



Are you worried about being overweight?

Are you worried about your health and how your lifestyle might be affecting this?

Do you have difficulty exercising because of your weight, or because of health problems you might have?

Do you feel low in mood, or suffer from low self-esteem because of your weight?

If you have answered yes to any of the above questions - this booklet could be for you.

MIND

WHAT

YOU EAT

Guided Self Help

To help you manage your weight and your lifestyle

This resource is designed to help you think about how to improve your health. It does this by giving you the information you need to make practical, long term changes to your lifestyle.

Part 1 - Getting Started

How to use this booklet:

- The booklet is divided into 10 sections, each with a new title in a red flash, like this:

Section Heading

- Throughout this booklet you will see information to read in black ink, like this.
- **Look out for tasks to complete -** they will be set out in a green flash, like this:

TASK

- Remember, take your time, and go at your own pace. As a guide we suggest doing one section each week. You can ask for support from your health professional at any time.
- When you've completed each section - keep going with your changes.
- You may want to monitor your weight during this time – if you do, once a week or a fortnight is enough, and try to keep to the same time of day e.g. Saturday morning after breakfast.
- Remember – even if your weight doesn't go down – stabilising weight is still a success. You will still be reducing your risk of cancer and increasing the strength of your bones etc.

“Even if your weight doesn't go down - stabilising your weight is still a success...”

HEALTHY

WEIGHT
MANAGEMENT

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Introduction



We live in a world surrounded by a vast amount of information about weight loss and weight management but unfortunately not all of it is sound advice. Some claims about weight loss are designed purely to make you spend money on products. Others may offer advice for rapid weight loss and 'gimmick' diets which only have short term benefits.

There are new diets coming onto the market every day and it is possible that you may have tried numerous diets in the past. Unfortunately, research and experiences have shown that dieting does not work in the long term, and here's why...

Our metabolism slows down...

When we cut down our calories too much our body starts adjusting to surviving on fewer calories by slowing the rate at which our body uses the calories (this is called metabolic rate).

Metabolism is affected by many factors such as whether you are male or female, tall or short, your genetics and the amount and type of exercise etc. The more weight we lose the less food we need, and so at a lower weight we may have to eat a bit less than we used to. Rapid weight loss can also lead to loss of muscle mass which slows our metabolism even further.

We feel deprived of food...

Most people who diet end up feeling deprived, fed-up, frustrated and hungry. This then often leads to diets breaking and then overeating. Any weight loss achieved will then be put back on and often people gain more leading to an even greater sense of frustration and failure. This can become a vicious cycle.

"...fad dieting doesn't work in the long term..."

It is important to always include the foods you enjoy, only in smaller amounts, less often or a combination of both.

Successful long term weight management and healthy living depends on us being able to make realistic and lifelong changes to our lifestyle.

This may include increasing how active we are, making changes to what we eat or making other lifestyle changes. Ideally, a combination of all of these will help you achieve a healthier lifestyle. Even small amounts of weight loss can make significant improvements to our health and well-being.

Part 3 - Are you eating regularly?

It is important to have a regular eating pattern every day. This means eating 3 meals per day and maybe 1- 2 snacks depending on your needs.

Leaving long gaps between meals leaves us feeling very hungry and this can lead to overeating.

Try not to leave more than 4 hours between meals/snacks

TASK

How many times each day do you eat?

.....
meals

.....
snacks

TASK

Many people find keeping a food diary helps them see what pattern they eat in.

Use the blank diary sheet on the next page to fill in a week of eating and drinking.

TASK

When you have finished the diary – here are a few questions to ask yourself:

Do you have a regular meal pattern?

Are the gaps longer than 3-4 hours?

Are you eating more or less than you thought you were?

Do you think this is too little, too much or just right?

What are your activity levels like?

When you are more active, do you change what you eat?

What foods are you eating currently?

Are there foods that you are avoiding or over-eating?

Do you enjoy what you eat or do you eat foods you feel you should or ought to be eating?

TASK

My goals for regular eating

1.
.....

2.
.....

3.
.....

TASK

Food Diary

Put as much information as you can to help you see your eating pattern

Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6-8am							
8-11am							
11am-1pm							
1-5pm							
5-7pm							
7-10pm							
10pm-6am							

Make a note of any physical activity here:

Part 4 - Recognising fullness and hunger

Our bodies are sending us messages all the time about how hungry or full we are but we are not always good at listening. Often we wait until the signals are really strong before we act upon them. For example we might wait until we are really thirsty before we get a drink. With food we often wait until we are very hungry and then possibly overeat as a result.

Food provides our body with the energy and nutrients it requires to work properly and healthily. However, we don't always eat just because we are hungry. There are many other reasons why we might eat such as celebrations, boredom, habit and negative feelings.

Comfort and compulsive eating can be used as a way of covering up feelings and needs rather than being aware of them and dealing with them or getting help.

Is it possible that eating has become something which gives you other benefits rather than just filling you up?

From a very young age we may learn lots of different reasons for eating.

TASK

Have a look at the list below and see if you can identify with any of these...

- *I don't know when I am full*
- *I eat to cope with unpleasant feelings such as boredom, loneliness, anger, depression etc.*
- *I may misread other signals from my body such as being thirsty or being tired*
- *Being criticised by others about my eating or how I look makes me want to eat more*
- *I don't like seeing food leftover and wasted so I would rather eat it*
- *I was deprived of food at some point and so now I have learnt to stock up when I can*
- *Other people buy me food as treats/presents*
- *I try to eat 'healthily' and then end up feeling deprived or defiant*
- *I eat as a reward*
- *I eat as a punishment*
- *I eat because other people are eating*

As you can see, there are numerous reasons why people eat and often few of these are actually linked to hunger. By recognising the reasons we eat to help cope with life we can begin to find other ways of coping with the same situations without using food.

TASK

What other reasons may you have?

List them below as this may help you identify when you are eating for other reasons than being hungry.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

TASK

We are in a constant state of hunger and fullness. Before you eat, try to stop and think how hungry you are. On a scale of 1-10

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

.....

(not hungry, no appetite)

(absolutely ravenous)

Try and wait until you are at 7-8 before you have a meal or snack

TASK

Fill in the table below at different times of day to see if you are eating when you are [really] hungry.

TIME >							
Day 1							
Day 2							
Day 3							
Day 4							
Day 5							
Day 6							
Day 7							

Part 5 - Physical Activity - Your secret weapon

This checklist is to help you think about how active you are. Keeping active is good for your physical and mental well-being.

TASK

Answer the following questions – for each section look in the comments/advice box

Do you consider yourself an active person?	YES	NO	Exercise can take many forms such as: Gardening, getting the bus halfway and walking the rest, walking the dog, taking the stairs, walking more, driving less, learning to ride a bike, parking car at the furthest place in a car park.
What would be your preferred activity?			Remember: It's not just about going to a gym – see above
How long would you participate in this activity (in minutes)			Research indicates that 20-30 mins of vigorous activity is beneficial to health. This can be broken up into 10 mins three times/day.
How many times/week			It's the regularity that gets the benefits e.g 5-7 times/week.
What stops you from being active?			Many people say they don't have the time. The easiest way is to make activity part of your daily living e.g push a lawnmower, walking fast, riding a bike, water aerobics...
Have you considered being more active	YES	NO	If yes, first check with your GP if you have a medical condition. Daily walks are a good place to start, join a rambling club or learn to ride a bicycle etc.
If NO why not?			The health benefits of physical activity is widely documented
Are you aware of the benefits?	YES	NO	
If NO say why			Lack of exercise bones and muscles get weaker, stiffness, loss of physical fitness, increase in pain, depression, helps relax
If YES here are some more benefits			Increased sense of well-being, more resistant to stress and less anxious, improves strength of muscles and joints, feel more energetic, helps relax, helps heart work more efficiently, improves circulation.
Still not convinced?			Refer to Part 2 - Find your motivation.

Losing weight or maintaining a healthy weight is so much easier with the help of regular activity and exercise. It strengthens muscle and bones, increases metabolism and helps your mental well-being too.

TASK

List your physical activity goals here.....

1.

2.

3.

**Remember –
keep your goals SMART
– specific, measurable,
realistic and timed**

Part 6 - Eat a Rainbow

It is recommended we eat plenty of fruit and vegetables every day as they are a good source of essential nutrients, such as vitamins and minerals. They are a good way of helping you feel full and possibly stop us from overeating on more energy dense foods.

TASK

How many helpings of fruit do you have a day? (this means pieces of fruit, glasses of fruit juice, and tinned or cooked fruit)

None 1 2 3 4 5 (please circle)

We are encouraged to have 5 portions of fruit and vegetables but you can aim to have at least two or three portions to start with. Choose from fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced. A portion is:

- *One apple, banana, pear, orange or other similar sized fruit OR*
- *A small glass (150ml) of fruit juice (counts as maximum of one portion a day) OR*
- *Two small fruits e.g. two satsumas, two plums or other similar sized fruit.*

TASK

How many helpings of vegetables do you have a day? (one helping is 2- 3 tablespoons of vegetables, or a bowl of salad. Fresh, tinned and frozen vegetables all count)

None 1 2 3 4 5 (please circle)

Targets for healthy eating: Aim to have at least five portions. Choose from fresh, frozen or tinned.

A portion is:

- *Two to three tablespoons of vegetables OR*
- *A dessert bowl of salad*

Different types of fruit and vegetables supply different vitamins and minerals so we are also encouraged to eat a wide variety to maximise the amount of nutrients we get from them.

One way to do this, is to eat different colours of fruit and vegetables each day. This is what we call eating a 'rainbow'. For example you could eat the following portions in one day:

Tomatoes (red)

Orange juice (orange)

Banana (yellow)

Peas (green)

Blueberries (blue)

TASK

Keep a note of the different fruit and vegetables you eat over the week and see how close you come to eating a rainbow...

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7

Part 7 - Breakfast

TASK

How often do you have breakfast? Please tick one box

- Daily*
- Most Days (at least 5 days a week)*
- Rarely or Never*

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day but often we miss it because we do not give ourselves enough time, or because we think it will help us lose weight. However, research shows that eating breakfast can help people lose or maintain weight. If by morning we have not eaten anything since the evening before - our metabolism has already slowed down. Eating breakfast kick starts our metabolism and provides us with fuel to give us energy and get going. Imagine a fire burning down overnight and then in the morning putting fuel onto it to get it stoked up and burning again: that is similar to how our metabolism works

A healthy breakfast is an important part of a balanced diet, and provides some of the vitamins and minerals we need for good health.

TASK

Try starting to have breakfast every day, and keep a note of what you have had below:

Day 1	
Day 2	
Day 3	
Day 4	
Day 5	
Day 6	
Day 7	

Here are some breakfast ideas:

2 Weetabix or 2 Shredded Wheat with 1/3 pint semi skimmed milk (100 -200ml)

1 -2 slices of toast with butter/margarine

Small glass of fruit juice (150ml)

1 Pot of fruit yoghurt or fromage frais

2 slices of toast

1 piece of Fruit

½ large or 1 small tin baked beans or spaghetti (200g) and

2 slices toast with butter/margarine

Small glass of fruit juice (150ml)

1 - 2 poached, boiled or scrambled eggs

2 slices toast with butter/margarine

Small glass of fruit juice (150ml)

1 cereal bar

1 pot Fruit yoghurt or fromage frais

1 fruit

A bowl (6 tablespoons/40g) breakfast cereal e.g:

bran flakes, cornflakes or fruit and fibre - with chopped banana, blueberries or strawberries

1 cup (100 -200ml) milk

1 -2 slices of toast with butter/margarine and jam

Small glass of fruit juice (150ml)

Porridge (160g made up) with chopped dates, blueberries or banana

A small slice of malt loaf with butter/margarine

Small glass of fruit juice (150ml) or a piece of fruit

Part 8 - Know your nutrients (Carbohydrate, Fat, Sugar, Protein and Calcium)

Carbohydrates

TASK

How often do you have bread, pasta, rice, potatoes, and cereals?

Daily Most Days (at least 5 days a week) Rarely or Never

Targets for healthy eating:

We should try and include at least one starchy food at each meal. These foods help to give us energy throughout the day, for example...

- High fibre breakfast cereal e.g. porridge, branflakes, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat
- Sandwich for lunch
- Potatoes, pasta or rice as a base for your evening meal

Fats

TASK

Is the food you eat often prepared with oil, butter, ghee or margarine? (e.g. for deep frying, oil in curry, for roasting) Yes No

Targets for Healthy eating:

We need some fats to provide fuel to keep us warm and to provide us with energy for all the body functions. Fat is also needed to provide certain vitamins and essential fatty acids, e.g. omega 3 found in certain fish and seeds. Having fat present in our diets also helps prevent overeating as it helps us to feel satisfied –it helps to control our appetite.

Plan meals that use healthier cooking methods, don't fry all the time. Think about steaming, roasting, stewing, braising, baking, boiling, grilling and stir-frying.

For example, ways to help to reduce fat intake:

- Grilling, e.g. grilled rather than fried fish
- Boiling, e.g. boiled rather than roast potatoes
- Poaching, e.g. poached rather than fried egg
- Steaming, e.g. steam vegetables to prevent over cooking and excess nutrient loss
- Baking, e.g. rather than deep fat frying
- Serving, e.g. avoid adding butter to vegetables for a glaze
- If you are adding fat or oil, use as little as possible and try pure vegetable oils such as rapeseed oil, sunflower oil or olive oil
- Use lean cuts of meat and take the skin of chicken breasts before cooking.

Sugar

TASK

Do you eat cakes, sweets, biscuits daily? Yes No

Cutting down on these types of foods could help you control your weight because they often contain lots of calories. Also sugary foods and drinks can cause tooth decay, particularly if eaten in between meals, so having fewer of these could also protect your teeth.

SUGAR SWAPS

Cut down on these:	And try these instead:
Sugar	Artificial sweeteners e.g. Canderel, Natrena, Sweetex, Splenda Half Spoon
Sweetened fizzy drinks	Diet/ no added sugar fizzy drinks
Ordinary squash, cordials	Sugar free / low sugar / no added sugar squash
Fruit juice	Unsweetened fruit juice, it is best if this is restricted to one small glass a day or dilute with water
Honey, treacle, jam marmalade	Reduced sugar jam/marmalade or use smaller amounts of the full sugar version
Sweets, chocolate, toffees	Scone, muffin, crumpet, currant loaf, hot cross bun, bagel, plain popcorn
Tinned fruit in syrup	Tinned fruit in natural juice
Ordinary jelly	Sugar free jelly
Puddings, cakes	Fresh fruit, yoghurt or fromage frais, sugar-free desserts
Chocolate or cream biscuits	Plain biscuits e.g. rich tea, digestive biscuits
Sugary breakfast cereals e.g. Frosties, Crunchy Nut Cornflakes	High fibre cereals e.g. Weetabix, bran flakes, Shredded Wheat

Protein

TASK

How often do you have meat, fish, eggs, beans and other non-meat sources of protein such as beans, peas, lentils and nuts?

- Never More than once a day Once or twice a week
 Once a day Most days (at least 5 days a week)

Try to have at least two portions from this food group per day. Aim to have at least two portions of fish a week, including a portion of oily fish (sardines, herring, mackerel, and pilchards to name a few). Some types of meat are high in fat, particularly saturated fat. So when you're buying meat, remember to buy lean cuts of meat.

To cut down on fat:

- Choose lean mince
- Cut the fat of the meat and skin off chicken
- Try to grill meat and fish instead of frying
- Try not to eat too many sausages, meat pies, salami as these are often high in fat
- Have a poached or boiled egg instead of a fried egg

Beans, peas and lentils (types of pulses) are good alternatives to meat because they are naturally low in fat, high in fibre, protein, and vitamins and minerals.

TASK

List some ideas you think you might be able to change with regard to your intake of protein think about foods you could include that you don't have at the moment:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Calcium

TASK

How much milk do you have a day? (This includes milk in cereal, milk in tea and coffee, used to make sauces or puddings and milky drinks)

- None ½ pint – 1 pint (2 glasses)
 1/3 pint or less (1 glass) 1 pint or more (3 glasses or more)

These are an important source of calcium which helps to keep our bones strong. Some dairy foods can be high in fat and saturated fat, but there are lower fat options to choose from e.g. semi-skimmed milk, reduced fat cheese. Or you could have just a small amount of high fat varieties less often.

TASK

How many portions of cheese or yoghurt do you have a day? (1 portion = 1oz/30g cheese or the size of three AA batteries portion of cheese or one small carton of yoghurt). Please tick one box.

- None 1 portion 2 portions 3 portions

Part 9 - Stay Hydrated

TASK

How much Fluid do you drink a day? (include water, tea, coffee, squash, pop & juice)

0 -2 cups 2 – 4 cups 4 – 6 cups 6 -8 cups 8 cups or more

We all need to drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration. Signs of dehydration include being less alert, having a poor reaction time, poor concentration and headaches. Drink at least 6- 8 glasses/mugs (250ml) of fluids a day. E.g. water, squash, sugar free drinks ,tea and coffee. Try to have as much variety of drinks as possible. When it is hot or if you are exercising you will need more fluids. Be careful of alcohol - this can lead to more fluid lost than drank.

TASK

See how much fluid you are drinking over the week put a tick through the mugs/ glasses below every time you have a drink.

Day 1								
Day 2								
Day 3								
Day 4								
Day 5								
Day 6								
Day 7								

Part 10 - How did you do?

Congratulations on working through this self help guide and for making positive steps towards a healthy lifestyle. Remember; the key is to make achievable long term changes and avoid short term 'dieting'. Small changes are important and more likely to be maintained over time.

Don't be put off by the occasional blip! When any of us start to make lifestyle changes it is likely that there will be times when sticking to these changes can be difficult for many reasons. Remember everyone 'slips' from time to time - and this is to be expected.

The important thing is to look at why it was difficult to stick to your plans and then review your goals and learn from the slip-back and move on and continue with the plans and goals you had previously set.

If you would like more support speak to your healthcare professional.



Feedback

We would appreciate your feedback on how you found this resource. Please complete the form below and return it to us by post or email. Or through the internal post at any of our BSMHFT sites.

1. Overall, did you find the guide helpful in making positive lifestyle changes?

Yes No A little

2. Can you tell us about the changes you made?

.....
.....
.....

3. Was weight control one of your goals? Yes No

Did you lose weight Yes (How much?) No

Did you maintain weight Yes No

Did you gain weight Yes No

4. How long (approximately) did it take you to complete all the sections?

..... weeks ormonths

5. What was the most helpful part of the guide?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

6. What could we change to make it better?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your feedback. Please send this by email: DieteticService@bsmhft.nhs.uk
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