



## Diet Center - Maintenance

### Maintaining Your Weight Loss Staying Vigilant with The Red Flag/Green Flag System

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By Greg Hottinger MPH, RD; and Michael Scholtz, MA, Biggest Loser Club experts

*Editor's Note: As shown in the "Where Are They Now?" segment of The Biggest Loser, losing the weight is half the battle. The other half is keeping it off. We thought you'd enjoy some great tips about maintenance from Biggest Loser Club weight loss experts Greg Hottinger and Michael Scholtz. The complete series is available on [BiggestLoserClub.com](#).*

You've worked hard to lose your weight. Nothing is more disturbing than hearing the story of a person who worked hard for months, only to gain back all the weight she lost or even more. To keep this from happening to you, learn how to create a Red Flag/Green Flag system that will help you recover more quickly from your lapses and keep you on track.

To make the system work, you'll need clear daily and weekly goals. By knowing when you're on track, you'll also begin to recognize when you first start to veer off course and when you're stuck in the ditch. This system is designed to help you correct your course when you start to slide just a little and repair the damage when you've had a major crash.

#### Green Flags

You've shifted your focus from losing weight to weight maintenance, and it's important to define your next steps by establishing specific goals. While you're not striving for the same restrictive goals as you were while losing weight, your new goals need to be just as defined. Write down your list of daily and weekly "green flags" which, when you meet them, indicate that you are clearly on your maintenance path.

#### Diet

Even though your calorie intake has gone up 500 calories or so each day, you're still following many of the same principles that helped you lose weight. It's important for you to keep eating quality food, maintain a consistent structure, and stay conscious of your choices.

#### Examples:

- You drink 48+ ounces of water at least 5 days per week.
- You drink 2 or fewer soft drinks per week.
- You eat 2-3 fruits at least 5 days per week.
- You eat 3+ vegetable servings 6 days per week.
- You don't skip meals.
- You eat healthy snacks.
- You are "conscious" of your food intake.
- You are choosing small treats several times each week.

#### Exercise

Being on track with exercise and fitness can mean vastly different things to different people, but there are several common guidelines to evaluate whether you are "up to speed" or not.