

Losing weight



Losing weight safely

You lose weight by reducing the amount of energy (calories) you consume.

High energy foods include:

Cakes, biscuits, chocolates, crisps, pastries, processed snacks and meals.



Note:

Some high energy foods are a good source of nutrients e.g. nuts, seeds, avocados. You don't need to cut these down unless eaten excessively.

Check how much sugar, fat and salt is in your food

	(Total) Sugars	Fat	Saturated fat	Salt
HIGH per 100g	over 22.5g	over 17.5g	over 5g	over 1.5g
MEDIUM per 100g	between 5g & 22.5g	between 3g & 17.5g	between 1.5g & 5g	between 0.3g & 1.5g
LOW per 100g	5g and below	3g and below	1.5g and below	0.3g and below

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How big are your portions?

Good portion control is key to losing weight. Making sure that at least half of your plate contains vegetables or salad can help you to lose weight because this will reduce the amount of starchy foods you eat and ensure you are getting five portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Refined carbohydrates such as white bread and white pasta can lead to weight gain because they encourage fat to be stored, particularly around the middle, so go for wholegrain sources instead.



Meal routines

Always start the day with breakfast, within 30 minutes of getting out of bed. This will help to balance your blood sugar and energy levels from the start of the day. It will also stop sudden hunger pangs and cravings which can tempt you to eat fatty or sugary sweets or drinks, or trigger a response which makes you overeat later in the day.

Eat at the same time every day to help you avoid unnecessary snacking.

Up your exercise

Increasing your physical activity levels will help you lose weight – aim for around 30 minutes a day of your favourite activity and the pounds should start shifting.



Sugar

Avoid sugary drinks, cakes, chocolate, biscuits, sweets and crisps if you are trying to lose weight.

Carbohydrates

Try to restrict your intake of carbohydrate/starchy foods to no more than 2-3 portions per day. The **wholegrain varieties** of bread, cereals, rice and pasta provide a source of fibre and other nutrients that can be lost in processing/refining. They will help you to feel full for longer too.

Fats and oils

It is important to continue to have small amounts of healthy fats and oils in your diet. They contain vital nutrients for your wellbeing. These **healthy oils** all come from plants, nuts or seeds, including olive, sunflower and vegetable oils, and nut oils.

Fish are also an important source of essential oils – e.g. tuna, salmon, mackerel, herring.

Choose **lean cuts of meat**, e.g. lean beef and chicken without skin. Trim off excess fat before cooking and drain any extra fat from the gravy or meat juices before serving.

Use **low fat dairy products**, milk (semi-skimmed or skimmed), naturally low fat yogurts, quark or fromage frais.

Avoid fast food such as takeaways, chips and burgers.

Are you hungry?

Some people may think they are hungry when they are actually thirsty. Try having a hot or cold drink to see if that satisfies you.



tips

- 1 Choose **'low fat'** and **'low sugar'** varieties of foods
- 2 Aim to **steam, grill or bake** wherever possible
- 3 **Serve food away from the table** where you are eating so that you are not just tempted to help yourself to a little more and have to think about getting up to have "seconds." The brain takes time (about 15-20 minutes) to register that you are full
- 4 **Concentrate on the colour, smell and texture of the food.** Try to eat more slowly. Become aware of stopping between each mouthful, slow the pace at which you eat which will help you to enjoy your food more
- 5 Alcohol adds unnecessary calories, so think about cutting down if you drink



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