



**PERSONALISED WEIGHT  
MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME  
LIFESTYLE GUIDE**



# The Role of Lifestyle Modifications

This booklet is part of Abu Dhabi's Personalised Weight Management Programme, a general guide designed to help individuals adopt a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle. While the booklet offers science-based recommendations across key areas: nutrition, physical activity, quality sleep, and mental well-being – we know that weight management isn't a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. You will work with your healthcare practitioner to develop a tailored 16-week plan that meets your unique needs and goals.

The guide outlines everyday lifestyle adjustments, balanced dietary strategies, practical movement routines, sleep improvement tips, and essential behavioural health support. It also provides self-monitoring tools, meal planning techniques, and strategies to navigate the emotional aspects of weight changes.

This is not just a guide to losing weight; it is a roadmap to building a balanced, healthier life while reducing the risk of chronic conditions. For example, achieving a 13% weight loss for individuals with obesity or a BMI of 40 can reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes by 41%, sleep apnea by 40%, hypertension by 22%, dyslipidemia by 19%, and asthma by 18%.<sup>1</sup>

Supported by an integrated healthcare system in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, this programme empowers you to take control of your health, improve your quality of life, and achieve lasting, long-term benefits.

## 1. Nutrition

## 2. Physical Activity

## 3. Healthy Sleep

## 4. Mental Support

1. Obesity Action Coalition website. <https://www.obesityaction.org/resources/benefits-of-5-10-percent-weight-loss/>

# Nutrition



## **Follow a balanced, reduced-calorie diet rich in whole foods:**

A balanced diet includes a variety of nutrient-dense foods that provide the necessary vitamins and minerals your body needs while helping manage caloric intake. Work with your healthcare practitioner to understand the right foods and calorie goals for you, and discuss ways to start tracking and understanding your diet more effectively.

### **Whole Foods:**

Choose foods that are minimally processed, such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, seeds, and lean meats. These are higher in nutrients and fiber, keeping you full longer.



### **Reduced-Calorie:**

Start by understanding your daily calorie needs and aim to reduce your intake by 500-750 calories per day to achieve gradual weight loss.



**Example: Instead of sugary cereal, opt for a bowl of oatmeal topped with fresh berries and a handful of almonds.**



**Focus on portion control and mindful eating techniques to prevent overeating:**

Portion control helps manage the quantity of food consumed, while mindful eating encourages awareness of hunger and fullness cues.

**Portion Control:**

Use smaller plates and check serving sizes on food labels. Visual cues, such as a serving of meat being roughly the size of a deck of cards, can help.



**Mindful Eating:**

Eat slowly, savour each bite, and avoid distractions such as television during meals. Pay attention to your body's hunger signals and stop eating when you feel comfortably full.



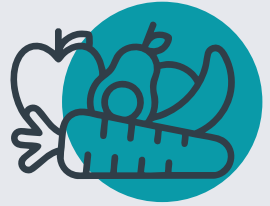
**Example: Serve dinner on smaller plates and savour each bite by putting your fork down between bites. Start with a small portion and only take more if still hungry.**

## **Plan meals to include vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean proteins:**

Planning meals ensures a balanced intake of essential nutrients, which is critical for overall health and energy levels.

### **Vegetables and Fruits:**

Aim for half of your plate to contain colourful vegetables and fruits, which are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber.



### **Whole Grains:**

Replace refined grains with whole grains to increase fiber intake, which can help with satiety and digestive health. Examples include brown rice, quinoa, and whole-wheat pasta.



### **Lean Proteins:**

Include lean proteins like chicken, turkey, fish, beans, or tofu. Proteins help build muscle and keep you feeling full.



**Example: A dinner plate with grilled salmon, a quinoa salad with mixed vegetables, and a side of roasted broccoli.**

## **Limit intake of processed foods, sugars, and saturated fats:**

Reducing these components can improve health outcomes and support weight management.

### **Processed Foods:**

Often high in unhealthy fats, sugar, and salt, processed foods can lead to weight gain and other health issues. Choose fresh or minimally processed options whenever possible.



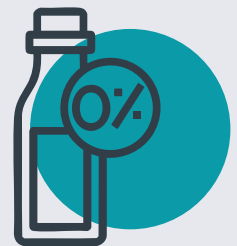
### **Sugars:**

Cut back on sugary drinks, sweets, and desserts. Opt for natural sweeteners like fruit if you need to satisfy a sweet craving.



### **Saturated Fats:**

Replace saturated fat sources, such as butter and red meat, with healthier fats found in foods like avocados, nuts, and olive oil.



**Example: Instead of a fast-food burger, prepare a homemade version using a turkey patty with whole-grain bun topped with lettuce, tomato, and avocado slices.**

# Physical Activity

Engaging in regular physical activity is an important component of a healthy lifestyle. You are encouraged to incorporate movement in a way that aligns with your routine and personal preferences. The following are suggested approaches:



## **Increase daily movement**

Simple habits like walking more, taking the stairs, or stretching regularly can make a real difference over time.

## **Practice moderate physical activities regularly**

This may include activities such as walking at a steady pace, recreational cycling, or any form of movement that elevates your heart rate while still allowing for conversation.

## **Include higher-intensity exercises when appropriate**

When suitable, consider incorporating more vigorous activities such as jogging, swimming, or structured exercise sessions to enhance cardiovascular fitness and muscular strength.

## General Advice to Keep in Mind

### **Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise per week:**

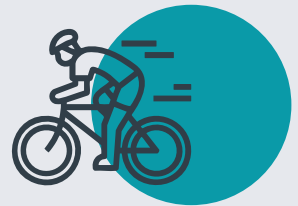
Moderate-intensity exercise raises your heart rate and makes you breathe faster, but you should still be able to talk without too much difficulty. Breaking the exercise into manageable sessions can make it easier to fit into your schedule.

### **Daily Routine Example:**

Walk briskly for 30 minutes, five days a week. This can include walking during your lunch break, in your neighbourhood, or at a local park.



Consider activities like cycling at a casual pace which can count toward your weekly goal.



### **Variation Example:**

- Try a mix of activities: 20 minutes of brisk walking on three days and a 25-minute session of swimming on two other days. This adds up to 150 minutes each week, meeting the minimum guideline for maintaining health and supporting weight loss.
- Include a mix of activities, such as aerobic exercises like walking and swimming, along with strength training.
- Combining aerobic exercises with strength training provides a comprehensive fitness programme that supports weight management and enhances muscle tone, balance, and endurance.

# Aerobic Activities Examples



## **Walking:**

Find a partner or group to walk with for company and motivation.



## **Swimming:**

If you have access to a pool, swimming can be a low-impact, total-body workout suitable for all fitness levels.



## **Cycling:**

Whether on a stationary bike at home or cycling outdoors, this activity is great for cardiovascular health.

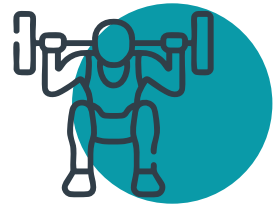


# Strength Training Examples



## Bodyweight Exercises:

Start with exercises such as push-ups, squats, and lunges, performing 2-3 sets of 10-15 repetitions, 2-3 times a week.



## Resistance Bands:

These bands are affordable and versatile, allowing you to perform various exercises to work major muscle groups.



## Weights:

Use free weights or machines at a gym to target different muscles. Begin with lighter weights and gradually increase as you build strength.



# Healthy Sleep



Sleep is essential to regulating the hormones that affect hunger and appetite.

## **Why good sleep is crucial for weight loss?**

- Poor sleep can lower your metabolism, making it harder to burn calories.
- Healthy sleep improves decision-making for healthier meal choices.
- Rested bodies have energy to be physically active, a key part of weight loss.

## **Ways to implement healthy sleep to your lifestyle:**

- Establishing healthy sleep habits can support your weight loss efforts.
- Regular physical activity and avoiding heavy meals before bed can improve sleep quality and weight management.

# Mental Health Support



Paying attention to your mental health is a key factor to staying consistent in your weight loss efforts, aiding in your overall health and wellness journey.

Mental health support and upkeep can help with:

- Controlling emotional eating, leading to better food choices.
- Sustaining motivation to stick with long-term lifestyle changes. Improving self-image.
- Building consistent healthy habits and preventing relapse in your weight loss journey.



The Personalised Weight Management Programme emphasises on the importance of utilising psychologists and mental health professionals to cope with sudden weight changes and emotional eating.



# Additional Factors for Success



## 1. Monitoring and Follow-Up

- Schedule regular consultations with healthcare providers to assess progress and update your plan as required for continued benefits
- Monitor weight, blood sugar levels, and other key health indicators regularly

## 2. Holistic Health

- Ensure adequate sleep and manage stress through techniques like deep breathing and meditation
- Consider psychosocial factors and seek support when needed—mental health is crucial

## 3. Education and Motivation

- Educate yourself about the benefits and limitations of obesity medications
- Set achievable goals and celebrate small victories to maintain motivation



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