

Weight doesn't have a calendar
Matt Sheehan | Media Relations Coordinator
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"Weight doesn't have a calendar," says [Kidanu Birhanu, MD](#), an OSF HealthCare internal medicine and weight loss specialist.

Now that the New Year has come and gone, many resolutions have done the same. But Dr. Birhanu says it's more important to make behavioral modifications than setting a date to lose weight.

"Behavioral modification is very important for people to lose weight. People can lose weight, then they gain it back. But if you have a reason why you want to lose weight and you are happy with the result, you are more likely to maintain your behavior," Dr. Birhanu says.

For Lori Boaz, a patient in the [wellness and weight management program at OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center in Rockford](#), her reasons were to keep up with her grandkids better and get both her knees replaced.

"I hope to get my new knees within the next year," Boaz says.

Meeting with the weight management team at any OSF location isn't just putting together a diet to go on, Dr. Birhanu says the team will work with you to put together a healthy lifestyle plan. He adds that setting expectations is key.

"I don't want them to expect too much or too little. After they lose weight, I always ask them what other things in their lives improved because of the weight loss," Dr. Birhanu says.

Boaz is roughly halfway to her weight loss goal and is getting closer to being able to get those knee replacements she's been wanting.

"We set goals. The main goal was to lose 100 pounds," Boaz says. "I didn't want to diet. Because I've lost weight before, and I gained it back. I wanted to eat healthy and be healthy, so every choice I made I had that in mind."

Dr. Birhanu says losing weight and gaining weight is a common occurrence, because your metabolism goes down each time you lose weight. But he says there are ways to combat this.

"Exercise improves your metabolism, so we advise them how to exercise," Dr. Birhanu says. "If a person never exercised in the past and now, you're asking them to exercise, there are injury possibilities, so we work with our physical therapy team to evaluate them."

Boaz says even when she meets her goal, she wants to continue meeting with her weight management team at OSF.

"We'll just set another goal! Because I'll still have weight to lose," Boaz says. "I think I'll just do this for the rest of my life!"

[OSF HealthCare](#) offers weight management programs all across the [Ministry](#). Dr. Birhanu's team is located at [OSF HealthCare Little Company of Mary Medical Center in Evergreen Park](#).