgia and related arthritic conditions, taking it easy will not be a problem. Still, I must consider an exercise program that will point me in the right direction.

Developing interest in an exercise program at a young age was not easy, and advanced years have not made it any easier. Gym workouts or those at home must be undertaken with care if we have been away from exercise for a long time. Let your doctor know your intentions. Once you have decided on a course of action, stick with it, because the weight goes on faster than it comes off. Remember that you know your body better than anyone else, so if you receive alarms telling you to slow down, do just that. You have to push to make gains but moderate and safe achievements are better than ending up in a hospital.

Losing weight is not an easy accomplishment, but it is the right thing to do. I feel better when I have lost weight because I know I certainly look better, not to mention the mental and physical comforts gained. Make 2018 your weight loss year. Leave the milkshakes to others!

Joe Steckler is the President of Helping Seniors of Brevard, a non profit organization designed to advocate, educate, and fundraise on behalf of Brevard's senior citizens. Feel free to contact us at: info@helpingseniorsofbrevard.org or calling: 321-473-7770. **SS**

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