

Eating

The old saying “we are what we eat” is very relevant today. Over 60% of people in the UK are overweight or obese, and this is linked to cancer, heart disease and strokes. It is now the second most common cause for cancer after smoking.

There is a great deal of advice about what you should and shouldn't eat and this can be very confusing. The broad principles of healthy eating are:

- To eat fresh unprocessed food (eg vegetables, meat, fish, fruit, nuts, salad)
- To avoid sugary foods – these are addictive and are hidden in processed foods.
- To convert “white” foods to wholemeal/brown where possible (eg bread, pasta, rice)
- “5 a day” – aim to eat at least 5 vegetables/fruit per day. This should include 1-2 pieces of fruit and the rest vegetables. Try and eat different colours of veg/fruit to get more nutrients (“eat the rainbow”). Frozen and tinned vegetables count too.
- Reduce portion size – try a smaller plate
- Make a meal plan and consider batch cooking (for the fridge or freezer) to help you stay on track and save money.

<https://www.activenorthtyneside.org.uk/health-eating/> - a useful video on healthy eating and a link to the 12 week healthy eating programme.

BBC Good Food is a free website/app which can give healthy practical recipes and advice.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/seven-nights-healthy-budget-family-suppers>

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/budget-meals-one>

Sugar has been shown to cause increases in insulin which causes the body to store it as fat. This causes a drop in sugar leading to cravings for sugar, sometimes feeling “shaky/tired/hungry” and so more sugar is eaten. This leads to big swings in sugar levels and increases the risk of diabetes, heart disease and obesity.

Children – Healthy 4 life is a free family healthy lifestyle programme to help children and families to make positive changes to maintain a healthy weight. The clubs run once a week for 8-10 weeks. Please see the link below for more information.

<https://www.activenorthtyneside.org.uk/get-active/active-families/healthy-4-life/>

Family health - <https://www.nhs.uk/change4life> - great ideas for exercise and healthy eating.

You can also contact Active North Tyneside for further information about free weight loss and activity programmes. Ring 0191 643 7171.

