



# Losing weight

## Getting started - Week 8

### Week 8 and you're doing great.

We all know we should eat more fruit and veg, which is especially helpful when trying to manage your weight. They contain fibre, vitamins and minerals. We should eat at least five portions of different fruit and veg a day.

Salads are often seen as the perfect dieter's food. But not all salads are as innocent as they seem. Find out what lurks beneath those healthy-looking green leaves and could be spoiling your diet.

### Laura's diary

#### Week 8



Calorie counting has made me a much more creative cook and has led to me experimenting with a wider range of fruit and veg.

Asian recipes are particularly versatile. Tomato-based curries and marinades deliver a variety, flavour and freshness that's hard to beat.

Crucially they tend to rely much less on the sorts of ingredients that send calorie values rocketing, like cheese.

I really recommend investing in some fresh and dried spices and to give it a go.

## Your actions for Week 8

- Plan to have at least two portions of veg with every evening meal this week
- Try some of our homemade salad ideas and experiment with your own
- Try to plan three 30-minute lunchtime walks this week. Your lunch break is an opportunity to get active
- Stick to your calorie and exercise targets

## Did you know?

Products carrying a 5 A DAY message can be misleading. '5 A DAY' logos have been appearing on food high in sugar, salt and fat such as biscuits and fizzy drinks.

Always check the label for the full list of ingredients and look for the Department of Health's official 5 A DAY logo.



# Week 8

# Eat more vegetables

Getting into the habit of eating more veg can help you lose weight and keep it off. There are so many ways to pack more veg into your favourite meals.

We all know that vegetables contain fibre, vitamins and minerals. But what have they got to do with losing weight?

Because they contain fibre, vegetables fill you up without packing a big calorie punch (depending on how they are cooked of course).

So, make veg a big part of your efforts to lose weight, and you can eat filling, satisfying meals – and avoid between-meal hunger pangs – without exceeding your daily calorie allowance.

Try these 10 tips to fit more vegetables into your diet:

- Aim to make your meal more filling by adding vegetables, and then cut back on another, high-calorie ingredient or food, or simply eat less. This way, you can feel full while eating fewer calories.
- Add beans, lentils and pulses to stews, bakes and salads.
- Aim for two portions of veg on your plate. If you're having shepherd's pie, have some peas with it too. Add carrots and broccoli to a roast dinner.
- Eat more salad or vegetable-based dishes. One meal can provide several portions of your 5 A DAY. For protein, you could add a boiled egg, chicken slices or cooked lentils. For example, start with some lettuce and add sliced tomatoes, red onion, apples, pears, celery, cooked beetroot, grated raw carrot and a hard-boiled egg.
- Have vegetables as snacks. Baby carrots, radishes, and sugar snap peas all make ideal snack food. They're convenient, easy to pack in handy portions and they require very little preparation.
- Swap sauces based on cheese or cream – on pasta, rice or a baked potato – for tomato or vegetable-based sauces. Throw in some kidney beans or chickpeas to make the sauce extra filling. These same ingredients can make a filling vegetable or bean-based soups as well.
- Add some crunch to your lunchtime sandwiches with lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber or grated carrot. This will help fill you up.
- Stock up on frozen vegetables. They're quick and easy to prepare in the microwave or on the hob. You can choose single vegetables – such as peas, carrots, green beans or cauliflower – or mixed veg.
- Cooked breakfast? Swap a fried tomato or mushroom for a grilled tomato or mushroom. Or, try an omelette stuffed with onion and peppers.
- Add green, leafy veg to soups or stews. Veg such as kale or swiss chard are loaded with calcium and iron. This is a really easy way to incorporate them into your meals.

## 5 A DAY portion sizes

A portion of fruit or veg is 80g.

Fresh, frozen, tinned and juiced fruit and veg all count towards your 5 A DAY. Use the rough guide below to work out whether you're eating your 5 A DAY:

- Half a grapefruit
- An apple
- 2 plums or satsumas
- 3 heaped tablespoons of peas, sweetcorn, beans or pulses
- 2 broccoli spears
- A dessert bowl of salad leaves

A 5 A DAY portion of dried fruit is around 30g. This is about one heaped tablespoon of raisins.

## Not one of your 5 A DAY

They may be vegetables but they do not count towards your 5 A DAY.

- Potatoes – including jacket potatoes, chips and crisps
- Yams
- Cassava
- Plantain



# Make the most of salads

Salads can be your best friend when trying to lose weight but beware of calorie-laden toppings.

A typical green salad of green leaves, tomatoes and cucumbers is low in calories, salt and fat and high in nutritional value.

However, toppings such as croutons, bacon bits, cheese, breaded chicken and creamy dressings will turn an innocent-looking salad into a dieter's nightmare.

The golden rule with salads: avoid fatty toppings, always ask for the dressing on the side and avoid mayonnaise or cream-based dressings.

## Salad dressings

Salad dressings are almost always high in calories. A single serving (two tablespoons) of mayonnaise is 220kcal; a mayo-based Thousand Island dressing is 194kcal and blue cheese dressing is 228kcal.

- Try making your own lower-fat and



lower-calorie dressings out of fruit juices. Or make a healthier vinaigrette with olive oil and vinegar or fresh lemon juice.

- Take care when buying commercial lower-fat salad dressings – while they may be low in fat, they can often be high in sugar. Always check the nutrition information on the label.
- If you're in a restaurant or cafe, ask for the dressing to be served on the side and add only as much as you need.
- Give a wide berth to salads such as Caesar, Waldorf, coleslaw and some pasta and potato salads, all of which are generally soaked in mayonnaise.

## 3 lower-calorie salad dressings

Orange-balsamic (82kcal)

- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- Juice of 1 large orange

French dressing (88kcal)

- 1 clove garlic minced
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp honey

Ranch-style dressing (51kcal)

- 1-2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 3 tbsp fat-free natural yoghurt
- Juice of 1 large lemon
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar

## Lower-calorie salad toppings

Add a burst of flavour with these 50kcal salad toppings:

- 1 tbsp toasted sunflower seeds
- 1 tbsp toasted pine nuts
- 1 tbsp toasted pumpkin seeds
- A handful of chopped grapes
- 1 tbsp of chopped toasted walnuts



## 5 A DAY

Find out about fruit and veg portion sizes with our 5 A DAY guides, including a downloadable illustrated poster and a portion size guide for a range of fruit and veg, including tinned and dried.

[nhs.uk/5ADAY](https://www.nhs.uk/5ADAY)