

Health HEALTHY HABITS

5 Things That Happened When I Weighed Myself Every Day For A Month

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I rarely go a day without chocolate ([there's good reason why](#)), I'm not someone who turns down a slice of birthday cake, and I consider myself pro-pasta (yes, the regular kind). Despite these diet sins, I've never seriously struggled with my [weight](#); my [BMI](#) has always been in the "normal" range, and I haven't had to work too hard to keep it there. That should make me pretty happy, but it's not entirely the case.

For starters, while my weight may be "normal," it's not what I'd call ideal. While I have no delusions of ever being model thin, I'd really like to be [5-10 pounds lighter](#) than I am now. That might not sound like a lot, but I know I'd look and feel better. It also seems like good insurance against crossing into the [overweight](#) category, a boundary that I've been inching closer to in recent years. (Getting older is inevitable, but getting fatter seems like something I ought to have the power to stop.)

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That's important from a [health](#) perspective—cancer, [diabetes](#), and [heart disease](#) all run in my family—but shedding even 5 pounds would also make going to the beach this summer a lot more pleasant. And while I love to shop for clothes, I dread the moment when I realize that a shirt is clinging to my tummy or a pair of pants will never, ever fit over my hips. If I could just lose a few

pounds it wouldn't be as hard to find something that's "flattering"—which, let's be honest, is code for makes-me-look-thin-enough. (Got 10 minutes? Try *Prevention's* new 10-minute workouts and 10-minute meals to lose weight for good. [Here's how to get started.](#))

Okay, so I have plenty of incentives to slim down, but making it happen is another story. Sure, I could cut back on [carbs](#), eat more plant-based foods, and get serious about exercise. But I don't really want to do any of those things. While I might have to buckle down at some point in the not-too-distant future, I wondered if I could kick-start weight loss with just one small change. My plan: I'd step on the scale each morning for a month.

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Until this point, I was only weighing myself sporadically, so I didn't have to confront my "number" on a regular basis. By forcing myself to do it daily, I'd have no choice but to keep my weight front and center in my mind throughout the day. [Studies have found](#) that people who adopt this habit tend to lose more weight compared to those who step on a scale less often. Maybe, hopefully, it would translate into me eating a little less and moving a little more, and a few pounds would melt away. Here's what actually happened.

I realized I weighed more than I thought I did.

Apparently it had been months—whoops!—since I last weighed myself. During that time, I somehow convinced myself that I weighed a certain number, so I temporarily freaked out when I stepped on the scale and saw that I was three pounds heavier. A quick glance at an app on my phone revealed that my memory was foggy, and that I had only gained one pound. But I was still pretty pissed about it.

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I learned that "fat days" and "thin days" aren't necessarily about what you weigh.

I've always had days when I hate everything in my closet because it makes me look fat and others when I'm happily surprised to see a slender person looking back at me in the mirror. I assumed that having a vague sense of whether I was "fat" or "thin" on a given day was directly linked to my current weight, but that turned out not to be the case. Once I started weighing myself daily I noticed that it was totally possible to [feel bloated](#) and gross while the scale was trending downward or to feel OK despite the fact that I had gained a bit. (Here are [7 reasons for bloating that have nothing to do with what you eat.](#))

I was shocked by how quickly my weight could shift.

Of course, I'd heard about "water weight," but before this experiment I thought it was the stuff of urban legend or something you told a friend so she'd feel better but didn't really believe. In the past, the scale would occasionally go up or down several pounds between weekly weigh-ins, and I thought that meant I had lost or gained fat. Now that I was weighing in daily, I realized something different was likely going on: One time I weighed myself and practically gasped because I was three pounds heavier than the day before. The next day? Those three pounds were—poof—gone (to my great relief).

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Seeing how much I weighed impacted my mood, but not my habits.

When the scale was a pound (or even a half-pound) lower, I was elated; when it was higher, I was angry and disappointed. But in neither instance did it inspire me to make positive changes. When I saw a lower number, I'd think "Great! I can eat another cookie and not really worry about it." When the number was higher, I'd tell myself, "You might as well eat what you like if you're not going to be thinner." Maybe that's some messed up logic, but it's the truth.

I didn't lose any weight.

If you've read this far, you probably already figured this out. My weight dipped up and down a little over the course of the month, and by the end I was one pound more than when I had started. The problem, I suspect, is that my motivation wasn't strong enough. Also missing: an actual weight-loss plan. Simply being reminded that I should lose weight just wasn't enough to push me into action. Maybe one day—when I'm serious about making some real changes—I'll give it another shot.

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