



# THE *Change* PROGRAM

a GP-delivered weight loss program  
for adults in primary care

Elizabeth Ann Sturgiss | Sonia Res | Rebecca Kathage | Kirsty Douglas

## PATIENT HANDBOOK





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**PATIENT HANDBOOK**

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# Upcoming **Appointments**

Date	Time	Notes

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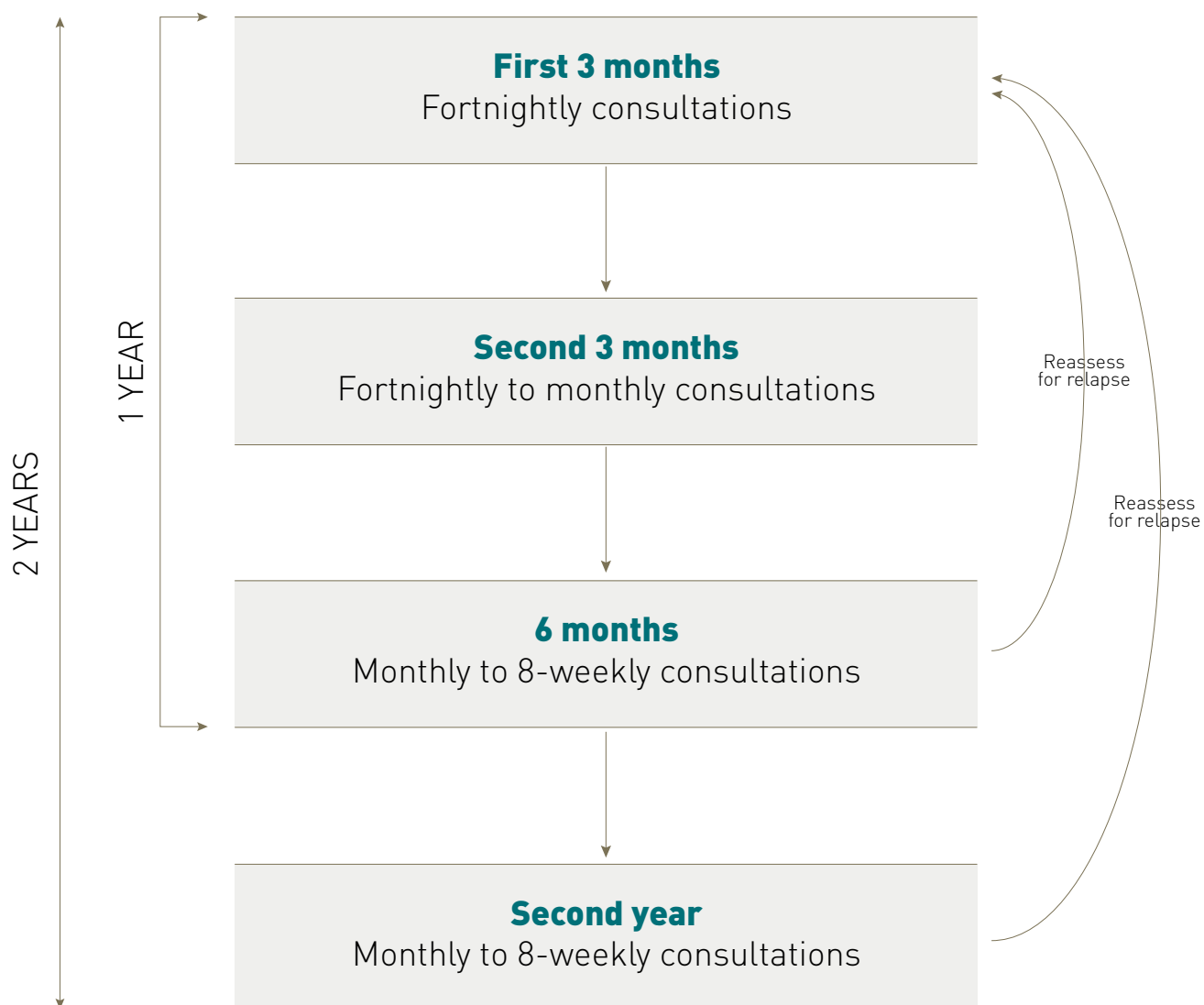
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# Contents

Upcoming appointments	iii
Consultation schedule	vii
<b>Welcome</b>	<b>1</b>
Welcome to The Change Program	1
Why is it so hard to lose weight?	2
Our obesogenic environment	3
Personal barriers to weight loss	4
<b>Goal Setting</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Wellbeing Score</b>	<b>13</b>
My wellbeing scores	13
<b>Nutrition</b>	<b>17</b>
Let's talk kilojoules and calories	17
Lose easy kilojoules	18
What's it worth?	20
All things are not equal	21
Australian Dietary Guidelines	22
Think about drinks	23
Having a drink?	24
Let's talk about portions	25
How many kilojoules should I be eating?	26
Look in your pantry	27
Let's go shopping	28
Mind boggling	30
Food labels	31
Thoughtful eating	32
How to make nutritious eating easier	34
Road blocks and obstacles	35

<b>Meal Plans</b>	<b>37</b>
Australia's healthy weight week	37
<b>Physical Activity</b>	<b>45</b>
How much physical activity?	45
Levels of physical activity – how active are you?	46
Move through your whole day	47
Where is my energy intake coming from?	48
Where is my energy going?	49
Who and what is helping me along the way?	50
<b>Problem Solving</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Physical Activity Diary</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Nutrition Diary</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Relapse Prevention</b>	<b>71</b>
Relapse prevention action plan	71
Relapse prevention	72
<b>Measurements</b>	<b>73</b>
Weight, waist circumference, test results	73
<b>Resources</b>	<b>79</b>
Other useful resources	79
Reference list	81

## The Change Program Suggested consultation schedule







# Welcome to The Change Program.

The Change Program is for patients who want to work with their general practitioner (GP) to control their weight and improve their overall health. It runs over a 2-year period, with frequent visits at the beginning of the program, which spread out as the program continues.

## Is it just about weight loss?

It's important that you and your GP don't just focus on weight loss. We know that about 30% of people who are overweight don't currently have any ill health effects from their weight. We also know that there are health benefits that come from lifestyle changes no matter whether you lose weight or not. Weight is used to help work out how healthy someone might be, but it is not the only marker of health.

Even small weight changes can have big health benefits<sup>1</sup>. Weight loss can:

- improve your blood pressure (even 2 kg of weight loss)
- improve knee pain from arthritis (6 kg or more)
- improve pain from heart burn
- reduce symptoms of sleep apnoea
- reduce symptoms of depression and improve self-esteem
- improve overall quality of life

## Why is The Change Program over such a long period?

The Change Program is designed to support you over a long period (2 years) so that the changes you make are sustainable and become second nature.

## What tools does The Change Program provide?

The program focuses on three main areas – nutrition, physical activity, and strategies to support lifestyle changes. It is based on current Australian guidelines and is put into a format that is easy for you and your GP to use. The program encourages you and your GP to work together to tailor what works for you, rather than just following a 'one size fits all' approach.

## Is this a diet?

The whole idea of The Change Program is to make lifestyle changes that can continue for the rest of your life, rather than a 'quick fix diet'. The Change Program works in all areas, not just nutrition, to help improve your overall health.

## Does it mean I can't see a dietitian or other health professional?

Not at all! We would encourage you to use whatever resources you need to help you achieve your goals. The Change Program is designed so you and your GP can work out what is best for you individually.

We hope this is the start of a new journey for you towards a healthier and more active life!

<sup>1</sup> NHMRC (2013) Clinical practice guidelines for the management of overweight and obesity in adults, adolescents and children in Australia. Melbourne: National Health and Medical Research Council.

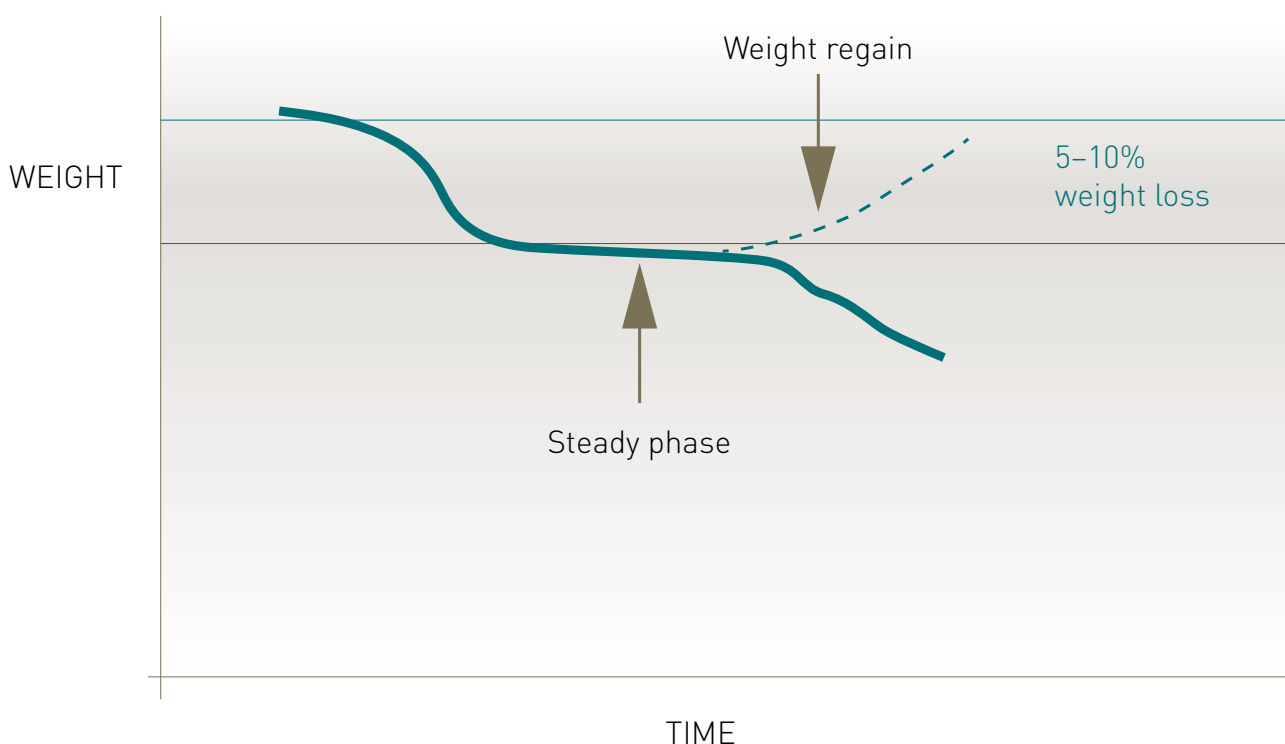
# Why is it so hard to lose weight?

Our bodies are hard-wired to maintain weight. If you have been overweight for a few years, your body is programmed to try and stay at about the same weight.

No matter what your starting weight is, once you lose about 5–10% of your weight, your body will think that you are starving and wasting away! Hormones kick in to tell your body to conserve energy and try to put weight back on. These hormones make you feel less full and satisfied with a meal.

When this happens you will enter a 'steady phase' – it is difficult to lose more weight as your hormones are fighting to put weight back on. The hormones might even make you feel hungrier and it is difficult to stick to your nutrition goals<sup>1</sup>.

This is often the time people put weight back on – they end up yo-yoing back and forth.



So what can you do?

1. Don't blame yourself for the steady phase! It's a natural and normal body process. It's your body's hormones working to make sure you don't starve.
2. Once you lose 5–10% of your weight and you notice weight loss slowing down, aim to **MAINTAIN** your weight rather than lose more.
3. After about 6–12 months of maintaining your new weight, your hormones should also settle down.
4. Then you can aim to lose another 5–10% of your weight. Remember, this may also be followed by another steady phase.

<sup>1</sup> NHMRC (2013) Clinical practice guidelines for the management of overweight and obesity in adults, adolescents and children in Australia. Melbourne: National Health and Medical Research Council.

# Our obesogenic environment

We are surrounded by **temptation**. From the time we wake up and see advertisements for breakfast foods, to our **drive** to work where we pass countless **fast food** outlets and billboards. At work morning teas, we have to have some cake, or that would be rude! It's tempting to pick up **quick and easy** dinner options on the way home in the **car**.

And there is also the **sitting down** nature of most jobs – staring at the **computer screen** for hours of the day. We often **snack** on something – partly to satisfy the urge to eat because the clock says it's lunchtime, partly to offer 'something else to do' with our hands, and partly due to the easy access to energy-dense junk food snacks (e.g. vending machines, fundraising chocolates).

There is an **abundance of food** wherever we look and so many choices. Sizes of coffees, restaurant meals, chocolate bars and bread loaves have all increased over time. **Bigger is better** is what we are led to believe.

## What can I do about it?

The first step is to be aware of how your surroundings are impacting on your lifestyle. Can you think of things about your home, work or community environment that are encouraging you to choose unhealthy lifestyle behaviours? (e.g. media, cost of foods, access to foods, access to physical activity)

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What things can you do each day to choose behaviours that will help you reach your goals? (e.g. take the stairs, choose active transport options, be aware of advertising, consider active options at work)

<b>Transport</b>
<b>Work</b>
<b>Home</b>
<b>Media</b>
<b>Nutrition</b>

You might want to discuss your ideas with your GP.

## Personal barriers to weight loss

Everyone has barriers that get in the way of lifestyle change. These are unique to each person. Your barriers might be physical or emotional factors, or things related to the environment you live in.

The first step to help you get to your goals is to identify your own barriers. Fill in the table below – your GP might be able to help you identify more.

Barrier	How it affects me
Physical (e.g. health related, medications, pain)	e.g. I can't walk long distances
Emotional (e.g. past experiences, feeling guilty, stress, life pressures)	e.g. I feel self-conscious when exercising in public
Environmental (e.g. safe places to walk, busy at work, transport options)	e.g. I always drive to work

Which of these barriers do you most want to change?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The *Problem solving* worksheet (page 51) might be helpful for thinking about possible solutions to your barriers. Your GP might also have some options to discuss with you.

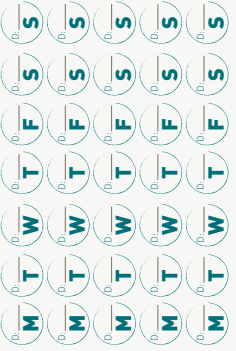
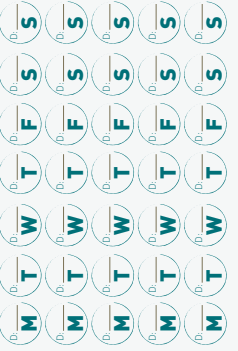
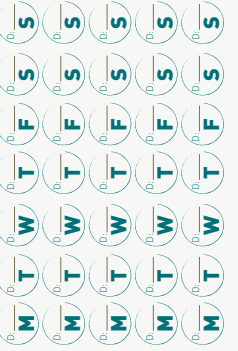
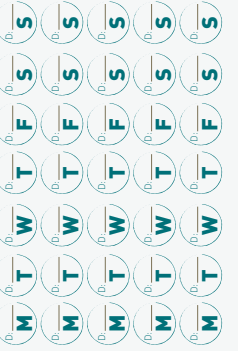
# Goal Setting

Have a think about what you want to achieve during The Change Program. Writing your goals here can help you keep your program 'on track'. On this table record your goals, and how you will go about achieving them. You might start with a few goals, and add to your list over time. The best way to make goals is using the 'SMART' principles: Specific, Measureable, Assignable (who is going to do it), Realistic, Time based.

Think about your goals carefully – make sure they are realistic! Discuss with your GP if you are unsure about any aspect of your goals.

My goal	How will I achieve this?	How will I know when I've done it?	Daily recording of goal
<p>EXAMPLE: To go for a daily walk</p>	<p>Walking with John in the morning before work, starting with a 10 minute gentle walk</p>	<p>When I've walked every morning for one month; I want to build up to 30 minutes of walking</p>	
<p>To cut down on sugary drinks</p>	<p>Stop buying juice or soft drinks at the grocery shop or work</p>	<p>When I've stopped my daily habit of juice or soft drink for 1 month or more</p>	
<p>To eat a healthy lunch</p>	<p>Pack lunch from home or buy salad or soup</p>	<p>When I bring lunch from home for at least 4 days per week; and when I buy lunch I choose healthy options for 1 month or more</p>	

# Goal Setting

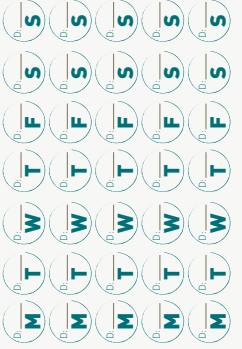
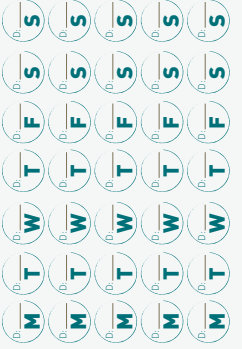
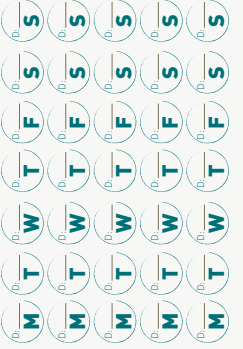
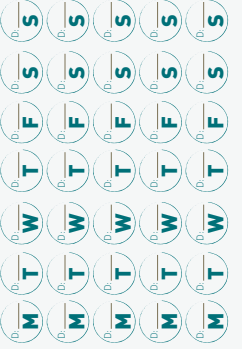
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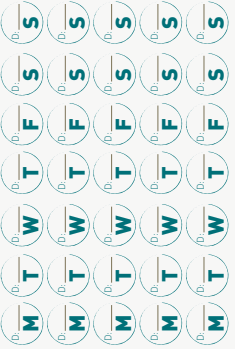
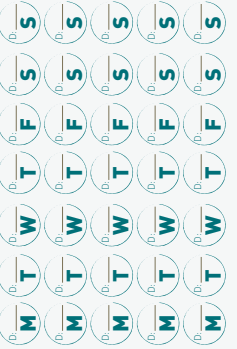
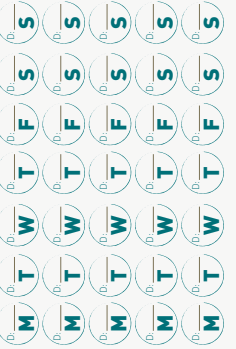
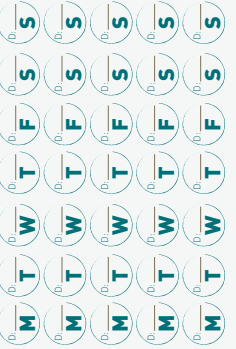
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# My Wellbeing Scores

Against each of the three questions, circle the response that best represents your current wellbeing.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **In general, how would you rate your health overall?**

1. Poor
2. Fair
3. Good
4. Very good
5. Excellent

## **Has your health limited what you can do day to day?**

1. Almost every day
2. Some days
3. Every once in a while
4. Rarely
5. Not at all

## **How much energy do you feel you have?**

1. None
2. Little
3. Some
4. Quite a bit
5. A substantial amount

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# Let's talk kilojoules and calories

## Why are kilojoules important to know about?

While The Change Program is not aimed at kilojoule counting, it is important to have a general understanding of the energy intake we should aim for every day. Think of this as a general 'spending' balance.

## What is a kilojoule and what is a calorie?

The kilojoules (kJ) or calories (cal) within a food are measures of the amount of energy in it. In Australia, we use kilojoules to measure foods' energy, however many foods show both kJ and cal on their nutrition labels – some people like the simpler numbers with calories. 4200 kilojoules is about 1000 calories. An average apple contains around 220 kJ (53 cal) and a slice of white bread is about 360 kJ (86 cal).

## What sort of kilojoule intake should I be looking at?

How many kilojoules you need depends upon your age, sex and how much physical activity you do.

The Australian Food and Groceries Council has used 8700 kJ (around 2000 cal) as the standard daily energy intake of an adult – this is what the recommended daily intake percentage (RDI%) that you see on food packaging is based on.

To lose weight you need to have a difference of 2500 kJ (about 600 cal) between your energy intake and your energy output.



## Are kilojoules the 'be all and end all'?

It is important to ensure that you don't just look at how many kilojoules are in foods, but also what else the food can do for you.

- Does it contain nutrients that you need?
- Is it high in fibre?
- Is it going to help fill you up?
- Is it heart healthy?

For overall health, these are important questions.

## Lose easy kilojoules

Snacking is a time when high-energy, nutrition-poor food is often consumed. When you are trying to lose weight, the kilojoules in cakes, biscuits, chips and other junk food add up quickly.

Are there any small changes that you could make to your current diet? Are you having snacks during the day that you could do without, or swap for something else?

Here are some 400 kJ (100 cal) snack options:

- 200 g of natural low-fat yoghurt
- 2 crisp breads and a thin slice of cheese
- A small handful of nuts (approx. 20 g)
- 3 oatmeal biscuits.



Write down your current snacks in the table below – what could you have instead?

My current snack food	Time and place of snack	Replacement or change
EXAMPLE: Chocolate/confectionery bar daily (53 g) – around 1000 kJ (240 cal)	3 pm at work	150 g tub of strawberry greek yoghurt – around 314 kJ (75 cal)
EXAMPLE: Salt and vinegar chips (45 g) – around 920 kJ (220 cal)	8 pm after dinner	2 crisp breads and a slice of cheese – around 418 kJ (around 100 cal)
EXAMPLE: Hot chips (150 g) – around 1500 kJ (360 cal)	1 pm for most lunches	Just on Fridays

My current snack food	Time and place of snack	Replacement or change

Are these changes that you could keep to in the long term?

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Are there occasions when you do want to eat cake, biscuits and other energy-dense snacks?

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Discuss your snacks with your GP and see if they have any more ideas for healthier options.

# What's it worth?

It is often surprising how much physical activity it would take to use up the energy in different snack foods.

Here are some examples to get you thinking:

- 2 slices ham and pineapple pizza (2400 kJ/574 cal) = 60 minutes of bike riding
- 100 g milk chocolate (2240 kJ/535 cal) = 50 minutes of swimming
- 10 jelly beans (373 kJ/89 cal) = 15 minutes of stair climbing
- 1 chocolate-covered biscuit (410 kJ/98 cal) = 10 minutes of bike riding
- 1 meat pie (1881 kJ/450 cal) = 2 hours 10 minutes frisbee throwing
- 1 croissant (1050 kJ/251 cal) = 1 hour of ballroom dancing
- 1 thick sausage (1069 kJ/255 cal) = 25 minutes of tennis
- 1 sausage roll (2028 kJ/485 cal) = 50 minutes of basketball
- 1 tablespoon chocolate spread (435 kJ/104 cal) = 20 minutes of vigorous gardening
- 400 mL chocolate milkshake (1660 kJ/397 cal) = 30 minutes of jogging
- 375 mL can cola (675 kJ/161 cal) = 30 minutes of gentle walking



Completely cutting out snack foods from your diet might not be helpful for you as it can lead to increased food cravings.

Limiting these foods, and enjoying them when you have them, is a better way to go (see *Thoughtful eating*, page 32).

What are your favourite snack foods?

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When do you eat these snack foods?

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What changes can you make so that you don't eat these snacks as often, and really enjoy them when you do have them? For some ideas see *Thoughtful eating* (page 32).

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You might want to discuss these ideas with your GP.

## All things are not equal

When choosing snacks it is tempting to focus on the number of kilojoules (calories) they contain. But all snacks are not equal!

Have a look at this list – each of the two choices have the same number of kilojoules (calories).

In terms of your overall health, choose the option that will best help you achieve your goals.

Choice 1	Choice 2	Kilojoules (calories) (approx.)
1 packet of potato chips	1 medium banana	436 (104)
2 tablespoons of hummus with 6 rice crackers	1 fun-size chocolate bar	368 (88)
2 choc-chip biscuits	2 cups of fresh fruit salad	620 (148)
1 medium apple	1 jelly snake	185 (44)
1 slice of zucchini and bacon frittata	Half a bucket of hot chips	611 (146)

When choosing foods think about the whole nutrition of the food, don't just look at the numbers on the box! The healthiest foods – fresh fruit and vegetables – don't have dietary information on them. They are excellent choices at every meal!

# Australian Dietary Guidelines

The Australian Dietary Guidelines give recommendations on healthy eating for all Australians. These tips are generally good for all of us to maintain a healthy lifestyle. If you have any questions, your GP would be a good person to discuss them with.

## Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day:

- **Vegetables and legumes/beans:** eat plenty of vegetables of different types and colours
- **Fruit**
- **Grain** foods: mostly wholegrain and/or high fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- **Lean meats** and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and **legumes/beans**
- **Milk**, yoghurt, cheese and/or soy/rice/cereal-based alternatives, mostly reduced fat

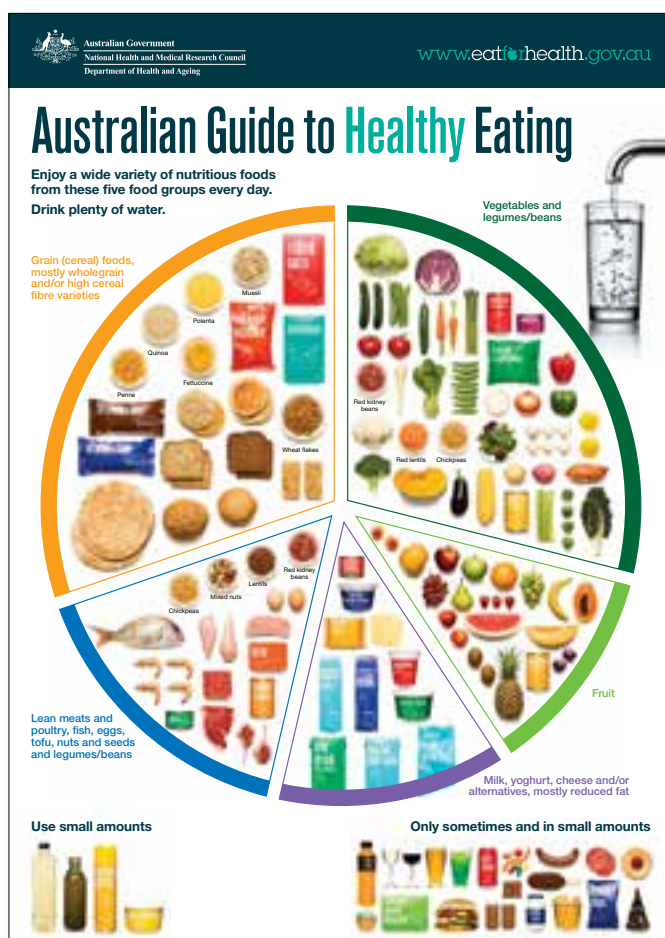
Without reduced energy intake, physical activity is unlikely to lead to significant weight loss.

And it is recommended that you drink plenty of **water**.

## Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol

- Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat, such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks.
- Replace high-fat foods such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut oil and palm oil with foods that contain predominately polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt.
- Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionery, sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, and energy and sports drinks.

If you are interested in looking at the full guidelines, they are available free online at [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au).



# Think about drinks

Drinks are often overlooked when people think about their nutrition – but often drinks contribute a large amount to your daily energy intake. It is easy to drink a large number of kilojoules in a short time period without even realising it.

Kilojoules can sneak into our everyday nutrition through our drink choices. Below are some examples.

250 mL skim milk (size of small coffee) = 375 kJ (90 cal)

600 mL sports drinks = 774 kJ (186 cal)

375 mL cola soft drink = 675 kJ (161 cal)

250 mL apple juice = 450 kJ (108 cal)



Can you swap your drinks for water (water does not contain any kilojoules)? Can you change to a low-fat milk option? Can you tip out half your soft drink and just drink half?

Also watch out for the type of drink you might mindlessly sip through the day – use water at your desk or when doing an activity. Aim to sit down and really enjoy other drinks such as a glass of wine or a coffee.

**Aim to drink water for thirst, and see other drinks as treats.**

Use the table below to look at your current drink choices; some examples are given:

My current drinks	Time and place of drink	Replacement or change
Sports drink 600 mL (774 kJ/185 cal)	After gym	Water bottle throughout session. Apple to eat after (220 kJ/53 cal)
Coffee (250 mL) flat white, whole milk, no added sugar (738 kJ/176 cal)	Daily, before work	Coffee (250 mL) flat white, skim milk, no added sugar (375 kJ/90 cal)



## Having a drink?

Alcohol has a very high amount of energy in it, whether it is wine, beer or spirits. Alcohol can be a cause for weight gain that gets missed.

The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommends that alcohol should make up less than 5% of your total daily energy intake.

For healthy men and women, drinking two or less drinks a day reduces your risk for alcohol-related harm and injury.



One can of full-strength beer (375 mL) = 590 kJ (140 cal)

One glass of wine (200 mL) = 500–600 kJ (120–140 cal)

One daiquiri cocktail (140 mL) = 750 kJ (180 cal)

Alcoholic drinks in Australia do not have nutritional information, such as energy content, on their label. You can find 'calorie counters' on the internet where you can look up the energy content of your favourite drinks.

Look at the energy content of your favourite alcoholic drinks and record them below.

Drink	kJ/cal in each 100 mL

Are you able to have alcohol only on certain days and have alcohol-free days?

Can you cut down to special occasions only?

Write down what you think you need to do about your alcoholic drinks to achieve your goals.

Discuss strategies for achieving this with your GP.

My goal for alcoholic drinks	How will I achieve this?

## Let's talk about portions

The amount of food that our society eats has steadily grown – our meal sizes are bigger than what people ate 50 years ago and we have more meat, sugar, butter and cream! This is a big part of the weight loss equation.

### What is a portion?

Food labels have two columns – one is 'Per Serving' and the other is 'Per 100 g'. The information that you will get from food labels will be based upon these two portions of the food. Sometimes very rich foods have lots of servings in the one small tub – it looks like the small tub should be for one person, but the food labels suggest a tiny serving size!

You can consume a lot of kilojoules this way without even realising. Have a look at the labels on some of your favourite foods to see how many servings are in the packet.

**Without reduced energy intake, physical activity is unlikely to lead to significant weight loss.**

### How can we get our portions right?

Food portions play a big part in weight loss. Have a look at some of the following tips that can help with getting portions right:

- Make sure your plate is filled with at least 1/2 vegetables, a 1/4 with a lean source of protein (e.g. lean steak, skinless chicken, fish or tofu) and 1/4 with some lower GI carbohydrates (e.g. corn, sweet potato, pasta or basmati rice).
- After dishing out your meal put leftovers into a container immediately. This may prevent the temptation to have seconds.
- Use smaller plates and bowls to help reduce your portion sizes.
- Often people will continue to eat even though they are full – see *Thoughtful eating* (page 32) for more information.

For more practical information on portion sizes, see the Australian Dietary Guidelines, online at [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au).



## How many kilojoules should I be eating?

For some people it helps to know how many kilojoules they need to eat each day to reach their goals. Calculating this depends on factors such as sex, weight, age and level of physical activity.

For example, a female who is aged 45, weighs around 100 kg and is lightly active will need to aim for an intake of around 7700 kilojoules (1840 calories) per day to lose 0.5 kg per week.

As the person loses weight, they need to eat fewer kilojoules per day to continue to lose 0.5 kg each week. For instance, when their weight drops to 90 kg, they need to eat around 7200 kilojoules (1721 calories) per day. At 80 kg, they need to eat around 6800 kilojoules (1625 calories) per day.

You can calculate your own daily energy needs at <http://www.8700.com.au/kj-explained/your-ideal-figure/>



If you are happy eating healthy, nutritious foods without focusing on the 'numbers' it is OK to skip this page.

## Look in your pantry...

Many people find it hard to eat in a healthy way when there are lots of unhealthy foods and drinks in the house.

Have a look in your kitchen cupboards – what sorts of food do you see? Are there lots of processed foods? Energy dense? You might like to make a list of foods below that you identify as not helpful in reaching your goals.

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How about the fridge? And your freezer? Are there foods in there that are unhelpful? Make a list of them below.

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Where else do you keep snack foods? In the car? Desk drawer at work? Make a note below of the places, and the foods that you keep there.

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If you had to imagine the ideal pantry cupboard, fridge and freezer, what kinds of foods would you have? If you are having trouble coming up with ideas, have a look at *Lose easy kilojoules* (page 18) and *Meal plans* (page 37).

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## Let's go shopping!

How often do you do the groceries? Once a week? A few times a week? Every day? Do you shop online?

Did you know that by planning your weekly meals and going for 'one big shop' you are more likely to have healthy nutrition?

Are you responsible for the grocery shopping in your household? If you aren't, you might like to do this exercise with whoever does the shopping in your house.

If we had a look in your shopping trolley, what would we find? You might like to describe your trolley contents below, or take a photo or attach a receipt.

For this activity you need to visit your usual grocery store (with the person that normally does the grocery shopping if that isn't you!).

Take notice of how the store is laid out – where are the fresh fruits and vegetables? Where is the milk and yoghurt? Where is the fresh bread?

Are there aisles that only have junk food in them? Which aisles are they?

Are there aisles that only have soft drinks? Add in any other foods you think are significant.

Food item	Where are they?
Fresh fruit and vegetables	
Milk and yoghurt	
Chocolate, lollies, junk food	
Soft drinks	

If you can, have a sideways glance into other people's trolleys. Do you notice anything about the type of food people are buying? Are there lots of processed foods? Is there much fresh fruit and vegetables? Write down anything you notice.

When you go grocery shopping, how do you want to change what happens? Below are some ideas to get you started.

Who is responsible for the grocery shopping? \_\_\_\_\_

Will I make a list before I go grocery shopping? Yes/No

How can I make writing a grocery shopping list easier? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How often do I want to go grocery shopping? Weekly / Twice a week / 3 times a week / Every day

Where do I want to do my grocery shopping? \_\_\_\_\_

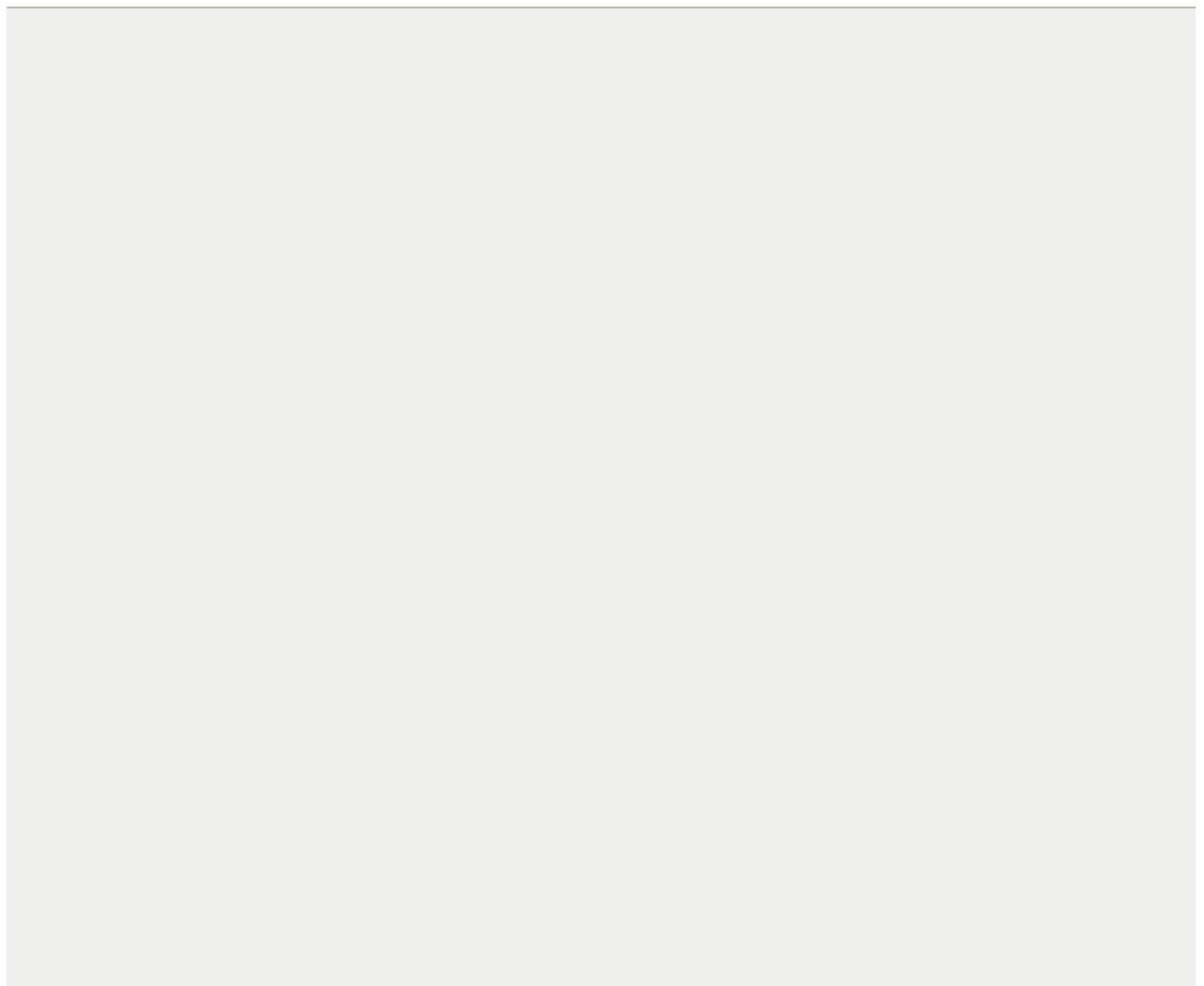
How much do I have to spend on food? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there aisles that I want to avoid when I'm shopping? \_\_\_\_\_

How much fruit and vegetables do I want to buy? \_\_\_\_\_

Will I buy fruit and vegetables from the same place as my groceries? \_\_\_\_\_

What do I want to see in my trolley at the end of my grocery shopping?



# Mind boggling

It is normal for your mind to bring up negative thoughts when you are trying to change your lifestyle. Especially when things don't go exactly as you planned!

Have a look at these examples of thinking patterns. Which ones do you notice in your own mind?

## It's 'all or nothing'!

"Oh well, I had one chocolate biscuit, I'm such a failure, I'll just chuck it all in."  
"I missed the gym today, might as well give up."

## Filtering out the positive

"I always focus on the things I ate badly during the day, even though most of what I ate was healthy!"

## Over-generalising

"I've never been any good at any physical activity." "I always eat badly."

## Discounting the positive

"I know I've lost weight before, but that doesn't count because I put it back on." "I know I ate really well last week, but that doesn't count because..."

## Catastrophising

"I missed the gym today and now my whole program is going to fail!" "I forgot to buy lettuce for the dinner I was planning and now the whole thing is going to be rubbish!"

## Emotional reasoning

"I feel really embarrassed, I'm such an idiot!"  
"I feel really shy at the gym, that means I'm going to be no good at it."

## Minimising

"I know I'm really overweight, but I'm sure the health risks are overstated."  
"I didn't even try to follow my nutrition plan today and it doesn't matter to me."

## Predicting the future

"I know I will fail at this."

## MUST thoughts

"I MUST eat healthy today!"  
"I MUST go to the gym!" "I MUST get this right!"

## Labelling

"I am weak." "I'm hopeless."  
"I'm no good at this."

## Blaming

"This is all my fault." "It's all HIS/HER fault, there is nothing I can do!"

Can you think of a recent example of when you had an unhelpful thought around your weight loss?

What was the situation? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the specific thought? \_\_\_\_\_

Did that thought influence what you did next? \_\_\_\_\_

Can you think of a more helpful way to respond to thoughts like these? Think about your current goals. How is this thinking and your response getting in the way of achieving your goals?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

You may wish to discuss this worksheet with your GP – can they offer you other suggestions? Can they see things about your thinking or responses that might be helpful too?

# Food labels

Trying to understand food labels can be confusing – lots of products make claims about being “healthy”, “low fat”, “high fibre” and “lunchbox friendly”.

In 2014 the National ‘Health Star Rating’ was introduced and manufacturers voluntarily put up to 5 stars on packaged foods – the more stars, the better the nutrition of the product.



This will make it easier to identify healthy foods – it might encourage you to find a healthier alternative!

Have you thought about limiting the amount of energy-dense junk food you eat across the week, to help you increase your fruit and vegetable intake?

If food is in a packet, and you need to read the label, is it possible to swap for an unpackaged, healthier alternative?

What energy-dense junk foods do you currently eat on a regular basis?

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Can you think of unpackaged foods that you could eat sometimes instead?

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Discuss with your GP to see if they have some other healthy food ideas.



## Thoughtful eating

Nowadays, it is easy to access cheap, high-kilojoule foods, and most of us feel short of time. We are all living such busy lives with work, family and other commitments. We are often choosing the “quick” food options.

Often, we eat while doing another activity (e.g. working at a computer, watching TV) and we hardly even notice the food going into our mouths. If we are distracted by another activity, eating becomes mindless, rapid and less satisfying.



This thoughtless eating contributes to weight gain. Because we eat faster, our body doesn't have time to notice the food in our stomachs and make us feel full, and so we eat more. This is one of the reasons why slowly gaining weight is normal now – you actually have to eat thoughtfully to stay at a healthy weight.

'Mindfulness' means being fully aware or 'present in the moment'. Thoughtful eating means taking time to see the way food looks, noticing the taste as it moves around your mouth, and enjoying its smell, texture and taste. Thoughtful eating slows down your eating, and makes you more aware of what you are eating. It may also allow your brain to register you are “comfortably full” before your stomach becomes overfull.

So, next time you find yourself sitting in front of your work computer to eat lunch, step away from the computer – even if only for 5 minutes. Think about what you are about to eat and try to work out if you are really hungry or just eating out of habit. Eat only when you are hungry. If you are just reaching for food out of habit then fill your mouth with water instead of food and see if the urge settles.

If you have grabbed a chocolate bar at the petrol station because you missed lunch and are “starving”, stop! Pull over to the side of the road and concentrate on that “starving feeling” and imagine trying to describe it to someone. Then let some fresh air into the car and take a few deep breaths. Now take the wrapper off the chocolate bar, enjoy the smell of the chocolate and take a single, small bite. Let it sit on your tongue – enjoy the sweetness of it, feel the stickiness and roll it around in your mouth, then clean out the sweet remainders between your teeth. Take some time to enjoy it – and then check on those hunger feelings – are they still there or have they decreased a little in intensity? If you take the time to really savour the first bite you may find that you don't need the entire chocolate bar.

The preparation and enjoyment of food is an important part of our social lives. If you live with others, make food a social occasion – take time to all sit down together at least a couple of times a week, and ban the phone, TV and radio. Take a breath before you start to eat – appreciate the food and everyone that helped get it to the table. Ask everyone to describe their favourite part of the meal and why.

## Simple first steps to eating thoughtfully

- Always eat sitting down.
- Take a deep breath and take time to look at the food on the plate in front of you – notice the colours and smells.
- Start with a drink of water and take sips between bites.
- Serve meals on a small plate; it looks more full and you might eat less.
- Think about the food in your mouth, make sure you chew well and think about the texture and flavours.
- Take time to talk and listen to others at the table between bites.
- Encourage conversation and put your cutlery down so that you slow your eating down.
- Don't feel the need to finish all the food on your plate – if you are not hungry then don't eat it.



NOTE: If thoughtful eating is very difficult for you, or if you have trouble with binge eating, please talk to your GP about this.

# How to make nutritious eating easier

Here are some helpful tips on how to make choosing healthy foods a bit easier in your day-to-day life.

## 1. Daily dinner plans

These days being time-poor is really common – we are often rushing and there is never enough time in the week to do everything.

When you come home from a busy day it can be difficult to think about what to have for dinner. You could be tired, hungry and stressed – thinking about preparing food is the last thing on your mind! It's in this situation that choosing takeaway or other quick and less nutritious dinners happens. Taking a small amount of time to plan the weekly meals can reduce stress and save you time in the long run – if you also plan your shopping you will have everything at your fingertips for the meal you want to prepare.

## 2. What's for lunch?

Lunch tends to be the most difficult meal to keep 'on track'. Often we're not home for lunch (making it tempting to buy takeaway), and it might be squeezed into a short space of time.

Packing lunch the night before is a good idea for a number of reasons:

- it saves you time in the morning
- it makes you less likely to choose energy-dense, nutrition-poor food
- it's likely to be much cheaper!

For some ideas on simple, healthy lunches, see *Meal plans* (page 37).

## 3. I'm starving...

Shopping for food when you are feeling hungry can make it difficult to focus on choosing healthy, nutritious foods.

Choose a time when you are not hungry, or have a healthy snack prior to shopping.

## 4. Choosing foods thoughtfully

Each time you choose a food or drink it is a chance to practise being thoughtful. Is your choice helping you achieve your goals?

For example, if you are travelling a distance in the car and stop for a snack at a petrol station or fast food restaurant, are there options available that are more helpful for achieving your goals? When you shop at the supermarket are there aisles that you could thoughtfully choose not to walk down?

For more information on being thoughtful, or mindful, see *Thoughtful eating* (page 32).



## Road blocks and obstacles

There will be times when it is difficult to keep heading towards your goals.

Do you think that there are times when it is OK to eat “unhealthy” foods? When are these times?

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Often, family celebrations are seen as a time when it is OK to eat “unhealthy” foods – foods that mark a celebration that aren’t eaten every day.

Are there situations in your life where you are eating unhealthy foods and you would prefer not to? Circle any of the situations below that apply to you and add more that you think of:

Workplace tearoom	Meeting friends at a cafe	Family dinners
Fundraising chocolates	Restaurants	Drive-through
Takeaway	Morning tea at work	Buying lunch out
Shopping with friends	Snacking in the car	Late night snacking
Snacking on the couch	Long-distance driving	Visiting relatives
Big baking sessions	Petrol station junk food	Quick meals
Being polite	_____	_____

Which two are having the most impact on your eating right now?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Can you detail exactly what is happening in each of these situations?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Can you think of ways to change what is currently happening? You might want to use the *Problem solving* worksheet to assist you. Your GP might be useful for bouncing ideas off or getting further information.

Social eating pressures can be a problem when trying to lose weight (e.g. eating to avoid hurting someone's feelings) – this is a good example of a situation to discuss with your GP.



## Australia's Healthy Weight Week

The following 7 day meal plan is from Australia's Healthy Weight Week, an initiative of the Dietitians Association of Australia. For more information visit [www.healthyweightweek.com.au](http://www.healthyweightweek.com.au).

### 7 Day Meal Plan

The information below outlines the ingredients, portion sizes and cooking methods to help you with the Australia's Healthy Weight Week 7 Day Meal Plan. Enjoy!

#### Monday

##### Breakfast

½ cup (60 g) natural muesli  
4 tinned apricot halves (canned in natural juice and drained)  
1 cup (250 mL) of reduced-fat milk

##### Lunch

1 medium wholemeal pita bread  
95 g tuna in springwater, drained  
2 cups of salad (lettuce, cucumber, red capsicum, snowpeas, avocado)  
200 g tub of reduced-fat yoghurt

##### Dinner

Sweet Potato, Rocket and Asparagus Frittata served with Four Bean Salad (see recipes)  
1 slice multigrain bread  
200 g tub of reduced-fat yoghurt mixed with 1 cup of frozen berries

#### Tuesday

##### Breakfast

2 slices of multigrain toast  
40 g x cottage cheese  
½ banana, sliced  
1 tsp honey

##### Lunch

Salmon Potato Cakes served with Baby Spinach & Sweet Corn Salad (see recipes)  
1 slice multigrain bread

##### Dinner

Grilled Lemon Chicken and Salad Wraps (see recipes)  
Spiced Apple Compote (see recipes) served with 2 scoops of reduced-fat vanilla ice cream

## Wednesday

### Breakfast

1 cup (45 g) whole grain cereal flakes  
 9 slices (150 g) of canned peaches (in natural juice and drained)  
 1 cup (250 mL) of low-fat milk

### Lunch

2 slices of multigrain bread  
 65 g lean sliced ham  
 2 slices (40 g) reduced-fat cheddar cheese  
 3 slices each of tomato and cucumber  
 10 baby spinach leaves  
 1 carrot cut into sticks to munch

### Dinner

Pan-fried salmon with Chickpea Salad (see recipes)  
 200 g tub of reduced-fat yoghurt with 1 cup of fresh cut rockmelon

## Thursday

### Breakfast

2 thin slices of fruit toast  
 1 tsp margarine spread  
 Banana Smoothie (see recipes)

### Lunch

Pumpkin and Chickpea Salad (see recipes)

### Dinner

Spaghetti Bolognese (see recipes)  
 2-3 cups green salad (lettuce, capsicum, snowpeas, cucumber, avocado) and 1 tbs light Italian dressing  
 1 slice of sourdough bread  
 Grilled Plums (see recipes) with 200 g tub of reduced-fat vanilla yoghurt

## Friday

### Breakfast

1 cup (45 g) whole grain cereal flakes  
 1 banana, sliced  
 1 cup (250 mL) of reduced-fat milk

### Lunch

3 sushi rolls, take-away (choose vegetable and fish varieties)  
 1 small take-away coffee (latte, flat-white, cappuccino) or hot chocolate using skim milk.

### Dinner

100 g steak, lean trimmed of all fat, barbequed or grilled  
 1 medium potato, baked  
 2 cups of mixed vegetables (such as carrot, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, red capsicum) steamed, using either fresh or frozen  
 1 slice of multigrain bread  
 Cheese platter – 40 g reduced-fat cheese, ½ cup grapes, 1 granny smith apple, sliced

## Saturday

### Breakfast

2 slices of sourdough bread  
 ½ avocado  
 2 tomatoes, diced  
 Ground black pepper to taste

### Lunch

1 medium wholemeal pita bread  
 65 g roast beef  
 1 tsp wholegrain mustard  
 1 cup of lettuce  
 Chocolate milkshake made with 1 cup (250 mL) of low-fat milk and 1 tsp diet chocolate topping

### Dinner

Chicken, Rocket & Leek Risotto (see recipes)  
 2 cups green salad (lettuce, capsicum, snowpeas, cucumber, avocado) and 1 tbs light Italian dressing  
 9 slices (150 g) of canned peaches served with 2 scoops of reduced-fat vanilla ice cream

## Sunday

### Breakfast

2 slices of multigrain toast  
 2 slices of avocado  
 1 egg, poached  
 1 tomato, grilled (sprayed with oil and cooked cut side down on a non-stick frying pan)  
 Ground black pepper to taste

### Lunch

2 slices of multigrain toast  
 65 g sliced chicken luncheon meat  
 1 cup of lettuce  
 ½ tbs reduced-fat mayonnaise  
 200 g tub of reduced-fat yoghurt

### Dinner

Marinated Tofu Stir Fry with Cashews (see recipes)  
 Banana Smoothie (see recipes)

## Snacks

If you are hungry between meals, save fruit or dairy serves from mealtimes to have as a snack, or alternatively select one or two choices from the following list:

- 20 raw almonds
- 8 dried apricots
- One piece of fresh seasonal fruit
- 250 mL/g reduced-fat milk/yoghurt
- One cup of vegetable sticks such as capsicum or carrot with 50 g hummus
- Two whole grain dry biscuits topped with slices of tomato and cracked pepper



## Recipes

### Sweet Potato, Rocket and Asparagus Frittata (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients

350 g sweet potato, peeled, cut into 3 cm pieces	Cooking oil spray
1 bunch asparagus, trimmed, cut into 4 cm lengths	6 eggs
60 g baby rocket leaves	1/2 cup (125 mL) reduced-fat milk
	100 g grated reduced-fat cheese

#### Method

Cook sweet potato in a saucepan of boiling water for 8-10 minutes, or until tender, adding asparagus to pan for the last 3 minutes of cooking. Drain well.

Preheat grill to high. Spray a large, ovenproof frying pan with oil and place over medium-high heat. Add sweet potato, asparagus and rocket. Cook stirring occasionally, for 2 minutes or until rocket wilts. Whisk together eggs and milk. Pour eggs into frying pan over sweet potato mixture. Cook for 4-5 minutes over medium heat, or until frittata is almost set. Sprinkle with cheese and place under preheated grill for 3-4 minutes until golden brown and just set. Cut into quarters.

### Four Bean Salad (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients

420 g can of Four Bean Mix, rinsed and drained	2 cups diced flat leaf parsley
2 stalks of celery, diced	1 tbs balsamic vinegar
1 red onion, diced	1 tbs olive oil

#### Method

Toss all ingredients together and serve with Sweet Potato, Rocket and Asparagus Frittata

### Salmon Potato Cakes (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients

450 g desiree potatoes, peeled, chopped	1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/3 cup frozen peas, thawed	2 tablespoons of finely chopped flat leaf parsley
2 x 200 g cans pink salmon, drained, flaked	1/3 cup dried breadcrumbs
2 teaspoons grated lemon rind	Olive oil spray

#### Method

Cook potatoes in saucepan of boiling water for 10-12 minutes or until tender. Drain. Transfer to a bowl and mash. Add peas, salmon, lemon rind, lemon juice, chives, parsley and half the breadcrumbs to the potato. Shape into 8 patties. Coat the patties in remaining breadcrumbs.

Spray a large frying pan with oil. Heat over medium heat. Cook patties for 4-5 minutes each side or until golden and heated through. Transfer to a plate lined with a paper towel.

### **Baby Spinach & Sweet Corn Salad (Serves 4)**

#### *Ingredients*

1 small bag of baby spinach leaves	200 g button mushrooms, sliced
420 g can of sweet corn, rinsed and drained	1 red capsicum, sliced

#### *Method*

Toss all ingredients together and serve with Salmon Potato Cakes  
Grilled Lemon Chicken and Salad Wraps (Serves 4)

#### *Ingredients*

400 g lean chicken breast	1 red capsicum, sliced
4 medium wholemeal pita breads	125 g snowpeas, chopped
4 cups lettuce, shredded	2 avocados, sliced
1 cucumber, sliced	Juice of 1 lemon

#### *Method*

Marinate chicken breasts in the juice of 1 lemon and place in fridge for 20-30 minutes. Spray a large frying pan with oil and place over medium-high heat. Cook chicken breasts for 4-5 minutes each side, until golden brown and cooked through (so there is no pink on the inside). Let chicken rest for a few minutes then cut in thick slices. Divide chicken slices into 4 portions and wrap cooked chicken inside wholemeal pita bread and fill with salad ingredients. Serve with a side of extra salad if desired using more of the above salad ingredients along with ½ a sliced of avocado. Top salad with a teaspoon of balsamic vinegar, if desired.

### **Spiced Apple Compote (Serves 4)**

#### *Ingredients*

4 large Granny Smith apples, peeled and cored	3 cinnamon sticks
1 lemon	¼ tsp ground all-spice
1/3 cup of brown sugar	

#### *Method*

Cut each apple into 8 wedges. Peel 2 strips of rind from lemon, using a vegie peeler. Squeeze 1 tablespoon of lemon juice. Place juice, rind, 2 cups of water, sugar, cinnamon and spice in a saucepan. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to boil, then simmer for 5 minutes. Add apple. Simmer for 10-15 minutes or until tender. Serve hot with 2 scoops of reduced-fat vanilla icecream.

### **Banana Smoothie (Serves 1)**

#### *Ingredients*

1 medium banana, chopped	1 tbs of honey
1 cup (250 mL) of low-fat milk	

#### *Method*

Place all ingredients into a blender and mix until smooth

## Pan-fried salmon with Chickpeas Salad (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

400 g can sweetcorn, drained	4 x 150 g salmon steaks (fresh or frozen)
1 red onion, finely chopped	200 g reduced-fat natural yoghurt
400 g can chickpeas, rinsed and drained	4 cups steamed green vegetables, to serve (fresh or frozen)
1/3 cup of finely chopped coriander	
2 tablespoons fat-free Italian dressing	

### Method

In a bowl, combine corn, onion, chickpeas, coriander and dressing. Set aside. Spray a large frying pan with oil and place over medium-high heat. Add salmon to pan and cook for 2 minutes on each side for medium, or until cooked to your liking. Serve salmon with a large dollop of yoghurt, chickpea salad and steam green vegetables.

## Pumpkin and Chickpea Salad (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

600 g of butternut pumpkin (approx. half cut pumpkin)	1 tsp of ground cumin seeds
2 red onions	2 cups of chopped coriander
2 x 400 g tin of chickpeas (washed and drained)	1 red capsicum, sliced
1 tsp of ground coriander	1 large bag of baby spinach leaves
	1 tbs sweet chilli, ginger and soy marinade

### Method

Peel pumpkin and cut into 2 cm pieces and boil in a saucepan of boiling water or steam in a microwave with a small amount of water until tender. Allow pumpkin to cool. Toss all the ingredients together and dress salad with 1 tablespoon of commercially bought sweet chilli, ginger & soy marinade.

N.B. Salad can be made the night before and dressed the following day when required.

## Spaghetti Bolognese (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

400 g lean mince meat	1 red capsicum
1 brown onion	6 champignon mushrooms
1 carrot	1 can of tomatoes, crushed
1 celery stalk	160 g pasta, uncooked

### Method

To make the bolognese sauce, add diced onion and a spray of canola oil to a saucepan. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until tender. Increase heat to medium-high. Add mince. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes or until browned. Add the diced vegetable and crushed tomatoes into the saucepan. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 20 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

In a large saucepan, bring water to the boil then add pasta (there should be enough water to generously cover pasta). Cook pasta to packet instructions. Divide pasta into 4 bowls and top with bolognese sauce.

## Grilled Plums (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

8 firm ripe plums, halved, stones removed      200 g tub of reduced-fat vanilla yoghurt  
2 tbs brown sugar

### Method

Preheat grill to high. Place plums, cut side up, on a baking tray lined with foil. Sprinkle evenly with brown sugar. Grill for 3–4 minutes, until golden and caramelised. Place 4 plum halves in each serving bowl, top with vanilla yoghurt to serve.

## Chicken, Rocket & Leek Risotto (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

2 cups of reduced-salt chicken stock      1 ½ cups Arborio rice  
1 tbs olive oil      1/3 cup finely grated parmesan  
1 leek (white part only), finely chopped      400g lean chicken breast  
2 cloves of garlic, crushed      1 bunch of rocket, shredded

### Method

Spray a large frying pan with oil and place over medium-high heat. Cook chicken breasts for 4-5 minutes each side, until golden brown and cooked through (so there is no pink on the inside). Let chicken rest for a few minutes then cut into smaller pieces. Cover with foil to keep warm and set aside. In the meantime, place stock and 2 cups of water into a medium saucepan. Bring to the boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and keep simmering until needed. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic. Cook, stirring, for 5 minutes, until softened. Add rice and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add 1/3 cup stock to rice mixture. Cook, stirring, until stock has been absorbed. Repeat with the remaining stock, adding 1/3 cup at a time, until all liquid is absorbed and rice is tender and creamy. Remove from heat and stir through parmesan, chicken and a bunch of shredded rocket. Divide into 4 serving bowls and serve with green salad.

## Marinated Tofu with Cashews (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

300 g firm tofu, cubed      4 cups mixed vegetables, chopped  
6 tablespoons sweet chilli, ginger & soy      (fresh or frozen)  
marinade      1/4 cup unsalted cashews  
450 g hokkien noodles

### Method

Place tofu and marinade in a bowl and toss to combine. Set aside for 5 minutes. Plunge noodles into a large bowl of boiling water and stand for 1 minute. Loosen noodles, drain and keep warm.

Spray a medium frying pan with oil and place over medium-high heat. Add tofu and cook for 2–3 minutes. Add vegetables and stirfry for another 2 minutes. Stir in cashews. Divide noodles between bowls. Top with tofu and veggies.



## How much physical activity?

Physical activity helps to improve our heart health, and can be fun, sociable and important for our mental wellbeing.

When we mention ‘exercise’ and ‘physical activity’ many people imagine gym sessions, running marathons, triathlons and boot camps – this is fine if you enjoy it and it’s what you want to do. But it’s important to remember that you can get benefit from even small amounts of physical activity.




“A little physical activity is better than none and more is better than a little!” (Heart Foundation)

### So how much exercise do we need to do?

Aiming for a total of 300 minutes (5 hours) of moderate intensity exercise or 150 minutes (2.5 hours) of vigorous activity each week would be a great thing<sup>1</sup>. Don’t be put off by that big number though – it can be done in small chunks over the course of the week. For example, walking from the car park to work might take 20 minutes, and if you walk back that is 40 minutes in that day. Or walking with a colleague at lunchtime could add to your physical activity time.

### How many kilojoules will my physical activity burn off?

Here are some examples of different physical activities and how many kilojoules they will burn (see more examples in the table on page 20).

Activity (for a 90 kg person)	Kilojoules burned
 Slow pace walk 20 minutes	351 kJ (84 cal) (approx. one chocolate-covered biscuit)
 Swimming freestyle 30 minutes	1092 kJ (261 cal) (half an apple cinnamon muffin)
 Bicycle riding 30 minutes	1400 kJ (335 cal) (two slices of pepperoni pizza)

What sort of physical activity did you record in the *Physical Activity Diary* (page 59)?

Changes we make to our physical activity need to be sustainable. Here are some tips for staying active in the long term:

- **Make it fun:** If you don’t enjoy it, it is unlikely that you’ll continue
- **Make it interactive:** Get a friend or a group of friends involved – this can help you stay motivated and is a great way to socialise
- **Make it realistic:** Try for something that is achievable and then build up on this
- **Get some variety:** This will help to make it more interesting and likely that you’ll continue.

Review your current goals every now and then (see *Goal setting*, page 5). Do you want to make any new goals about physical activity?

Regardless of your weight, physical activity provides health benefits

<sup>1</sup> NHMRC (2013) Clinical practice guidelines for the management of overweight and obesity in adults, adolescents and children in Australia. Melbourne: National Health and Medical Research Council.

## Levels of physical activity – how active are you?

The table below looks at different levels of physical activity – **can you tick your current activities?**  
**There is space for you to write in other activities you might do.**

Intensity	Description	Example
<b>Sedentary</b>	Activities that involve sitting or lying down, with little energy expenditure	<p><b>Occupational</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> sitting at work</p> <p><b>Leisure</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> watching TV <input type="checkbox"/> reading <input type="checkbox"/> sewing  <input type="checkbox"/> computer games <input type="checkbox"/> social networking</p> <p><b>Transport</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> sitting in a car <input type="checkbox"/> bus or train</p> <p>Others _____            _____</p>
<b>Light</b>	Activities that require standing up and moving around in the home, workplace or community	<p><b>Occupational</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> working at a standing workstation <input type="checkbox"/> housework (hanging out washing, ironing, dusting)</p> <p><b>Leisure</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> active video games (e.g. Wii)</p> <p><b>Transport</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> gentle walk to nearby shops or bus stop</p> <p>Others _____            _____</p>
<b>Moderate</b>	Activities that are at an intensity that requires some effort, but allows for a conversation to be held, but not singing (depending on fitness)	<p><b>Occupational</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> active job such as builder or gardener <input type="checkbox"/> working at a treadmill workstation</p> <p><b>Leisure</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> brisk walking <input type="checkbox"/> gentle swimming  <input type="checkbox"/> social tennis</p> <p><b>Transport</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> cycling to work  <input type="checkbox"/> brisk walk to work/bus stop</p> <p>Others _____            _____</p>
<b>Vigorous</b>	Activities that lead to harder breathing, or puffing and panting (depending on fitness)	<p><b>Occupational</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> jogging to deliver pamphlets</p> <p><b>Leisure</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> aerobics <input type="checkbox"/> snow skiing and some competitive sports</p> <p><b>Transport</b> – <input type="checkbox"/> jogging to work  <input type="checkbox"/> cycling (uphill) to work/shops</p> <p>Others _____            _____</p>

# Move through your whole day

Our bodies were made to move – walk, run, dance, stroll, skip, jump, boogie, cycle, swim, sidestep, tiptoe, reach, sprint, paddle, leap, lunge, twirl and shimmy!

Sitting still for most of your day increases your risk of heart disease. It also makes you more likely to have back pain and stiff joints.

All movement and exercise is good for you – but ‘saving it all up’ for a couple of bursts each week will not give you the same benefits as moving more throughout your whole day.

Break your typical weekday into sections – can you think of ways to move in each?

**bin not at desk**

**walking to work**

**parking further away**

**a walk after dinner**

Morning
Lunch
Afternoon
Evening

Would your weekends be different in any way? How can you be more active on the weekends?

Morning
Lunch
Afternoon
Evening

**Hot tip: Sit/stand workstations can be a great way to vary your position throughout the day!”**

**going to talk to someone instead of using email**

**speaker phone**

**walking around the garden**



## Where is my energy intake coming from?

Snacking often contributes to weight gain because we eat food that has high energy content but low nutritional value. Below are some common places where people “unconsciously” snack. Circle the ones that apply to you.

In the car	In front of the TV	At the movies
At the work desk	Catching up with friends	Cafes
At the pub	After work	In the work tearoom
At parties	On public transport	After the gym
In the evening on the lounge	Others	

What are your favourite snacks at the moment?

Thinking about the places where you snack, and the things that you snack on, can you think of any changes you could make that will help you reach your program goals?

Place	What I'm snacking on now	What I could do instead

## Where is my energy going?

The modern world has many energy-saving devices, convenience products and household items that help us conserve energy and often save time. Here is a list of all the devices we could think of – circle the ones that you use, and add any more that you can think of.

Remote for TV	Remote for air conditioner	Bin in every room
Remote control garage door	Drive-through takeaway	Mobile phones
Electric mixmaster	Washing machine	Clothes dryer
Powered baby swing	Electric bicycle	Car
Food processor	Electric kitchen beaters	Electric juicer
Drive-through bottle shop	Home delivery	Online shopping
Robotic vacuum cleaner	Lift	Escalator

All of these time and energy saving devices mean that we don't burn the same energy when doing an activity without the device.

For example, walking into a shop to make a purchase burns more calories than sitting in the car and using drive-through! Taking the stairs burns more energy than going in the lift.

If you think of your usual day, are there any activities where you could make a small change and burn more energy? Here is a table to help you think about different aspects of your day.

	What I'm doing now	What I could do
Getting to work		
Getting home from work		
Housework		
Personal care		
Going to the shops		
Cooking		
Lift/escalator		

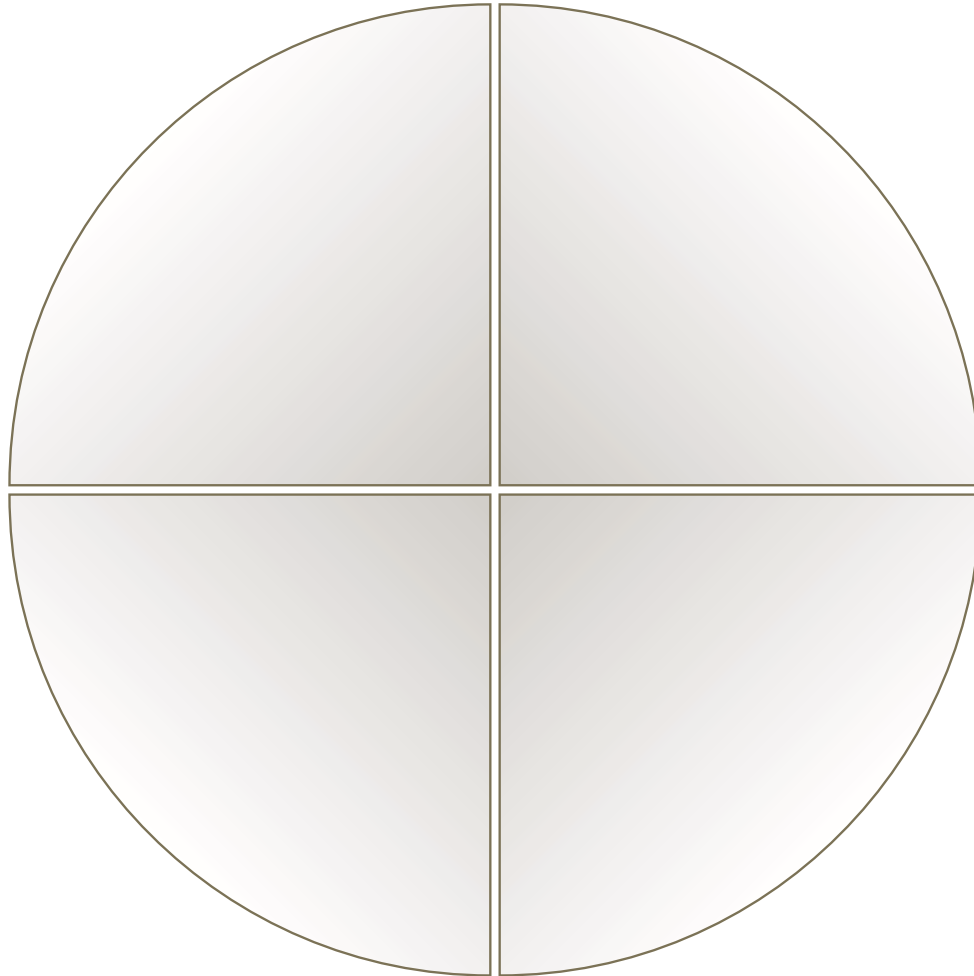
You don't have to choose the energy-burning option every time! But by making a conscious effort, you'll be able to increase the amount of energy you use each day.

## Who and what is helping me along the way?

This activity is about identifying the people, places, animals and events that are supporting you as you participate in The Change Program.

Fill the space with things that are **supporting you, making things easier** and **helping you** when things don't go as planned. There is no 'right way' to do this – be creative!

You can use the divided circle below if it helps – each portion might be a different aspect of your life, or a different person or place.



Are there ways you could “grow” this circle? Are there things that are getting in the way? Reflect on these here. Your GP might be a good person to discuss any concerns with.

# Problem solving

Have a look at your *Nutrition Diary* (page 65) and *Physical Activity Diary* (page 59) – is there something happening that is stopping you achieving your goals? This is the time to identify these problems and think about ways to change what is happening. We have given you a few copies of this so can you work through different issues as they come up.

## What is the problem?

Discuss with your GP what seems to be the problem – try to be as detailed as you can be (e.g. 'I can't get up early enough in the mornings to go for my daily walk').

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## What can you do about it?

Be really creative and think about anything you could possibly do to address this problem – think broadly and even write down ideas that seem out of reach or impossible! Your GP might be good to bounce ideas off.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

### Look more closely at each solution

For each of your possible solutions, can you look at what is good and not so good about each one?

1.	Good:
	Not so good:
2.	Good:
	Not so good:
3.	Good:
	Not so good:
4.	Good:
	Not so good:
5.	Good:
	Not so good:
6.	Good:
	Not so good:

### Which solution would be best for you at the moment?

After considering all of the solutions, which one is going to suit you best at the moment?

Why have you chosen this solution?

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### How are you going to implement this change?

Are there specific things you need, or steps you need to take to achieve this change?

Things I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps I need to take:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with your GP any barriers that they might see for you, or supports that they think may assist you.

## Problem solving (copy 2)

Have a look at your *Nutrition Diary* (page 65) and *Physical Activity Diary* (page 59) – is there something happening that is stopping you achieving your goals? This is the time to identify these problems and think about ways to change what is happening. We have given you a few copies of this so can you work through different issues as they come up.

### What is the problem?

Discuss with your GP what seems to be the problem – try to be as detailed as you can be (e.g. 'I can't get up early enough in the mornings to go for my daily walk').

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### What can you do about it?

Be really creative and think about anything you could possibly do to address this problem – think broadly and even write down ideas that seem out of reach or impossible! Your GP might be good to bounce ideas off.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

### Look more closely at each solution

For each of your possible solutions, can you look at what is good and not so good about each one?

1.	Good:
	Not so good:
2.	Good:
	Not so good:
3.	Good:
	Not so good:
4.	Good:
	Not so good:
5.	Good:
	Not so good:
6.	Good:
	Not so good:

### Which solution would be best for you at the moment?

After considering all of the solutions, which one is going to suit you best at the moment?

Why have you chosen this solution?

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### How are you going to implement this change?

Are there specific things you need, or steps you need to take to achieve this change?

Things I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps I need to take:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with your GP any barriers that they might see for you, or supports that they think may assist you.

## Problem solving (copy 3)

Have a look at your *Nutrition Diary* (page 65) and *Physical Activity Diary* (page 59) – is there something happening that is stopping you achieving your goals? This is the time to identify these problems and think about ways to change what is happening. We have given you a few copies of this so can you work through different issues as they come up.

### What is the problem?

Discuss with your GP what seems to be the problem – try to be as detailed as you can be (e.g. 'I can't get up early enough in the mornings to go for my daily walk').

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### What can you do about it?

Be really creative and think about anything you could possibly do to address this problem – think broadly and even write down ideas that seem out of reach or impossible! Your GP might be good to bounce ideas off.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.



### Look more closely at each solution

For each of your possible solutions, can you look at what is good and not so good about each one?

1.	Good:
	Not so good:
2.	Good:
	Not so good:
3.	Good:
	Not so good:
4.	Good:
	Not so good:
5.	Good:
	Not so good:
6.	Good:
	Not so good:

### Which solution would be best for you at the moment?

After considering all of the solutions, which one is going to suit you best at the moment?

Why have you chosen this solution?

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### How are you going to implement this change?

Are there specific things you need, or steps you need to take to achieve this change?

Things I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps I need to take:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with your GP any barriers that they might see for you, or supports that they think may assist you.

## Problem solving (copy 4)

Have a look at your *Nutrition Diary* (page 65) and *Physical Activity Diary* (page 59) – is there something happening that is stopping you achieving your goals? This is the time to identify these problems and think about ways to change what is happening. We have given you a few copies of this so can you work through different issues as they come up.

### What is the problem?

Discuss with your GP what seems to be the problem – try to be as detailed as you can be (e.g. 'I can't get up early enough in the mornings to go for my daily walk').

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### What can you do about it?

Be really creative and think about anything you could possibly do to address this problem – think broadly and even write down ideas that seem out of reach or impossible! Your GP might be good to bounce ideas off.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

### Look more closely at each solution

For each of your possible solutions, can you look at what is good and not so good about each one?

1.	Good:
	Not so good:
2.	Good:
	Not so good:
3.	Good:
	Not so good:
4.	Good:
	Not so good:
5.	Good:
	Not so good:
6.	Good:
	Not so good:

### Which solution would be best for you at the moment?

After considering all of the solutions, which one is going to suit you best at the moment?  
Why have you chosen this solution?

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### How are you going to implement this change?

Are there specific things you need, or steps you need to take to achieve this change?

Things I need: \_\_\_\_\_

Steps I need to take:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Discuss with your GP any barriers that they might see for you, or supports that they think may assist you.

# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See *Levels of physical activity – how active are you?* (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?

# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See *Levels of physical activity – how active are you?* (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?

# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See Levels of physical activity – how active are you? (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?

# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See *Levels of physical activity – how active are you?* (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?

# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See *Levels of physical activity – how active are you?* (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?



# Physical Activity Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record any physical activity you do. You may also like to record extended periods of no activity – such as watching TV, or sitting at a desk at work. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with the activity. See *Levels of physical activity – how active are you?* (page 46) for more help.

Time and place	Any physical activity? (remember to record times when you are sedentary)	Any feelings associated?

# Nutrition Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record everything that you eat and drink. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with eating. If you prefer, you could take photos of your meals and snacks to show your GP.

Time and place	What you ate/drank	Any feelings associated?

# Nutrition Diary

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record everything that you eat and drink. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with eating. If you prefer, you could take photos of your meals and snacks to show your GP.

Time and place	What you ate/drank	Any feelings associated?

# Nutrition Diary

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

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Time and place	What you ate/drank	Any feelings associated?

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Time and place	What you ate/drank	Any feelings associated?

# Nutrition Diary

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Over the next 3 days record everything that you eat and drink. Also record where you were and any feelings associated with eating. If you prefer, you could take photos of your meals and snacks to show your GP.

Time and place	What you ate/drank	Any feelings associated?

# Relapse prevention action plan

It is helpful to think about relapse even BEFORE you reach your goal. This will help you to be more prepared and less likely to lose the progress you have made.

## Routine monitoring:

When on track, I will review my progress every \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks.

Be specific about your threshold.

For example, a significant weight regain might be 3 kg.

## The THRESHOLD I will watch out for to monitor weight regain:

(Tick the appropriate box)

- When my weight increases by \_\_\_\_\_ kg
- When I don't meet my physical activity goals for \_\_\_\_\_ days
- When I don't meet my goals for nutrition choices for \_\_\_\_\_ days

## The ACTION I will take if I reach my threshold:

Without reduced energy intake, physical activity is unlikely to lead to significant weight loss.

- Discuss with my GP and review my goals (see *Goal setting*, page 5)
- Make the following adjustments to my nutrition (consider doing *Nutrition Diary*, page 65):

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- Make the following adjustments to my physical activity (consider doing *Physical Activity Diary*, page 59):

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- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Review of potential obstacles (see the *Road blocks and obstacles* worksheet, page 35)

An example of a change to nutrition might be: 'I will give up alcohol for the next 2 weeks while I get back on track.'

An example of a change to physical activity might be: 'I will take the stairs for the next 3 weeks while I get back on track.'



# Relapse prevention

(Use this in conjunction with the *Relapse prevention action plan*)

The Change Program focuses on long-term change and relapse prevention. Why is this important? We know that many people who lose weight will regain the weight within 5 years. So, for any long-term weight loss, relapse prevention is vital<sup>1</sup>.

Here are a few things that you should know when planning for the future:

1. Be prepared for the relapse – for most people, relapse happens at some stage.
2. Weight regain is not just from people ‘slipping back into their old habits’. In fact, we know that changes in our body occur that make it harder for us to keep losing weight and even to keep at a steady weight (see *Why is it so hard to lose weight*, page 2).
3. Small amounts of weight loss are beneficial to your health. If you do regain weight, this does not mean you are back at square one.
4. The *Relapse prevention action plan* (page 71) can help you monitor progress and put into place the right action when needed. We know that it is important to act quickly even when small changes occur (e.g. regaining 3 kg).
5. People can often lose motivation in a number of scenarios:
  - a. If they haven’t achieved their weight loss goal in the expected time frame
  - b. If they have hit the ‘steady phase’ (see *Why is it so hard to lose weight*, page 2)
  - c. If they have achieved all their goals.

If we are expecting that our motivation is likely to drop off at any stage, we can put into place some strategies to overcome this.

**Be realistic:** Most people can expect a weight loss of between 5 and 15% (equivalent to about 5–10 kg) over a one-year period by using lifestyle changes<sup>1</sup>. If we are realistic with our goals, we are more likely to achieve them, and less likely to lose motivation.

**Be prepared for the ‘steady phase’:** This means you may need to readjust your goals. For example, aim to maintain your current weight for a while rather than pushing for a greater weight loss.

**This is not a diet, but a lifestyle:** Remember that when you have achieved your goal, it’s worth investing in relapse prevention to ensure you maintain your new health.

## Know what motivates you:

- › Remind yourself why you are doing this and make new goals if necessary (see *Goal Setting*, page 5)
- › Bounce off others: who can you talk to when you need that extra bit of motivation? This may be your GP, a relative, work colleague or friend (see the *Who and what is helping me along the way?* worksheet, page 50)
- › Reflect on potential obstacles that are draining your motivation (see the *Road blocks and obstacles* worksheet, page 35)
- › Review your helpful and unhelpful thoughts (see the *Mind bogging* worksheet, page 30).

<sup>1</sup> NHMRC (2013) Clinical practice guidelines for the management of overweight and obesity in adults, adolescents and children in Australia. Melbourne: National Health and Medical Research Council.













## Other useful resources

Here are some examples of other resources you might find useful.

For more information on portions:

- Portion Perfection by Amanda Clark at [www.greatideas.net.au](http://www.greatideas.net.au)

For recipe ideas or complete menu plans:

- CSIRO Total Wellbeing Diet at [www.csiro.au/en/Research/Health/CSIRO-diets/CSIRO-Total-Wellbeing-Diet](http://www.csiro.au/en/Research/Health/CSIRO-diets/CSIRO-Total-Wellbeing-Diet)
- “Swap it Don’t Stop it” phone app
- “CalorieKing Australia” phone app

For assistance to get moving and active:

- “MyFitnessPal” phone app
- The Heart Foundation website at [www.heartfoundation.org.au](http://www.heartfoundation.org.au)
- If you like running there are many running apps available







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The Heart Foundation <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Pages/default.aspx>





# THE *Change* PROGRAM



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