

# WAYS OF EATING



FACT: Extra virgin olive oil improves blood sugar levels.  
Serve two tablespoons of olive oil on your salad or vegetables to reap the benefits.

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Personalised plan



## Goals and outlook

Your goal of losing 4-5kg in order to get back to your ideal weight is certainly achievable. You've successfully lost weight in the past and maintained that loss, so you are well motivated to succeed.

A change in your exercise routine, a few more treats and snacks and eating out frequently with friends has led to some creeping weight gain, you've noticed this in increased body fat around the middle.

You've got good awareness of what is responsible for this weight gain and you are motivated to get back on track, so it should be possible for you to get much closer to your goal weight in time for your holiday.

With a willingness to stick to your healthy way of eating, reduce your carbs, watch your eating when out socially and in the evenings, it's realistic to expect a weight loss of 2-3 kg in the 4 week period before your holiday. You may be able to achieve more than this with very strict adherence to a low carb way of eating and regular HIIT exercise regimen, but it can be difficult however, to predict exact results, especially when the amount of weight you need to lose is quite small.

You generally eat a healthy, balanced diet and you've found a way of eating and exercising that works for you. You've got a clear understanding of your triggers for overeating/making poor choices. My suggestions below will help you to regain control of your eating habits and boost your motivation to reach your goal weight.



## Nutrition

You have a good understanding of nutrition and are committed to making healthy choices, most of the time. You have developed a way of eating which supports your health and weight goals but you struggle at times to balance this with your social life and desire to treat yourself after a hard day or heavy workout.

### Keep it up

- You've made a commitment to getting **plenty of vegetables each day**
- Your meals are **well balanced and healthy**
- You eat plenty of **healthy fats** each day
- You eat **quality protein** with each meal
- Your **sugar and refined carb** intake is generally low and you fuel up for exercise on complex carbs

### Keep an eye on it

- Nuts, cheese and protein cookies** are good choices for snacks, but aim to leave time between meals where possible.
- Alcohol** intake - this week you were within the recommended limit but a few more glasses a week could take you over.
- Variety** - I can see that you have created a healthy way of eating to fit in with your time commitments, but lack of variety can lead to boredom and missing out on the full range of nutrients.

### Let's work on it

- Variety.** Variety is necessary for optimal nutrient intake: From your food diary, I can see only 5 different types of vegetables eaten over the course of a week. Aim to introduce a new vegetable each week. Eat a rainbow of different colours and types. It's wonderful that you are getting a portion of green vegetables in your morning smoothie, but could you make a change from spinach sometimes? Kale, watercress, rocket or beetroot (I've included links to some recipes I think you will enjoy). It's great to see that you are cooking from scratch most weekdays and you take a home prepared lunch to work each day.

Would you be prepared to widen your repertoire of recipes to get more variation? Eating the same things each day can be convenient, but could lead to boredom. I wonder if your tendency to need frequent treats and to indulge on evenings out could be linked to eating for convenience and health rather than pleasure. Work on finding ways to prepare healthy foods that you really enjoy eating.

- **Water.** Hydration: drink plenty of water each day, especially on days when you work out.
- **Time between meals.** Leaving time between meals, reducing snacking. Try to leave at least 3 hours between eating episodes to enable your insulin levels to fall between meals. Try to keep snacks to only one or two occasions a day.
- **Healthier snacks.** Choosing healthy snacks if needed. Choose low carb, nutritious snacks such as a small handful of nuts, 2 squares of very dark chocolate, cheese on parmesan shortbread (recipe in the program Library), celery and cream cheese, cheese crisps (recipe in the Library)
- **Eating out - choices.** Making healthier choices when eating out with friends where possible. Aim to choose dishes where the carb elements can be ignored or removed (most restaurants are happy to make changes like swapping chips for an extra portion of vegetables). Stick to two (or one) courses: have a starter and main and skip the dessert. Ask serving staff if sauces include flour or sugar. Beware of soups that have been thickened with potato or flour.
- **Eating out - portion size.** Increasing awareness of portion size when eating out: try to check in with your body periodically to notice how full you are and try to stop when you feel comfortably full. It's common to overeat when eating socially as we are distracted from what we are eating and tend to eat similar amounts to those around us rather than noticing when we've had enough.
- **Late night eating.** Aim to stop eating by 8 or 8.30 pm. Avoid snacking after dinner. Look to have at least 12 hours overnight with no food.
- **Cutting sugar and refined carbs.** You are aware that keeping your carbs low is an effective way for you to lose weight, keep this in mind when making choices. Think of the carbs as providing next to no nutritional value and first fill half of your plate with vegetables, then add a good palm-sized piece of meat or similar protein source. Maybe you don't need any carbs at this point! Be aware of the many ways that sugar can creep into the diet. Our article on Kicking the sugar habit gives some good tips.
- **Alcohol.** Limit to 2 nights per week.



## Mind

Food is on your mind a lot, unless you are distracted, and you feel hungry often. You have a tendency to snack out of boredom and you feel the need to treat or reward yourself after a hard day or heavy workout. Eating out and drinking is an important part of your social life and you are aware that you often struggle to make good choices and often eat more than you need to. You give in easily to temptation and pressure to eat more than you need/foods you wouldn't normally choose and this leads to feelings of guilt and remorse. You are relatively happy with your current body image and weight, but would feel better at your optimal weight.

### Keep it up

- Limiting eating out** socially to weekends
- Noticing how you feel** after making poor choices or overeating

### Keep an eye on it

- Non-hunger eating: tendencies to **eat out of boredom or as a reward or treat**
- Noticing how **eating out socially changes your eating behaviour**

### Let's work on it

- Eat out in healthier places.** Consider asking friends for support in meeting your weight loss goals: could you make suggestions for places to eat out which serve healthier low carb options?
- Research menus** before evenings out and choose the best option beforehand. Stick to your choice when you arrive!
- Food cravings.** Use the R.A.I.N exercise for dealing with food cravings (see further information). You've noticed that you pick often at food out of boredom. This is likely not due to true hunger, so the exercise will help you to check in with yourself to see what you really need. Is there a more appropriate way to relieve boredom than eating? Similarly, you could use this method to investigate your tendency to need a treat or reward after a

hard day or a good workout. Look at ways to meet this need without sabotaging your weight loss efforts.

- **Think before snacking.** Practice taking a mindful pause when tempted by available snack foods or desserts when eating out: Give yourself a quiet moment to take a few breaths and think about whether you really want to eat what is on offer and how it will affect your goals if you do. By taking a pause, you give yourself the opportunity to make a conscious choice rather than reacting unconsciously to the cue to eat.



## Life & activity

You have a good work/life balance and make time for being with friends, exercise and relaxation. You sleep well and have developed some strategies for dealing with an often busy and stressful work life. You have a good routine for eating healthily on weekdays, you need to work on making better choices at the weekends if you want to achieve your weight loss goals.

### Keep it up

- Good **healthy eating and exercise routine during the week**
- Good sleep patterns** resulting in waking feeling fully refreshed
- Making time to **socialise, exercise and relax**
- Shopping for healthy, natural foods**
- Cooking from scratch**

### Keep an eye on it

- Going with the flow socially** where food choices and portion sizes are concerned: be mindful of when peer-pressure is pushing you to make unhealthy food choices
- Allowing **stress** to get the better of you: monitor your stress levels and if you find stress building, take time to meditate and steps to reduce stress levels
- Urge to use **alcohol to unwind** after a stressful day: if you find yourself unable to limit alcohol to two days a week and you're having a drink at the end of most days to unwind, consider changing your routine to include a non-food, non-alcohol relaxant, such as a walk in the fresh air or a visit to the gym.

### Let's work on it

- Too busy.** Investigate how you feel about the level of busyness and activity in your life. Read our article 'Are you addicted to being busy' to see if there are any points which are relevant to you!
- Feeling overwhelmed.** Feeling constantly overwhelmed by work over long periods is not ideal. Chronic stress like this is detrimental to long term health and well being and can

contribute to weight gain (or inability to lose weight) particularly to weight gain around the mid-section (visceral fat) Consider using mindfulness techniques to notice when stress levels are high and take measures to reduce them. You may benefit from using an app such as Buddhify (<http://buddhify.com/>) which has specific mini-meditations to use during work breaks and when feeling overwhelmed by stress. You may also find some of our mindfulness exercises useful (you can find them in your program library)

- **Optimal exercise.** Consider using a heart rate variability monitor to ensure that your exercise is taken at times which are optimal to your health. Exercising when the body is stressed or in need of rest is counterproductive to health and weight loss goals. Using an HRV monitor can help you to decide when a workout is optimal or if some relaxation time is more appropriate.

## Action plan

I've created a three step action plan for you based on what I've recommended on the previous pages. You shouldn't try and do everything at once. To help you I've suggested what you should start right now and what you can start later. Once you feel you've mastered one of the actions (ie, it's become a normal habit for you), get started on another. Similarly if you're struggling with one, stop and choose another.

<b>START NOW</b>	<p>Stick to the low carb diet 7 days per week.</p> <p>Allow yourself a high carb treat once a week only *</p> <p>Don't eat between meals, only snack where absolutely necessary and choose healthy low carb snacks. *</p> <p>Drink alcohol on 2 days a week only. *</p> <p>Add a new food each week to increase variety into your diet *</p> <p>Use the R.A.I.N exercise to reduce cravings</p> <p>Review sources of stress and consider what changes you can make to reduce stress levels</p>
<b>TRY THESE NEXT</b>	<p>Avoid late night eating. Aim for a 12 hour fast each night. *</p> <p>Add a green vegetable to your morning shake (5 times per week). *</p> <p>Talk to your friends about choosing healthier eateries</p> <p>Review your attitude to 'busyness'</p>
<b>TRY THESE WHEN YOU'RE READY</b>	<p>Use mindfulness techniques to deal with stress and food cravings</p> <p>Use a heart rate variability monitor to avoid intense exercise when stressed</p> <p>Monitor your thirst levels: when you feel the urge to snack, are you perhaps thirsty instead?</p>

### \* Your personal trackers

I've set-up personal trackers so you can track your weekly progress with these items. In the app, tap 'track' then tap 'tracker settings' and turn on these trackers when you're ready to use them.

## Further information

Smoothie recipes

Parmesan shortbread

Cheese crisps

R.A.I.N exercise

Buddhify

Kicking the sugar habit