

Get to your healthy weight - and stay there!



According to Monash University, around 14 million Australians are either overweight or obese. Obesity has doubled in just 20 years. If we carry on this way, by 2025, nearly 80 per cent of all adults and a third of children will be overweight or obese – figures which are mirrored in New Zealand. Even scarier is the picture of health for our children – by the time that kids reach the age of 20 or so, their life expectancy will be shorter than other generations simply due to being so heavy.

Overweight: the new smoking?

Being overweight can seriously damage your health, so much so that being overweight has now overtaken smoking as the leading cause of premature death and illness in Australia. Being too heavy affects your body in very many ways – it stresses your bones and joints, reduces mobility and triggers fatty liver. It's also a major cause of type 2 diabetes – a

serious condition that if uncontrolled can lead to nerve damage, amputation and even blindness!

So, eating well, exercising regularly and getting into a healthy weight range are all essential for good health.

There's no magic remedy for losing weight – it's the same as it has always been. You have to consume fewer calories and burn more.

The healthy way to do this is to eat low-fat protein with every meal, increase fibre – especially from fresh fruit and veggies – whilst cutting your intake of saturated fat, sugar and salt (which is linked with hypertension). It's also very important to choose carbohydrates that are wholegrain and have a low glycaemic index (GI).

Let's talk GI

GI is a ranking system for carbohydrates. Low GI foods are best because they supply glucose units linked together in a large and complex form (you may have heard of the term complex or starchy carbohydrates?).

It takes your body time to break these down into tiny glucose units – which is the form that your body and brain cells need for fuel. And, as glucose is released slowly and steadily in a way that your body can handle, you get long-lasting fuel for body and mind.

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Carbohydrate foods are given a GI ranking ranging from zero to 100. So:

- Low GI = 55 and under (these are the best choice)
- Medium GI = 56-69 (choose these in preference to high GI foods and drinks)
- High GI = 70 and above (try to limit how much of these you consume).

You could say that high GI foods and drinks are already digested; the tiny glucose molecules are small enough to quickly enter your bloodstream. When your body detects that your blood glucose is raised (the body tries very hard to keep it within a normal range), the hormone insulin is released to reduce blood glucose levels by taking the glucose into cells. The rapid surge in blood glucose after consuming sugar can mean that too much insulin is produced resulting in a sugar low. And it's that low blood glucose that will send you running for yet another high-GI food or drink. And so, the cycle continues...

Choosing mostly low GI helps to keep your body and your mind on a steadier level helping to prevent sugar cravings, spiking and crashes...

What is metabolic syndrome?

Being overweight and not being active can trigger metabolic syndrome. Also called Syndrome X, Metabolic syndrome is a condition that's characterised by the production of large amounts of insulin which the body can't use properly. Insulin tries to take glucose from the blood into body cells where it provides fuel for cell processes. And, by doing this, it helps to keep blood glucose levels within narrow concentrations. But when insulin can't do its job properly, glucose circulates in the blood. This is insulin resistance when insulin is produced but just can't do its job.

And, even though you may not have any symptoms, high blood glucose levels can be detected with a medical test. High concentrations of glucose don't belong in the

blood and overtime, this can damage tiny blood vessels and delicate nerves. It can have a real and serious impact on your health.

What is central obesity?

Having too much fat around your middle – central obesity – is a major sign of metabolic syndrome. The fat is wrapped deeply around your vital organs and is called visceral fat. We all need a certain amount of visceral fat but too much can risk your health.

That's because visceral fat is much more metabolically active than the subcutaneous fat (the stuff around your bottom that wobbles), which is a storage material. Visceral fat produces chemicals that trigger inflammation. And it's this kind of internal inflammation which is strongly linked with type 2 diabetes and other chronic (long-term) conditions such as heart disease.

Your ethnicity and gender affect your likelihood of central obesity (more men are prone to it but women are more likely to get central obesity especially after their menopause).

Generally speaking, if your waist measures 94 cm or more (men) or 80 cm or more (women), you probably need to lose some weight. If you are a man of South Asian, Chinese, Asian-Indian, Middle Eastern or Central American heritage, you are more at risk if your waist measures 90 cm or more. Recommended waist measurements are being investigated to be useful for all ethnic groups – because of typical body build, they are likely to lower for Asian men compared with Caucasian men and higher for people of Pacific Islander heritage.

So what can you do? Getting more active and enjoying a healthier diet will help you lose excess body fat, and reduce your weight.

Aerobic exercise

Start slowly – try one, two, five minutes of skipping and build it up at your own pace until you can hop, skip or jump for half an hour. Remember, if you have any medical conditions or if you haven't exercised for a while, speak with your doctor first. An experienced personal trainer can help – or look for local classes in your area.

Target abdominal fat by working your whole core. Muscle exercises, yoga and Pilates can help but blasting away total body fat with aerobic exercise is also very efficient.

Build muscle

Muscle takes up much less space than fat and it requires a lot more calories just to exist. So, increasing your muscle-to-fat ratio cuts body fat and gives you great shape and definition. Include weight-training exercises into your weekly routine to build muscle – work towards two to three half-hour sessions per week and you'll see the results fast!

Diet

Around 70 per cent of your weight is due to what you eat and drink and 30 per cent is down to how much and how well you exercise. So, watch your portion sizes, cut down on sugars



and saturated fats, and watch what you drink. Juices, soft drinks and alcohol are loaded with calories so be sure to be aware before you make the conscious decision. Drink lots of water as sometimes, you can mistake hunger for thirst. Cut out fruit juices and sugary cordials etc.

Replace your meals with Nutrimeal™

Kick-start your weight-loss by replacing all three meals for five days with a **Nutrimeal™**. Yes, it can be a challenge. But it may be just the jump-start you need!

This regime provides just 690 calories from three **Nutrimeals** daily and add one **USANA Protein Snack** (160 calories) plus one piece of fruit (100-150 calories) and lots of green veggies (spice them up with pepper and a little soy or chilli).

Nutrimeal contains a range of proteins, healthy fats, low GI carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals – it's a low-calorie meal-in-a-glass. Combined with exercise and a healthy diet, it's a great choice if you want to drop some kilos or you want to focus on low GI eating (**Nutrimeal** has a glycaemic index of just 25 that is certified by the Glycemic Index Foundation. Check out the GI of foods on: www.gisymbol.com.au/foods.html). It is also great if you just don't want to think about food and portions as you works towards or maintain a healthy weight.

Try taking just **Nutrimeal** and a **USANA Protein Snack** plus a piece of fruit and lots of steam green veggies for five days. Then, switch to two **Nutrimeals** a day plus one low GI meal and healthy snacks for 4-8 weeks. Then, maintain your weight with one **Nutrimeal** daily, two healthy low GI meals and healthy snacks.

Nutrimeal: other benefits

- A good source of fibre. Don't forget to take plenty of fluid to ensure that fibre can work properly.
- High in protein. The fibre satisfies your hunger in a physical way, protein is essential for muscle growth and repair.
- Fortified with vitamins and minerals. A healthy meal should contain a mix of these not just to top up your body stores, but because many of them work together to help enhance body processes and help keep you healthy.

What is a healthy meal?

Load up half of your plate with veggies – not the fried or cheese- or mayo-drenched kinds.

Protein foods (low-fat) should make up a quarter of your plate.

The other quarter should be low GI carbs – like brown or basmati rice or wholemeal pasta, quinoa or wholegrain breads.

What is insulin resistance?

Eating too many high GI foods and drink and being overweight can trigger a condition called insulin resistance. The pancreas secretes more and more insulin to try and maintain blood glucose levels to within narrow limits but the cells become resistant to its action and blood glucose levels build up.

High levels of blood glucose can be detected via blood testing and urine testing – signalling the presence of glucose which spills over into the urine. This can result in damage to tiny blood vessels increasing the risk of heart and blood vessel diseases.



One recent study funded by Diabetes UK found that drastically cutting calories helped overweight people get healthier. Study participants consumed just 800 calories per day (each **Nutrimeal** provides around 230 calories so three shakes plus one **USANA Protein Snack** provides around 850 calories). After some months the researchers found that the body started to become more responsive to insulin (you should not follow this kind of drastic eating schedule unless under medical supervision).

Newcastle University's Professor Roy Taylor believes that the benefits were seen when visceral fat was cut and so the body began to respond to insulin again. Visceral fat is thought to clog up the pancreas (where insulin is produced) and liver which can get congested due to large amounts of triglycerides - a type of fat, from too much sugar/fat/alcohol. This cuts insulin production and stops it from being used properly.

By drastically dropping the calories, your body switches into starvation mode so that fat is burned from the vital organs. This frees up the organs so they can do their job properly again.

Remember to exercise for between 30-60 minutes a day, to build lean muscle and burn more fat.



Buddies are best!

Studies have shown people who lose weight and get healthy in a group are more likely to lose weight and keep it off. If you're really committed to getting healthier, the mutual support – and mutual accountability – will help you reach your goals.

Other suggestions:



Add extra fibre with a teaspoon or two of **Fiber Plus™**



Add extra protein with **SoyaMax™**



Add **USANA Probiotic** to help your healthy bacteria flourish



Try the liver health tonic, **HepaPlus™** – it contains the liver tonic milk thistle and the potent anti-inflammatory, turmeric.



Go Nuts' n' Berries™ – low in calories and made with nuts for healthy fats, and contains super foods (cranberries and chia seeds).

* Vitamin supplements should not replace a balanced diet. Use only as directed. Always read the label.

