

## Determine Your Calorie Level

The Think Thin Eating Plan offers five calorie levels: 2,400; 2,200; 2,000; 1,800; and 1,600. You will start with the highest level that still enables you to lose weight. Once you plateau for a few weeks, you will move down one level. To find the right starting level, use a calculator to compute the math.

### WOMEN

**A** Your age in years  $\times$  7.31 = \_\_\_\_

**B**  $387 - A =$  \_\_\_\_

**C** Your weight in pounds  $\times$  4.95 = \_\_\_\_

**D** Your height in inches  $\times$  16.78 = \_\_\_\_

**E**  $C + D =$  \_\_\_\_

**F**  $B + E =$  \_\_\_\_

**G**  $F - 200 =$  \_\_\_\_ (your calorie goal)

### MEN

**A** Your age in years  $\times$  9.72 = \_\_\_\_

**B**  $864 - A =$  \_\_\_\_

**C** Your weight in pounds  $\times$  6.46 = \_\_\_\_

**D** Your height in inches  $\times$  12.8 = \_\_\_\_

**E**  $C + D =$  \_\_\_\_

**F**  $B + E =$  \_\_\_\_

**G**  $F - 200 =$  \_\_\_\_ (your calorie goal)

Adapted with permission from the National Academies Press, Copyright 2005, National Academy of Sciences

Depending on your age, you may get a negative result for Step B. In that case, for Step F, you would simply subtract the smaller (negative) number from the larger number.

For example, here is how a 5'7" 65-year-old woman weighing 195 pounds arrived at her 1,800-calorie level:

**A** Your age in years  $\times$  7.31 = 475.15

**B**  $387 - A =$  -88.15

**C** Your weight in pounds  $\times$  4.95 = 965.25

**D** Your height in inches  $\times$  16.78 = 1124.26

**E**  $C + D =$  2089.51

**F**  $B + E =$  2001.36

**G**  $F - 200 =$  1801.36 (your calorie goal)

Regardless of your age, the answer you get in Step G is the number of calories you need to consume to lose weight slowly and steadily, assuming you are currently exercising fewer than 30 minutes a day. (If you are exercising longer, multiply your calorie goal by 1.2.) Round up or down to the closest calorie level. For example, if your answer is 2,150, you will use the 2,200-calorie plan; if your answer is 2,075, you will use the 2,000-calorie plan.

Before you start, make sure your health-care provider approves of the calorie level you calculated on the Think Thin Eating Plan. Keep the following pointers in mind during the first couple of weeks that you are fully on the plan:

- If you don't lose weight within the first week, you are either on a plan that contains too many calories (and you will need to step down to the next level) or you have not followed the plan precisely. Make sure you are counting every ingredient, measuring every portion, and eating your meals at home.
  - If you often feel intensely hungry and lose more than 2 pounds during the second and third weeks of this eating approach, you are following a calorie plan that is too low. Step up one level.
  - If you start with the 1,600-calorie plan and don't lose weight, do one of the following:
    - Decide to use this plan to help you eat in a healthier way and maintain your weight.
- OR**
- Increase your exercise to lose weight (if it's reasonable to do so).
- OR**
- Consult a registered dietitian to help you reduce your calories to 1,400 (if you need to lose weight to improve your health).