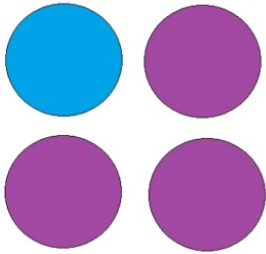


# Obesity

## About Obesity



Obesity is a word used to describe people who are very overweight.



About 1 in every 4 adults in the UK is obese.



Being obese can cause a lot of day-to-day health problems.



It can also lead to serious health problems, like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.



Being obese means that you are likely to die younger than if you are a healthy weight.



Obesity is normally caused by eating too much and moving too little:



- You get energy from the food that you eat.



- To be a healthy weight you need to burn off the energy you get from the food you eat.



- You burn off this energy by being active – being active means moving around doing things like walking, housework or exercise.



- If you do not burn off the energy from the food you eat you will put on weight, because the energy you don't burn off is turned into body fat.



So if you eat a lot of food, especially fatty and sugary food, and you spend a lot of time sitting down, you are likely to be overweight or obese.

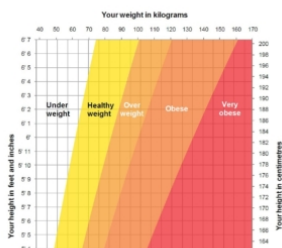


For a few people there is a medical reason that can make it more likely they will be overweight or obese. Medicine can usually help with this.

## What Are The Symptoms Of Obesity?



We measure how overweight people are by looking at how much they weigh compared to how tall they are.



This measure is called your Body Mass Index (BMI).



Your doctor can work out your BMI for you. Or you can use this BMI calculator on the internet.



Another way to check if you are obese is to measure your waist with a tape measure.



- If you are a man and your waist is 94cm or more you are likely to be obese.



- If you are a woman and your waist is 80cm or more you are likely to be obese.



If you are obese you might have problems with day-to-day activities:

- Feeling out of breath.



- Sweating.



- Snoring.



- Finding it hard to do activities like walking or exercising.



- Feeling very tired.



- Pains in your back or your joints.



- Feeling sad, lonely or depressed.

## Treatment And Care For Obesity



The best way to treat obesity is to lose weight. You should:



- Eat a healthy diet.



- Be active.



Losing weight takes time and effort.



If you are overweight or obese you should speak to your doctor.

Your doctor can talk to you about how to lose weight safely.



They can tell you about support you can get, like how to join a local weight loss group or how to get free exercise sessions.



They can also do tests to check for other health problems caused by being overweight or obese.



### **Eating a healthy diet**

You should make changes to what you eat so that you lose weight a little bit at a time.



You should make changes you can stick to for the rest of your life to keep to a healthy weight.



A healthy diet should include:



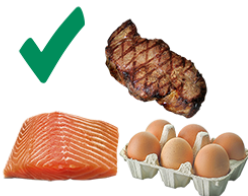
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables.



- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy foods – wholegrain is best.



- Some milk and dairy foods (like cheese and yoghurt).



- Some meat, fish, eggs and beans.



- Only a small amount of food and drink that are high in fat and sugar.



You should try not to:

- Eat foods that have a high amount of salt in them.



- Drink too much alcohol.



- Eat larger portions than you need.



- Drink too many sugary drinks.



- Eat when you are not hungry to make yourself feel better – this is called 'comfort eating'.



There are some diets where you lose weight fast. But they can be dangerous.



Speak to your doctor if you are thinking of trying one of these diets.





## Being active

Being active is important for losing weight. It keeps you healthy and helps you to feel good too.



- You should try to be active for at least 2 and a half to 5 hours a week. This could mean you exercise for 30 minutes 5 times a week.



- You can do any activities which increase your heart-rate and breathing. This could be things like walking, jogging, cycling, swimming or dancing.



- You could also do more vigorous activities, like running or sports.



- But even just getting up and moving around, or doing just 10 minutes of exercise at a time is good.



- It is important to find activities that you enjoy and want to keep doing.



- You could do activities with friends or family. Or you might meet new friends if you start a new activity.



- You can look on the internet for ideas about how to get active. For example, you could try the NHS choices coach to 5k running plan



### **Taking medicine**

If changing your diet and doing exercise do not help you to lose weight, your doctor might give you some medicine called orlistat.



This might help you, but you will also need to eat a healthy diet and be active.



You can get side-effects from taking this medicine. Side-effects are other things that can happen to your body because of the medicine.



### **Having an operation**

Some people can have an operation to take away some of their body fat. Only people who are very obese will be offered this operation.