

Tips for weight loss

Whilst your focus should always be on your health, there are some practical things you can do to aid weight loss if that it is one of your goals.

Weight gain happens for a variety of reasons including genetics (yes, really!) lifestyle, stress, lack of exercise, food intolerance, nutritional deficiencies, weak digestive system, over eating, poor food choices, hormonal imbalances, side effects of medications and many more reasons besides. Don't look for quick fixes and sudden drastic weight loss results. If you lose weight too quickly, it will only be temporary and you are likely to gain it all back – and more – due to the imbalances you have forced on your body.

Here are simple, manageable things you can do to boost your metabolism and your energy which will lead to sustainable and permanent weight loss ☺

- **Start your day with a cup of hot water and lemon:** *this will cleanse your digestive tract, boost your immune system and help to energise you.*
- **Have a probiotic:** *research has proven that increasing the healthy bacteria in your intestines leads to better absorption of nutrients throughout the day- and that leads to weight loss!*
- **Take apple cider vinegar:** *two teaspoons of apple cider vinegar in a small glass of water 20 mins before your meals supports your stomach acids and aids absorption of nutrients (which in turn aids weight loss)*
- **Add seeds to breakfasts and salads:** *they are low calorie and highly nutritious and help boost your energy.*
- **Snack on fruit, nuts, and seeds:** *people who snack on fresh, unsalted nuts lose weight more easily than those who do not. That's because nuts are high in protein and essential fatty acids and help keep you feeling full. Portion wise; 6-8 almonds, 2-3 Brazil nuts, 4 or 5 walnuts.*
- **Recognise hunger v thirst:** *very often, thirst can feel like hunger. Sipping water regularly throughout the day will help keep hunger pains at bay and carries nutrients to your cells.*
- **Reduce carbohydrate intake in the evening:** *carbohydrates (e.g. potatoes, pasta, rice etc.) break down as sugars in the body for you to use as energy. If you don't burn the energy off, the sugars will be stored as fat.*
- **Eat slowly!** *Thoroughly chewing your food is not only beneficial for your digestive health, it is also a great weight loss tool. It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register that you have had enough.*
- **Consider the Glycaemic Index:** *The Glycaemic Index measures the speed at which carbohydrates break down into sugar in our bodies. Low GI foods are digested*

slowly, keep you feeling fuller for longer and keep your blood glucose levels even. Sticking to mostly low-moderate GI foods will help weight loss.

Examples (intolerances excepted)

Low GI Foods (0-55)	Moderate GI Foods (55-70)	High GI Foods (70-100)
All bran	Shredded wheat	Cornflakes
Buckwheat	Couscous	Tapioca
Brown rice	Basmati rice	Short grain white rice
Whole grain bread	Pita bread	French baguette
Pasta	New potatoes	Baked/mashed potatoes
Grapefruit	Banana	Dates
Lentils	Sultanas	Parsnips
Broccoli	Beetroot	Pumpkin
Peanuts	Muesli bar	Honey
Oats	Rice Bubbles	Jelly beans

- **Avoid fried foods.** *Apart from stripping valuable nutrients, frying foods adds fat and calories. Stir-fry, bake and steam instead.*
- **Avoid unhealthy take-aways:** *They are usually high in fat and calories and the portion sizes are usually excessive. If you are out with friends and they have opted for fast food, choose salads, low fat subway, crumbed fish (as opposed to fried) etc. Most fast-food outlets offer low fat alternatives.*
- **Watch your drink.** *Fizzy drinks, some fruit juices and alcoholic drinks are high in calories. For example, a 12-ounce can of Coca-Cola contains 154 calories; an 8-ounce glass of lemonade can contain up to 110 calories; a 7-ounce gin and tonic is 171 calories; and a 3-ounce glass of white wine is 70 calories. Don't be fooled by the 'diet' drinks either. Research has proven that the artificial sweeteners actually stimulate appetite so although you may be getting fewer calories in your drink, you're likely to feel hungrier later.*
 - ❖ *a glass of vegetable juice a day is highly nutritious and a great weight loss tool*
 - ❖ *try two teaspoons of chia seeds in water with a little lemon*
 - ❖ *avoid fizzy drinks, especially the 'energy' varieties!*
- **Avoid TV dinners:** *Research has proven that eating in front of the television results in a greater intake.*
- **Keep a food and exercise diary:** *It's useful to keep a food diary when you are trying to lose weight and I have enclosed some templates for your use. You'll be able to see at a glance just how much you are sneaking in that you might not otherwise have*



been aware of and identify where and when your weak spots may be. Even just having the odd bite of someone else's chocolate bar and accepting a chip or two can soon mount up.

- **Use a list when shopping for food.** *Planning ahead is a great weight loss tool. Only buy what's on your list and do not shop (or write the list!) when you are hungry.*
- **Sleep in the dark.** *A study just published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences shows that you can gain weight just by sleeping with a dim light on (like the glow from a nightlight).*
- **Start and end your daily intake within a 10-hour period.** *This helps set your circadian code, just as our ancestors naturally had. Don't wake up your digestive team once they've finished their work!*
- **Balance your hormones:** *Hormonal imbalances are often responsible for weight gain. Have blood tests to check your levels (your health practitioner can recommend the best tests for you based on your age)*
- **Resist temptation!** *We tend to go for the easy options so put all food out of sight apart from fruit. Re-order your cupboard – put healthy foods in your eye-line.*
- **Recognise success:** *NOT putting weight on is a success – losing it is a bonus!*