



PATIENT INFORMATION

A Guide to Healthy Eating and Weight Loss

The advice in this leaflet is not only to help you lose weight but also to improve the eating habits of you and your family. A healthier diet, high in fibre, low in fat, sugar and salt is recommended for the whole family.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Your BMI is a way of showing if you are a healthy weight for your height.

Why do I need to lose weight?

Being overweight can be a risk to your health as it may lead to the development of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, joint pains and breathing problems.

How can I lose weight?

The only way to lose weight is to eat less energy (calories) from food and drink than your body needs and using more calories by being more active.

Choose activities that you can do and enjoy and always start any new exercise programme slowly. If any doubt, contact your doctor before you start.

How much weight should I lose?

This will vary from one person to another. However, you should aim to lose 0.5 – 1kg (1 – 2 lb) per week. Slow, gradual weight loss is more likely to be permanent. Weigh yourself no more than once a week.

What about special slimming foods?

Meal replacement drinks and snack bars are not recommended to help you lose weight. They are expensive and do not help you to change your long-term eating habits to a healthier diet.

What should I do?

Have regular meals, especially breakfast and do not be tempted to miss meals.

The occasional celebration for example birthdays or Christmas will not cause any harm. Your day to day eating pattern is much more important.

Remember to:

- Eat more fibre
- Eat less fat
- Eat less sugar
- Eat less salt

Ways to eat more fibre

- Eat wholemeal varieties of bread, rice, pasta and potatoes with their skins
- Have at least five servings of fruit and vegetables each day

Ways to eat less fat

- Grill rather than fry food and avoid chips, pastry and cream
- Try to include more meals with fish, chicken (no skin) or pulses (peas, lentils, and beans – including baked beans)
- Cut down on fatty meats, for example sausages, pâté, luncheon meat
- If you choose beef, lamb or pork cut off all visible fat and skim any visible fat from mince or stews
- Try to choose low fat dairy foods such as skimmed or semi-skimmed milk. Cottage cheese, low fat hard cheese, natural yoghurt, diet yoghurt or diet fromage frais
- Try low fat spreads instead of spreads and butter

Ways to eat less sugar

- Cut down on sugary foods such as sweets, biscuits, cakes and chocolate. Choose fruit instead
- Choose low calorie drinks for example diet fizzy drinks, sugar free or low calorie squashes
- Avoid adding sugar to drinks and food

Ways to eat less salt

- Avoid adding salt in cooking or at the table
- Cut down on salty foods such as crisps, salted peanuts, bacon, ham, salted meats and processed foods

Alcohol

Remember alcohol is high in calories. Most low alcohol drinks are not low in calories. If drinking spirits choose low calorie mixers. Avoid cream liqueurs.

Ideas for meals

Breakfast

- Fruit or small glass of unsweetened fruit juice
- High fibre cereal or porridge and milk (no sugar)
- Or wholemeal bread or toast spread thinly with low fat spread and reduce sugar jam/marmalade or yeast extract

Main Meal

- Lean meat or fish or eggs or beans
- Vegetables or salad
- Bread, potatoes, rice, pasta or chapattis
- Dessert without sugar, for example fresh fruit, tinned fruit in natural juice, sugar free Instant Whip®, sugar free jelly, diet yoghurt or custard made with skimmed milk and sweetener

Snack Meal

Sandwiches with a filling of:

- Lean meat or fish or eggs or low fat cheese
- Soup and a roll
- Jacket potato with low fat cheese or tuna or baked beans
- Toast with sardines (in tomato sauce) or baked beans or scrambled egg
- Vegetables or salad
- Fresh fruit, tinned fruit in natural juice

Between meals

If you are hungry, you could have:

- Fresh fruit, diet yoghurt, bread, toast or cereal, raw vegetables or low calorie soups.

Drinks

- Tea or coffee without added sugar, sugar free squash, diet fizzy drinks, water

Information given to:_____

Information Given by: Print Name_____.Signature_____

Contact Number ☎ _____

Produced by the department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Torbay hospital

Further copies are available from the intranet (Nutrition and Dietetics website) and iCare.