



## *Slim Down with a Game Plan*

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for women 20 years and older, 62 percent are overweight and more than half of that population is considered obese. Unfortunately, more women are fighting the battle of the bulge—in fact, there are five percent more adult women who are obese than men.

Market data research published in *Forbes Magazine* reported almost 71 million Americans attempted to lose weight in 2004 and spent more than \$46 billion dollars on weight loss products and self help books that promised an easy solution to their expanding waistline. (*Forbes Magazine*, 2005)

The American Dietetic Association reports that even small amounts of weight loss add up to better health. Losing just 10 percent of your body weight may reduce your risk of obesity related diseases. (*Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 2002)

For women, obesity plays an important role in chronic disease development, including Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, gall bladder disease, arthritis and certain types of cancers, according to the American Obesity Association.

Dietary guidelines for Americans recommend five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day for good health. However in 2003, only 27 percent of women ate the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables. (Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, 2003)

Research has shown that when following a reduced-calorie diet, people who included three servings of milk, cheese or yogurt each day lost significantly more weight and body fat, especially in the abdominal area, than those who did not include dairy. (*Obesity Research*, 2004)

Nearly one half of adults report they do not exercise at all. The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports recommends adults 18 and older exercise at least 30 minutes, five days a week to be healthy. No time to exercise? Try breaking the time spent exercising into smaller segments of 10 to 15 minutes throughout the day.

Even a little exercise adds up. In fact, a recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* indicates women benefit as much from moderate physical activity as from intense workouts when trying to lose weight.

It may not be glamorous, but the key to any successful healthy weight loss strategy comes down to managing overall calorie intake by eating less and exercising more. The National Institutes of Health recommends a goal of one to two pounds per week for safe, effective weight loss.