

Stoke Mandeville Dietitians: 01296 315775

How can I help reduce healthcare associated infections?

Infection control is important to the well-being of our patients and for that reason we have infection control procedures in place. Keeping your hands clean is an effective way of preventing the spread of infections. We ask that you, and anyone visiting you, use the hand sanitiser available at the main entrance of the hospital and at the entrance to every clinical area before coming in to and after leaving the clinical area or hospital. In some situations hands may need to be washed at the sink using soap and water rather than using the hand sanitiser. Staff will let you know if this is the case.

www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk

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Weight Management with Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)

Patient information leaflet

If you require a translation or an alternative format of this leaflet please call PALS on 01296 316042

Safe & compassionate care,

every time

Introduction

Following Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) you are at greater risk of becoming overweight or obese. This is due to a combination of a lowered metabolic rate, immobility due to paralysis, and prolonged periods of sitting in a wheelchair.

Becoming overweight or obese will increase your risk of developing:

- Coronary heart disease
- Raised cholesterol levels
- Type 2 diabetes
- Osteo-arthritis
- Some cancers
- Pressure ulcers

With SCI excess weight will also make transfers to and from sitting more difficult and will increase your risk of developing pressure ulcers.

To achieve weight loss, your 'energy out' (from being physically active) must be greater than 'energy in' (from food and drink consumed). As your mobility following SCI is likely to have significantly reduced, your food and drink intake may also need to be reduced or changed to avoid gaining weight.

Weight Loss Recommendations

Steady weight loss of 0.5-1kg (1-2lb) per week is advised. This will enable you to sustain the weight loss you are achieving.

Meal Plan

BREAKFAST:

MID-MORNING:

LIGHT MEAL:

MID-AFTERNOON:

MAIN MEAL:

BEDTIME:

Record Your Progress

- Set yourself a realistic target – it may be above the ideal weight for your height
- For most people, excess weight is gained over several months/years. Your body copes best if you lose weight slowly over several months – aim to lose no more than 1-2 lbs (0.5-1kg) a week
- Avoid weighing yourself more than once a week and weigh at the same time of day, under comparable circumstances
- Set your own goals and be realistic. These might be food related e.g. eating 3 portions of fruit/day or no more than 1 packet crisps per week, or they may be activity related e.g. going for a 15 minute walk 5 times a week.
- Give yourself a ‘reward’ when you achieve your goals. Rewards should be non-food based e.g. going to see a film or buying a magazine – something you personally would enjoy.

Week	Goals	Weight	Reward
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Preparing to Lose Weight

Think about why you want to lose weight and write down clear reasons. This will help to motivate you now, and in the future. These reasons should be things you really value to help keep you motivated, e.g. to keep as healthy as possible for my children etc.

1.
2.
3.
4.

Are you ready to make changes?

Losing weight and keeping it off can be hard. It is important that you feel ready and are prepared for the challenge ahead. To help you succeed, focus on what has worked well for you in the past and what has not worked so well.

Answer true or false:

I have thought carefully about why I want to lose weight.

True or false

I have my own strong reasons for wanting to lose weight

True or false

I am willing and prepared to put time and effort into changing my food and activity habits each week. **True or false**

I understand that I need to make long term lifestyle changes for success. **True or false**

For every false answer, we suggest you have a rethink. It is a sign you may not be ready to lose weight in a way that will lead to long term success.

Getting Started

Losing weight and keeping it off requires a willingness to change habits for good. Accept changes to your diet and activity levels as pleasant, enjoyable things to do. These tips below may help:

- Be realistic about how much weight you can lose (aim to lose ½ - 1 kg or 1-2 pounds per week) and plan to make changes that are achievable. Losing 5-10kg (10-20lb) can make a really positive difference to your health.
- Make a list of any barriers you may have or might find when making changes, so you can develop strategies to overcome them. A barrier may be that you feel you don't have time to have breakfast.
- Keeping a record of what you eat and drink to increase awareness of your eating patterns may give you more control over your eating. Some people find using a phone app to record intake helpful e.g. 'My fitness pal' or 'My net diary'.
- Make a note of particularly unhelpful thoughts and situations that trigger eating e.g. boredom, low in mood or when alone. Perhaps you find it hard to refuse food in social situations. Tackling everyday issues are important for long term success.
- Plan ahead. Be prepared for what you are going to eat at each mealtime. Write a weekly meal plan with a shopping list so you have healthy foods to hand. Do your shopping when you are not hungry or stressed; use your list.
- Make sure the time is right, but do not search for a reason or convenient excuse not to make changes happen.

Food Labels

Most products have nutritional information on the label. Some products also have colour coding on the front, to tell you at a glance if the food has high (red), medium (amber) or low (green) amounts of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt per 100g of the product – see below.

Most pre-packed foods show a list of ingredients. They are listed in order from largest to smallest amount. So if the first few items are high-fat things, like butter, cream, oil, then the product is a high fat food.

Low fat means there is no more than 3g fat per 100g
Reduced fat means that the product is at least 30% lower in fat than the standard version of the product
Light/Lite mean at least 30% lower in one value than the standard product, e.g. calorie or fat content
No Added Sugar does not mean the food contains no sugar. Naturally occurring sugars are not taken into consideration.

	FAT	SATURATES	SUGARS	SALT
LOW HEALTHIER CHOICE	3g or less	1.5g or less	5g or less	0.3g or less
MEDIUM OK MOST OF THE TIME	3.1g to 17.5g	1.6g to 5g	5.1g to 22.5g	0.31g to 1.5g
HIGH JUST OCCASIONALLY	More than 17.5g	More than 5g	More than 22.5g	More than 1.5g

Low, medium and high amounts of nutrients per 100g.

Food and Drink Swaps to Save Calories

Food	Swap To	Save (approx. calories)
½ pint full cream milk	½ pint semi skimmed milk	56
1 oz ordinary cheddar	1 oz reduced fat cheddar	50
chicken with skin	chicken without skin	100
meat pie	beef stew	400
fried egg	boiled/poached egg	35
1 tbsp double cream	1 tbsp fromage frais	85
fried fish	grilled fish	125
fish in batter	grilled fish	280
1 cup of tea with 2 sugars	1 cup of tea without sugar or with sweetener	40
cream cake	currant bun	85
large packet standard crisps	small packet reduced fat crisps	160
bar of milk chocolate	low fat chocolate mousse	195
1 can ordinary cola drink	'Diet' cola drink	130
thick butter on 1 slice of bread	thin low fat spread on 1 slice of bread	60
1 rasher fried bacon, including fat	grilled lean bacon	80
fruit fool	'Diet' yoghurt	160
1 tbsp mayonnaise	1 tbsp fat free vinaigrette-type dressing	150
standard creamy cooking sauce per portion	'Healthy Eating' type cooking sauce per portion	60
large burger, large fries	regular burger, regular fries	450
portion fried rice	portion boiled rice	200
2 digestive biscuits	1 banana	65
chips	boiled or baked potatoes	370

The EatWell Guide

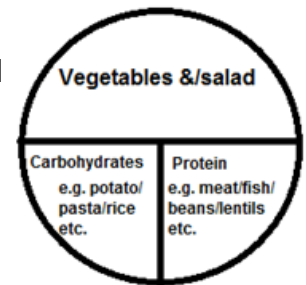
The Eatwell Guide (on the next page) describes the variety and proportions of foods and drinks to consume in a healthy, balanced diet. A variety of items from different food groups is needed to provide the range of nutrients your body needs, i.e. energy, protein, vitamins and minerals and fibre for healthy bowels.

The Food Groups of the EatWell Guide include:

- Fruit and vegetables
- Bread, other cereals and potatoes
- Milk and dairy foods
- Meat, fish and alternatives
- Foods containing fat
- Fluid

Portion Control for Weight Loss

Portion control is key to losing weight: Half-fill your plate with vegetables/salad and divide the remaining half between carbohydrate and protein– see image.



Guide your food portion sizes by using: your 2 open hands for vegetable/salad the size of your palm for protein

the size of your fist for carbohydrates and fruit portions the tip of your thumb for fats, spreads and oils- see image.



Eatwell Guide

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

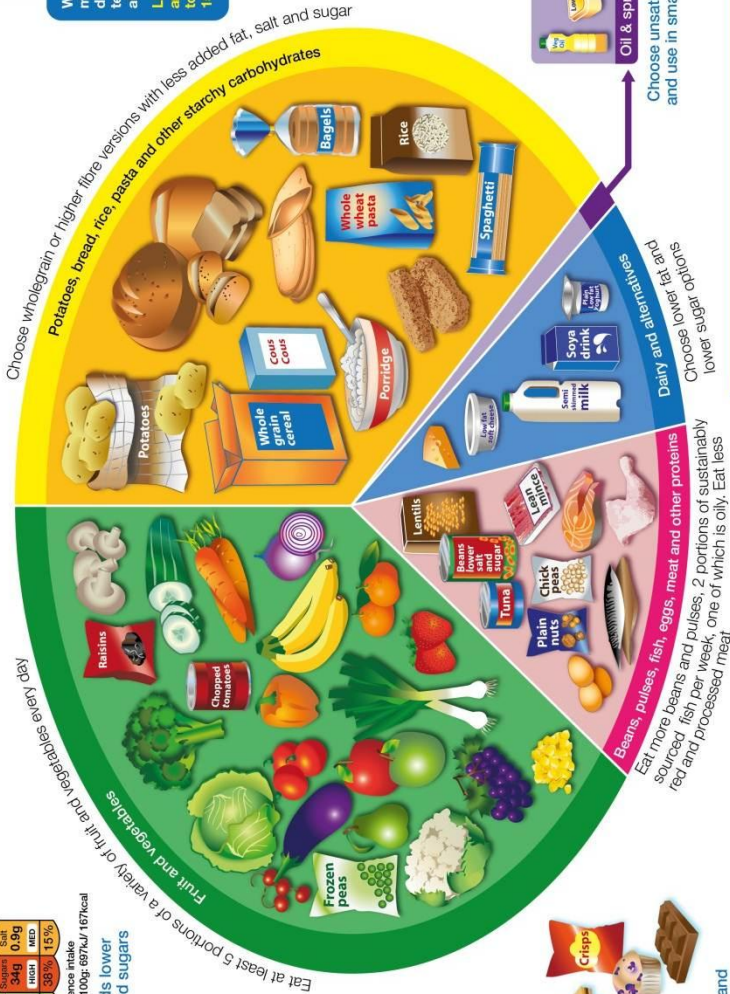
Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (16g) contains		Salt	
Energy	Fat	Low	Med
1048kJ	3.0g	LOW	MED
250kcal	1.3g	LOW	MED
	0.9g	LOW	MED

Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 897kJ/ 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

6-8 a day
Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.
Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.



Eat less often and in small amounts

Online version can be found at www.gov.uk

Hints to Help Weight Loss

You may find the following hints helpful:-

- Eat regularly and do not miss meals – otherwise you may eat more later on!
- Sit down and enjoy meals rather than eating ‘on the run’
- Eat slowly and chew well; tune in to feelings of fullness
- Concentrate on, and enjoy your meals – avoid doing anything else like reading or watching television while eating
- Check food labels for food serving sizes and adjust your portions.
- Try using a smaller plate.
- Make a weekly menu and shopping list and stick to it; to avoid impulse buying try not to shop when you are hungry
- If you have to buy foods that are not on your plan, keep them out of sight and easy reach
- Keeping a food diary (for a week or two) may reveal patterns and habits that you need to change. Work out times when you are more likely to snack or go off course with your eating and try to find solutions e.g. have suitable low calorie snacks available e.g. carrots, celery or other activity like going for a walk, phoning a friend or tidying a drawer!!
- Lapses or ‘bad days’ are normal – try to learn from them. Don’t let a lapse become a relapse where you give up altogether. Get straight back on track with your eating plan-

How to Eat More Fibre

Fibre rich foods will help to fill you up. Try to include fibre-rich foods daily:

- Wholemeal/wholegrain/wholewheat varieties of starchy grains e.g. bread, cereals, pasta and rice
- High fibre breakfast cereals
- Potatoes, boiled or baked with skins
- All types of vegetables and salads including pulses e.g. baked beans, red kidney beans, peas and lentils
- All types of fruit – fresh, tinned in natural juice or stewed without sugar
- Remember to increase your fibre intake gradually and drink plenty of fluids e.g. **8 cups** a day of water or other drinks e.g. tea, coffee or sugar free squash

Alcohol

All alcohol is high in calories so limit your intake to lose weight.

Choose low calorie/sugar free mixers; try a wine spritzer with sparkling water, choose half pints/small can/small glass/single measure; limit the number of drinks.

It is recommended that men and women should not regularly consume more than 14 units per week.

Try to have alcohol free days weekly and do not binge drink.

1 unit = 125 ml glass red/white wine
 25 ml of spirits
 50 ml sherry
 ½ pint normal strength beer

The Importance of each food group

Fruit and vegetables

Vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre are found in this food group. Many contain vitamin C which is important for maintaining a healthy skin and improving iron absorption.

Eating a variety of fruit and vegetables, of at least 5 portions a day, is recommended. These foods are also useful for filling you up when hungry at mealtimes or as a snack, as they are low in energy.

Avoid drinking more than 1 glass of fruit juice per day as it is high in natural sugar. Increasing the amount of cranberry juice you drink is unlikely to reduce your risk of developing urinary tract infections and may cause your weight to increase.

Potatoes, Cereals and other starchy carbohydrates

These include foods such as bread, rice, pasta, potatoes and cereals. They contain starch, fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins. They are also the main source of carbohydrate so a good source of energy. Choosing wholemeal/wholegrain varieties can help you feel fuller for longer as well as maintaining good bowel habits.

It is recommended to have some of these foods at each meal but it is often easy to have more of these foods than we need. To lose weight, aim for a ¼ of your plate to be from this group of foods.

Milk and dairy foods

These foods provide calcium which is important for strong bones and helps prevent osteoporosis. Choose low fat types when possible. The low fat dairy products contain the same amount of calcium and protein but less fat and less energy compared to original products.

Meat, fish and alternatives

These foods, include meat, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, nuts and lentils that provide protein and minerals, such as iron to prevent anaemia.

Foods containing fat

A small amount of fat is needed as part of a healthy, balanced diet. Fat is a source of essential fatty acids and it also helps to absorb fat soluble vitamins, e.g. vitamin A, D and E.

All types of fat are high in calories. We should aim to reduce saturated fat (which increases cholesterol levels) and replace some of these with unsaturated fats. If using spreads/margarine use them in small amounts and choose ones based on olive oil, rapeseed oil or sunflower oil. These are made from polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fat which is healthier for the heart.

Foods high in sugar/salt

These food are not strictly part of a healthy eating diet. A high intake of sugar can lead to weight gain and tooth decay. For occasional treats only use confectionary, pastries, biscuits, fast food/takeaways. Try an artificial sweetener in drinks or on cereal. Limit high salt products like crisps and salted nuts, instead choose a handful of unsalted nuts.

Don't Forget Fluid

Fluid is important to help keep hydrated and the skin elastic reduces the risk of developing pressure sores and prevents constipation. You should aim for 2 litres of fluid per day (or drink 8-10 glasses). Avoid drinks that contain sugar or alcohol as these are high in calories and can also lead to weight gain.

Sugar

Sugar in whatever form (glucose, honey or syrup) is just 'empty' calories. Reducing your sugar intake will help you to lose weight. Check food labels for sugar 'red traffic light' (see page 17) and anything ending in 'ose' on the ingredients list- these are sugars.

How to Eat Less Sugar

- Try to get used to tea and coffee without sugar. If you cannot give up sugar try a sweetener instead e.g. Sweetex, Canderel, Hermesetas or Splenda.
- Opt for plain water or use sugar-free or no added sugar drinks.
- Avoid sugar coated breakfast cereals or adding sugar to cereals. Use small amounts of jams and preserves
- Choose puddings such as fresh or stewed fruit, tinned fruit in natural juice or unsweetened low fat yoghurts.
- Limit chocolate, sweets, cakes and biscuits to occasional treats. These are usually high in fat as well as sugar.

Fibre

Fibre is found in cereal foods, fruits and vegetables – these foods also contain other beneficial nutrients so you should include plenty of fibre in your diet.

There are two types of fibre –

Insoluble fibre – found in fruit skins, fibrous vegetables e.g. carrots, wholemeal/wholegrain flour, breads, bran and cereals.

Soluble fibre – found in oats, rye, beans, peas, lentils and other fruit and vegetable flesh.

Together they are good for bowel health, help reduce cholesterol and improve blood sugar control.

Top Tips for a Healthy Diet and Weight Loss

Fat

Fat is the most concentrated source of energy in the diet. High fat diets are implicated in heart disease and certain cancers, it also plays a role in weight gain. Try different cooking methods and use smaller amounts to lessen fat intake from foods.

How to Eat Less Fat

- Avoid fried foods – instead grill, microwave, steam, poach, dry roast, casserole or bake without adding fat.
- Choose low fat dairy products. Try using skimmed or semi-skimmed milk instead of full fat milk, low fat and diet yoghurts.
- Sparingly use butter, margarine, ghee or palm oil (saturated fats). Swap to lower fat spreads and unsaturated oils.
- Use less hard cheddar cheese. Try reduced fat varieties e.g. edam, cottage cheese, Dairylea Light, low fat soft cheese.
- Eat smaller portions of meat and fish. Cut off visible fat and avoid fatty and processed meats e.g. belly pork, streaky bacon, sausages and salami. Try adding pulses to dishes to reduce the amount of meat used e.g. add chickpeas to a Bolognese.
- Cut down on pies, pastries and dumplings, crisps, sauces, mayonnaise and salad cream, as they contain hidden fats. Try low fat salad dressing, herbs, vinegar and lemon juice for flavour.
- Limit ordinary and low fat oven chips to a small portion as an occasional treat and try 'dry roasting' potatoes.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

Your Body Mass Index (BMI) will tell you if you are a healthy weight for your height. The ranges are based on the relationship between body weight and your increased risk of disease and death.

With a spinal cord injury you are classed as overweight with a BMI greater than 22.5kg/m². This cut off is lower than the general population which classifies overweight with a BMI greater than 25kg/m².

This is because your body composition changes:

- Your muscle mass decreases predominantly from below the level of your injury
- Your bone mass decreases predominantly from below the level of your injury.
- Your fat mass is likely to increase

Generally, a healthy BMI range for you is between 18.5-22.5kg/m². You can use the BMI table on the next page to check your BMI and monitor your weight loss progress.

There is no easy answer to weight loss and no “quick fix”. Weight loss can only be achieved if you use up more energy (calories) than you eat (take in) from food and drink.

There are three ways to achieve this:

- by eating and drinking fewer calories
- by using up more calories by being more active
- a combination of both is the most effective

Body Mass Index Chart (BMI)

Height in m Height in feet/inches

1.93 6ft 4"	9	9	10	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14	15	15	16	16	17	17	18.2	18.7	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	25	26	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	34	35	37	37	40
1.88 6ft 2"	9	10	11	11	11	12	13	13	14	14	15	15	16	16	17	18.1	18.6	19	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	33	35	36	36	37	39	38	42
1.82 6ft	10	11	11	12	12	13	13	14	15	15	16	16	17	18.1	18.7	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	45	
1.77 5ft 10"	11	11	12	12	13	14	14	15	15	16	17	17	18.5	19	19	20	21	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	31	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	44	44	47
1.75 5ft 9"	11	12	12	13	13	14	15	15	16	16	17	18.2	18.9	19	20	20	20	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	28	28	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	35	35	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	45	45	48
1.72 5ft 8"	11	12	13	13	14	14	15	16	16	17	18.2	18.9	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	43	43	45	46	47	50
1.7 5ft 7"	12	12	13	13	14	15	15	16	17	17	18.6	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	33	34	35	37	38	39	40	41	42	44	44	46	47	48	51
1.67 5ft 6"	12	13	13	14	15	15	16	17	17	18.6	19	20	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	35	37	38	39	40	42	43	44	45	46	48	49	50	53
1.66 5ft 5.5"	12	13	14	14	15	15	16	17	18.1	18.8	19	20	21	21	22	23	23	24	25	26	26	27	28	29	29	30	31	31	32	33	34	34	35	36	37	39	39	41	42	43	44	46	47	48	50	50	54
1.65 5ft 5"	12	13	14	14	15	16	16	17	18.3	19	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	33	33	34	35	35	36	38	39	40	41	43	44	45	47	47	49	50	51	55
1.62 5ft 4"	13	14	14	15	16	16	17	18.2	19	19	20	21	22	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	35	36	37	38	39	41	41	43	44	45	47	48	49	51	52	53	57
1.6 5ft 3"	13	14	15	15	16	17	17	18.7	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	35	36	37	38	39	40	42	42	44	46	46	48	50	50	52	53	54	58
1.57 5ft 2"	14	15	15	16	17	17	18.6	19	20	21	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	30	30	31	32	33	34	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	42	43	44	46	47	48	50	51	52	54	55	56	60	
1.52 5ft	15	16	16	17	18	19	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	38	39	40	41	42	43	45	46	47	49	51	52	53	55	56	57	59	60	65
1.47 4ft 10"	16	17	18	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	39	37	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	48	49	50	52	54	55	57	59	60	62	63	64	69
1.34 4ft 5"	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	57	60	61	63	65	66	69	71	72	74	76	77	83
1.21 4ft 2"	23	25	26	27	28	30	31	32	34	35	36	38	39	40	42	43	45	46	47	49	50	51	53	54	56	57	58	60	61	62	64	65	66	68	71	73	75	77	80	81	84	87	88	91	84	95	102
Weight in lbs	77	81	85	88	92	97	101	106	111	115	119	124	128	133	137	141	146	150	155	159	164	168	172	177	181	186	190	194	199	203	208	212	216	221	230	238	243	252	261	265	274	282	286	295	304	308	330
Weight in kg	35	37	39	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	104	108	110	114	118	120	124	128	130	134	138	140	150

Key	
	Underweight <18.5
	Normal 18.5-22
	Overweight 23-25
	Obese 26-39
	Morbidly Obese >40