

SMALL WEIGHT LOSS EQUALS BIG HEALTH GAINS

I read an interesting article in the Post Register the other day that explained some of the healthy benefits associated with losing just a small percent of a person's weight. I admit, that when I first read the headline I thought to myself, "Here we go again with another diet that probably won't work." However, as I started to digest the article (no calories involved) I was pleasantly surprised.

The article explained that whether you had a lot of weight to lose or just a little it did not matter. Research shows that by only losing five to 10 percent of your body weight and keeping it off (that's the catch), you can reap major health benefits. For example, if you weighed 150 pounds, then 5-10 percent of that would equal 7-15 pounds. The article stated, "Ten pounds may not seem as if it could make that much difference, but it will. Instead of focusing on how you look, concentrate on the major health benefits of losing even a relatively small amount of weight." According to the article, here are some of the areas where weight loss can benefit.

Diabetes: People who are over weight are twice as likely to develop type 2 diabetes compared to the rest of the population. By losing just a little weight and being physically active, your body is better able to control blood-sugar levels, which can decrease or, in some cases, even eliminate the need for medication.

Heart disease and hypertension: A study found that over weight people who lost as little as 10 pounds over six months and maintained that loss for 2 ½ years had significant reductions in blood pressure. In some cases, blood pressure medication can be reduced or discontinued.

Space does not allow me to explain more, but also mentioned in the article are the benefits associated with **Arthritis and Sleep Apnea**. The complete article, written by Kerry Neville, can be found in the Thursday, June 20, 2002 Post Register. If you do not have that issue, please contact me and I will share a copy with you.

(Larry B. Wickham, Wellness Committee)