



## **Health Advice # 12 Scale-Obsession and Healthy Weight**

People who frequently weighed themselves often resorted to unhealthy dieting tactics such as skipping meals, smoking, and using diet pills or laxatives to reach a healthy weight. Frequent self-weighers also tended to gain more weight than people who did not weigh themselves that often. If you weigh yourself first thing in the morning, you're going to have a different weight than if you weigh yourself at 5:30 p.m. You weigh less in the morning because you're on an empty stomach, and you're usually a little bit dehydrated.

What you eat also makes a difference. For example, if your meal the night before was high in sodium, you might be a little bloated, with water affecting the weight on the scale. In addition, women's menstrual cycles can play havoc with the amount of water they are retaining. These hormonal variations can cause the scale to tip in a way not reflective of your overall healthy weight.

You should always weigh yourself once a week, at the same time on the same day so there's consistency in your measurements. If you're not on track, you can get discouraged and not want to continue the plan that day. And when you're trying to eat healthy, it's a day-to-day commitment. So stay focused, stay active — and stay away from the scale but once a week.

(Keri Gans, RD, a nutrition consultant in New York City and a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.)

**To your health! Anima Sana in Corpore Sano (a healthy mind in a healthy body)**  
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