

What Your Scale Is Really Telling You

February 15, 2017



If your goal is weight loss, it can be easy to celebrate when you see the number on the scale fall by a few pounds one day, then worry when the scale jumps by a pound or two the next day. But what do these short-term fluctuations in weight really tell you?

What causes weight to fluctuate?

Short-term fluctuations in weight are normal and generally reflect changes in your body's level of water. It's not possible under typical circumstances for your body to gain or lose several pounds of fat over the course of just a few days. Diet, exercise, weather, and your bathroom habits are all factors that can change the level of water in your body and cause the number on the scale to change, too.

For example, eating salty food causes your body to hold on to extra water. Until your body clears out the excess salt and the water that comes with it, your weight will increase by a few pounds. An intense, sweaty workout can cause your weight to decrease by several pounds from the fluids you lose as sweat. Once you are fully rehydrated and your level of body water is restored, your weight will increase again.

Metabolism and Your Scale

Aside from salty foods and sweaty workouts, your metabolism can also influence your body's water balance and cause day-to-day fluctuations in weight.

Your body's process of carbohydrate metabolism is one example. As part of normal metabolism, your body stores a small amount of carbohydrate that is used to maintain steady blood sugar levels between meals and to power muscles during exercise. This reserve of stored carbohydrate, called glycogen,

attracts and holds extra water. When your body's glycogen reserves are full, your level of body water will be much higher than when your reserves are depleted.

Both your diet and your exercise habits can lead to changes in the body's level of stored glycogen. Because normal variations in your body's glycogen stores affect your level of body water, weight fluctuations are part of normal metabolism.

Weigh the Right Way

While it's normal for body weight to fluctuate by several pounds over the course of a week or even during a single day, weighing yourself is still a useful method to track your progress. However, stepping on the scale too frequently can make it hard to see long-term changes because of temporary fluctuations in body weight.

Checking your weight less often, once a week or once a month for example, will give you a good idea of your progress while limiting the distracting influence of short-term fluctuations in weight. Also, weighing yourself on the same scale, on same day of the week, and at the same time of day will help you get the most consistent measurement.

Watching the scale drop by a few pounds only to see it rise again by the end of the week can feel discouraging. But when you know what your scale is really telling you, it's easy to avoid being distracted by short-term weight fluctuations and stay focused on your long-term goals.

© Copyright 2017, Isagenix International, LLC. All Rights Reserved. | [Terms of Use](#) | [Disclaimer](#)