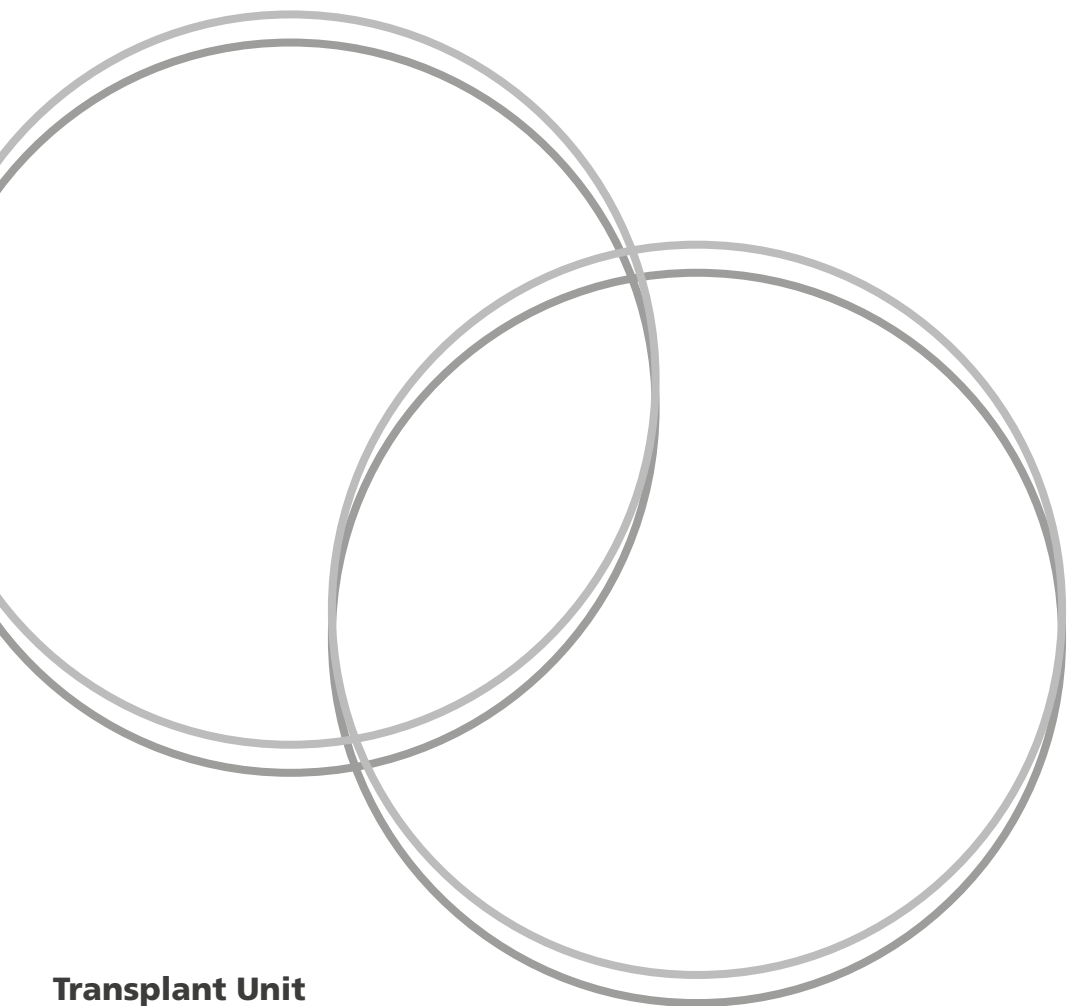




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Healthy Eating After Your Transplant

Information for patients



Transplant Unit

If you have had a transplant and would like advice about healthy eating, then this is the leaflet for you.

Eating healthy for your transplant

After your transplant it is important to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle, to keep your transplant working well.

Weight gain can happen for many reasons after a transplant. A healthy diet can help stop you gaining too much weight and reduce your risk of developing heart disease, diabetes and poor bone health.

Top tips for healthy eating

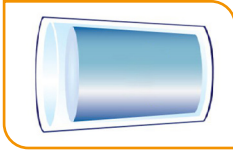
- Eat a variety of different foods.
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day.
- Choose a rainbow of different coloured fruit and vegetables.
- Choose more high fibre foods such as high fibre bread, oats, beans, pulses and lentils.
- Choose lean meat, fish, poultry and unprocessed plant based protein sources such as beans, pulses.
- Use healthy cooking methods (grilling, dry roasting or steaming).
- Follow current alcohol recommendations.
- Don't add salt in cooking or at the table.
- Try to cook from fresh, rather than processed or convenience foods.
- Eat the right amount to be a healthy weight.

The Eatwell Guide

No one food contains all the nutrients we need to stay healthy, so it is important to eat a varied and balanced diet.

The Eatwell Guide (the picture version of this guide is on page 3) shows how we can do this and in what proportions. You don't need to always get the balance right at each meal, but try to get it right over a day or week.

Diagram of Healthy Eating Guide



Fruit and vegetables

Aim for more than 5 portions a day.
Tinned, fresh, frozen and dried all count.

1 portion is 80g which is approximately:

- 1 medium fruit (e.g. apple, banana).
- 2 small fruits (e.g. plums, satsumas).
- A small bowl of salad.
- 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables.
- A handful of grapes or berries.



Starchy foods

- Eat a portion at each meal, e.g. bread, potato, sweet potato, yam, plantain, rice, pasta, noodles, couscous or breakfast cereal.
- Choose high fibre varieties, such as wholegrain pasta, wholemeal bread and brown rice.



Meat, fish, eggs, poultry and alternatives

- Choose lean meat and skinless poultry.
- Eat less processed meat, such as bacon, ham and sausages.
- Eat 2 portions of fish per week, one of which is oily, such as sardines and mackerel.
- Choose poached, boiled or scrambled eggs rather than fried.
- Pulses, peas, soya beans, tofu, lentils, textured vegetable protein and Quorn are good alternatives to meat.



Milk and dairy products

- Aim for 3 to 4 portions a day to meet calcium requirements, e.g. 200mls of milk, 30g of cheese (size of a small matchbox) or 1 pot of yoghurt.
- Choose lower fat varieties.
- If choosing milk alternatives ensure they are fortified with calcium.



Foods containing fat and sugar

- Eat less often and in small amounts.
- Choose unsaturated oils, such as olive and rapeseed oils.



Being a healthy weight

Being a healthy weight helps your transplant to keep working well.

After your transplant, a combination of increased appetite, previous dietary restrictions being lifted and new medications can lead to weight gain, high cholesterol and/or raised blood sugar levels. It is important to maintain a healthy balanced diet and be as active as you can.

The body mass index (BMI) chart (shown on the next page) gives a rough idea of whether you are carrying excess weight for your height. An ideal BMI falls between **18.5 to 25kg/m²**, but even a small amount (e.g. 5 to 10%) of weight loss if you are overweight will produce significant health benefits.

Prevent unwanted weight gain

Some of the anti-rejection medications may make you feel hungry.

- Don't mistake thirst for hunger – have a glass of water and wait 30 minutes before reassessing your hunger.
- You may find brushing your teeth after eating helps put you off eating more.
- Be aware of your portion size - you could try using a smaller plate.
- Try to limit snacks in between meals. Choose low calorie options such as fruit, low fat yogurt, unsalted nuts, plain pop corn.
- Be as active as you can, aim for at least 30 minutes activity every day.
- For a 12 week diet and exercise plan, see the NHS website: www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight

BMI chart

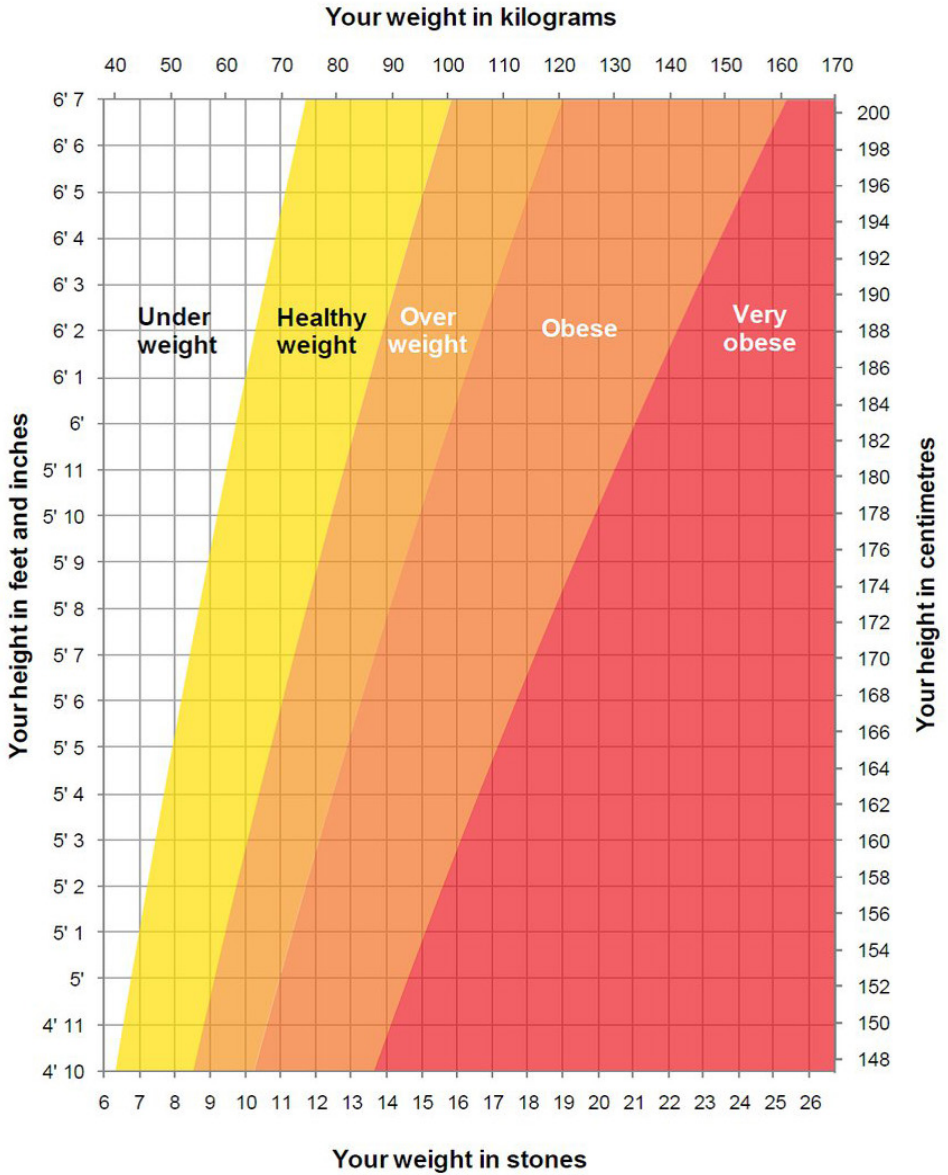


Chart taken from www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/height-weight-chart

If you think you may be overweight and would like further support with losing weight, please speak with your GP, hospital doctor, specialist nurse or dietitian.

Heart health

Following a healthy diet and lifestyle, being a healthy weight and keeping your cholesterol in range, can reduce your risk of developing heart disease.

Cholesterol – is a fatty substance in blood, which is produced naturally in the liver. Some cholesterol also comes from the food we eat, but this doesn't affect our blood cholesterol. There are two main types of cholesterol; one is good and one is bad for heart health.

High density lipoproteins (HDL cholesterol) is often known as 'good' cholesterol as it removes cholesterol from the blood.

Non-high-density lipoproteins (Non-HDL cholesterol) is often known as 'bad' cholesterol because when there is too much, it can build up in your arteries. This can cause them to become narrowed or blocked and increase your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

To help lower your cholesterol you don't need to avoid fats altogether. You should cut down on foods high in saturated fat and replace them with food high in unsaturated fat like vegetable oils (olive, rapeseed and sunflower oil), nuts, seeds, avocado and oily fish.

Sugary food and drinks – eat less sugary foods and drinks helps to achieve a healthier weight and reduce the risk of developing heart disease.

Here are some suggestions that may help you reduce your sugar intake:

- Choose flavoured water, no added sugar squash and sugar free fizzy drinks.
- A small glass of fruit juice or smoothie can count as 1 of your 5 a day, but the remaining 4 portions should come from whole fruit or vegetables.
- If having a snack, choose a portion of fresh fruit, plain biscuits or unsalted nuts.
- If having dessert choose natural yogurt with fruit or sugar free jelly.

Salt

It is important to follow a diet which is low in salt. This helps to reduce blood pressure, which can prevent damage to your transplanted organ, as well as your heart.

Rock salt, sea salt, Himalayan salt and garlic salt all have the same amount of salt content as table salt, so they should also be avoided.

It is recommended to have less than 6g of salt a day. The majority of salt comes from convenience foods and this can easily add up to 9g a day.

Top tips for eating less salt

- Avoid adding salt when cooking or at the table. Instead, flavour food with lemon juice, pepper, garlic, chilli, vinegar, herbs and spices.
- Limit processed meats, such as, bacon, ham, gammon, sausages, pork pies, burgers, salami and corned beef. Choose fresh meats as an alternative, such as chicken, turkey, pork, beef and lamb.
- Choose fresh or unsalted frozen fish, instead of smoked fish, shellfish or processed fish (such as scampi or seafood sticks).
- Choose unprocessed vegetarian protein sources such as beans, pulses, tofu, 'plain' Quorn or soya products.
- Check the food labels on canned foods, such as tinned fish, baked beans and soups and choose those with less salt.
- Limit salty snacks like crisps, salted nuts or Bombay mix. Choose unsalted popcorn or nuts, plain breadsticks, rice cakes or crackers instead.
- Choose reduced salt versions of stock cubes and condiments. Try adding more herbs/flavourings and cooking juices instead.
- Limit ready meals and convenience foods. Try to cook from fresh as often as you can. If this is difficult, then compare food labels and choose the option with the least salt content.
- When eating out, ask the chef or person taking your order for no salt to be added to your meal.

Reading food labels

Most packaged foods display a nutritional grid on the back of the packaging detailing the calorie, protein, carbohydrate and fat content per 100g of the food. Some products include further information on types of fat, sugar, salt, vitamins, minerals and fibre.

Traffic light labels are often displayed on the front of packaging. These labels use red, amber and green colour coding, to help us make healthier choices when shopping.

Try and choose lots of foods with mainly green coding and fewer with amber coding. Try to avoid foods with mainly red coding.

The table below shows high, moderate and low levels of fat, salt and sugars in food.

| | This is high | This is moderate | This is low |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|---------------------|
| Fat | Over 17.5g per 100g or over 21g per portion | 3 to 17.5g per 100g | Under 3g per 100g |
| Saturated fat | Over 5g per 100g or over 6g per portion | 1.5 to 5g per 100g | Under 1.5g per 100g |
| Total sugars | Over 22.5g per 100g or over 27g per portion | 5 to 22.5g per 100g | Under 5g per 100g |
| Salt | Over 1.5g per 100g or over 1.8g per portion | 0.3 to 1.5g per 100g | Under 0.3g per 100g |

Nutrition labels can also provide information on 'reference intakes' (recommended daily allowance, or RDA). These are shown as a percentage and are guidelines for an average person. This can be more complex to follow compared to the colour coded labels. Speak to your dietitian if you would like more information.

Alcohol

Drinking a lot of alcohol can lead to unwanted weight gain and other undesirable health issues. The current recommendation for both men and women is:

- Drink less than 14 units a week.
- If you drink up to 14 units a week spread this out over 3 or more days.
- Try to have a few alcohol-free days in a week.

Although the units of alcohol will depend upon the strength of the drink, the guide below will help you see how many units there are in typical drinks:

| Drink | Units |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| 25ml shot of spirit | 1 |
| Small (125ml) glass of wine | 1.5 |
| Large (250ml) glass of wine | 3 |
| 1 bottle (330ml) of beer/lager | 1.7 |
| 1 pint of beer/lager/cider | 2 |
| 1 pint of strong beer/lager/cider | 3 |

Always check with your pharmacist or doctor whether it is safe to drink alcohol with your current medications.

Useful websites

British Dietetic Association

This website has various fact sheets on different aspects of healthy eating.

Website: www.bda.uk.com/food-health/food-facts.html

British Heart Foundation

This website has lots of information about heart health and keeping well.

Website: www.bhf.org.uk

Consensus Action on Salt and Health

This website provides useful advice for managing your salt intake.

Website: www.actiononsalt.org.uk

Drinkaware

Website: www.drinkaware.co.uk

NHS – diet and exercise plans

Website: www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight

NHS – eating well

Website: www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well

Oxford Kidney Unit

This website has lots of information about the Oxford Kidney Unit for patients and carers.

Website: www.ouh.nhs.uk/oku

OUH Patient Portal Health for Me

Please ask a member of the reception team in Renal Outpatients to sign you up to the patient portal.

Website: www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/patient-portal

How to contact us

If you would like further information about anything in this leaflet, the renal dieticians will be available in the morning during your clinic appointment. Please ask the receptionist to let the dietician know you would like to talk with them.

Renal Dietitians

Telephone: 01865 225 061

8.00am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Please leave a message on the answerphone.

We can only provide advice or information if we care for you under the Oxford Kidney or Transplant Unit (Churchill Hospital).

This includes the network units at Banbury, High Wycombe, Milton Keynes, Stoke Mandeville, Swindon (Great Western Hospital) and Whitehouse Dialysis Unit.

If you do not attend these sites, please contact your local care team for support.

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



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