



Health and  
Social Care

Eat Well  
Feel Well  
and  
Lose Weight



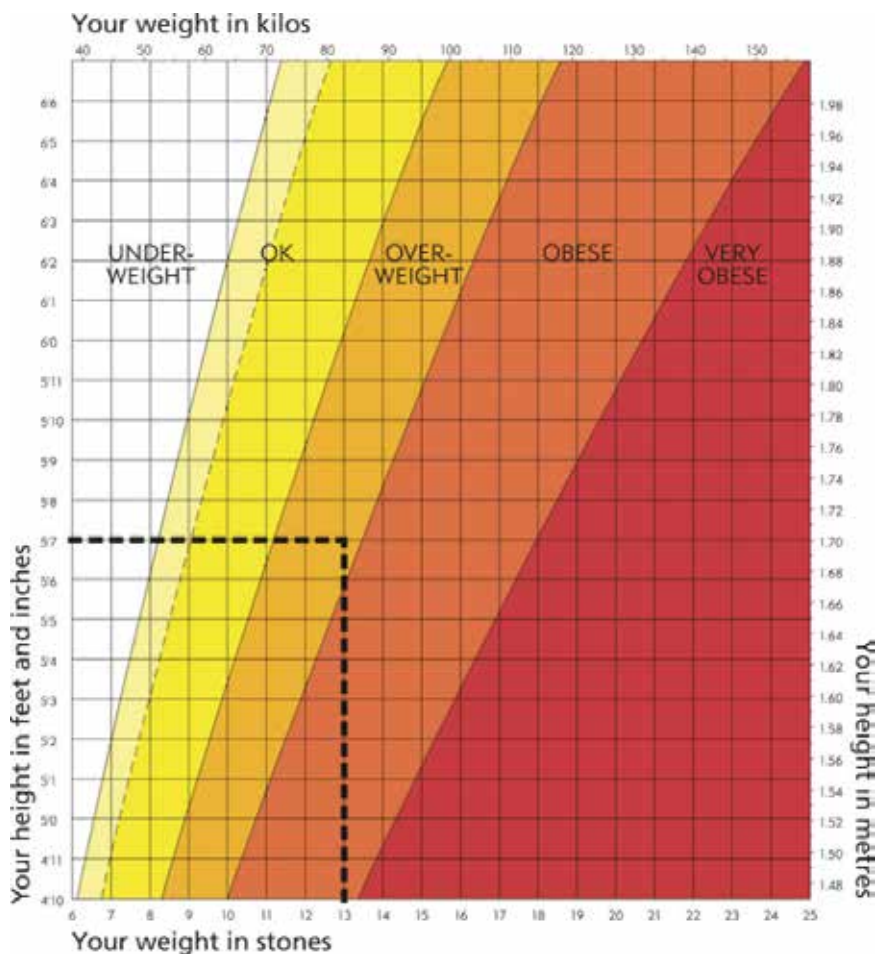
# What's your BMI?

If you are overweight or obese, losing even 5-10% of your weight can reduce your risk of conditions like high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and joint problems. It can also improve your mobility, self esteem, sleep and give you more energy.

Body mass index (BMI) is a measure that uses your height and weight to work out if your weight is healthy or not.

For most adults, an ideal BMI is between 18.5 - 24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>.

You can use this chart to check if you're the right weight for your height.



# Healthy Choices

If you are overweight or obese, making healthy food choices and being active will help you to lose weight, improve your health and feel good.

## Keep active

Increase your everyday activity levels on a regular basis.

## More fibre

High fibre foods help to satisfy your appetite.

## Less fat

Foods high in fat are very high in calories.

## Less sugar

You do not need to eat sugar; it only gives extra calories and a frequent intake causes tooth decay.

## Less salt

For some people, eating too much salt can cause high blood pressure.

## Drink sensibly

Keep alcohol intake within limits advised:

Men and women should have no more than 14 units per week.

## Look at labels

Understanding food labels can help you make healthier choices.

Read on for more information on each of these points.



# Top Tips

- Choose two or three small changes to start with and write a clear action plan
- Aim for a healthy weight loss of 0.5 - 1kg (1-2lbs) a week. Keep a track of your progress by weighing yourself no more than once a week
- Women need around 2,000 calories, and men around 2,500 calories daily to maintain a healthy weight. For a healthy weight loss, aim for 500 calories less per day through making changes to your diet and exercising more
- Eat a wide variety of different foods to ensure a good intake of nutrients and to prevent boredom
- Avoid distractions while you're eating - sit down, eat slowly, chew well and enjoy your food
- Don't shop for food when you are hungry. Make a list and stick to it
- There may be times when you eat too much or make less healthy food choices. Don't let this put you off your overall goal, get back on track the next day
- Think about other goals you would like to achieve eg. being more active with your children or taking the stairs without getting out of breath
- Keep more active - set a weekly activity goal and keep a track of your progress
- Get support from family, friends, community groups and informative websites/apps - this can help to encourage you and keep you on track
- Once you have achieved your target weight, continue to eat healthily and be physically active in order to maintain it.



- Eat 3 regular meals a day, starting with a healthy breakfast. Skipping meals can lead to overeating later in the day
- Watch your portion sizes, especially if you eat out often

# More Active

Being more active is a good way to improve our health

Staying active helps:

- Control weight
- Reduce the risk of conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some cancers
- Lower blood pressure
- Improve cholesterol levels
- Strengthen muscles
- Prevent the development of osteoarthritis and osteoporosis
- Benefit the immune system
- Reduce stress, anxiety and depression
- Make us look and feel better.

How active should I be?

Adults should aim to be active daily and should do at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity per week, in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One approach could be to do 30 minutes on 5 or more days of the week. There are now specific guidelines for young people, adults and older people.

Please see link below for further information.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-physical-activity-guidelines>



# What is moderate physical activity?

Moderate activity will raise your heart rate and make you breathe faster and feel warmer. You should still be able to talk with a friend. Walking, cycling, swimming or dancing is ideal.

## Enjoy keeping active

Starting to exercise is easier than you think. Begin by putting a little extra effort into everyday things such as housework, gardening, taking the stairs instead of the lift and reduce the time you are sitting down.

Ask a friend to join you or find out about local clubs or classes where you can meet others, be active and have fun.

Physical activity opportunities in your area might include:

- Walking groups
- Couch to 5k
- Park runs
- Cycling schemes
- GP exercise referral schemes.

Try a variety of activities and choose the ones you enjoy best. Chair based activities are an option for those with reduced mobility.

It can be encouraging to keep a track of your activity - try using a phone app, pedometer or keep a written record.

If you have a health problem or any worries about starting exercise, check with your GP first.



# More fibre

Eating foods that are higher in fibre will fill you up and keep you full for longer. Fibre also helps to keep your bowels healthy and reduce cholesterol.

- Choose wholegrain, wholemeal, wheaten or granary bread
- Try a high fibre breakfast cereal eg. Weetabix, Bran Flakes, porridge or Shredded Wheat
- Include pulses such as peas, beans and lentils regularly
- Include boiled or baked potatoes, brown rice and wholemeal pasta
- Try to have 6-8 glasses of fluids (non-sugary) daily, preferably water but tea or coffee can also be included
- Include at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day. These can be fresh, frozen, canned, dried\* or juice.

A portion is 80g or any of these:

- 1 medium sized fruit eg. 1 apple, orange, banana
- 2 smaller fruits eg. plums, kiwi fruit, satsumas
- 3 heaped tablespoons of fresh or frozen vegetables
- 1 large slice of pineapple or melon
- 1 cereal bowl of salad
- 150ml glass of fruit juice or smoothie (counts as a maximum of one portion per day)
- 30g dried fruit eg. raisins, prunes, apricots (counts as a maximum of one portion per day).



\*To protect dental health, dried fruit is not a suitable between meal snack. It is best taken at mealtimes.

# Tips to get your 5 a day

- Use chopped or stewed fruit to sweeten porridge, wholegrain cereal or natural yoghurt at breakfast
- Serve meals with a side salad instead of extra bread, pasta or potatoes
- Add an extra portion of vegetables to your evening meal
- Go for tomato and vegetable based sauces instead of cream or cheese sauces
- Have vegetables as healthy snacks eg. chopped carrots, sugar snap peas or cherry tomatoes.

N.B. Potatoes are a starchy food and are not counted as a portion of vegetables.





# Less fat

Tick if you have already made the changes below. Then look at the boxes you have left blank. Why not try these suggestions?

- Grill, boil, bake, stew, steam, roast or microwave your food instead of frying.
- Use low and reduced fat spreads, butter and oils very sparingly. Low fat spreads contain less fat and less calories.
- Choose spreads and oils labelled 'high in monounsaturates', 'high in polyunsaturates' or 'low in saturates'. Monounsaturated oils include rapeseed or olive oil.

Oils such as sunflower, soya or corn oil are polyunsaturated oils.

- Limit cakes, pastries, sweet biscuits, chocolates, crisps, sausage rolls, pies, cream, coleslaw and mayonnaise. These all contain a lot of hidden fat.
- Eat boiled or baked potatoes instead of chips, sauté and roast potatoes which are high in fat and should be avoided.



# Less fat

- ❑ Try adding pulses like chickpeas, kidney beans or red lentils to soups, stews and casseroles instead of meat. Pulses (beans, peas, lentils) are lower fat sources of protein, and are less expensive.
- ❑ Try to eat fish twice per week, including 1 portion of oily fish eg. mackerel, sardines or salmon. These are rich in omega 3 fats which are good for the heart.
- ❑ Eggs may be taken as an alternative to meat - try boiled, poached or scrambled instead of fried.
- ❑ Some types of meat are high in fat. Always choose lean cuts and trim off visible fat before cooking. Keep portions small and drain off fat during cooking.
- ❑ Use chicken and turkey more often than red and processed meat as these contain less fat, but remove the skin before cooking.
- ❑ Use lower fat dairy products such as skimmed or semi skimmed milk, diet or light yoghurts and lower fat cheeses eg. Edam, reduced fat Cheddar, cottage cheese.
- ❑ Try preparing your own packed lunch and cooking more meals at home rather than eating out and getting takeaways. Home cooked food is often lower in fat and could also save you money.



# Less sugar

Foods high in sugar often contain a lot of calories and very little nutrients. We should get most of our energy from high fibre foods and fruits and vegetables, and only eat sugary foods occasionally.

Try to cut down by:

- Cutting out sugary snacks such as sweets, chocolate, cakes and sweet biscuits. If hungry, choose healthier snack options like fruit, raw vegetables with houmous, plain popcorn, oat/rice cakes, diet or light yoghurt, sugar free jelly or low calorie hot chocolate
- Reducing sugary drinks - aim to drink more water. Other lower sugar drinks include low fat milk, tea, coffee, no added sugar diluted juice or diet/zero drinks
- Gradually reducing sugar added to hot drinks or cereal. If needed, use a small amount of artificial sweetener such as Canderel, Hermesetas or Sweetex
- Using a lower-fat spread, houmous, sliced banana or lower-fat cream cheese rather than adding jam, marmalade, syrup, treacle or honey on toast

- Being sugar aware! Look at nutrition labels and choose foods with less added sugar. Page 12 has more information on food labelling.



# Less salt

Eating too much salt can cause high blood pressure which can increase your risk of heart disease and stroke. In addition, foods that are high in salt are often also high in sugar and/or fat therefore cutting down can be beneficial all round.

- Adults should have no more than 6 grams of salt daily. Try not to add salt at the table and use sparingly in cooking
- Add flavour using pepper, herbs spices, lemon juice, garlic or chilli instead of salt
- Avoid salt substitutes such as LoSalt or supermarket own brand reduced sodium salt
- Swap high salt snacks such as crisps and salted nuts for healthier options such as lower salt oven baked crisps, rice cakes, plain popcorn and unsalted nuts
- Limit smoked fish and processed meats such as sausages, bacon, burgers, ham and processed chicken products
- Watch out for meat and fish products in pastry, batter or breadcrumbs as these can be

high in salt and/or fat

- Limit use of stock cubes, gravy granules, soy sauce or yeast extract. Choose reduced salt varieties where available
- If using tinned foods, cooking sauces, ready meals or other convenience foods, choose reduced salt or no added salt options
- See page 12 for more information on food labelling.



# Drink sensibly

Regularly drinking more than the recommended number of units can increase the risk of diseases such as cancers, stroke, heart disease, liver disease and damage the brain and nervous system.

Alcohol is high in calories so cutting down could also help you control your weight.

It is recommended that men and women do not drink more than 14 units per week. If you do drink as much as 14 units per week, it is best to spread this over 3 days or more and include several alcohol free days.

Use the table below to work out how many units and calories you are drinking.



Drink - ABV	Quantity	Approx Units	Approx Calories
Beer - 4%	1 pint	2.3	180 calories
Stout - 4.1%	1 pint	2.3	210 calories
Ale - 5%	1 pint	2.8	200 calories
Cider - 4.5%	1 pint	2.6	220 calories
Alcopop - 4%	1 bottle (275mls)	1.1	170 calories
Spirits - 37.5%	1 NI pub measure (35mls)	1.3	70 calories
Liquor - 17%	1 NI pub measure (35mls)	0.6	120 calories
Wine - 12%	1 small glass (125mls)	1.5	90 calories
Wine - 12%	1 bottle - 750mls	9	550 calories

# Food labels

Most packaged foods have a front of pack label, showing nutritional information per serving. This can help you choose options that are lower in fat, sugar and salt. For labels that are colour coded, simply choose products with more **greens** and **ambers**, and fewer **reds**.

If a product does not have a colour coded label, look at the nutritional information table on the back of the packet. Compare the nutrient information per 100g of the food to the table below, to decide whether it is **high**, **medium** or **low** in fats, sugar and salt.

## Determining red, amber and green colour coding

	Fat	Saturates	Sugars	Salt
Low <i>Healthier choice</i>	3g or less	1.5g or less	5g or less	0.3g or less
Medium <i>OK most of the time</i>	3.1g to 17.5g	1.6g to 5g	5.1g to 22.5g	0.31g to 1.5g
High <i>Just occasionally</i>	More than 17.5g	More than 5.0g	More than 22.5g	More than 1.5g

Have a look at the nutritional information on the foods you commonly eat. Using this table, make a note of those with a lot of **reds** and try to find healthier alternatives with more **greens** when next at the supermarket.

## Do I need a supplement?

Most people obtain enough vitamins and minerals from a well-balanced diet.

Adults and children over the age of one should consider taking a daily supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D, particularly during autumn and winter. People who have a higher risk of vitamin D deficiency are advised to take a supplement all year round. At risk groups include people whose skin has little or no exposure to the sun, like those in care homes, or people who cover their skin when they are outside.

# Sample meal plan

## Breakfast

High fibre cereal or porridge with banana, berries or raisins **or**

2 slices of wholemeal/granary toast with a small amount of low fat spread or butter and eggs/mushrooms/tomato/avocado/banana

Fruit or unsweetened fruit juice



## Mid-morning

Water, tea or coffee

## Light meal

Small amount of pulses, fish, eggs, cheese, lean meat or poultry with salad in a wholemeal sandwich/wrap/pitta or baked potato **or**

Bowl of vegetable or lentil soup with 2 slices of wheaten/wholemeal bread or a roll or 4 rice/oat cakes or crispbreads **or**

Small amount of meat, egg or houmous on a bed of salad with 6 tablespoons of cooked savoury rice, pasta salad, couscous or quinoa

Water or sugar free drink

A piece of fruit or diet yoghurt



## Mid-afternoon

Water, tea or coffee

## Main meal

Small amount of pulses, fish, eggs, cheese, lean meat or poultry with plenty of vegetables or salad and 2 potatoes or 6 tablespoons of cooked rice or pasta or 2 rounds wholemeal bread. Examples: Curry, bolognese, casserole, stir fry, potato topped pie

Water or sugar free drink

A piece of fruit or diet yoghurt



## Bed time

Water or sugar free drink

## Notes

- If this is much less than your usual intake, eat more bread, cereal, rice, pasta or potatoes
- Try to include 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day
- If hungry between meals, include a healthier snack as suggested on page 9
- Aim for 6-8 glasses of fluid every day.

# Goals/targets

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# Contact details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Useful websites

HSC Public Health Agency  
[www.choosetolivebetter.com](http://www.choosetolivebetter.com)  
[www.enjoyhealthyeating.info](http://www.enjoyhealthyeating.info)

NHS 12 week weight loss plan  
[www.nhs.uk/livewell/loseweight/Pages/Loseweighthome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/loseweight/Pages/Loseweighthome.aspx)

Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland  
[www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritioni](http://www.food.gov.uk/northern-ireland/nutritioni)

Safefood  
[www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/Weight-Loss](http://www.safefood.eu/Healthy-Eating/Weight-Loss)

## Useful apps

Downloadable from mobile phone app stores:

'Weight-mate' (safefood)  
Weight loss support

'One you easy meals' (NHS)  
Eat healthier versions of the foods you love

'One you couch to 5k' (PHE)  
Coaching to increase from walking to running

'MyFitnessPal'  
Calorie counter and diet tracker

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