Small Changes, Big Benefits

You can make a big difference to your fat and calorie intake just by making small changes to your eating habits. Read on to find out how...

A practical guide to making healthier Weight Wise choices without giving up the foods you enjoy.
Are you Weight Wise?

Changing your eating habits and becoming more physically active will help you to lose weight and reduce your health risks. If you’re thinking about becoming Weight Wise, you can start quite simply. Remember: small changes can make big differences in the long run.

One great thing to do is...

Think F.A.T.

Most of us eat too much fat. Fat is very “energy-dense” – each gram of fat contains 9 calories. Weight for weight, that’s much higher in calories than other nutrients such as starchy carbohydrates found in bread, rice, pasta and potatoes. So it makes sense to start by checking all the fat you eat in a week and watch out for “hidden fats”:

F is for FREQUENCY. Look at how often you eat fatty foods and snacks – try to reduce it and/or find lower-fat alternatives.

A is for AMOUNT – try and reduce the portion sizes of fatty foods and snacks.

T is for TYPE – can you choose a better type of fat? Try to avoid “saturated fats”. For example, swap butter or margarine for sunflower or olive oil-based margarine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested daily amounts for weight loss*</th>
<th>kcals**</th>
<th>fat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>70-80g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>50-60g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*these figures are based on the guideline daily amounts (GDAs) but have been adapted for individuals who are trying to lose weight.

** kcals, or kilocalories, are the scientific units for what most people call calories. These are only average guidelines, not individual targets.

Remember, if you DON’T opt for a lower-fat food item – such as a lower-fat sandwich – you could be eating ALL of your daily fat intake in just ONE MEAL. So choose carefully!
There are no “good” or “bad” foods. The key to healthy eating is to try and ensure you eat a good variety of foods to maintain a healthy balance. And wherever possible, choose lower-fat alternatives.

Food labelling

If you understand food labels, you can make Weight Wise choices without having to avoid the foods you enjoy.

How food is prepared is often more important than what the food item is. Learning to recognise high fat foods or foods with “hidden” fats will help maintain the variety in your diet and can avoid you having to buy special ‘diet’ foods.

Check food claims alongside the label – a chocolate bar that states it is “85% fat free” still means it has 15g of fat per 100g (and it’s often very high in sugar as well). Find out the exact portion size of the food item to work out how much fat you are eating.

For a complete main meal or 100g of a snack item (such as biscuits or crisps) use the following rule of thumb:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THESE AMOUNTS OR LESS</td>
<td>THESE AMOUNTS OR MORE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2g of sugars</td>
<td>10g of sugars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3g of fat</td>
<td>20g of fat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1g of saturated fat</td>
<td>5g of saturated fat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This quick guide (right) will help you to work out whether the amount of fat, sugar and saturated fat listed on the label is a little or a lot.
Are you Want to know what you're eating?

Milk shake
- SAVE!
- 516 kcals
- 13g FAT

Diet drink

Large fries
- SAVE!
- 461 kcals
- 32g FAT

Cream cake
- X

Currant bun
- X

SAVE!
Is it right Wise?

Burger, large fries

Bar milk chocolate

Regular burger, regular fries

Low fat chocolate mousse

1 pint whole milk

2 chocolate digestives
BLT (Bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich)

SAVE!
411kcals
38g FAT

Healthy Eating BLT
(Bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich)

Small Changes

Take an extra 5 seconds to find the lower-fat alternative to your usual sandwich.

For example, both sandwiches are filled with the same amount of meat and cheese,

But one contains low-fat mayonnaise & low-fat margarine.

You could "save" 411 kcals & 38g of fat.

Just by making the changes suggested above, you could save...

Note: "kcals" is short for kilocalories. That's the amount of energy.

comic company
**Big Benefits**

When choosing your preferred food, watch out for hidden and unnecessary fats. For example, a slice of bacon, lettuce, and tomato. They taste just as good. However, an egg is lower in fat, so it has less than half the fat, half the calories.

But by choosing the lower-fat sandwich, you could save around 2,000 kcal and 150g of fat!

*Kcal: A scientific unit for what most people call “calories”.*