

# Making Every Contact Count (MEEC) Health and Well being

## Maintaining a Healthy Weight

Eating a healthy diet is really important for you to maintain good health and to maintain a healthy weight and BMI.

Research shows that reaching and keeping to a healthy weight cuts your risk of heart disease because it helps prevent and manage conditions like [high blood pressure](#), [high cholesterol](#), and type 2 [diabetes](#), that put you at greater risk of [coronary heart disease](#). Being overweight isn't just about the way we look. It can lead to more aches and pains, problems in sleeping and a loss of energy and confidence.

Even if you don't have any of these conditions, it's important to keep to a healthy weight so you don't develop them in future.

### Healthy weight

To ensure that you remain healthy, your body mass index (BMI) should be between 18.5 and 24. A BMI score of more than 24 may contribute towards serious health issues such as hypertension (high blood pressure), kidney disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and heart problems. To work out your BMI you will need to know your height and weight. To work out your waist measurement you will need a tape measure.

The table allows you to see what your BMI is:

Height	5-0	5-1	5-2	5-3	5-4	5-5	5-6	5-7	5-8	5-9	5-10	5-11	6-0	6-1	6-2	6-3	6-4
100	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	14	13	13	12	12
105	21	20	19	19	18	17	17	16	16	16	15	15	14	14	13	13	13
110	21	21	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	15	14	14	13
115	22	22	21	20	20	19	19	18	17	17	17	16	16	15	15	14	14
120	23	23	22	21	21	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	15	15	15
125	24	24	23	22	21	21	20	20	19	18	18	17	17	16	16	16	15
130	25	25	24	23	22	22	21	20	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16	16
135	26	26	25	24	23	22	22	21	21	20	19	19	18	18	17	17	16
140	27	26	26	25	24	23	23	22	21	21	20	20	19	18	18	17	17
145	28	27	27	26	25	24	23	23	22	21	21	20	20	19	19	18	18
150	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	23	23	22	22	21	20	20	19	19	18
155	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22	21	20	20	19	19
160	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22	21	21	20	19
165	32	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22	21	21	20
170	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22	21	21
175	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22	21
180	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	22	22
185	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	27	26	25	24	24	23	23
190	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	26	25	24	24	23
195	38	37	36	35	33	32	31	31	30	29	28	27	26	26	25	24	24
200	39	38	37	35	34	33	32	32	30	30	29	28	27	26	26	25	24
205	40	39	37	36	35	34	33	33	31	30	29	29	28	27	26	26	25
210	41	40	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	28	27	26	26
215	42	41	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	28	27	26
220	43	42	40	39	38	37	36	34	33	32	32	31	30	29	28	27	27
225	44	43	41	40	39	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	31	30	29	28	27
230	45	43	42	41	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	30	29	28
235	46	44	43	42	40	39	38	36	36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	29
240	47	45	44	42	41	40	39	37	36	35	34	33	33	32	31	30	29
245	48	46	45	43	42	41	40	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	31	30
250	49	47	46	44	43	42	40	39	38	37	36	35	34	33	32	31	30



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### Do I need to lose weight?

There are two main ways to tell whether you need to lose weight: your Body Mass Index (BMI) and your waist measurement. To work out your BMI you will need to know your height and weight. To work out your waist measurement you will need a tape measure.

Body mass index (BMI) is your weight in kilograms divided by your height in metres squared.

- if your BMI is between 25 and 29, you would be considered overweight
- if your BMI is between 30 and 40, you would be considered obese
- if your BMI is over 40, you would be considered very obese (known as "morbidly obese")

Your shape, as much as your weight, can affect your health risk. Fat around your middle can increase your risk of getting [heart disease](#), cancer and type 2 [diabetes](#). That's because these fat cells produce toxic substances that cause damage to your body.

You can work out if you're at increased risk by simply measuring your waist. Find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips, and measure around your middle at a point mid-way between these. For many people this will be at the level of the tummy button.

	Increased risk	Severe risk
Men (white European)	over 94cm (37")	over 102cm (40")
Men (African-Caribbean, South Asian and some other minority ethnic groups)		over 90cm (35.5")
Women (white European)	over 80cm (32")	over 88cm (35")
Women (African-Caribbean, South Asian and some other minority ethnic groups)		over 80cm (32")

If you are overweight, losing weight will not just benefit your physical health, your emotional and mental well-being will also be improved as you will find exercise much easier and this in turn will improve your mental health.

If you intend to go on a low-fat or low-calorie diet to achieve gradual weight loss, you should always seek advice from your GP beforehand. They can offer you help, support and advice before you start your diet.

### Physical exercise

Many of us struggle with the idea of doing exercise. It might be that we are too busy, feeling tired and achy, or simply can't face the thought of it. Physical exercise doesn't have to be about running around a track or working out in a gym. It can just be about being more active each day, perhaps just walking more, or taking the stairs rather than

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the lift. If medical problems stop you from doing one thing, there may be others that you can do.

The good news is that building activity into your day actually gives you more energy and strengthens joints.

## Making a change

We all want to feel healthy and trim, but no-one wants to deprive themselves of all of the things they enjoy related to drinking and eating. To drastically cut out too many of the things we enjoy often results in failure and the loss of any benefits gained.

To succeed one of the best ways to be healthy is to make some swaps and build them in to your life for the long term. The more you do, the better you'll feel – and you won't have to say "no" to everything.

Our bodies are designed to store fat so eating lots of fatty and sugary foods is a very quick way of adding this to our fat stores. This does not mean that you should stop eating these snacks, try to change what you eat and eat the fatty and sugary foods in moderation.

## Tips

- Try not to eat snacks from a big packet (such as a jumbo bag of crisps) usually you will eat more than you think. Try putting snacks in a bowl.
- Fill up on healthy foods like fresh fruit and vegetables instead of foods that are high in sugar or fats.
- White bread has very little fibre, try changing your white bread for wholegrain.
- Swap your full-fat milk for semi-skimmed milk.
- Cut down on alcohol intake
- Swap fizzy pop for water with a dash of fruit juice or squash that is low in sugars.
- Use a smaller plate when eating; you will eat a smaller portion.
- If you're craving chocolate or biscuits, have a handful of dried fruit instead.
- Take up a new sport or active hobby like walking the dog.

## Underweight?

Being underweight is equally as damaging to your health as being overweight. If your BMI is under 18.5, you should consult your GP, being underweight can be an indication of some health problems, so it's very important that you see your Doctor.

## What do I do next?

Make an appointment with your GP, they will be able to give you all of the help and support to manage a healthy weight, Your GP can also help you to assess your current diet and levels of physical activity, and set goals for change.

# Patient Information

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