

Successful Weight Management Eating Guide

Body Weight and Health

Overweight or obesity is defined as having too much body fat, which can harm your health. If you are overweight or obese, you have a higher risk of developing chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease, and certain cancers such as endometrial, breast and colon cancer. Being overweight or obese can also affect your mobility and well-being.



Body Mass Index

The Body Mass Index (BMI) can help to determine if you are overweight or obese.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (kg)}}{\text{Height (m)} \times \text{Height (m)}}$$

Classification	BMI (kg/m ²)	Health Risk
Underweight	< 18.5	Risk of Nutrient Deficiency
Normal Range	18.5 - 22.9	Low
Overweight	23.0 - 27.4	Increased
Obese I	27.5 - 32.4	Moderate
Obese II	32.5 - 37.4	High
Obese III	≥ 37.5	Very High

Waist Circumference

Waist circumference predicts total body fat better than BMI and can assess risk for heart disease and diabetes.

Waist Circumference (cm)	
Men	Women
< 90	< 80

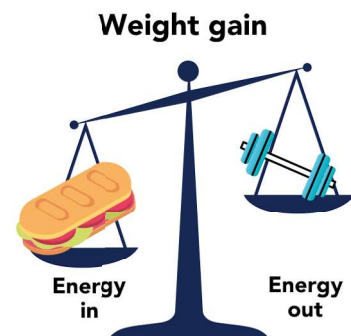
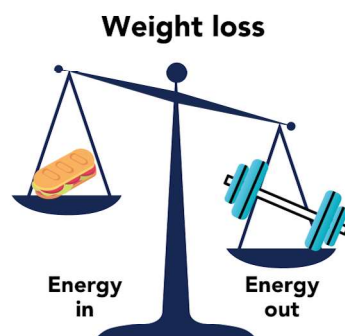
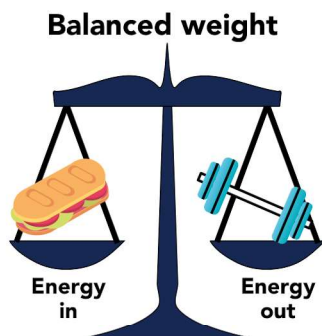


Waist circumference is **NOT** the narrowest part of the waist

Measure your waist at the level of the belly button

Energy Balance

Energy balance is the relationship between the calories you consume through food and drinks (energy in) and the calories you burn through physical activity (energy out).



Healthy eating and being **physically active** is the best way to help you achieve sustainable weight loss.

In general, aim to reduce 500kcal per day to lose around 0.5kg per week. A safe amount of weight loss is 0.5 to 1kg every week. Your dietitian will guide you based on your individual requirements.

Why doesn't this always work?

Losing weight can be difficult due to factors such as slow metabolism, lack of sleep, stress, hormones and side effects from medications. Choose a habit that you can grow to enjoy and incorporate into your daily life!

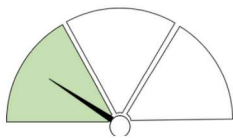
Physical Activity

Exercise can help you control your weight, reduce stress, improve sleep and prevent chronic diseases.

- Aim for 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise; or 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise; or a mix of both each week
- You can gain more health benefits by doing muscle-strengthening activities. These activities should work all your major muscles and be done at a moderate or higher intensity. Aim for 2 or more days a week.

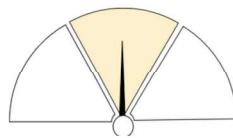


Exercise Intensity



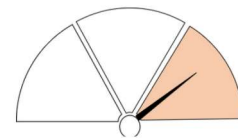
Light

Can talk in full sentences and sing



Moderate

Can talk in phrases or short sentences but cannot sing



Vigorous

Have difficulty talking

How to increase your daily physical activity:

- Use the stairs instead of the escalator or lift
- Take 10-minute brisk walking breaks
- Achieve 10,000 steps every day
- Start small and gradually increase the intensity or duration of exercise
- Reduce sedentary time



Note: Please consult a physiotherapist or doctor for personalised recommendations or if you have been advised to limit the intensity of physical activity.

Healthier Eating Tips

A healthy balanced diet, together with physical activity, can help you reach and maintain a healthy body weight.

Below are some ways to reduce calorie intake:

1. Reduce Portion Size



Serving Sizes

My Healthy Plate can help you to envision what a healthier, balanced meal looks like. However, it does not include how much calories or servings of each food group a person needs.

My Healthy Plate reproduced from <https://www.healthhub.sg> with permission by Health Promotion Board, Singapore

To identify the recommended number of servings suitable for your needs, please refer to the chart below:

Food Groups	Recommended number of servings per day							
	6 months (181 days) - 12 months	1-2 years	3-6 years	7-12 years	13-18 years	19-50 years	51 years & above	Pregnant & lactating women
Brown Rice & Wholemeal Bread	1-2	2-3	3-4	5-6	6-7	5-7	4-6	6-7
Fruit Vegetables	½	½ - 1	1	2	2	2	2	2
	½	½	1	2	2	2	2	3
Meat & Others <i>of which</i> Dairy Foods or Calcium-Rich Foods	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3½
	1½	1½	1	1	1	½	1	1

My Healthy Plate - recommended servings per day reproduced from <https://www.healthhub.sg> with permission by Health Promotion Board, Singapore

Why is there a range of serving sizes?

Different individuals have different needs. Your dietitian will guide you on the portion that you need based on your needs and activity levels.

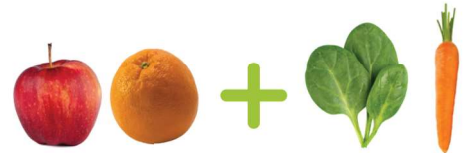
2. Increase Fibre Intake

Eating more fibre helps you feel full for longer, reducing the urge to overeat. Fibre also takes a longer time to chew, therefore slowing down your food intake.

Tips for increasing fibre intake:

Aim for 2 servings of fruits and 2 servings of vegetables daily

- Eat whole fruit instead of drinking fruit juices
- Stock up on frozen fruit and vegetables
- Add vegetables or fruit in your meat dishes
- End your meal with fresh or frozen fruit



Choose wholegrains

- Try different types of wholegrains

[For example: brown rice, wholemeal bread, oats, wholegrain noodles, whole-wheat pasta, buckwheat soba, barley, millet, quinoa, millet (ragi), broken wheat (dalia)]



- Start small – try swapping half of your white rice for brown rice. Alternatively, start by adding wholegrains to one meal per week and gradually increase from there.

- Look out for food products with the “Higher in Wholegrains” Healthier Choice Symbol when grocery shopping

















Higher in Wholegrains

- Look for eateries and food stalls with the “Wholegrain options available here” as they provide items like brown rice, brown rice beehoon or wholegrain chapati



3. Reduce Fat Intake

Reducing high-fat food and drinks can lower your calorie intake, aiding weight loss and preventing unnecessary weight gain.

	Instead of	Choose this ✓
Choose lean over fatty meat		 Remove visible fat and skin
Choose fresh over processed meat		
Choose low-fat or non-fat over full-fat dairy products		
Replace meat with plant-based protein		
Cook with healthier oils and in lesser amounts	 Coconut/ Vegetable/ Palm oil	 Sunflower/ Soybean/ Corn/ Canola/ Olive oil
Use fat spreads sparingly (e.g butter, peanut butter, cream cheese)		
Choose healthier cooking methods	 Limit deep-frying to twice a week	 Boiling/ Baking/ Stir-frying/ Grilling

Healthier choices when eating out:

Tips when eating out	Instead of	Choose this ✓
<p>Choose lean cuts of meat and poultry Remove any visible fat and skin</p>	 <p>Meat with skin 4 tsp oil</p>	 <p>Lean meat without skin 2 tsp oil</p>
<p>Choose noodles in clear soup over noodles in gravy or fried/dry noodles</p>	 <p>Char kway teow 7.5 tsp oil</p>	 <p>Wonton noodle soup 1 tsp oil</p>
<p>Choose plain brown or white rice over flavoured rice</p>	 <p>Chicken rice / Nasi lemak / Nasi briyani (rice only) 2 tsp oil</p>	 <p>No added oil</p>
<p>Choose dishes cooked without coconut milk</p>	 <p>Laksa 8 tsp oil</p>	 <p>Mee soto 2.5 tsp oil</p>
<p>Avoid adding fried shallots, sauces, and gravies</p>	 <p>Gravy added 3 tsp oil</p>	 <p>No gravy & added oil</p>

 = 1 teaspoon oil = 5g fat

4. Reduce Sugar Intake

Food and drinks with added sugar contribute extra calories with very few nutrients. According to the Health Promotion Board, you should have no more than 10 teaspoons of sugar each day. This recommendation is based on a 2000 calorie diet. Further reducing sugar intake to 5 teaspoons daily can also lead to weight loss and improved health.



Instead of	Choose this ✓
 <p data-bbox="197 976 783 1151">Brown sugar/ White sugar/ Rock sugar/ Gula melaka/ Sugar syrup/ Honey/ Coconut palm sugar/ Fructose/ Corn syrup/ Agave nectar</p>	 <p data-bbox="890 1032 1358 1115">Artificial sweeteners/ Luo han guo (monkfruit) extract</p>
 <p data-bbox="368 1413 612 1451">Condensed milk</p>	 <p data-bbox="948 1413 1310 1451">Low fat evaporated milk</p>
 <p data-bbox="427 1653 552 1691">Candies</p>	 <p data-bbox="986 1653 1270 1691">Sugar-free candies</p>
 <p data-bbox="264 1910 711 1995">Dried fruits with added sugar/ Canned fruits in syrup</p>	 <p data-bbox="970 1933 1278 1971">Fresh or frozen fruits</p>

Instead of	Choose this ✓
 <p>Kopi with condensed milk and sugar 4 tsp sugar </p>	 <p>Kopi-o-kosong/ Kopi-c-kosong (with evaporated milk) No sugar </p>
 <p>Brown sugar bubble tea with pearls 18 tsp sugar </p>	 <p>Tea without creamer or sugar No sugar </p>
 <p>Tapioca pearls/ Fruit purees</p>	 <p>Ai yu jelly/ Aloe vera/ Konjac jelly/ White pearls</p>
 <p>Thick spread of sweet spreads e.g. Jam/ Kaya</p>	 <p>Thin spread of no added sugar spreads</p>
 <p>Sugar sweetened drinks 2 - 6 tsp sugar </p>	 <p>Sugar-free drinks No sugar </p>

 = 1 teaspoon of sugar (5g) = 35 kcal

5. Limit Alcohol Intake

Alcohol is high in calories and contains very little nutritional value. Excessive consumption can lead to weight gain. If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. Keep to 2 standard drinks for men and 1 standard drink for women.

1 Standard Drink = 10g Alcohol



330ml Beer



100ml Wine



30ml Spirits

Tips to moderate alcohol consumption:

- Stay away from pre-mixed drinks with added sugars and don't mix alcohol with energy drinks as they have more calories
- Avoid drinking on an empty stomach. Before drinking, eating a light and healthy snack can keep you full and slow alcohol absorption.
- Avoid salty food items as they can make you thirsty and reach out for more drinks
- Choose lower alcohol and calorie alternatives, such as light beer and wine spritzers
- Refrain from low-carbohydrate beer. While it is lower in carbohydrates and calories, it still has the same alcohol content as regular beers.



6. Practice Mindful Eating

Mindful eating is maintaining an awareness of the food and drink you consume. You can learn about your body's reaction to food by paying attention to how it makes you feel. Notice the signals your body sends about taste, satisfaction, and fullness. Eating mindfully can help you to lose weight, reduce binge eating and feel better overall.



Mindful Eating ✓	Mindless Eating
Focusing your attention on your food and the experience of eating	Eating on autopilot or while multitasking (driving, working, reading, watching TV etc.)
Eating only to satisfy physical hunger	Eating to fill an emotional void (because you're stressed, lonely, sad, or bored)
Eating nutritionally healthy meals and snacks	Eating less nutrient-dense foods
Chew and eat slowly, savouring every bite	Eating food as quickly as possible
Listening to your body's signals and eating only until you're full	Eating until all the food has gone, ignoring your body's signals of fullness

Set SMART Weight-Loss Goals

SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound. Write down these goals so you can monitor your progress over time.

Examples of SMART goals:

- "I will aim to lose 10% of my current weight over 6 months at a rate of 0.5-1kg per week"
- "To lose 3kg by February 23, I will walk for 20 minutes on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in my neighbourhood."



Summary

If you are overweight or obese, you have a higher chance of getting chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers. It can also affect how well you can move and how you feel. You can lose weight by being active and eating a healthy balanced diet. To reduce calorie intake, it is recommended to:

1. Reduce portion sizes
2. Increase fibre intake
3. Reduce fat intake
4. Reduce sugar intake
5. Limit alcohol intake
6. Practice mindful eating

Contributed by Nutrition & Dietetics Service, Allied Health Services

This brochure is produced for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please seek the advice of a qualified healthcare provider before starting any treatment or if you have any questions related to your health or medical condition.

Information shared is accurate as of [December 2023] and subject to revision without prior notice.



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