

## Calculating Individual Energy Needs:

This is a simple formula anyone can use in order to estimate how many calories their body requires in a given day.

1. Estimate your resting metabolic rate- this is how many calories your body needs to simply function and be alive. To do this, multiply your healthy weight (or goal weight) by ten calories per pound. If significantly overweight, use an adjusted weight, which is halfway between your current and your desired weight. Example: If you weigh 220, but at one time normally weighed 140, then use 180 as your adjusted weight.
2. Add more calories for daily activity apart from your purposeful exercise. If you are moderately active throughout the day, add about 50 percent of your resting metabolic rate (what you just found in step 1). If you're sedentary, add 20 to 40 percent, and if very active, add 60 to 80 percent. Example: If you are moderately active throughout the day (think of a nurse) and your resting metabolic rate was 1400, take that number and multiply by .50 or 50%. That gives you 700. Now add 700 to 1400, which comes to 2100. So now you're up to 2100 calories per day.
3. At this point you will want to add in the calories for purposeful exercise. This part can be difficult, because you will have to estimate calories burned for exercise. Bear in mind here that if weight loss is your goal, it's better to underestimate than overestimate. Let's say you walked for 60 minutes at a brisk pace (about 3.5 miles per hour). That's a calorie deficit of about 300 calories depending on how much you weigh. You'll then need to add in 300 calories for purposeful exercise. Now you're up to 2400 calories for the day.
4. To lose weight safely and effectively, subtract 20 percent of your total calorie needs. Using the same example, this would be 480 calories to cut out, and  $2400 - 480$  leaves you with 1,920 calories to work with during the day. Use these calories wisely by making mostly healthful choices your body needs and spacing out your meals in order to burn calories more effectively and stabilize your blood sugar. On a last note, remember that slow, steady weight loss pays off by staying off. Rapid weight loss tends to reappear just as quickly. Stay the pace and don't give up. A reasonable goal for weight loss is .5 to 1 lb per week for those under 150 pounds, and 1 to 2 lbs. per week for those heavier.