

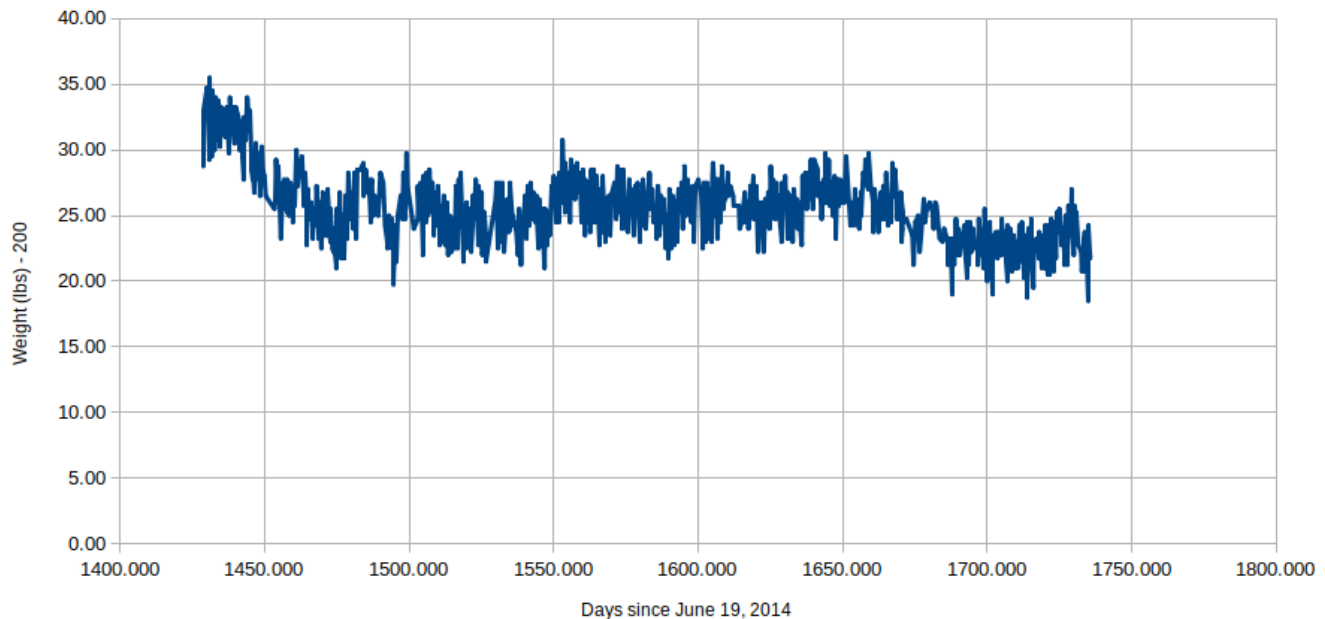
My Weight

At 50 years old, the Red Cross refused to let me donate blood because my blood pressure was too high. I checked with my doctor that I had not seen in 5 years and asked what I could do about it. She saw that my cholesterol was also high recommended changing my diet and losing weight from my 275 pounds. Even though I had been doing adult-league volleyball matches on Sundays for years with about 7 hours of practice during the week, I had been eating like I did when much younger. She also recommended a book called *Eater's Choice - A Food Lover's Guide to Lowering Cholesterol* by Dr. Ron Goor & Nancy Goor. I didn't pay attention to its recipes, but closely studied what it said about nutrition and heart disease. Within a year I had dropped down by 30 pounds.

A year later, I took an early retirement and returned to California. I also read a book "*Dr. Dean Ornish's Program for Reversing Heart Disease*" by Dr. Dean Ornish which struck me as being solidly based on good science. As a result, I went nearly vegan and started doing some serious weekly hiking for the next few years. That brought my weight down to my college weight of 223 pounds. Unfortunately, a much greater percentage of that weight is now fat.

I have continued to yo-yo between 220 and 235 pounds during the past 20 years. Control improved when my daughters bought us a physician's beam balance scale. It was precise to within ¼ pound and allowed better tracking of when my weight deviated upward. Now if I see that happening, I can eat less for a week or so and regain control. Below is a record of recent measurements:

Craig's Weight (lbs) vs Day from May 17, 2018 to March 20, 2019



The fluctuations here are real; they cannot be blamed on the scale! That makes it easier to focus on corrective action. Nearly all the daily fluctuation seen in the graph is from variations water mass intake.

The standard conversion factor between food calories and fat is 9 food calories = 1 gram of fat. I normally probably eat about 1800 calories/day, but if my body only needs 1700 calories/day, the extra 100 calories become 11 g of fat. There are 454 grams in 1 pound so 11 g is 0.0242 pounds of fat. After 40 days of eating 100 extra calories, I will gain about 1 pound of fat. After a year, I would gain nearly 9 pounds. Losing weight follows the same math in reverse. As a physicist, I look at my body as a thermodynamic engine where

$$\text{calories in} - \text{calories out} = \text{fat storage} + \text{activity}$$

After lots of reading and thinking, the best advice seems to be to ignore the blare of advertisement and fat diets and just adopt a whole foods (apple, not apple juice), plant-based diet as urged by the following two books among others:

How Not to Die by Michael Greger, M.D. with Gene Stone

Whole – Rethinking the Science of Nutrition by T. Colin Campbell with Howard Jacobson

Of course, personal economics and the realities of our overly busy lives make this difficult.