

## Who can help you lose weight?

- **In the RUH, Bath area**, there is plenty of help available if you are keen to lose weight and improve your health
- **Talk to your GP**: they are best placed to help find the right services for you
- Many services are available locally, including:
  - **BANES: The Healthy Lifestyle Service** offers free support and advice to help people access services which can enable them to lead a healthier lifestyle. <http://www.sirona-cic.org.uk/services/healthy-lifestyle-service/> (01225 831 852)
  - **Wiltshire**: help to get you more active <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisureandrecreation/sportphysicalactivity/activehealth/physicalactivityreferralprogramme.htm> (0300 4560100)
  - **NHS** healthy lifestyle website, **Change4Life**: <http://www.nhs.uk/Change4Life> (0300 123 4567) and advice <http://www.nhs.uk/Tools/Pages/Losing-weight.aspx>
- **Weight loss** organisations:  
*(some GPs may provide vouchers for free sessions)*  
[www.slimmingworld.com](http://www.slimmingworld.com) (0344 897 8000)  
[www.weightwatchers.co.uk](http://www.weightwatchers.co.uk) (0345 345 1500)

## Losing weight before your operation



### Why and how to lose weight before your operation

Being overweight increases the risk of complications during surgery. If your operation is not urgent, taking time to lose weight before going ahead may be of great benefit to you.

## Why do I need to lose weight?

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About a quarter of UK adults are very overweight (BMI over 30) and the number is rising. Excess weight increases the risk of poor health and being overweight leads to more complications of surgery and anaesthesia.

These risks include:

- Breathing disorders
- Heart failure
- Diabetes
- Blood clots (DVT or deep vein thrombosis)
- Infections
- Increased side effects from medications
- Slower recovery from surgery
- Longer hospital stay.

With mild obesity, the risks are only increased a little, but with greater excess weight, complications are more frequent and serious.

**The good news is that almost all of these risks can be reduced by losing weight.**

In most circumstances, complications can be avoided, by losing weight (even a little) before your operation. If your surgery is not urgent, it may well be worth you delaying your operation to allow you time to lose weight.

## How can I lose weight? 10 top tips

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1. **Keep to your meal routine.** Try to eat at roughly the same times each day.

2. **Go reduced fat.** Choose reduced fat foods (e.g. dairy foods, spreads, salad dressings) where you can. Use high fat foods (e.g. butter and oils) sparingly.
3. **Walk off the weight.** Aim to walk 10 000 steps (equivalent to 60–90 min moderate activity) each day. You can use a pedometer to help count the steps.
4. **Pack a healthy snack.** If you snack, choose a healthy option such as fresh fruit or low calorie yogurts, instead of chocolate or crisps.
5. **Learn the labels.** Be careful about food claims. Look at food labels and choose items containing less than 20g total fat and less than 15g of sugar per 100g.
6. **Caution with your portions.** Do not heap food on your plate (except vegetables). Think twice before having second helpings.
7. **Up on your feet.** Break up your sitting time: stand up for ten minutes out of every hour.
8. **Think about your drinks.** Choose water or sugar-free squashes. Unsweetened fruit juice and fruit smoothies contain natural sugar so limit to one glass a day (200 ml/one-third pint). Alcohol is high in calories; limit to one unit a day for women and two units a day for men.
9. **Focus on your food.** Slow down your rate of eating; try putting your sandwich or knife and fork down between bites. Do not eat on the go or while watching TV. Eat at a table if possible.
10. **Do not forget your 5 a day.** Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day (400 g in total). A portion is 80g or the amount that fits into the palm of your hand.

*Adapted from tips included in International Journal of Obesity (2008) 32, 700–707*