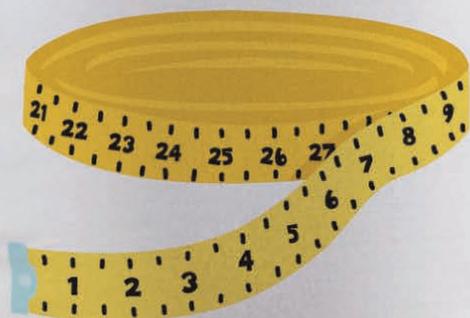


**Is your  
waistline  
creeping up  
on you?**

**CHOOSE  
TO**

**LIVE  
BETTER**

**Measure  
up**



# Take the tape measure test

Changes to our lifestyle – settling down, having children, starting a new job – can lead to a change in our waistlines, as well as our outlook. These changes can affect our health. An easy way to find out whether your waistline is increasing your risk of developing serious illnesses such as heart disease, some cancers and type 2 diabetes is to take the tape measure test. Here's how:

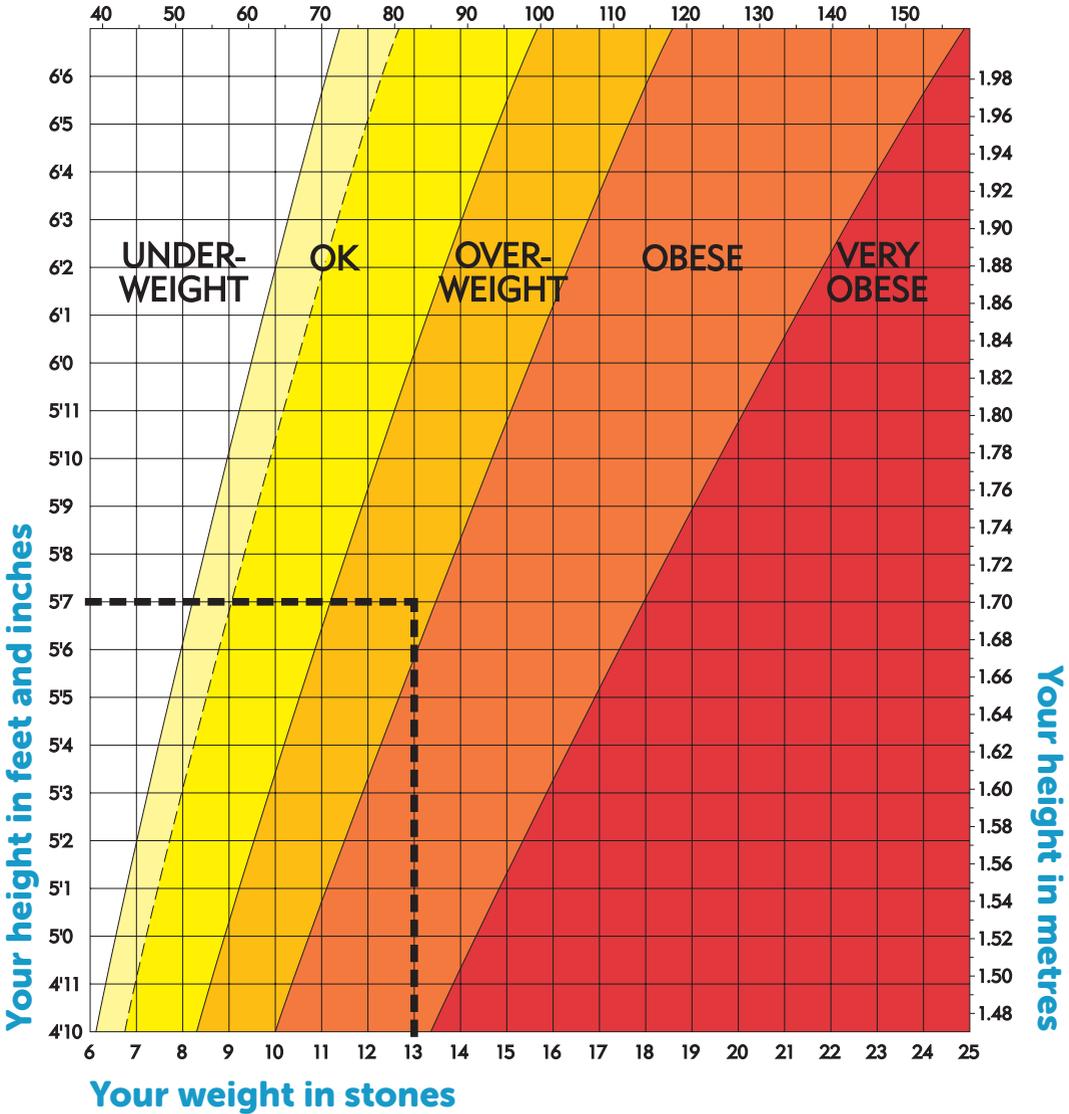
- Find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips.
- Place the tape measure half-way between the two, breathe out normally and measure around your waist.
- Once you have your measurement use the table below to see if you're at risk.

<b>Waist measurement</b>	<b>At increased risk</b>	<b>At high risk</b>
Men	94cm (37")	102cm (about 40")
Asian Men		90cm (about 35")
Women	80cm (about 32")	88cm (about 35")
Asian Women		80cm (about 32")

Please note: the tape measure test relates to adult measurements only.

This should give you an indication of whether your health is at risk, but your overall height in relation to your weight is also important. Check your height and weight against the body mass index (BMI) chart, which you can find overleaf.

# Your weight in kilos



# Check out your weight

Using the BMI chart opposite, you can work out whether you're underweight, overweight or about right for your height. Check out your weight for your height and from this decide on a plan of action, if you need one.

## How did you score?

**Underweight** – you may need to put on weight by eating more. Speak to your GP if you are concerned.

**OK** – well done, you're a healthy weight and you should aim to stay that way. Eat well and be active.

**Overweight** – you need to avoid gaining any more weight. It's also time to try to lose some, if you can.

**Obese or very obese** – your health is at risk. You need to lose weight to avoid serious health problems.

Losing weight may seem a big challenge, and it won't happen overnight. The best way to lose weight (and keep it off) is to make small, long-term changes to what you eat and drink and be more active every day. The ideas and tips in this leaflet will help you get started, and you can go to **[choosetolivebetter.com](http://choosetolivebetter.com)** for more advice and healthy recipe ideas.

**Be a bit more  
active everyday**



# Small changes make a big difference

Think of losing weight and living healthier as a marathon rather than a sprint. By making small changes over time you'll see and feel a big difference.

Losing weight doesn't need to be a chore. Set yourself realistic and achievable targets for healthy eating, drinking and physical activity. This can help you lose weight gradually over a period of time. This is a healthier way to lose weight and will help make sure that you keep it off.

## **Set realistic goals**

- Take it one day at a time – eating healthier and being more active is something to approach positively, not as a punishment!
- Ask your friends and family for their support; they may even wish to join you in your efforts.
- Write down the changes you plan to make. Create a timeline to measure your progress – review where you are after a month, then three months and so on. This helps to give you a sense of achievement.

**Swap a glug of oil  
for a teaspoon**



- Start with 2–3 goals and when you've reached them, set some more, for example:

**"I will...**

...switch to water or diet/sugar-free fizzy drinks"

...eat at least one extra portion of fruit and veg each day to work towards my 5-a-day"

...cut the fat off meat before cooking"

...measure out 1 teaspoon of oil for cooking rather than using a "glug"

...spread butter, margarine or low-fat spread very thinly"

...cut my alcohol by half"

...go for a walk either in my lunch break or when the kids are at school"

...spend less time sitting and more time moving"

...take the stairs instead of the lift".

- If you slip up one day don't dwell on it – just carry on the next day with your target in mind; don't wait until the next week to get back on track. Don't deny yourself little pleasures now and again, just don't make a habit of it.
- Try some of the swaps on pages 17 to 23.

**Try cycling  
to work**



# Getting active

Physical activity has huge health benefits. Try and build up to at least 150 minutes (2 ½ hours) of moderate intensity physical activity per week in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week. You will know your activity is of **moderate intensity** if you breathe faster, your heart beat speeds up and you feel warm.

There are many types of activities to choose from; but choose something you will enjoy so that you will be more likely to keep it up. You could try:

**Walking**, which is one of the easiest ways to get active. It can be fitted into everyday life, can be done almost everywhere, and requires very little equipment, so is one of the cheapest activities available. It is an ideal way to start if you are sedentary or very overweight. But for walking to have a beneficial effect on your health, you need to do it briskly and, ideally, often. The thing is, once you've caught the walking bug, you'll find it's hard to stop! See [www.walkni.com](http://www.walkni.com)

**Cycling**, which is growing in popularity all the time. Not only is it a brilliant way to get out and about and explore your local area or head further afield, it's also a fantastic way to get fit. Cycling is a great way to get active as a family, with a friend or to use as a form of 'green' transport going to and from work and the shops. See [www.cycleni.com](http://www.cycleni.com)

**Swap full fat  
for low fat**



# Weekly meal planner

We all lead busy lives and finding the time to eat healthily as a family can be a challenge. But planning ahead makes it much easier - use this pull-out section to help. First think about the meals and snacks you want to eat over the week; check what's already in the cupboard then write your shopping list based on the planner.



This will help you spend less on impulse buys and have food in the fridge to make healthy meals for you and your family.



Remember you can save leftovers in the fridge or freezer for another day!

# Weekly meal planner

	<b>Breakfast</b> Porridge with fruit	<b>Snack</b> Banana	<b>Lunch</b> Tuna salad sandwich	<b>Snack</b> Fruit salad	<b>Dinner</b> Chicken or veggie curry and rice, yogurt
Example					
Sunday					
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					

Shop again!

# Shopping list

**Fruit, vegetables and potatoes** (eg apples, red peppers, melon, tomatoes, onions, cabbage and potatoes...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Fresh meat, fish, poultry** (eg chicken, mackerel, pollock, lean mince...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Dairy, eggs and chilled foods'** (eg semi-skimmed milk, low-fat yogurt, cheese, eggs, spread...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Food cupboard** (eg pasta shells, rice, baked beans, tinned tomatoes, tinned tuna and dried lentils...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Bread** (wholemeal bread, wheaten bread, bagels, white bread...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Frozen** (eg peas, oven chips, sweetcorn...)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# Shopping tips

**Avoid shopping when you're hungry or in a rush** – you'll be less likely to pick up snacks and food you don't need.

**Try grocery shopping online** – there may be a charge for delivery but there's a lower risk of buying food on impulse.

**Check out special offers** – these can sometimes make economic sense but think about what you are buying, what you will use it for and when.

**5-a-day** – fresh, frozen, canned, dried and juiced fruit and vegetables all count towards your recommended 5 portions of fruit and veg a day. Frozen can be cheaper, quick to use and last a lot longer, so you can save money in the long run. Choose fresh fruit and vegetables when they are in season for the best value for money.

**Get the kids involved!** – give them a job like finding the healthy food on your list. It will save time and teach them about healthy eating along the way.

**Look at supermarkets' own brands** – they may be better value than the branded products without any difference in taste or nutritional value.

**Every food label tells a story** – the big supermarkets and many food manufacturers display nutritional information on pre-packed food. This is very useful when you want to compare different food products at a glance. Take a look at our info on food labels for more advice

**[www.choosetolivebetter.com/content/eating-and-drinking-well](http://www.choosetolivebetter.com/content/eating-and-drinking-well)**

# Ideas for mornings

It's often said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Get the day off to a good start – have a healthy breakfast and be as active as possible.

## **Need some inspiration?**

Try some of these simple ideas:

- Swap sugar or chocolate-coated cereal for wholegrain and beat the mid-morning hunger pangs.
- Swap fried eggs for poached or boiled ones – and if you fancy bacon, make sure it's lean and grill it.
- Swap two sugars in your morning tea or coffee for one – then swap one for none.
- Taking the kids to school? Try walking them down the road instead of driving.
- Take the bus to work and get off a stop early or, if you drive, park a little further away.
- Get set for the day – go for an early morning walk, swim or cycle.
- Avoid the lift or escalator and take the stairs instead – get that blood pumping.
- Feeling peckish? Have some fruit at elevenses.



**Swap chips  
for jackets**



# Ideas for lunch time and the afternoon

After a busy morning, tummies start to rumble and thoughts turn to lunch. Fill up on a healthy lunch to tide you over until tea time. Just a few simple choices can make a difference.

Try these simple ideas:

- Add lots of salad vegetables to your favourite sandwich filling.
- Choose a low-fat spread in place of butter, margarine or mayonnaise.
- Replace full-fat cheese and yogurt with low-fat versions.
- Have a jacket spud instead of chips – just as tasty and full of fibre.
- For something hot, try a tasty soup but avoid creamy varieties.
- Have water or juice instead of a fizzy drink.
- Instead of sitting, go for a walk with a workmate at lunch time.
- Avail of any work-based physical activity programmes on offer or set one up!
- Take the children to the park and join in with their activities.
- Time on your hands? Go for a walk, cycle, swim or session in the gym.



**Swap fizzy drinks  
for water**



Here are some simple swaps to save on calories and fat throughout the day:

<b>Replace</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>Save</b>
Pasta carbonara	Pasta with a tomato/ vegetable sauce	140 calories and 6g fat
Fast food French fries	Oven chips	120 calories and 11g fat
Ham and cheese toasted sandwich	Chicken salad sandwich	162 calories and 15.5g fat
1 pint whole milk	1 pint semi- skimmed milk	200 calories and 22g fat
Sausage roll	Small pancake with butter	97 calories and 9g fat
Large scone with spread	Small scone with spread	130 calories and 6g fat
Standard chocolate coated caramel bar	Funsized chocolate coated caramel bar	150 calories and 7g fat
2 chocolate digestives	An apple	80 calories and 6g fat
Packet cheese and onion crisps (32.5g)	Packet of plain popcorn	109 calories and 8g fat
Doughnut	Mini breadsticks (pack of 6) with a stick of hard cheese	114 calories and 6g fat
Can of sugary fizzy drink	Bottle of water	135 calories

**Take the dog  
for a walk**



# Ideas for evenings

For many of us the evenings are the best time of the day – dinner and time to relax or spend time with family or friends. Try to make this a healthy time.

Here are some simple ideas to try.

- Swap skinny fries for thick-cut chips – or better still try boiled spuds instead.
- Swap cream or crème fraîche in cooking sauces for natural yogurt or choose a tomato-based sauce instead.
- Thinking of a takeaway? Instead of fried rice or chips, choose boiled rice or noodles.
- Fancy pizza? Remember pepperoni, chorizo and sausage are higher in fat and salt. Choose tuna, chicken or vegetarian instead.
- Don't pile food on your plate – and try saying 'no' to seconds or the kids' leftovers.
- If you simply can't go without dessert, share one between two.
- Swap a night in the pub or cinema for a night out dancing, ten-pin bowling or skating.
- Swap sedentary video games or TV for something active. Sign up for an exercise class, visit the gym or just tidy up the house.
- Take the dog out or meet up with a friend for a walk.



# Help and support is on hand

**If you are overweight or obese it can seem like a big challenge.**

The thing is, tackling a weight problem doesn't have to be a mountain to climb. As we've shown in this booklet, with just small changes you can make a big difference – starting from right now.

Why not use the food and activity diaries included at the back to help you get started.





It's often easier if you  
have help and support –  
so get your friends and family  
involved if you can, to help you on  
your way to a healthier you.

For top tips, simple healthy recipes  
and some brilliant ideas simply  
visit our website at:  
**choosetolivebetter.com**



Public Health  
Agency

**Public Health Agency**  
12-22 Linenhall Street, Belfast BT2 8BS.  
Tel: 0300 555 0114 (local rate).  
[www.publichealth.hscni.net](http://www.publichealth.hscni.net)

Find us on:



**CHOOSE  
TO**

**LIVE  
BETTER**