

Losing excess weight and maintaining a healthy weight can seem a difficult task for many; however, there are numerous ways that this may be achieved. The two key goals in moving towards a healthy weight range are to increase daily energy expenditure by exercising to burn calories and reduce daily intake of calories by eating healthy foods. The benefits of losing weight whether it be a small or large amount are huge. Any weight loss will improve overall health, but will also make a person look and feel a lot healthier. This module will allow you to understand the reasons behind weight gain and weight loss and why a healthy body is so important. You will also be given useful lifestyle advice to ensure your individual weight management program works safely and effectively.

Why should I maintain a healthy weight? What is the benefit to me?

- **You will live longer and better!!**
 - Reduced blood pressure and improved cholesterol levels and thus a decreased risk of fatal heart complications such as heart attacks and stroke.
 - Reduced blood glucose levels and improved blood sugar control resulting in a reduced risk of diabetes.
 - Decreased risk of complications during pregnancy
 - Reproductive health benefits – improved menstrual cycles, increased fertility and regular ovulation
 - Reduced risk of some cancers - endometrial, breast, prostate and colon.
- **You will feel good!!**
 - Reduced risk of gout.
 - Improved joints and mobility and decreased risk of arthritis and other musculoskeletal problems.
 - Psychological benefits -decreased levels of depression, distorted body image, eating disorders and low self-esteem
 - Improved sleep patterns
 - Higher energy levels



How do I know what a healthy weight range is for me?

The standard method for measuring your "ideal" body weight is using a "BMI" calculation.

BMI stands for Body Mass Index. It is a measure of a person's body based on their height and weight and is the most widely used calculation to judge a person's weight and to assess whether someone is overweight, underweight, average or obese.

To calculate the BMI, you take the persons weight in (kg) and divide it by their height (in metres) squared. The healthy range lies between 18.5-25. Under 18.5 is considered underweight. Over 25 is considered overweight and over 30 is considered obese.

This is a useful and reliable tool to quantify a person's weight but does have some limitations. Since it is solely based on body weight, the BMI measurement does not differentiate between fat and muscle. So, if the person is an athlete or they have a muscular build, their BMI value may indicate that they are overweight or obese when in reality, they may have little body fat and a lot of muscle. On the contrary, you must consider the limitations for people who may have lost some muscle mass (such as older persons or people with injuries). In this case, BMI may underestimate the amount of body fat. It is also important to keep in mind that BMI is only one measurement used to determine health risk. Other factors to consider include waist circumference, family health history and lifestyle habits.

Exercise Advice

Exercise boosts the metabolism and allows for more calories to be burnt. It is recommended that exercise is undertaken 5 days a week and for a duration of 30-60 minutes. The Australian Heart Foundation recommend at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on all or most days of the week. This can be accumulated in bouts of 10 minutes or more if more convenient. The duration may need to be increased to allow for more calories to be burnt. Exercise can be aerobic (walking, swimming, running, riding, jogging, skipping, hiking etc) or anaerobic (weight training or sprinting). Important to note: your 30 minutes at the gym may have only burnt off half the cheeseburger your had for lunch, but remember that regular exercise increases muscle mass and 'teaches' the body to burn kilojoules at a faster rate, even when at rest. So once you are finished at the gym, your Basal Metabolic Rate is still elevated and burning calories faster and better than what it usually would be! A great motivating fact to share with others

Treatment Options

Meal replacement technique – examples include *Optifast, Betty Baxter, Becoming Healthy, Ensure, Isowhey, Tony Ferguson, Dr Timms and Amcal's Be Good to Yourself.*



- Each one of these programs have specific instructions; however, the general idea is to replace two of the three main meals per day as they have been designed to contain the recommended requirements of calories, carbohydrates, and vitamins to promote weight loss.
- Based on the principle of eating a low GI diet and including a high amount of protein.
- Generally breakfast and lunch are the two meals substituted.
- The third meal should consist of a lean piece of meat the size of the palm of the hand and 'healthy' (low GI) vegetables.
- Can eat healthy snacks in between meals such as a serve of fruit, serve of selected nuts, salad or vegetables.
- You don't need to totally cut out the foods you enjoy – can still enjoy coffee with skim milk, nice snacks, muesli bars, biscuits and of course fruit, salad and vegetables.
- Lots of water is vital with this diet, and a fibre supplement is also recommended as many of the shakes/soups don't contain a lot of fibre.
- Please see your helpful LiveLife pharmacy staff for more information on this!

Orlistat (Xenical)

- Recommended only for people with a BMI over 30 or may be used for a BMI of 27 if they possess other risk factors.
- Take one capsule with each main meal (three times a day). This medication prevents 1/3 of the dietary fat from being absorbed in the body. It passes straight through the digestive system and out in the bowels. This can lead to the unwanted side effect of 'fatty/oily' stools. This encourages you to maintain a healthy, low fat diet so you don't experience the fatty stools.
- This is a "Pharmacist Only" S3 product, thus you will ALWAYS need Pharmacist involvement. The pharmacist will also need a height and weight measure-



ment so they are able to calculate a BMI before supplying this medicine.

- Recommended to take a fat soluble vitamin 2 hours before or after xenical to replace lost nutrients in the body (generally vitamins A, D, E and K).
- Generally recommended for 6 to 12 months and results can be expected within 2 weeks.

Complementary therapies

- Increasing fibre in the diet to give a feeling of fullness and to keep the bowels functioning. Fibre also helps to control blood sugar levels by slowing glucose absorption and inhibiting large surges of insulin - e.g. Benefibre, Metamucal, Fybogel
- Chromium to assist sugar and carbohydrate metabolism in the body to produce energy—e.g. Blackmores Sugar Balance
- Homeopathy—e.g. Martin and Pleasance - Cravings control spray—for the temporary relief of symptoms associated with cravings for junk food, fatty food, alcohol and sugary food. Contains Schuessler Tissue salts. *Please note there is no scientific evidence supporting the use of Homeopathic medicine. If you do have any queries on this type of medicine, consult your pharmacist.*
- Ayurvedic herbs—e.g. Blackmores Metabolism Advantage— contains *Coleus forskohlii*, an Ayurvedic herb traditionally used as a digestive tonic. This product may support the metabolism of fat, protein, sugars and other carbohydrates. It may also support cellular fat breakdown and provide energy during weight loss. This product contains selenium which in high doses can be toxic—consult your pharmacist if concerned.
- Swisse Trimshot – contains African mango, which may help reduce appetite and is high in soluble fibre; this then delays the emptying of the stomach for a more gradual absorption of dietary sugars. African mango also assists with maintaining lower cholesterol levels. Also contains CactiNea, which can improve the elimination of excess fluids to help maintain a healthy body balance. Use 1 scoop twice a day as a satisfying snack and to fill you up before a main meal. Contains adequate fibre and is rich in antioxidants. Mix with water, soy-milk, low fat or non-fat milk or sprinkle on low fat yoghurt.
- Swisse Appetite Suppressant—contains an ingredient (Simaluma) derived from the cactus family believed to act as a natural appetite suppressant. Complementary therapy only and must be used in conjunction with a healthy diet. Take 1 tablet twice daily, 30 minutes before a main meal.



LiveLife Pharmacy Products available for Optimal Care

- **Sports support** for any old injuries to protect the muscles/joints for exercise.



- **Anti-inflammatory rubs/liniments** for sore muscles when adjusting to exercise.



- **Scales**— to allow you to monitor your weight-loss progress.



- **A good quality multi-vitamin**—to ensure you are still getting all of the vitamins/minerals the body requires.



- **Blood pressure monitor**—for those with hypertension, wishing to start losing weight and exercising.



- **Blood glucose monitor**—for those who are diagnosed/borderline type 2 diabetics, in order to assess the changes in their blood sugars.



- **Pedometer**—so that you may set yourself a daily “target” of steps.



- **Fibre supplements**—e.g. Metamucil, to give a feeling of satiety (a feeling of fullness and satisfaction) and ensure you are maintaining a sufficient level of fibre in your diet.



- **Artificial sweeteners**; e.g. Sugarine tablets or liquid. Gives negligible calories whilst still providing a great taste to sweeten a hot drink etc. One tablet = 2 teaspoons of sugar. Tablets can be halved.



- **Low sodium salts**; e.g. Herbamare—to reduce sodium intake.



A note on Low GI foods and “Healthy Carbs”

Firstly, what are carbohydrates?

Carbohydrates are a large group of compounds we eat in our food (including sugars, starch and cellulose) that when broken down, produce energy for the body. However, not all carbohydrate foods are created equal, in fact they behave quite differently in our bodies. The glycemic index or GI describes this difference by ranking carbohydrates according to their effect on our blood glucose levels.

Choosing low GI carbs (or “complex carbohydrates”) - the ones that produce only small fluctuations in our blood glucose and insulin levels - is the secret to long-term health, reducing your risk of heart disease and diabetes. It is also a key factor in maintaining a sustainable healthy weight range.

Eating a lot of high GI foods can be detrimental to your health because it pushes your body to extremes. This is especially true if you are overweight and sedentary. Switching to eating mainly low GI carbs that slowly trickle glucose into your blood stream keeps your energy levels balanced and means you will feel fuller for longer between meals.

Examples of Low GI foods:

- Breakfast cereals based on oat, barley & bran
- Basmati rice
- Sweet potato
- Wholegrain/rye bread
- Fresh fruit
- Lentils
- Baked Beans

Examples of High GI foods:

- Lollies and chocolate
- Canned fruit in syrup
- White Bread
- Softdrinks

Healthy Eating Tips:

- **Don't set unrealistic goals and starve yourself.** Make changes slowly such as adding a salad to your meal or switching from butter to cholesterol free oil when cooking. If you skip meals, you may find you eat more when you do eat and this may lead to a larger stomach capacity!
- **Reduce portion size** – use smaller plates at home, order entrée size when dining out or split a dish with a friend. Meat, fish and chicken should be the size of the palm of your hand.
- **Create new eating habits** – Eat with others and NOT in front of TV, take time to chew your food as it can take a few minutes for your brain to recognize you're full. Ask yourself if you are really hungry and try having a glass of water before you start your meal. Use a small fork; it takes longer to eat, therefore the "full" signal occurs before we finish our meal.
- **Breakfast is the most important meal of the day** as it will give your metabolism a kick-start for the day. Make this your biggest meal! We spoke earlier about meal replacements being used at breakfast and lunch, but please understand this is not skipping a meal; these sachets are portion and calorie controlled meals as part of a proper weight loss eating plan.
- **Eat 3 healthy meals daily, with small additional snacks in between** to keep energy levels up and boost the metabolism. Some examples of good "snacks" include raw nuts/seeds, fresh/dried fruit, low-fat yoghurt & vegetable sticks with low fat dip.
- **Fill up on fruit and vegetables** – these are the foundation of a healthy diet and should be in every meal. Aim for at least 5 portions per day.
- **Avoid fruit juice and canned fruit** as they have high amounts of sugar.
- **Water is a vital part of a healthy diet.** It helps flush out waste products and toxins.
- **Try to eat HEALTHY carbohydrates** as they provide longer-lasting energy and keep you fuller for longer as they are digested slowly. These include whole-grains, beans, fruits and vegetables, brown rice and wholemeal pasta.
- **Try to avoid unhealthy carbohydrates** such as white flour, sugar and rice; these are digested quickly and cause a rapid spike in energy and blood sugar levels that don't last.
- **Dietary fibre is essential for maintaining a healthy digestive system**, and makes you feel fuller for longer. Good sources of fibre are beans, fruit and oat products.
- **Include good sources of healthy fats** in the form of omega-3 as they are needed to nourish the brain and heart. Sources include salmon, avocados, nuts and seeds.
- **Reduce or limit saturated and trans fats.** Saturated fats are found primarily in animal sources (red meat and whole milk dairy products) and trans fats are found in margarines, chips, biscuits, snack food, fried foods, and other processed foods.
- **Protein is important** as it gives us energy and is the basic building block for our growth and energy. However it should not make up the primary part of the meal. A lack of protein in the diet can slow growth, reduce muscle mass, reduce immunity and weaken the heart and respiratory system. Protein is particularly important for children. Proteins will make you feel fuller for longer than carbohydrates as they are broken down slower.
- **Limit your sugar consumption.** Sugar causes rapid spikes in energy that don't last. Avoid sugary drinks (e.g. Cola drinks) as they can contain about 10 teaspoons of sugar.
- **Salt should be used sparingly (no more than 4 grams of salt daily – i.e. 1600mg sodium).** This will help to avoid fluid retention and bloating and can also decrease blood pressure. Canned soups and frozen meals contain hidden salts that surpass the recommended daily allowance.
- **Avoid alcohol** – contains lots of calories and puts strain on your liver.



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