

RECOMMENDED FOODS FOR A HEALTHY DIET

EVERYDAY USE These foods are low in sugar and/or saturated fat or high in fibre	EAT OCCASIONALLY A few of these foods should only be eaten once a week	FOODS TO AVOID These foods are high in sugar or fat, particularly saturated fat
CEREALS & BISCUITS Wholegrain flour, bread and crisp-breads. Brown rice and wholemeal pasta. Wholegrain/wheat-based breakfast cereals (high in fibre)	White flour, white bread, plain biscuits, cream cracker. Refined breakfast cereals eg. cornflakes	Sweet chocolate and cream filled biscuits. Cheese biscuits. Sugar or honey coated breakfast cereals
FRUIT & VEGETABLES All fresh, frozen and tinned fruit and vegetables including potatoes - jacket, boiled or mashed	Fried or roasted potatoes if cooked in suitable fat. Low-fat oven chips	Chips, fried or roast potatoes if cooked in an unsuitable fat or oil (see FATS below)
FISH White fish, oily fish fresh or tinned in tomato sauce or well-drained if in brine	Shellfish, fish paste, smoked fish	Fish roe, taramasalata, deep fried fish eg. cod and scampi
MEAT Fresh, frozen or tinned lean beef, lamb, ham, chicken and turkey without skin	Liver, kidney, low fat sausages and pate etc.	Sausages, black pudding, salami, meat with visible fat eg. streaky bacon
EGGS & DAIRY Egg whites (cooked), skimmed milk. Semi-skimmed milk used in small amounts eg. 2/3 pint daily. Cottage cheese, low fat and natural yoghurts	Four eggs per week (cooked). Reduced fat cheese	Hard cheese, whole milk, fresh or tinned cream. Yoghurt made with whole milk
NUTS	Almonds, brazils, chestnuts, hazelnuts (small portions)	Cashews and peanuts (salted and dried)
FATS Pure cooking oils such as corn, sunflower, soya, olive and rapeseed oils. Spreads that are high in polyunsaturates and low in saturated fat are acceptable in small quantities		Butter, margarine high in saturates and/or low in polyunsaturates, suet dripping, lard, white fat
SWEETS AND PRESERVES Saccharine-based sweeteners	Boiled sweets, peppermints, jam, marmalade, sugar	Chocolates, chocolate spreads, toffee, mincemeat, marzipan.
DRINKS Water, tea, coffee, unsweetened fruit juice, diet or sugar-free drinks	Alcohol, fruit cordials, fizzy drinks, low fat milky drinks	

WEIGHT LOSS DO YOU NEED TO LOSE WEIGHT?



The simplest and most popular way of assessing whether you could benefit from losing weight is to work out your body mass index or BMI. This can be done by dividing your weight in kilogrammes by your height in metres squared. To see how, follow the example below:

Convert your weight into kilogrammes (kg). For example 11 stone 8 pounds (lbs) = 162 lbs (11 stone x 14 lbs = 154 lbs + 8 lbs = 162 lbs). Multiply weight in lbs by 0.45 to give kg weight. 162 lbs x 0.45 = 73 kg

Then convert your height into metres (m). For example if you are 5 feet, 5 inches tall = 65 inches (5 ft x 12 inches = 60 inches + 5 = 65 inches). Multiply height in inches by 2.54 to give height in centimetres = 65 x 2.54 = 165.1cm. Then divide by 100 to give height in metres (165/100 = 1.65m)

To find your BMI, divide your weight (73kg) by your height squared (1.65m x 1.65m = 2.72m²). So 73kg/2.72m² = a BMI of 26.8



BMI classification in adults		
20 - 24.9	=	Normal
25 - 29.9	=	Overweight
30 - 40	=	Obese
> 40	=	Morbidly obese

The individual described in the example above has a BMI of 26.8 and is therefore classified as overweight.

BENEFITS OF LOSING WEIGHT

By reducing your weight you will help keep your blood pressure down and reduce the workload of your heart. This in turn will lead to a reduction in your risk of heart disease. Heavier bodies require more effort from the heart to supply oxygen. Being overweight also increases your risk of diabetes and suffering from joint problems, particularly in the weightbearing joints such as your ankles, knees and hips.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND WEIGHT LOSS

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How does physical activity help you lose weight?

- To reduce weight effectively it is important that the amount of energy you use up during your daily activities (your energy expenditure) is greater than the amount of energy you take in (the food you eat). Physical activity is a crucial tool in helping increase energy expenditure (burn calories) and can help use up stored fat.
- Physical activity also helps build muscle which speeds up your metabolic rate. This increases the amount of calories you burn even when you are not exercising.
- Reducing the fat around your stomach will help reduce the risk of developing high blood pressure and diabetes and having a heart attack or stroke.
- In terms of weight loss, several short bouts of activity (eg. 3 x 10 minutes) is as effective as 30 continuous minutes.
- Physical activity also helps reduce high blood cholesterol levels.
- Physical activity, along with a healthy diet, helps reduce stress and improves your overall feeling of well-being and quality of life, as well as helps you to sleep well.
- It also reduces the risk of bowel cancer, osteoporosis and the risk of falling.

What type of activity is best?

While stamina-based activity is particularly important for health when you are overweight, you also need to include some strength and flexibility-based activity to get the best health gains.

Stamina-type activities: Walking, swimming, cycling, dancing, tennis and housework (washing floors or windows)

Strength-type activities: Walking uphill, carrying shopping, climbing stairs, gardening (digging or mowing) and housework

Flexibility-type activities: Dancing, yoga, Pilates, T'ai Chi and gardening

Tips on increasing your activity level

- Walking is an ideal activity as it's free and easy to do anywhere. Perhaps take a dog for a walk to make it more interesting.
- Look for opportunities to be active during your whole day. For example park at the far end of the car park, or walk one stop further to catch the bus, and take 10 minutes out of your lunch break to go for a walk.
- Try using the stairs instead of the escalator. If you do use the escalator, start by walking part of the way up and gradually progress to walking up the whole way.
- Choose activities that you enjoy doing. Involve your friends and family to make your activities fun, sociable and enjoyable.

How much and how often?

Frequency Your main aim is to build up to 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on 5 or more days of the week. If this seems too much to start with, try starting with 3 x 10 minute walks spread throughout the day and work towards 2 x 15 minute walks and then 30 continuous minutes. One goal is to try and increase your activity by 2 minutes each day.

Intensity Moderate intensity means breathing harder and getting warmer than normal. It does not need to be hard. You should be able to talk and be active at the same time.

Advice Whatever your chosen activity, it should be performed at a gentle intensity which gradually increases until after about 10 minutes you have reached the level you can maintain for your chosen period of activity. This gets the blood flowing to your muscles and allows your heart rate to increase gradually. When you are nearing the end of your activity you should also slowly decrease the level of activity over 5-10 minutes to allow your heart rate to slow down gradually.

Remember Set yourself realistic goals and don't worry if you miss one day. Just make sure that the next day you pick up where you left off.

Staying safe

- If you do not know how much physical activity you can do safely or you have other medical concerns such as heart problems eg. angina or joint problems eg. arthritis, ask your GP or practice nurse for advice.
- Make sure you start slowly and build up to the recommended levels. Avoid high intensity, high impact activities, for example jumping up and down. This puts unnecessary stress on your joints.
- Wear appropriate and comfortable footwear.

If you get any of the following problems stop ask for medical advice from your GP or by contacting NHS Direct on 0845 4647

- discomfort in your chest or upper body brought on by physical activity
- uncomfortable or severe breathlessness during your activity
- dizziness or nausea on exertion
- fainting during or just after doing physical activity
- palpitations (a very fast or irregular heart beat) during activity.