



# BALANCED CHOICES<sup>®</sup>

## *monthly nutrigram*

### **How to Win at Losing: Important Lessons from Successful Losers**

Losing weight is hard. Keeping it off is even harder. Yet, some people do keep significant amounts of weight off long-term. They are successful at losing and researchers are trying to learn their strategies for success.

The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) was started in 1993 by researchers who were interested in finding out what successful losers do to keep the weight off. People who have lost 30 pounds and successfully kept it off for at least one year can join the registry. Over 4,500 people have been studied and, on average, they have lost 60 pounds and kept off at least 30 pounds for about 5 years – pretty impressive figures!

Here is a summary of the study's findings so far:

- About half of the registry members lost their weight on their own – not in a formal weight loss program or with help from a weight management specialist. But whether they lost weight on their own or through an organized program, most maintainers keep their weight off by eating a low-fat, low-calorie diet and exercising.
- The weight loss maintainers said they made a lot of changes in their eating and exercise habits in order to lose weight and keep it off.
- When compared to the average American, the maintainers eat fewer calories and less fat. In fact, a low-calorie, low-fat diet seemed to be one of the keys for successful weight loss maintenance.
- Walking was the most common type of exercise among the maintainers.
- Most of the maintainers eat breakfast regularly.
- Members were more likely to be successful if they were consistent with their eating pattern as opposed to being more stringent during the week and letting up a bit on the weekends.

What is the lesson learned from successful weight loss maintainers? Losing weight is not rocket science, it's hard work! Exercise and a basic healthy diet are what it takes – and consistency and perseverance!

And here's some really good news, the longer the maintainers kept their weight off – the easier it got! As the years went by, most found that they needed fewer strategies to keep the pounds off – it became second nature. They also found that their self-confidence and mood were boosted after weight loss!

If you have lost 30 pounds and kept it off for at least a year and you would like to join the weight control registry, just call 1.800.606.NWCR. For more information about the group, go to [www.nwcr.ws](http://www.nwcr.ws).