

# BLUE ZONES POWER 9

## 80 PERCENT RULE

### STOP AT 80%

Residents living in the original Blue Zones® areas share common lifestyle habits called Power 9®. Eating wisely is one of them. People who live in Okinawa, Japan have a wise strategy when it comes to maintaining a healthy weight. They call it “hara hachi bu”, which means to stop eating when you are 80% full. Studies show that cutting back on calories can lead to better heart health, longevity, and weight loss. In fact, losing just 10% of your body weight offers significant health benefits, such as lower blood pressure and cholesterol, which can reduce your risk of heart disease.



### DRINK UP!

Did you know that our bodies are made up of 50 to 75% water? The average adult loses about 10 cups of water every day. Replenish your water supply by trying to drink at least eight cups of water each day. If you're being moderately active, increase that amount by one or two cups. For strenuous activities lasting more than an hour, increase your average water intake by two to three cups for every hour of activity.

### Smart Snacking Strategies

Well-chosen snacks can offer you nutrients and an energy boost to power you through a busy day. They can also satisfy hunger so you can keep your meal portions in check. The next time a snack attack strikes, refuel with these tasty, nutrition-packed snacks:

- Peel a banana, dip it in low- or non-fat yogurt, roll it in crushed cereal, and freeze.
- Spread celery sticks with a tablespoon of peanut butter and top with raisins.
- Stuff a whole-grain pita pocket with ricotta cheese and apple slices. Add a dash of cinnamon.
- Mix ready-to-eat cereal, dried fruit, and nuts in a sandwich bag for an on-the-go snack.
- Smear a scoop of low- or non-fat frozen yogurt on two fat-free graham crackers and add banana slices for a yummy sandwich.
- Top low- or non-fat vanilla yogurt with crunchy granola and berries.
- Spread a thin layer of peanut butter on apple slices.
- Blend low- or non-fat milk, frozen strawberries, and a banana into a delicious smoothie.
- Dip baby carrots and cherry tomatoes in low- or non-fat ranch dressing.
- Eat a handful of nuts.
- Wash your healthy snack down with a glass of water.

Source: *The American Dietetic Association*

## Test Your Weight Loss Wisdom

**What is the very best way to lose weight and keep it off?**

- a. Exercise more
- b. Eat less
- c. Burn more calories than you consume
- d. All of the above

The correct answer is **d**. All of the above. You must eat fewer calories or burn more calories than you consume. The best way to lose weight is to do both. Combine regular physical activity (think of ways to move your body naturally, like riding your bike, walking, or gardening) with a healthy, low-calorie, low-fat diet to achieve and sustain weight loss, and remember “hara hachi bu” – stop eating when you’re 80% full!

## Q & A: Ask the Expert

**Q: How many calories do I need to consume every day to maintain a healthy weight? How many calories less do I need to consume every day if I want to lose weight?**

**A:** It depends on how much activity you get each day, how much you currently weigh, and your percentage of body fat. Your body mass index, or BMI, is one way to determine if you are at a healthy weight. BMI is calculated based on your height to weight ratio.\*

As far as healthy weight loss goes, most experts agree it is safe to lose one to two pounds a week. Losing 10 pounds can be as easy as eating 100 calories less each day for a year. Talk to your doctor and health advisors about developing a personal plan that is suited to your lifestyle. Remember to celebrate your successes, large and small, as you progress down the path to better health.

## TOP 5 WAYS TO EAT LESS AND SHED SOME POUNDS

**Many of us tend to gain weight not by stuffing ourselves too full, but by eating a little bit too much each day without even thinking about it. Use these easy tips to help you cut back on calories and eat more mindfully:**

- 1 Downsize your dinnerware.** The size of the plates and glasses we use has an impact on how much we eat. Try using smaller plates and tall, narrow glasses. You’re more likely to eat significantly less without even thinking about it.
- 2 Enjoy soup-er nutrition!** Nutritious soups can boost your health and your weight-management efforts. Fiber-rich veggies help you feel fuller so you eat less, while giving your body the nutrients it needs.
- 3 Snack on nuts.** Enjoying a handful of nuts can be healthy. They’re a source of important vitamins and minerals and heart-healthy fats. Studies have shown that eating nuts may reduce your risk of heart disease and could even increase your longevity.
- 4 Eat an early, light dinner.** Eat a light dinner early in the evening to give your body plenty of time to digest the food before going to bed. This practice may promote better sleep during the night and a lower BMI.
- 5 Slow down and be mindful of your food.** Many of us eat while on the run, or sitting in front of the computer or the TV. This often means we don’t notice what we’re eating or how fast we’re consuming it. Make it a habit to sit down and savor the tastes and textures of what you’re eating. You’ll slow down, eat less (hara hachi bu!), and enjoy your food more.

*\*To calculate your BMI, please visit: [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult\\_bmi/english\\_bmi\\_calculator/bmi\\_calculator.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/adult_bmi/english_bmi_calculator/bmi_calculator.html).*

Learn more about Power 9® Principles at [bluezonesproject.com](http://bluezonesproject.com)