

WHY  
WEIGHT  
MATTERS



Your weight, your health series

**Being overweight can put your health at risk.  
Losing even a small amount of weight can make  
a big difference.**

Every little bit counts. Losing 1–2lb (½–1kg) per week is ideal. As little as 12lb (5kg) can help you to:

- feel better;
- build your confidence;
- feel less tired;
- increase your energy levels;
- move about more easily;
- reduce breathlessness;
- reduce back and joint pain;
- lower blood pressure and cholesterol;
- reduce the risk of diabetes and heart disease.

**Under  
pressure?  
If you eat for  
comfort when  
you're busy, have  
some fruit snacks  
handy**



## Small changes make a big difference

Weight gain is all about how much energy (calories) you take into your body through food and how much energy your body uses.

Making small changes every day to reduce the calories you take in and increase the activity you do will help you manage your weight. It is easier to fit small changes into your day-to-day life than to change everything in one go.

## Where can I get help with my weight?

There are lots of people who may be able to help. The best places to start looking for information are your doctor's surgery, local library, leisure centre or council. There may be some independent slimming organisations in your area.

### Tips for getting started: better eating

- Eat three meals each day and reduce the size of the portions.
- Start the day with cereal and a piece of fruit or a glass of fruit juice.
- Have at least five portions of fruit or vegetables every day.
- Take a packed lunch if this helps you to have a healthier meal.
- Plan ahead for your family food shopping and meals.
- Avoid extra snacks and drinks containing fat and sugar.
- Have plenty to drink, including water.
- Try to avoid using food as a reward or for comfort.

## Tips for getting started: becoming more active

- Aim to cut down on activities that involve little movement, such as watching television and using the computer.
- Add a little activity as part of your daily routine – use the stairs rather than the lift, get off the bus one stop early, walk up escalators.
- Find times in the day when you can take a brisk walk – several 10 minute walks are as beneficial as one longer walk.
- Identify ways of becoming more active as a family – try walking, swimming, cycling, dancing or playing together in the park.
- Make activities part of your social life – meet up with a friend or neighbour for a daily walk.
- Think of ways of becoming more active that you will enjoy, like dancing, bowling or gardening.

Be realistic and make as much time in your day as you can to be more active. You can do it as several short bursts of 10 minutes



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