



# Food for thought

Easy read information





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**A member of staff or a carer can support you to read this booklet. They will be able to answer any questions that you have.**

### **About this leaflet**

- This leaflet is for people who want to lose weight and be healthier.
- It will tell you about changes you can make to how you eat and exercise.
- It will tell you where you can go to get help.

## Why might I want to change the way I eat and exercise?



Eating healthy is not just about losing weight. It can help you to feel better and be able to do more things.

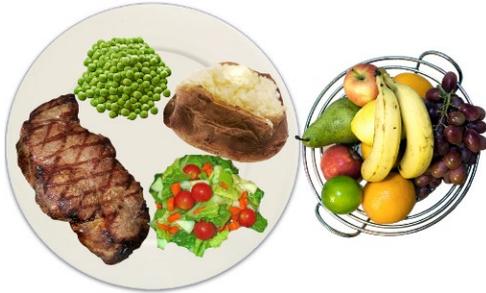
If you want to lose weight and feel healthy, there are steps you can take to help you succeed.

Some people find it hard to stick to a healthy lifestyle. It can help you to keep remembering why you want to change.



You could draw a picture or write a list of why you want to change. You could use this to help you keep going with your changes.

## How do I start?



You could start by thinking about your life now. Keep a note or diary of everything you eat and drink, where you eat and drink and how you are feeling and the exercises you do.

Keep the diary for a week or two. This will help you to see what kind of food you eat and whether you have a balanced diet – this means the right types of food in the right portion sizes.

It will show if you are getting enough exercise.

It will also show you what might be stopping you living a healthier life.

When you have finished your diary, you could think about these questions:

- What has surprised or worried you about what you eat?
- What do you eat? What do you not eat?
- Is there any food you eat lots of?
- How often do you exercise – what do you do and for how long?
- What would you like to change?



## Why do some people get overweight?



Food gives us the energy we need to do the things we do every day.

If you don't do much through the day, but eat lots of food, you end up putting on weight.



Keeping your weight healthy means that you need to eat the right amount of food and do the right amount of exercise.

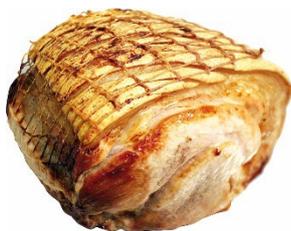
## What can I do to be more healthy?

### Healthy eating

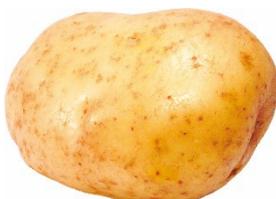


You could start by changing the way you eat. Eating healthy is not just about eating less.

You should try to eat lots of different things. You should make sure that you eat:



Protein – from milk, meat, fish, cheese, eggs, peas, beans and nuts. Protein helps us grow and repair damaged parts of our body.

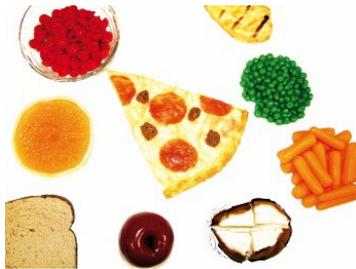


Carbohydrates – from bread, flour, potatoes, cereals, pasta and rice. Carbohydrates keep us warm and give our body energy to do things.

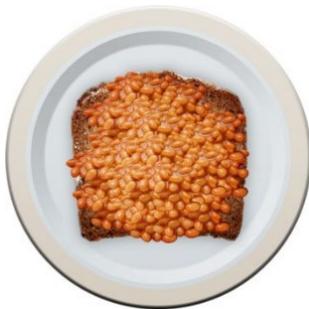


Fats – from butter, cream, nuts and lard. Fat helps keep us warm and gives our body energy to do things.

Some fats are better than others and lots of food has fat hidden in it, like cakes and biscuits. You should be careful how much fat you eat.



Vitamins and minerals – these come from all foods and help our bodies work properly.



Fibre – from wholemeal and wholegrain food, fruit, vegetables, beans and nuts. Fibre helps the digestive system work properly.



Fluid – our body needs fluids to work properly. This can come from water, tea, coffee, soft drinks and milk.



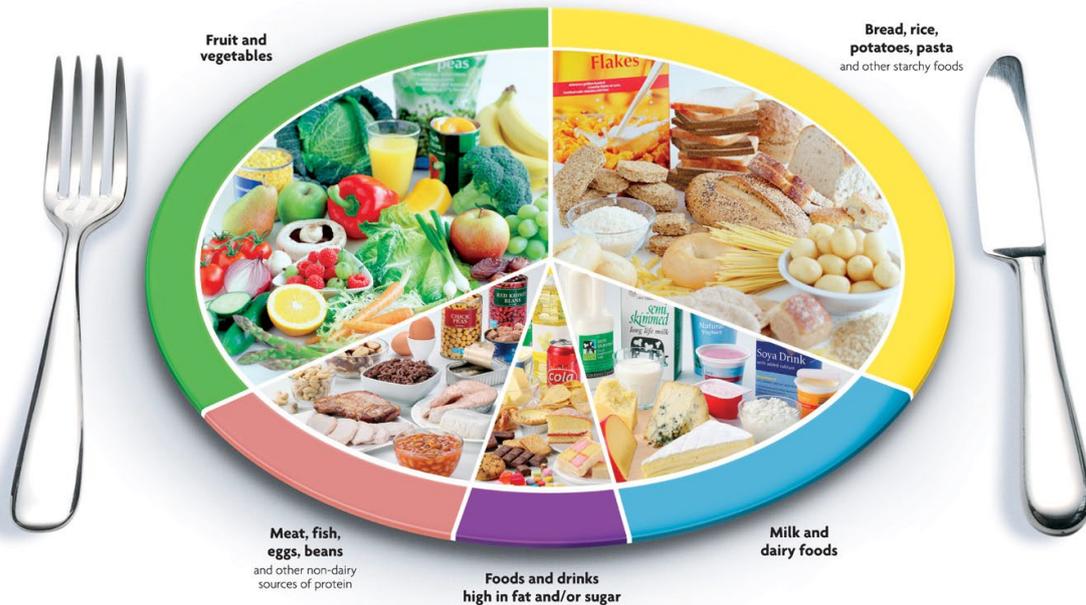
Fruit and vegetables – these help our body fight diseases and keep healthy. You can eat frozen, fresh or tinned fruits and vegetables.

You can use the Eatwell Plate to help you think about the types of things to eat and how much to have.

## 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.



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Healthy eating is about eating regularly. You should eat three meals a day. You can have two or three healthy snacks too. It is important not to eat too much of anything.

## What about if I am hungry?



People eat for lots of different reasons – not just because they are hungry. These could be:

- They are bored
- It's a habit
- Feeling low or depressed
- Covering up feelings

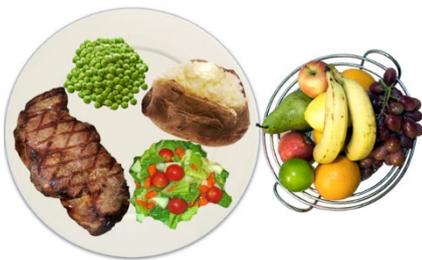


You could draw a picture or write a list of the reasons why you eat. This might help you to think about when and why you eat and help you to make a plan of how you can change your eating habits.

## What about diets?



Lots of people find that that they do not eat much on diets. Nearly everybody puts the weight back on after their diet has finished.

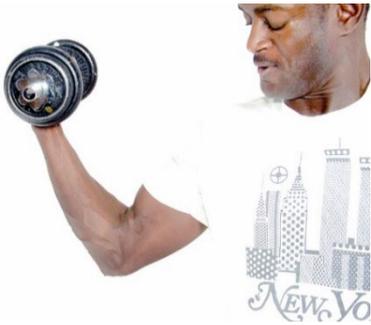


It might be better not to diet but to just change the type of food you eat so it is healthier.



Eating less sugar, sweets, fizzy drinks, take-away foods like fish and chips, chocolates and crisps and eating healthier food is likely to help you lose weight.

## Exercise



Exercise can help you to be healthier. Exercise doesn't have to be going to the gym or going out for a jog. These are good ways to exercise but you could start slowly by:

- Doing some gardening.
- Walking to the shop instead of getting the bus.
- Doing some jobs around the house, like hoovering.

Everyone should try to do 30 minutes of exercise five times each week. This sounds like a lot, but it doesn't have to be all in one go. You could do three lots of 10 minutes or two lots of 15 minutes.

You can talk to your doctor or nurse before you start any exercises to make sure that it is OK for you to do it.

Exercise should make you feel warmer and make your heart beat faster.

You could spend some time thinking about what exercise you do already and what you would like to be able to do in the future.

## Changing the way you think about yourself



Lots of people feel unhappy because they are overweight or unhealthy. TV programmes and newspapers show pictures of people who are very thin and people think they should look like them.

Some people are bullied because of the way they look.



It is important to remember that what people say about you doesn't matter as long as you are happy with yourself. Your doctor or nurse can help you if you think you need help to be healthier or if you are feeling low or depressed because of the way you look.

## Keeping it going



Sometimes it is hard to stick to the changes you have made. It can help to set yourself goals so that when you have achieved something you feel good about doing it.

Take things slowly, one step at time. Don't try to change lots of things all at once.



Do something nice for yourself when you have reached a goal, as a treat.



Ask your family and friends to help keep you going and let them know when you have achieved a goal, they can help you celebrate it! Ask friends and family to help you shop for or cook healthy things.

Don't worry if you make a mistake. Everyone makes mistakes and you shouldn't let this put you off making the changes to your life.



Keep looking at your diary of what you used to eat and drink to see how many changes you have made.

## Where to get more help

If you would like to get more help or information, you can get in touch with these people:



### **Beat**

Information and support for people who have eating disorders.

Telephone: 0808 801 0677

Email: [help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk](mailto:help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk)

[www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk](http://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk)



### **Mind Infoline**

Help, information and support.

Telephone: 0300 123 3393

Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)



### **Rethink**

Information and help for anyone who has mental health problems.

Advice Service: 0808 801 0525

Email: [advice@rethink.org](mailto:advice@rethink.org)

[www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)



You can also get help and information from your doctor or nurse.





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