

Healthier Eating for Weight Loss Booklet



Booklet Content.

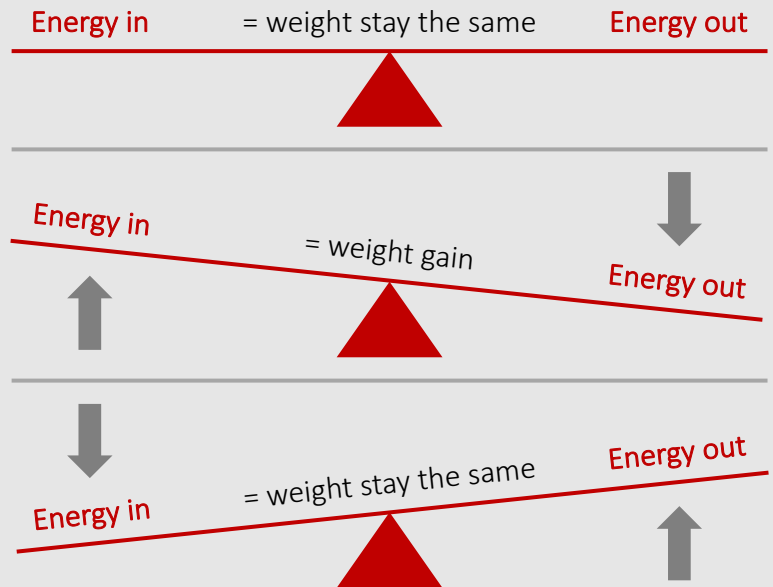
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Understanding energy balance

To understand how weight gain and loss works, it can be helpful to think about your body as a balance of energy in and energy out. You take energy in through the calories in your food, and then you burn this energy off through your daily routine – through things like walking, shopping and going to work.

To stay the same weight, you energy in and energy out need to be the same. Weight gain happens when you take in more energy than you need.

So to lose weight, you need to tip the balance by taking in less energy and by burning more energy up. This means reducing your food intake and increasing your levels of physical activity.






Food intake + Physical activity = Lose weight

The principles of dieting success

To help you lose weight, you need to take in less energy, and burn more energy up. This means you need to eat fewer calories. However, cutting down the quantity of food you eat is a difficult change to make and doing it the wrong way – for example by skipping meals – can be bad for you.

To make it easier for you to succeed in cutting down your calories and losing weight, there are three key areas you'll need to work on:

getting a healthy
balance of food

cutting down on
the quantity you
eat

keeping to a
regular eating
pattern






Getting a healthy balance of food

Eating and drinking fewer calories doesn't mean that you have to count calories or even cut out food. Healthy eating for weight loss means eating the right balance of food, but also the right amount of food.

The best way to understand it is to think of foods in food groups. We need more foods from some food groups and less from others – but you don't need to give up any single food or drink completely. You should choose to eat mainly healthier foods that you enjoy, but it is fine to have a treat now and again

The eatwell plate shows the types and proportion of foods you need to eat to achieve a well-balanced and healthy diet. It covers everything you eat during the day including snacks.

For a balanced diet you should try to eat:

-  plenty of fruit and vegetables
-  plenty of bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy foods – choose wholegrain varieties whenever you can
-  some milk and dairy foods
-  some meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein
-  just a small amount of foods and drinks high in fat and/or sugar.

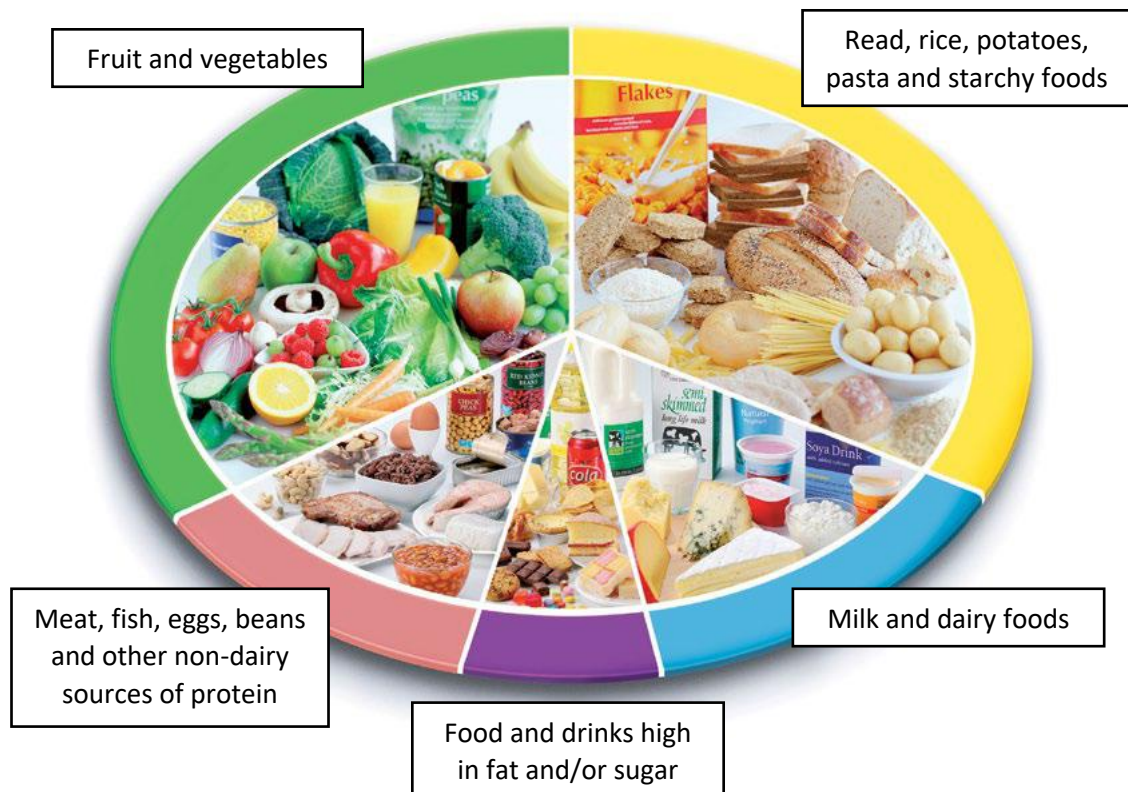
You don't always need to get the balance perfect at every meal, but try to get it right over a longer time such as a whole day or week and try to choose foods that are lower in fat, salt and sugar when you can.

Eating with the proportions of the eatwell plate in mind will ensure you get the right balance of vitamins and minerals as well as starch and fibre, while keeping fat and sugar down. This will not only help you keep your weight down, but also reduce your risk of coronary heart disease, some cancers, and dental problems.



The Eatwell Plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



Even if you think you are already eating very healthily, it may be that your portions are too large, which means you will be taking in more calories than you are using up, resulting in weight gain. It is important to manage the quantity, as well as the type of food that you eat.

Everyone is different, but to keep their weight the same most adult men need around 2,500 kilocalories (kcal) a day, and most adult women need around 2,000 kcal a day.

To lose weight, the average man can eat or drink 1,800 kcal a day. The average woman can eat or drink 1,500 kcal a day to lose weight.

Your calorie intake includes all your food and drink and should be based on the food groups from the eatwell plate.

What are kilocalories?

A 'kilocalorie' is another word for what is commonly called a 'calorie'. So 1,000 calories will be written as 1,000kcal.

Can I indulge?

Nothing is banned, but foods from the foods and drinks high in fat and sugar group provide a lot of calories with little nutritional benefit, so you shouldn't eat too much of foods from this group. Think of these as foods to be enjoyed occasionally, rather than as everyday necessities.

Keeping a regular eating pattern

Eating regularly can help you achieve your weight loss goals because it helps to ensure you don't get too hungry, meaning you'll be less likely to think about food between meals and less likely to turn to eating high calorie snacks.

Once you get in the habit of eating at roughly the same times each day it will make it easier to control how much you eat.

What is my current eating pattern?

- I skip breakfast more than once a week
- I have a large lunch and skip dinner
- I regularly miss meals and snack throughout the day
- I have a late breakfast, skip lunch and have a large evening meal
- I don't eat all day and have a large evening meal

If you have ticked one or more of the boxes above, then you need to set some goals so that you can try and eat more regularly.



Fruit and vegetables

About a third of the food you eat should be made up of fruit and vegetables. You should aim to have at least 5 portions of fruit and veg every day.

Research shows that people who eat more than 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day have a lower risk of coronary heart disease. Fruit and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals which your body needs to keep healthy and they are naturally low in fat. They are also a good source of fibre, which makes them filling to eat, and they will keep your digestive system healthy.

Ideas to help you get your 5 a day

- add fresh or dried fruit to your breakfast
- have fruit as a snack between meals
- have a bowl of salad with your meal – if you have a ready meal, always add extra vegetables or salad to it
- add tinned beans such as red kidney beans and chickpeas to soups, stews, curry and pasta sauces
- use leftover vegetables to make soup.



Keeping a regular eating pattern

Fruit and vegetable portions

One portion is:

Root vegetables

Three heaped tablespoons (80g)



Corn on the cob

One whole



Salad

One dessert bowl



Whole fresh fruits

One fruit



Medium fruits

Two fruits (80g)



Small fruits

One handful (80g)



Large fruits

One slice, about 5cm thick (80g)



Grapefruit

Half (80g)



Tinned fruit in natural juice

Three heaped tablespoons



Stewed fruit

Three heaped tablespoons



Dried fruit

One heaped tablespoon (30g)



Fruit juice

One small glass or small carton (150ml). No more than one a day



Keeping a regular eating pattern

Bread, rice, potatoes, pasta and other starchy

food

About a third of your food should be starchy foods – this food group is our body's main source of energy and should be a part of all meals.

Choose higher fibre/wholegrain options when possible – they contain more fibre, vitamins and minerals and provide energy that is released slowly, making you feel fuller for longer and less likely to snack between meals.

Milk and dairy

foods

This food group includes milk and milk products such as cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais – but not butter, margarine or cream, which are part of the food and drinks high in fat and sugar group. Milk and dairy foods are an important source of calcium and protein.

The fat content varies a lot between different foods in this group. Choose lower-fat versions when you can – this will mean you can benefit from their protein, calcium and other nutrients, but have less fat to go with it.

If you don't drink milk or eat dairy foods, it's good to use a milk substitute like soya milk, with added calcium – go for the unsweetened versions.

Tips

Aren't these foods fattening?

Starchy foods (sometimes called carbohydrates) aren't any more fattening than any of the other food groups. However it can be easy to eat more of these foods than we need, meaning the calories really add up! The key is to not add fat when you're cooking and preparing these foods.

Ideas for getting the most from your starchy foods:

- Bake, boil or steam starchy foods, rather than frying them. Avoid adding fat once they're cooked – for example don't add butter to potatoes or chapattis, or creamy sauces to pasta or rice.
- Try making your own breads, rolls, scones or chapattis with wholemeal flour.
- Eat potatoes with their skins on to get an extra boost of fibres, vitamins and minerals.
- Add pulses such as lentils, beans and chickpeas to stews or curries.



Keeping a regular eating pattern

Choosing low-fat milk and dairy products

Check out the tables below to see how different cheese compare – choose the versions that are lower in fat and calories as much as possible.

Cheese facts			
Type of cheese	Total fat per 100g	Saturated fat per 100g	Calories (kcal) per 100g
High fat (more than 17.5g per 100g)			
Mascarpone	44	29	428
Stilton	35	23	410
Cheddar, Red Leicester, Double Gloucester and other hard cheeses	35	22	411
Parmesan	30	19	452
Brie	29	18	343
Soft goat's cheese	26	18	320
Edam	26	16	341
Processed cheese e.g. cheese slices, cheese strings	24	14	297
Camembert	23	14	290
Feta	20	14	250
Mozzarella	20	14	257
Medium fat (3.1g – 17.5g per 100g)			
Half-fat cheddar	16	10	273
Reduced-fat processed cheese	13	8	228
Ricotta	8	5	144
Cottage cheese (plain or with additions e.g. pineapple)	4	2	101
Low fat (3g or less per 100g)			
Reduced-fat cottage cheese (plain)	2	1	79
Quark	0.2	0.1	74

Keeping a regular eating pattern

Choosing low-fat milk and dairy products

Check out the tables below to see how different creams and yoghurts compare – choose the versions that are lower in fat and calories as much as possible.

Cream comparisons

Compared item	Total fat per 100g	Saturated fat per 100g	Calories (kcal) per 100g
Cream			
Clotted	64	40	586
Double cream	54	33	496
Whipping cream	40	25	381
Double cream alternative (buttermilk & vegetable oil blend)	36	25	350
Soured cream	20	13	205
Single cream	19	12	193
Half cream	14	9	148
Single cream alternative (buttermilk & vegetable oil blend)	13	8	148
Crème fraîche			
Standard crème fraîche	31	22	378
Half fat crème fraîche	15	10	162
Fromage frais			
Natural creamy	8	6	113
Virtually fat free	0.1	0.1	49
Yoghurt			
Greek style	10	7	133
Thick and creamy	6	4	106
Greek style (sheep's milk)	6	4	92
Whole milk	3	2	79
Soya alternatives	2	0.3	72
Greek style 0% fat	0	0	57
Low fat yoghurt	1	0.7	56
Diet yoghurt	Trace	Trace	54

Keeping a regular eating pattern

Meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-dairy sources of protein.

You should eat foods that provide you with protein two or three times a day. Protein is important for your body to work properly and these foods will provide you with vitamins, such as B12, and minerals including iron and zinc.

As well as meat and fish, choose ‘alternatives’ such as eggs, nuts and nut butter, pulses such as peas, beans and lentils and seeds, quorn™ and tofu

Myth buster: Is there a limit to how many eggs you can eat in a week?

There’s no recommended limit on how many eggs you should eat. Eggs can be included in a healthy, balanced diet, but remember that it’s a good idea to eat as varied a diet as possible and to use healthier cooking methods when you do have eggs. Boil or poach them rather than frying and avoid adding butter to scrambled eggs.

Choosing protein foods

Some protein foods may also be high in fat, so choosing lower fat alternatives can make sure you are getting enough protein without that extra fat and calories.

- Choose lean cuts of meat.
- Remove visible fat and skin from meat and poultry.
- Limit how often you choose processed meats, such as burgers, bacons, sausages and pies – they often contain a lot of hidden fat and salt.
- Choose fish, eggs and quorn™, beans and lentils a few times a week.
- Cook without adding fat – bake, steam, grill, poach or microwave.



Better meat choices

The type of meat you use and the way you cook it can make a big difference to the amount of calories and saturated fat you eat.

Use the table to choose meat that is better for you.

Type of meat	Higher calories & fat	Lower calories & fat
Pork	Cooked pork belly joint with fat Per 100g: 293 kcal 23.4g total fat, 8.2g saturated fat	Cooked lean pork leg joint Per 100g: 182 kcal 5.5g total fat, 1.9g saturated fat
Beef	Fried rump steak with fat Per 100g: 228 kcal 12.7g total fat, 4.9g saturated fat	Grilled lean rump steak Per 100g: 177 kcal 5.9g total fat, 2.5g saturated fat
Poultry	Fried chicken breast in breadcrumbs Per 100g: 242 kcal 12.7g total fat, 2.1g saturated fat	Grilled chicken breast without skin Per 100g: 148 kcal 2.2g total fat, 0.6g saturated fat

Keeping a regular eating pattern

Spreading fats, oils, dressing and sauces



Top Tips

- Choose a reduced fat spread instead of butter, margarine or ghee.
- Grill, bake, steam boil or poach your foods.
- If you need to use oil, use small amounts of mono and polyunsaturated oils, such as rapeseed, olive, or sunflower oil. Measure it with a teaspoon rather than pouring it straight into the pan or use a spray oil.
- Make your own salad dressings using ingredients like balsamic vinegar, low fat yoghurt, lemon juice and herbs.



Keeping a regular eating pattern

Foods and drinks high in fat and sugar

This group includes cakes, crisps, sweets, chocolate, sugary fizzy drinks and alcohol. These tend to be the foods we need to cut down on. While they can be included in a balanced diet, they are not essential.

You should aim to have only small amounts of foods in this group – swap these for healthier versions or keep them for special occasions only.

Tips

- Choose 'diet', no added sugar or unsweetened versions of fizzy drinks, squashes and fruit juice.
- Instead of snacks such as crisps, chocolate, pakora, samosa, sweet pastries and biscuits – choose fruit, plain popcorn, wholegrain crackers or raw vegetables with low fat dip like salsa or cucumber and yoghurt.
- Use semi-skimmed milk, 1% or skimmed milk rather than condensed milk or coconut milk.



Use food labels to guide you to healthier versions of these foods or healthier alternatives – look at page 14 for more information on food labels.

There's no recommended limit on how many eggs you should eat. Eggs can be included in a healthy, balanced diet, but remember that it's a good idea to eat as varied a diet as possible and to use healthier cooking methods when you do have eggs. Boil or poach them rather than frying and avoid adding butter to scrambled eggs.

Think about drinks

Drinking enough is an important part of keeping healthy so you need to have regular non-alcoholic drinks – around 6 to 8 drinks a day.

The amount of drink you need does vary though – for example if you do more activity than usual or if it's a hot day you will need to drink more. You will get some water from the food you eat, but you still need to drink too.

Many people don't realise how many calories they take in through their drinks, so when looking over your food diary think about what you drink and what swaps you can make.



Keeping a regular eating pattern

Cold drinks

Water is the best choice, but you can include other non-alcoholic drinks during the day such as sugar-free squash or fruit juice. Avoid fizzy drinks that contain a lot of sugar and calories so choose sugar-free or 'diet' alternatives instead. Flavoured waters with a hint of fruit are also good for mixing it up, but check they don't have any added sugar.

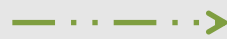
Hot drinks

You can include some tea and coffee among your daily drinks, but it's important that this isn't your only source of fluid. This is because they make it harder for your body to absorb the iron you need from the food you eat and also contain caffeine, which is a stimulant.

If you add sugar to your tea and coffee, try using sweeteners instead, or gradually reducing the amount you have by half a teaspoon so you get used to the taste before cutting it out completely. Remember to also think about the amount of milk in hot drinks as this can add calories – at home or in the coffee shop go for the skinny option (using skimmed milk) and skip the cream on hot chocolate.

Saturated fats

These can raise the amount of cholesterol in your blood, especially the harmful LDL cholesterol which increases the risk of fatty deposits developing in your arteries.



Top Tips

to cut the amount of fat you eat:

- Cut down on high fat snacks like crisps, chocolates, biscuits, samosas and pakoras.
- Change to low fat dairy products: use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk and choose low fat yoghurts and cheese.
- Buy the leanest cuts of meat you can and avoid processed meat products like sausages and bacon.
- Remove the skin and visible fat from meat before cooking.
- Try baking, boiling, steaming, poaching or microwaving your food instead of frying, so that you don't need to add fat. Buy a non-stick frying pan and roasting tray so you can cook without adding fat.
- Measure out oil with a teaspoon or use oil spray rather than pouring it straight from the bottle.
- Spoon off fats and oils from casseroles and curries.



Shopping

Food labels

Getting to grips with food labels will help you compare products when you're shopping and make healthier choices to support your weight loss.

Most foods have a nutritional information panel either on the back or side of the pack. Find the 'per 100g' column, and then compare them with the figures shown in the box below to see whether it's low, medium or high.

All measures per 100g	Low	Medium	High	
	A healthier choice	OK most of the time	Just occasionally	
Sugar	5g or less	5.1g – 22.5g	More than 22.5g	More than 27g / portion
Fat	3g or less	3.1g – 17.5g	More than 17.5g	More than 21g / portion
Saturates	1.5g or less	1.6g – 5g	More than 5g	More than 6g / portion
Salt	0.30g or less	0.31g – 1.5g	More than 1.5g	More than 1.8g / portion

Tips

As well as looking at labels, here are a few more tips for successful food shopping:



- Write a list before you go – this will help you focus only on what you need and could save you time and money too.
- Never go shopping when you're hungry – you'll find it much easier to avoid temptation and just buy the foods you'd planned.
- Get smart about 'bargains' – we all love to save money, but if the special offers are on foods high in calories is it really worth it?

Eating out

Eating out usually means we have little control over how food is prepared or how large the portion is. The food also tends to be high in fat, salt and sugar and the healthy choices are not that obvious. But there are some things you can do to reduce the impact on your weight loss goals, meaning having the odd meal out is unlikely to make a difference to your weight in the long run.



Top Tips

- Ask to go 'skinny' on coffees and hot chocolate.
- Choose a scone or currant bun instead of a pastry, cream cake or chocolate muffin.
- If sandwiches are being made deli style, say no to extra cheese, mayo and sauces.
- Plan what you're going to eat before you go – some companies have online menus you can use to choose the healthier options.
- Portion sizes are often bigger when you're eating out so don't feel you have to finish what's on your plate. Share a starter or pudding rather than having your own.
- Ask for dressings and sauces on the side so you can decide how much to add and remember the 'extras' you add like cheese, sour cream and dressings can be high in fat and salt.
- Go for tomato or vegetable-based sauces and soups rather than cream, coconut or cheese-based ones.
- Choose plain boiled rice instead of fried and go for boiled or jacket potatoes rather than chips or wedges.
- Choose steamed or stir-fried options rather than deep-fried dishes – batter is off the menu!



Get moving

This guide has mainly focused on how to reduce your calorie intake to help you lose weight, but you will know from page 2 that you can also lose weight by increasing the amount of calories you burn being active. Increasing your daily activity helps burn calories that would otherwise end up stored as fat. It also builds muscle. The more muscle you have the more energy your body uses when resting and the easier it is to lose weight.

Regular activity is a vital part of your weight loss journey – it's essential to maintain a healthy weight in the long term. Physical activity also improves your heart health and reduces the risk of developing heart disease, diabetes and some cancers. This is true no matter what weight you are or how much weight you lose as a result of being active.



How much should you aim to do?

For weight loss and heart health, you should aim to exercise daily and in total should be clocking up at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity activity every week – that's activity which involves moving different parts of your body, getting slightly breathless (but still able to talk) and becoming a little hot and sweaty.

This doesn't have to mean going to classes or taking up jogging. It's more about finding something which suits you – and which is safe and enjoyable. Aim to increase your activity levels gradually. Start by aiming for up to half an hour a day of moderate activity on at least five days of the week. Then build this up gradually to help with your weight loss.