NHS choices
www.nhs.uk

Losing weight

Getting started - Week 4

You're four weeks into your journey – keep going! This week we'll be tackling food cravings and snack temptation.

If you've increased your activity levels, you may feel like a snack or two to keep you going between meals. There's actually nothing wrong with snacking if you're hungry but avoid grazing.

A healthier snack will help you beat your cravings and keep your energy levels up between meals. Our 100-calorie healthier snacks will help you keep on top of your calories and keep temptation at bay.

Laura's diary

Week 4

I don't know about you but I find it hard not to snack between meals, especially when I've been exercising that day.

My go-to snacks include flavoured rice cakes, low-fat yoghurt and fruit, low-fat cottage cheese and oatcakes.

To avoid snacking on unhealthy foods, I don't have any biscuits, chocolate, sweets or other high-calorie junk foods at home.

I try to plan my snacks for each day of the week, and look up the calories online beforehand so I don't have to do it each day.

I try not to fight the urge to snack because I know it'll turn into a craving for some high-calorie comfort food.

Your actions for Week 4

- To avoid temptation, plan your snacks for each day of the week. If you work, take a day's portion along with you
- Don't forget your daily calorie intake – 1,400kcal for women and 1,900kcal for men
- Keep moving! If you didn't manage 150 minutes last week, try to achieve it this week
- Look for easy ways to burn calories as part of your daily routine. Check out the tips in this pack

Did you know?

Some people need a snack between meals to maintain energy levels, especially if they are very active.

Choosing fruit or vegetables instead of crisps, chocolate and other high-calorie snacks will help you replace lost energy without putting on weight.

✓

Week 4

NHS choices
www.nhs.uk

Workplace diet traps

We spend on average about a third of our day at work, so it makes sense to give what we eat during working hours some careful consideration.

All too often our workload, stress, tiredness, lack of time and temptation combine to derail our best intentions.

With a bit of planning, you can use snacks and lunch to keep your diet on track, your energy levels up and even save a bit of money.

Here are 10 tips to make workplace eating healthier for you:

Eat breakfast

This should be your mantra. A healthier breakfast will set you up for the day and stop you becoming hungry before lunch. If you're not hungry before leaving home, have breakfast at work.

Bring your own

Home-cooked food is often lower in calories and fat and cheaper than food bought on the high street. If sandwiches aren't your thing, you could cook extra in the evenings and take the leftovers to work, saving you money.

Drink water

Drinking water regularly may help keep hunger pangs in check. You should aim to drink about six to eight glasses (1.2 litres) of fluid every day.

Plan your snacks

Keep a healthier snack within reach, such as fruit, veg (e.g. carrot sticks and reduced-fat hummus dip) or homemade popcorn (without fat, sugar or salt).

Go for wholegrain

When making sandwiches, go for wholegrain bread, which is more filling than white bread, and will keep you feeling fuller for longer. Wholemeal pitta bread and bagels are alternatives to brown loaf bread.

Go 'low mayo'

Mayonnaise is about 80% fat, and a just few dollops will turn a healthier meal into an unhealthy one. Try lower-fat mayo, reduced-fat hummus, tzatziki or tomato salsa.

Work on your 5 A DAY

A snack is a good opportunity to increase your intake of fruit and vegetables. To count towards your 5 A DAY, each portion of fruit or veg should be 80g.

Swap crisps

If you have a bag of crisps at lunch, go for oven-baked crisps, which can contain up to 70% less fat than regular crisps, or a plain rice cake.

Go lean

Instead of fatty sarnie fillings such as sausages or bacon, go for lean meats, such as turkey or chicken, tuna and salmon or a hard-boiled egg. Remember to go easy on the mayo!

Make soup

Lower-calorie vegetable-based soups are a great way of filling you up and boosting your 5 A DAY intake. Make a batch on the weekend for use during the week.

100-calorie snacks

Try these 100kcal snacks; round figures are simple to track:

- 3 rye crispbreads with 1 tablespoon of reduced-fat soft cheese
- 8 tbsp of salsa and carrot sticks
- 3 tbsp reduced-fat hummus and celery sticks
- 5 tbsp tzatziki and cucumber sticks
- 3 cups air-popped plain popcorn
- 1 thin slice wholemeal toast with 1 teaspoon of peanut butter
- 1 cup of low-calorie instant hot chocolate

For more ideas, read 10 surprising 100 calorie snacks at nhs.uk/100-calorie-snacks.

Burn as you go

Turn your daily routine into an opportunity to get active, feel healthier and burn off some extra calories:

- Get off the bus a stop early
- Go for a brisk walk at lunchtime
- Forget the lift, take the stairs
- Leave the car, walk instead
- Do a daily grocery shop on foot

NHS choices
www.nhs.uk

Food cravings

However good our intentions, when a food craving strikes it can be a real test of our willpower.

There is debate about why we have cravings. They can be caused by our emotions and by such things as such as stress, boredom, habit or insecurity. Use these tricks to help combat cravings:

Don't go hungry
Hunger can make cravings worse. Keep your energy levels topped up with some healthier high-fibre snacks.

Drink water
Some people find water helps to calm cravings. Because water is filling, it can trick your body into thinking it's satisfied. Hot drinks can work too.

Find a distraction
Find an activity to take your mind off your craving. Go for a walk, have a bath, call a friend, listen to music.

Chew some gum
Some people find chewing sugar-free gum curbs their appetite. But don't overdo it as chewing more than 20 sticks of gum over a day can make you ill.

Brush your teeth
Brush your teeth with toothpaste. Once your mouth is minty clean and fresh, some people find it helps to get rid of a craving.

Reduce temptation
You're less likely crave unhealthy foods if they're not readily available – so avoid buying them!

Set a time limit
Cravings are fleeting. Try holding off for 30 minutes and find something to distract you in the meantime. Chances are, your urge will pass once the time's up.

Have a small portion
If the desire just won't go away, give in, but do it the smart way: have a small portion and reduce your calorie intake later to stay on track.

Craving swaps

Try these healthier alternatives – but remember to still count the calories:

SWAP crisps FOR pretzels

SWAP chocolate FOR dates

SWAP fried chips FOR oven chips

SWAP fizzy drinks FOR diet versions

SWAP deep pan pizza FOR thin crust

SWAP sweet and sour FOR stir-fry

SWAP sweets FOR raisins

Super soups

Soup is filling, tasty and can be low in fat. Make a batch at the weekend and store it in portions for lunches during the week. Why not try:

- Mexican bean and tomato: 117kcal
- Chunky chicken and sweetcorn: 244kcal
- Carrot soup: 103kcal

For the recipes, see the Change4Life Meal Mixer at nhs.uk/c4lrecipefinder

How to stretch

Learn how to stretch and cool down after a run or workout to gradually relax, improve flexibility and reduce soreness. This routine should take about five minutes.

nhs.uk/stretch

NHS choices
www.nhs.uk

Week 4 food and activity chart

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Food	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**	**Food**
Total calories:	*Total calories:*	*Total calories:*	*Total calories:*	*Total calories:*	*Total calories:*	*Total calories:*
☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗
Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*	Oops! *Unplanned snacks or drinks*
Your 5 a day	**Your 5 a day**	**Your 5 a day**	**Your 5 a day**	**Your 5 a day**	**Your 5 a day**	**Your 5 a day**
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Activity	**Activity**	**Activity**	**Activity**	**Activity**	**Activity**	**Activity**
Total minutes:	*Total minutes:*	*Total minutes:*	*Total minutes:*	*Total minutes:*	*Total minutes:*	*Total minutes:*
Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins	Aerobic exercise mins
☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗
Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins	Strength exercise mins
☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗	☐ ✓ ☐ ✗

Weekly summary

Start of the week

Weight	Waist
kg/lbs	cms/in

Aerobic exercise: ☐ 10 mins ☐ ☐ 30 mins ☐ ☐ 60 mins ☐ ☐ 90 mins ☐ ☐ 120 mins ☐ **150 mins +**

Your weight loss tracker - Record your weight and waist size at the start and end of each week to help you stay on track

1 session on 2 or more days a week

Strength exercise: ☐ mon ☐ tues ☐ wed ☐ thurs ☐ fri ☐ sat ☐ sun

End of the week

Weight	Waist
kg/lbs	cms/in