

**Is your
waistline
creeping up
on you?**

**CHOOSE
TO**

**LIVE
BETTER**

Measure
up



Take the tape measure test

Changes to our lifestyle – settling down, having children – can lead to a change in our waistlines, as well as our outlook. These changes can affect our health. An easy way to find out whether your waistline is increasing your risk of developing serious illnesses such as heart disease, cancer and type 2 diabetes is to take the tape measure test. Here's how:

- Find the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hips.
- Place the tape measure half-way between the two, breathe out normally and measure around your waist.
- Once you have your measurement use the table below to see if you're at risk.

Waist measurement	At increased risk	At high risk
Men	94cm (37 inches)	102cm (40 inches)
Asian Men	90cm (35.5 inches)	
Women	80cm (32 inches)	88cm (35 inches)
Asian Women	79cm (31.5 inches)	
Please note: the tape measure test relates to adult measurements only.		

This should give you a basic idea of where you are, but your overall height in relation to your weight is also important. Check your height and weight against our body mass index (BMI) chart, which you can find overleaf.

Check out your weight

Using the BMI chart opposite, you can work out whether you're underweight, overweight or about right for your height. Check out your weight for your height and from this decide on a plan of action, if you need one.

How did you score?

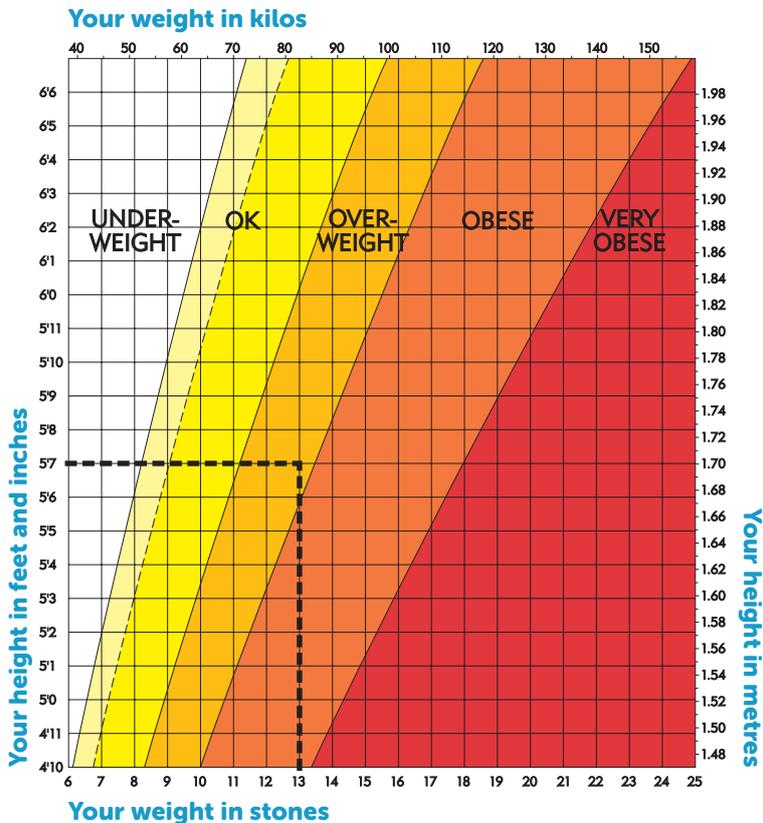
Underweight – you may need to put on weight by eating more. Speak to your GP if you are concerned.

OK – well done, you're a healthy weight and you should aim to stay that way. Eat well and be active.

Overweight – you need to avoid gaining any more weight. It's also time to try to lose some, if you can.

Obese or very obese – your health is at risk. You need to lose weight to avoid serious health problems.

Losing weight may seem a big challenge, and it won't happen overnight. The best way to lose weight (and keep it off) is to make small, long-term changes to what you eat and drink and be more active every day. The ideas and tips in this leaflet will help you get started, and you can go to choosetolivebetter.com for recipes and advice.



**Be a bit more
active everyday**



Small changes make a big difference

Think of losing weight and living healthier as a marathon and not a sprint. It doesn't need to be a chore. By making small changes over time you'll see and feel a big difference.

Here are some simple things to try straight away:

- Plan your meals in advance – make a shopping list and stick to it.
- Don't shop for food when you are hungry – it's easier to give in to temptation.
- Eat smaller portions and eat more slowly – give your stomach time to realise it's full.
- Alcohol is high in calories – so keep an eye on your intake.
- Similarly, swap sugary drinks for sugar-free alternatives such as water, tea, coffee or diet drinks.
- Be as active as possible, as often as you can – a brisk stroll, walking the dog... it all helps.
- Find odd jobs to do between meals to avoid nibbling.

**Swap full fat
for low fat**



Ideas for mornings

It's often said that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Get the day off to a good start – have a healthy breakfast and be as active as possible.

Need some inspiration?

Try some of these simple ideas out:

- Swap sugar or chocolate-coated cereal for wholegrain and beat the mid-morning hunger pangs.
- Swap fried eggs for poached or boiled ones – and if you fancy bacon, make sure it's lean and grill it.
- Swap two sugars in your morning tea or coffee for one – then swap one for none.
- Taking the kids to school? Try walking them down the road instead of driving.
- Take the bus to work and get off a stop early or, if you drive, park a little further away.
- Avoid the lift or escalator and take the stairs instead – get that blood pumping.
- Feeling peckish? Have some fruit at elevenses.



Ideas for lunch time and the afternoon

After a busy morning, tummies start to rumble and thoughts turn to lunch. Fill up on a healthy lunch to tide you over until tea time. Just a few simple choices can make a difference.

Try these simple ideas out:

- Add lots of salad vegetables to your favourite sandwich filling.
- Choose a low-fat spread in place of butter, margarine or mayonnaise.
- Replace full-fat cheese and yogurt with low-fat versions.
- Have a jacket spud instead of chips – just as tasty and full of fibre.
- For something hot try a tasty soup but avoid creamy varieties.
- Have water or juice instead of a fizzy drink.
- Instead of sitting, go for a walk with a workmate at lunch time.

Swap a glug of oil
for a teaspoon



Ideas for evenings

For many of us the evenings are the best time of the day – dinner and time to relax or spend time with family or friends. Try to make this a healthy time.

Here are some simple ideas to try out.

- Swap skinny fries for thick-cut chips – or better still try boiled spuds instead.
- Swap cream or crème fraîche in cooking sauces for natural yogurt or a tomato-based sauce.
- Thinking of a takeaway? Choose boiled rice or noodles instead of fried rice or chips.
- Fancy pizza – remember pepperoni, chorizo and sausage are higher in fat and salt. Choose tuna, chicken or vegetarian instead.
- Don't pile food on your plate – and try saying 'no' to seconds or the kids leftovers.
- If you simply can't go without dessert, share one between two.
- Swap a night in the pub or cinema for a night out dancing or ten-pin bowling.
- Swap sedentary video games or TV for something active.

Help and support is on hand

If you are overweight or obese it can seem like a big challenge.

The thing is, tackling weight problems doesn't have to be a mountain to climb. As we've shown in this booklet, with just small changes you can make a big difference – starting from right now.

It's often easier if you have help and support – so get your friends and family involved if you can, to help you on your way to a healthier you.

For top tips, simple healthy recipes and some brilliant ideas simply visit our website at:
choosetolivebetter.com



Want to manage
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Department of Health, Social Services
and Public Safety
www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

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Public Health Agency
12-22 Linenhall Street
Belfast, BT2 8BS
Tel: 028 9032 1313
www.publichealth.hscni.net