



# Losing weight

## Getting started - Week 10

Well done on reaching Week 10.  
Great work!

Working towards a goal isn't always easy; sometimes life just gets in the way. When we feel depressed, angry, bored or stressed, we often turn to food to feel better. Identifying your comfort eating triggers is the first step in breaking the bond between your feelings and food.

Did you try to build in some of the activity ideas we suggested last week? If you didn't, why not give some of the tips a go this week?

### Your actions for Week 10

- If you're about to finish Couch to 5K then get on the forum at [couchto5k.healthunlocked.com](http://couchto5k.healthunlocked.com) and shout about it! You can claim your C25K Graduate badge there too
- If you use public transport to get to work, try to fit a 20-minute walk into your journey every day of the week
- Is stress or feeling down causing you to overeat? If you think it might be, visit the Moodzone at [nhs.uk/moodzone](http://nhs.uk/moodzone)

### Laura's diary

#### Week 10



Last week we encouraged you to focus a bit more on exercise.

If you took up the Couch to 5K challenge in Week 2 this is your big week. Go for it!

It's amazing how much having a goal can help motivate you.

Furthermore, achieving that goal can be hugely rewarding and can help build your confidence, which will feed into other areas of life.

Spend some time this week planning your next goal and how you can achieve it.

### Did you know?

You're more likely to fall off the diet wagon at the end of the week. Research suggests that we tend to eat more on Fridays and Saturdays than at any other time of the week.

Avoid undoing all your good work by sticking to the advice every day.



# Week 10

# How are you getting on? Tips for diet success

You've been following this advice for almost 10 weeks, and it won't always have been easy. Here are a few tips to keep you motivated.

'Help – I've blown it'

Fix: Expect setbacks

It's to be expected that you give in to temptation once in a while, but don't let that become an excuse to give up on trying to lose weight. So, if you had a slice of chocolate fudge cake at work today, pick yourself up, put it behind you, move on and get back on the wagon straight away.

'Help – I still get hunger pangs'

Fix: Fill up on fibre

There is no need to feel hungry when trying to lose weight. Check that you're sticking to your daily calorie limit. Don't be tempted to consume less than that. Fill up on low-calorie fibre-rich foods as much as you can. They're best for staving off hunger pangs and helping you feel full.

'Help – I don't think I can carry on'

Fix: Reward yourself.

Adopting healthier habits can sometimes feel like hard work. Try setting yourself a series of mini-goals as you progress through your weight loss journey. A mini-goal can be whatever you want it to be. It doesn't

have to be weight-related. Every time you achieve a mini-goal, treat yourself with a non-food reward.

'Help – I've lost weight but not inches'

Fix: Be patient

Everyone's body-fat distribution is different, so the inches come off a little differently too. Initially, you may lose weight without losing inches. Be patient, and the inches will drop off in time. You'll soon notice your clothes getting looser and your body looking slimmer.

'Help – I've stopped losing weight'

Fix: Try something new to kickstart weight loss

Perhaps you've been losing weight nicely but for the last week or so, the scales have stayed the same. It's the dreaded weight loss plateau. Don't worry, this is normal. Check that you're sticking to your calorie limit. Are you forgetting to count a snack here or there, or overdoing your portion sizes? Also, it can really help to kickstart things by doing a little more exercise, or to try a different type that challenges your body in new ways.

## How to avoid temptation

- Before eating, ask yourself if you're really hungry
- Don't store junk food, such as chocolate and crisps, at home
- Stock up on healthier and lower-calorie food for when hunger strikes
- Keep yourself busy so you're not always thinking about food
- Never shop hungry. Prepare a shopping list and stick to it
- Don't ban foods. You will only crave them more

## Keep a food diary

A food diary can help you identify and tackle problems such as emotional eating.

Keeping a food diary involves writing down what you ate, whether you were actually hungry, when you ate and watching for the triggers.

You can use a notebook or one of several food diary charts freely available online. Alternatively, food diaries are often included in weight loss apps on mobile devices.

# How to beat comfort eating

**It's easy to turn to food when you're stressed, upset, or simply bored.**

But you have to address so-called comfort eating to continue making progress on this guide. Emotional eating can be beaten, although it's not always easily done. In some cases, you may need professional help. As a first step, you could try these simple techniques:

## Recognising comfort eating

To help spot when you're comfort eating, keep a food diary for a few days. Whenever you eat something, record your mood and how hungry you are on a scale of 1 to 10.

If you find you're eating in response to negative emotions rather than hunger, chances are you're comfort eating.

Now, make a "trigger" list: a list of the feelings and circumstances that tend to spark your comfort eating.



## Dealing with comfort eating

Think about how to change or avoid the circumstances that prompt negative feelings, which in turn lead to comfort eating. If your commute to work leaves you stressed and reaching for a snack, for example, can you find a new route?

It's not always possible to avoid difficult feelings, but if you find yourself snacking or craving certain food, it can help to follow a routine.

Ask yourself: am I really hungry, or is this comfort eating? Then, wait 30 minutes before eating. Often, you'll realise that it is really emotional comfort, not food, that you need.

## 10 comfort eating triggers

Once you've identified what sets off your comfort eating, you can start to tackle it. Here are 10 common triggers:

- Work stress
- Loneliness
- Money worries
- Bad weather
- Tiredness
- Arguments with your partner
- Boredom
- Sadness
- Unemployment
- Health problems

## Non-food comfort fixes

- Take your mind off food with some reading
- Listen to a favourite song
- Write down a fun thing you're going to do today, or this week
- Watch a movie
- Phone a friend
- Go for a walk
- Clean the car
- Have a bath
- Surf the web
- Do some breathing exercises
- Do some exercise



## Legs, bums and tums

Tone up, firm up and burn fat from your tummy, hips, thighs and bottom with this 10-minute legs home workout. This exercise routine counts towards your 150 minutes of activity a week.

[nhs.uk/bumsandtums](https://www.nhs.uk/bumsandtums)