



Health eating advice after stroke



The link between health & weight

The link between health and weight



Maintaining a healthy body weight is important for your health and wellbeing:

- Being overweight can lead to health problems including diabetes, heart disease and stroke.
- Being a healthy weight is about watching your portion sizes, eating a healthy, balanced diet and being active.
- If diet and weight loss advice was given to you before you left hospital continue to follow that advice at home.
- Weight management programmes should include advice on increasing physical activity that is appropriate and sustainable.
- You should always seek medical advice before starting a weight loss plan.



**Unhealthy diet and increased
health risks**

Unhealthy diet and increased health risk



The interaction between cholesterol, high blood pressure and smoking create the biggest risk for further strokes and other health conditions.

Changing to a healthy diet has an important role to play in reducing the risk of further strokes and diabetes as well as having a positive effect on lowering cholesterol levels and blood pressure.

Maintaining successful changes to diet (and other lifestyle factors) is influenced by many things including readiness to change, financial issues, food preferences and cultural influences.

Being overweight increases the risk of developing hypertension and diabetes. A reduction in weight, even a small reduction, can have significant health benefits.

Cholesterol



Cholesterol



What is cholesterol:

- Cholesterol is a fatty, waxy substance mainly produced in your liver.
- It is also found in some foods like red meat and full-fat dairy products.
- Your body needs cholesterol to help make cells. Cholesterol is also needed for digestion and helps to make important hormones and vitamin D.
- There are two types of cholesterol – one is good and the other is bad.

Good and bad cholesterol

Good cholesterol is good because:

- It helps to break down and recycle or get rid of your bad cholesterol.

Bad cholesterol is bad because:

- Too much of it can cause fatty patches to build up along the walls of your arteries. These patches can cause your arteries to become narrow or blocked. This makes it difficult for your arteries to carry blood around your body. Depending on which arteries are affected, this can lead to a heart attack or stroke.

To reduce your risk of serious health problems you should:

- Have a low level of bad cholesterol in your blood and a higher level of good cholesterol.

Importance of lowering Cholesterol



Each serving (150g) contains

Energy (kJ)	Fat	Protein	Sugars	Salt
11%	13g	5.6g	0.8g	0.7g
	25%	11%	<1%	12%

of an adult's reference intake



Increased cholesterol is associated with increased risk of future vascular events including stroke:

- A drug called a statin can be used to lower cholesterol.
- Statins are a family of drugs.
- Statins are metabolised in the liver.
- Reducing fat intake in diet has been shown to provide significant protection from vascular events.
- Using statins combined with a low fat diet is the optimum treatment option.
- You may have been prescribed a statin if you have had an ischaemic stroke. This was prescribed to reduce the risk of subsequent stroke.



What is a healthy diet?

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is good for your health

By eating the right foods you can:

- Reduce your risk of developing serious health conditions like heart disease, stroke and diabetes.
- Boost your immune system.
- Improve your energy levels.
- Lose weight or stay a healthy weight.

What is a healthy diet



A healthy, balanced diet includes:

- Eating a wide variety of foods to give your body all the essential nutrients and energy it needs.
- A diet that is low in saturated fat, salt and sugar.
- A diet that is high in fruit, vegetables, fibre, nuts, whole grains (for example, oats and brown rice).
- A diet that is high in pulses (for example, lentils and beans).



How to eat more healthily

How you can eat more healthily 1

Aim to:

- Reduce your fat intake: especially saturated fats.
- Reduce your salt intake: high salt intake can contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke.
- Reduce your sugar intake: high sugar intake leads to weight gain and your risk of diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
- Increase your fibre intake: fibre may reduce your cholesterol level.



How you can eat more healthily 2



Aim to:

- Eat more fruit and vegetables: aim for 5 portions per day. This gives you the vitamins and minerals your body needs to remain healthy.
- Eat more beans and pulses: and less red and processed meats.
- Eat at least 2 portions of fish a week: including 1 portion of oily fish like mackerel.

Food groups



What are the right food (groups) to eat?



The right food groups:

- Fruit and vegetables.
- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates (preferably wholegrain or higher fibre options).
- Dairy and alternatives (including lower fat, lower sugar options such as semi-skimmed milk, low fat yoghurt and cottage cheese or alternatives such as soy or almond).
- Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins.
- Oils and spreads.

Portion size



Know your portion sizes



Know what counts as a portion of fruit and vegetables:

- 'One portion' is equal to: one banana, 2 plums, a couple of broccoli florets, a carrot, a handful of strawberries, a cereal-bowl size of salad or 2 tablespoons of peas.
- Dried, canned and frozen fruit and vegetables count towards your total.
- Limit fruit juice and smoothies to 150ml per day – the sugar in these drinks is digested faster and can cause tooth decay.
- Beans and pulses also count as a serving.
- Potatoes do not count as they are carbohydrates.

things to consider



Things to consider



Check food labels: it's important to know how much fat, sugar and salt is in your food.

Choose healthier cooking methods, for example, steaming, boiling, baking or grilling instead of frying and using fat.

If you eat between meals, choose healthy snacks such as fruit, unsalted nuts or unsalted popcorn.

Stay hydrated! It is also important to keep your body well hydrated. Try to drink 6-8 cups of non-alcoholic fluid a day (water, milk, sugar-free drinks, tea, and coffee count), even if it means an extra visit to the toilet.

Always try to eat breakfast.

Do regular physical activity.

Eatwell guide



The interactive Eatwell Guide

Explore the interactive Eatwell Guide:

- It highlights how much of what we eat overall should come from each food group to achieve a healthy, balanced diet.
- Click on the link below to explore interactive eating well advice from the NHS:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>



Information used to create this resource

Information used to create this resource has been taken with kind permission from:

- CHSS Healthy Eating essential guides Salt, Cholesterol, Healthy Eating, Healthy Weight available: <https://www.chss.org.uk/resources-hub/>

Other websites are also referred to/signposted in this resource include:

- NHS Eatwell guide available: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/the-eatwell-guide/>
- NHS Inform: [/https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/nutritional/obesity](https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/nutritional/obesity)
- Scottish Health Survey: main report 2018, revised 2020.

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