



LITTLE BIG GUIDE

to weight management

Nutrition | Exercise | Sleep | Stress management

Driving change | in obesity



Your weight management coach:
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From dieting to lifestyle change

Most people who set out to lose weight believe they'll experience lasting success. Many dieters however, end up regaining the weight they initially lost, and their weight yo-yos with each attempt. This doesn't need to happen though. There are steps they can take to improve their chances of successful, lasting weight loss, overcoming the yo-yo effect once and for all.

It may seem counterintuitive, but permanent weight loss is more likely if you concentrate primarily on issues other than weight. Let's imagine that your body weight is like a trailer. Your actions steer the car and the trailer follows. Attempting to pull the trailer without a car would be unwise, as this is extremely difficult and, sooner or later, you're bound to fatigue. Instead, it's worth practicing your driving skills. When you steer the car in the direction you wish to go, the trailer will follow. Instead of focusing on your weight, concentrate on the things you have control over: managing your time, planning your meals, finding a form of physical activity you enjoy, decompressing from stress, getting enough rest, and engaging in meaningful activities.



The best way to start planning and implementing which changes to undertake is to consider the things that impact your well-being. Your body weight is certainly one thing that affects your well-being, but there are also many others. There are things in life that you can control, but many are beyond your control even though they affect your life.



Behavior analysis helps you launch a lifestyle change

Behavior analysis is an exercise that provides an overview of the factors affecting a situation. It helps us see which things we can control and are worthy of our attention. You'll find a behaviour analysis exercise on the following page.



Think about all the things that affect your well-being or body weight. Then consider the following questions:

Exercise 1: BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS

The aim of this exercise is to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that affect the problem at hand (e.g., weight management, lifestyle change). The exercise supports change by helping you see the big picture and highlighting what can and can't be controlled.

Write down the people, situations, and things that impact your weight and well-being. Try to examine this from several angles with as much honesty as possible. Include factors that have a positive impact too. Consider which factors affect each another and highlight the most significant ones. Identify the issues you can't control as well as the ones you can tackle right now. Write down the insights you gain from the exercise and which changes you could begin making today. This exercise works well when done with a friend, family member, or professional. Communicating with another person helps broaden your view of the matter at hand.

What's the most significant factor affecting your weight?

Which factors can you control?

Which factors are out of your control but still affect the overall situation?

Which issue or factor would you like to tackle right now?



What affects your weight?

Successful lifestyle change requires motivation. Uncovering personally relevant reasons to change will help justify the considerable effort required. Body weight, by itself, is rarely a significant issue, but it can certainly affect other aspects of life that deeply matter to you. For many people, important reasons to make a change include experiencing more ease or enjoyment during leisure time or work-related activities, feeling more energetic when playing with their children, or perhaps returning to a meaningful hobby.



Thinking about what's personally important to you builds a foundation for behavior change, providing tremendous support during difficult times. When the reasons underlying your motivation to change are clear in your mind, you can remind yourself why it's worth persisting when the going gets tough.





Write down the things that you consider important in your life.

Exercise 2: VALUE ANALYSIS

The aims of this exercise are to think about the people and activities that are important to you and to consider how they affect your everyday life. Crystallizing your values strengthens motivation and provides guidance towards the things that matter to you most. Finding the most personally significant elements can make lifestyle change feel more meaningful and provide useful support when things feel difficult.

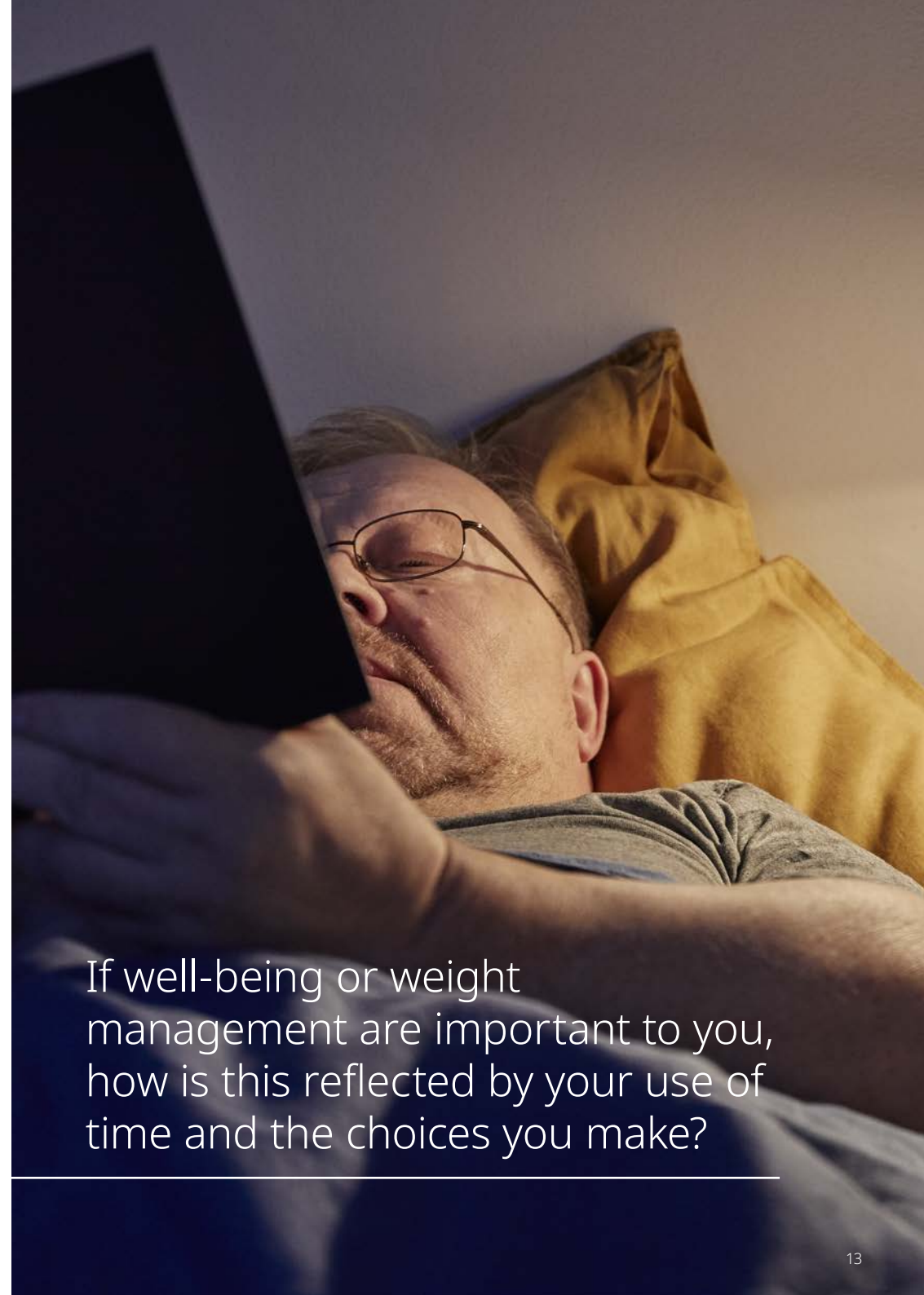
- 1 Each note to the left describes a particular aspect of life. Evaluate the importance of each item on a scale from 1 to 10. (1 = not important at all, 10 = very important.) Write the number on each note.
- 2 You can write other aspects of life that are personally important to you too. Don't rack your brain too hard though. Just jot down the things that come to mind right now. Write one thing on each empty note.
- 3 Consider how effective you currently are at managing each of these issues on a scale from 1 to 10. (1 = completely unsuccessful, 10 = entirely successful.) Write the number next to the note. Which of these values have you been most successful with and which ones are more of a struggle? Which domains are you most interested in and willing to invest your time and effort?
- 4 Next, think about how your weight affects these and other issues that matter to you.

Making values meaningful

Simply thinking about values doesn't precipitate change. Understanding how personal values relate to current behaviors is a necessary next step. Are you living in alignment with your values? How do you divide your time between the things that matter to you? If weight management or well-being are important to you, how is this reflected by your use of time and the choices you make? Can you identify how weight management connects to aspects of life that you consider important? Values become meaningful only when we act upon them on a regular basis.



When making a lifestyle change, you may witness conflicting values in your everyday life. You may have to re-think how to allocate your time and perhaps give up something you enjoy in order to live in a way that supports your well-being. You may have to make time for physical activity, meal planning, and adequate rest. This might require spending less time watching TV or surfing the web. Be "selfish" and block out the time you need for yourself. Learn to say "no" when that's what's needed and start prioritizing your own well-being.



If well-being or weight management are important to you, how is this reflected by your use of time and the choices you make?

This tool will help you with goal setting

SPECIFIC –
Have you defined a clear, specific, straightforward goal?

MEASURABLE –
Can your progress be tracked, measured, or quantified?

ACHIEVABLE –
Is the goal challenging but attainable?

RELEVANT –
Does the goal align with your values and long-term vision?

TIMELY –
Have you set a target date to make sure you're accountable?

Goals and an action plan

The previous sections involved deep dives into the significance of body weight and the nuts and bolts of lifestyle change. Contemplation by itself, however, doesn't cause change. Action fuels change, and it's easier to change your actions if you've set tangible goals.

A house is built one brick at a time and action plans that reflect the value of incremental change set us up to succeed. When making a change, concentrate on just a few things at a time rather than taking on everything at once. Changing routines requires lots of repetition, and attempting to transform multiple routines simultaneously can be overwhelming and unproductive.

It might be useful to think about goal setting on at least two levels:

WHAT'S YOUR LONG-TERM GOAL?

This goal can be a guiding star towards which you travel; an image that reminds you where you're going. For example: My goal is to run with my grandchildren; or to move quickly from my boat to the pier; or to keep up with friends on hikes in the mountains.


WHAT'S YOUR GOAL FOR THIS WEEK OR MONTH?

Short-term goals are more practical and should be formulated concretely. This goal will be updated regularly. For example: My goal is to go to the gym twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and include at least a handful of fruits or vegetables in every meal.

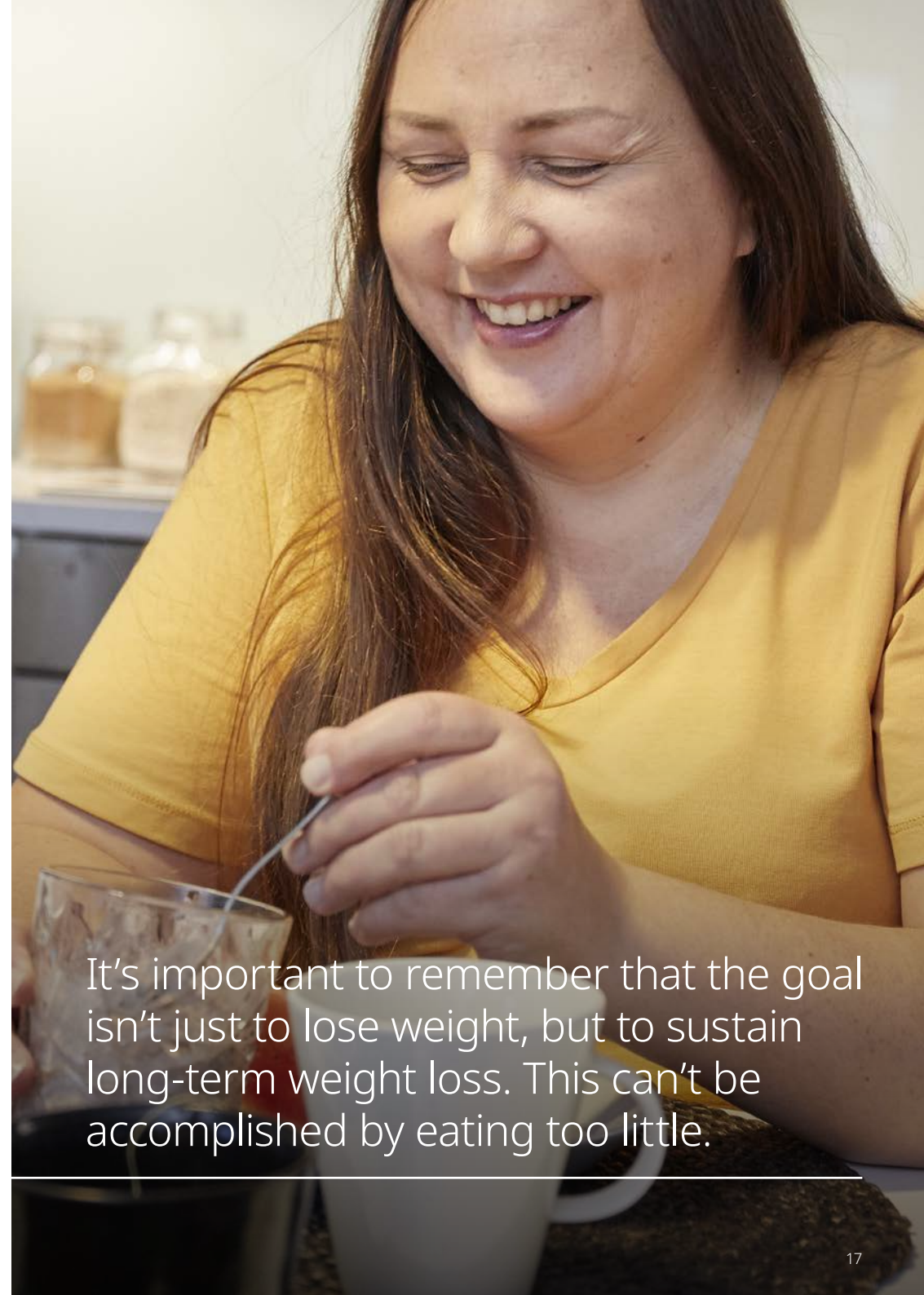
Targeted eating supports permanent weight loss

You've undoubtedly heard that eating less and exercising more leads to weight loss. The truth, however, is much more complex. In reality, the body reacts to significant reductions in energy intake by increasing levels of hunger hormones and decreasing levels of fullness hormones. These hormones powerfully influence appetite and cravings.

Eating too little affects the brain and body in several ways. When people try to lose weight, they commonly ignore the signals their bodies send them and may eat too little without even noticing. It may take weeks or months for the experience of starvation to catch up with them.



This is an important reason to make sure you're eating enough and maintaining a moderate, rather than extreme, calorie deficit.



It's important to remember that the goal isn't just to lose weight, but to sustain long-term weight loss. This can't be accomplished by eating too little.



Do you eat enough?

Assess your diet with the following statements:

- 1 Compared to my baseline energy levels, I feel energetic throughout the day.
- 2 I don't feel uncontrollable hunger or the need to snack throughout the day. I feel hunger, but it's not beyond my control. I'm able to recognize when I've eaten enough.
- 3 I don't have uncontrollable cravings at any point in the day.
- 4 It's relatively easy to make dietary choices that align with my values and goals, and I don't feel that I have to restrain myself.
- 5 Compared to my usual mood, I'm in good spirits throughout the day. I notice the effects of eating enough versus eating too little on my mood.
- 6 My family and friends agree that I don't experience large mood swings.

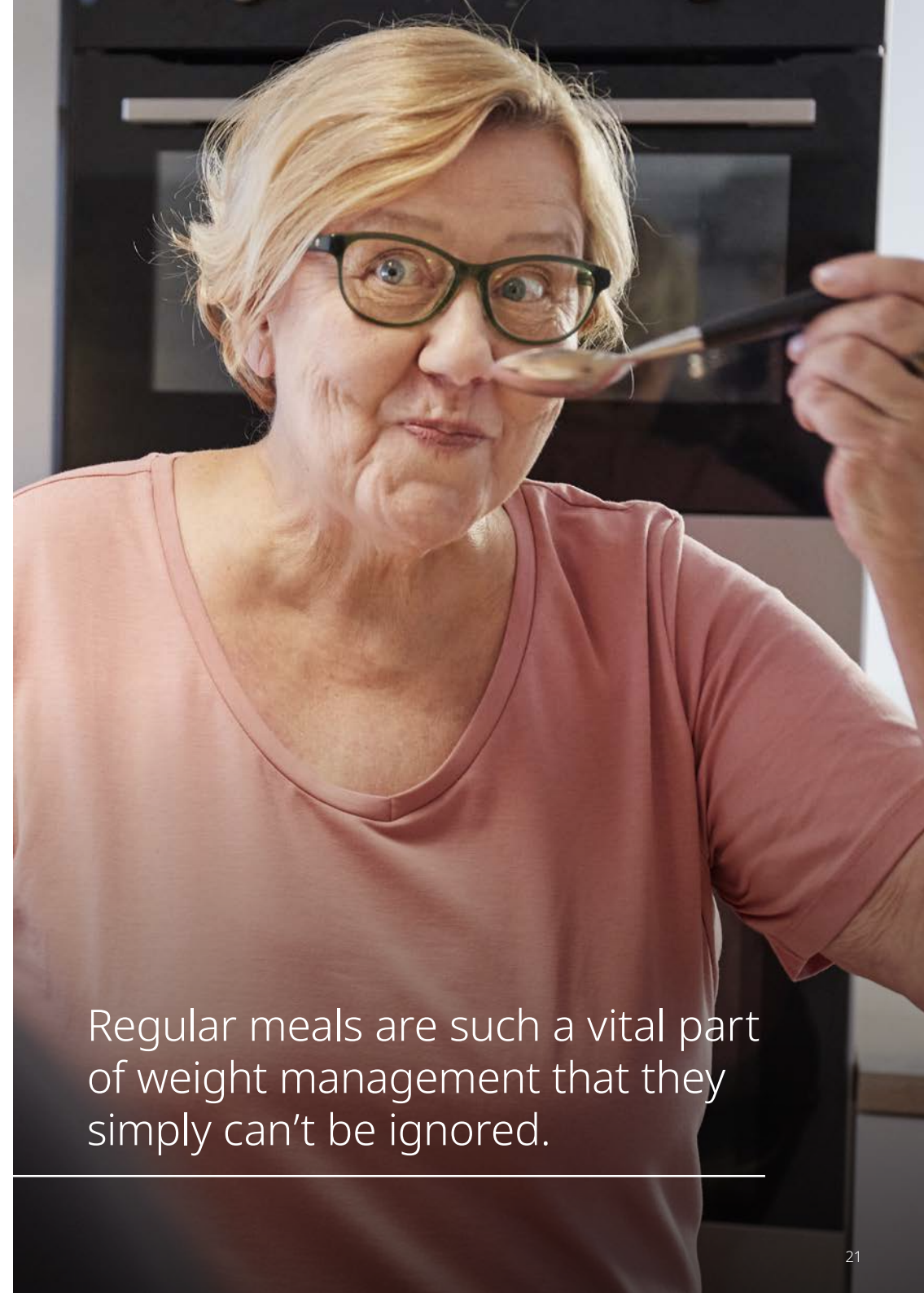
Eating regularly

The concept of eating regularly is discussed often, and talking about it in relation to weight loss may even feel frustrating. Consistent meals however, are such a vital part of weight management that they simply can't be ignored. You may need to experiment to find a pattern of regular eating that works for you, but the 3-5 rule works for most people. Eat 3-5 meals (including snacks) every 3-5 hours throughout the day. Some people may feel better with 6 meals a day, but very few feel well eating just two daily meals.



For many people, a productive rhythm includes breakfast, lunch, an afternoon snack, dinner, and, if necessary, an evening snack. It's worth exploring whether larger breakfasts and lunches (if you work during the day) affect how much you eat at dinner and whether you experience cravings. Eating in the evening doesn't cause weight gain by itself, but if you eat too little throughout the day, you may overcompensate at dinner and eat more than you really need.

Your calorie requirements depend on your body size and level of physical activity. The next page provides a sample day's meals that you can use as a template for weight management. If you're very physically active or significantly overweight, you may need to eat more calories than the menu provides.



Regular meals are such a vital part of weight management that they simply can't be ignored.



One-day sample menu

Breakfast

Bowl of oatmeal cooked with dairy or soy milk

1–2 dl berries

1 dl cottage cheese

1 handful of nuts

(1 slice of whole grain bread and 1 egg)

(Coffee or tea)

Lunch

1–2 dl whole grain rice or, pasta, or 1–2 potatoes

100–150 g cooked meat, chicken, fish, red meat, beans, or lentils

1/2 plateful of vegetables (either as a salad or cooked)

1 tbsp salad dressing or oil

(1–2 slices of whole grain toast with spread)

(1 glass of dairy or soy milk)

Snack

1 orange or any other fruit

1 cup of dairy or plant-based yogurt

1 handful of nuts

Dinner

Plate of fish-, meat-, or vegetable-based soup

(1–2 slices of whole grain toast plus spread and vegetables)

Dessert, like a few pieces of dark chocolate

Evening snack

1 cup of cottage cheese or dairy or soy yogurt

1–2 cups of berries or other fruit

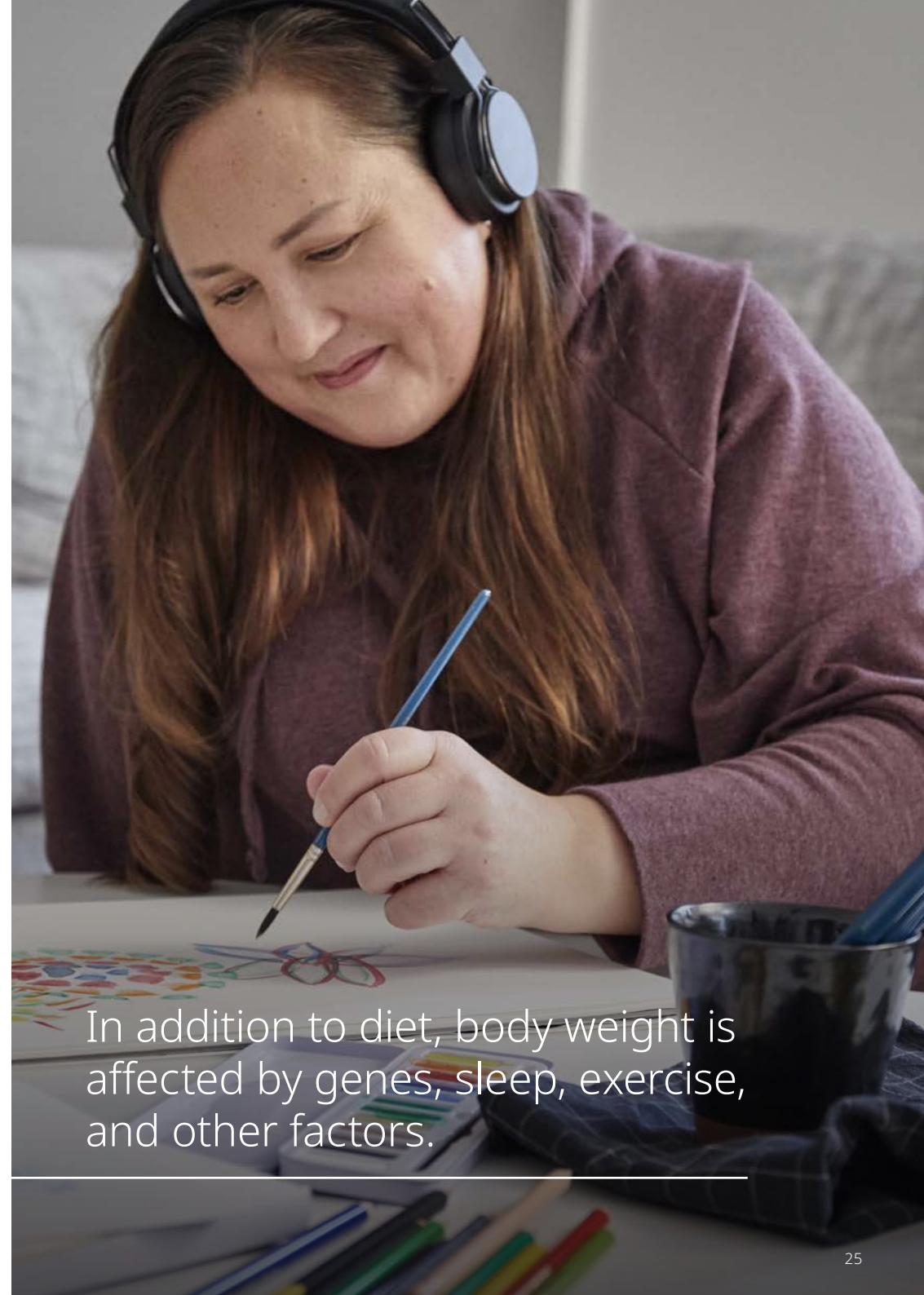
1 cup of oat flakes, oat bran or “talkkuna” flour

Diet quality matters

While eating less and exercising more undoubtedly support weight loss, there are other important food-related factors that also affect body weight. Diet quality can powerfully influence fullness, blood sugar levels, and intestinal bacteria. These factors, in turn, impact body weight, as do genetics, sleep, exercise, dieting history, medical conditions, and medications.



When embarking on a lifestyle change, the focus should be on well-being, not weight. These changes still affect body weight, sometimes quickly and sometimes slowly. There are also instances when lifestyle changes don't initially seem to affect body weight at all, though progress becomes visible in due time.



In addition to diet, body weight is affected by genes, sleep, exercise, and other factors.

Fruits and vegetables: The cornerstones of healthy eating

While many questions in the field of nutrition science remain unanswered, it's well established that fiber-rich plant-based diets offer an array of health benefits. Eating plenty of fruits, vegetables, and other high-fiber foods decreases calorie intake, keeps hunger at bay, stabilizes blood sugar, and feeds health-promoting intestinal bacteria. These foods also taste fantastic and their colourful appearance makes eating more enjoyable.

In adding fruits and vegetables to your diet, start with the ones you like most and therefore feel the easiest to add. The idea is to include fruits and vegetables, fresh or cooked, in each meal and snack. For example, have a handful of berries in the morning and a piece of fruit as an afternoon snack. Add a couple of handfuls of cherry tomatoes before lunch and dinner too. If you already eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, you can aim to get five different colors and find new varieties. The goal is to eat at least 500 g of fruits and vegetables per day, though it's beneficial to eat even more.



Fruits and vegetables deliver plenty of health-promoting fiber, and so do whole grains, nuts, and seeds. Selecting foods from each of these food groups supplies our good intestinal bacteria with a variety of fiber that nourishes them, which in turn, nourishes us.

Add fruits, vegetables, or both to every meal. Don't worry about the types you don't like. Just incorporate the ones you enjoy most.

Protein maintains muscles and keeps hunger at bay

When the aim is to lose weight and keep it off, it's important to lose weight safely and maintain your well-being. Rapid weight loss and inadequate protein intakes lead to muscle loss which, of course, is undesirable. If your diet contains insufficient amounts of protein-rich foods (like fish, chicken, red meat, eggs, dairy products, beans, lentils, and plant-based protein products) or your overall calorie intake is too low, amino acids will be taken from storage (i.e., muscles). In this case, you risk losing muscle mass instead of just body fat.

To maximize the loss of fat, not muscle, weight loss should be moderate (200–1,000 g/week) and protein intake should be adequate. This amounts to approximately 1–1.5 g/kg of body weight/day.

Here's a cheat sheet for adequate protein intakes:

WEIGHT		PROTEIN
80–99 kg	➔	at least 80–90 g
100–119 kg	➔	at least 100 g
120–159 kg	➔	at least 120 g
> 160 kg	➔	at least 130 g

The calorie content of the diet doesn't affect protein intake. However, it should be noted that, in a very low-calorie diet containing inadequate amounts of carbohydrates and fats, some of the dietary protein is burned for energy. This prevents protein from being used by the muscles.

Source: Current Care Guideline on obesity



Examine the protein sources in your diet on the following page.

Do you get enough protein?

10 g of protein

Quark
1 dl

Egg
1.5 pcs

3 dl of milk
or yoghurt

Cottage cheese
6 tbsp (60 g)

3 slices (30 g)
of cheese

Nuts, almonds
40-60 g

Soy drink
3 dl

Meat or fish
40-50 g

Wholemeal
oatbread
2 slices

Porridge made
from flakes
and cooked
with milk 2 dl

Tofu or seitan
40-50 g

Beans or cooked
lentils 120 g

Cooked peas
180 g (3 dl)

Soy yoghurt
2 pots (ä 125 g)

Soy quark
160 g

Seeds
40-60 g

Soy flour or
ground soy
4-5 tbsb
(20-25 g)

Pulled oats
35 g

Pasta, dry
70 g (1.25 dl)

Härkis, tempeh,
Quorn or Oumph!
60-80 g

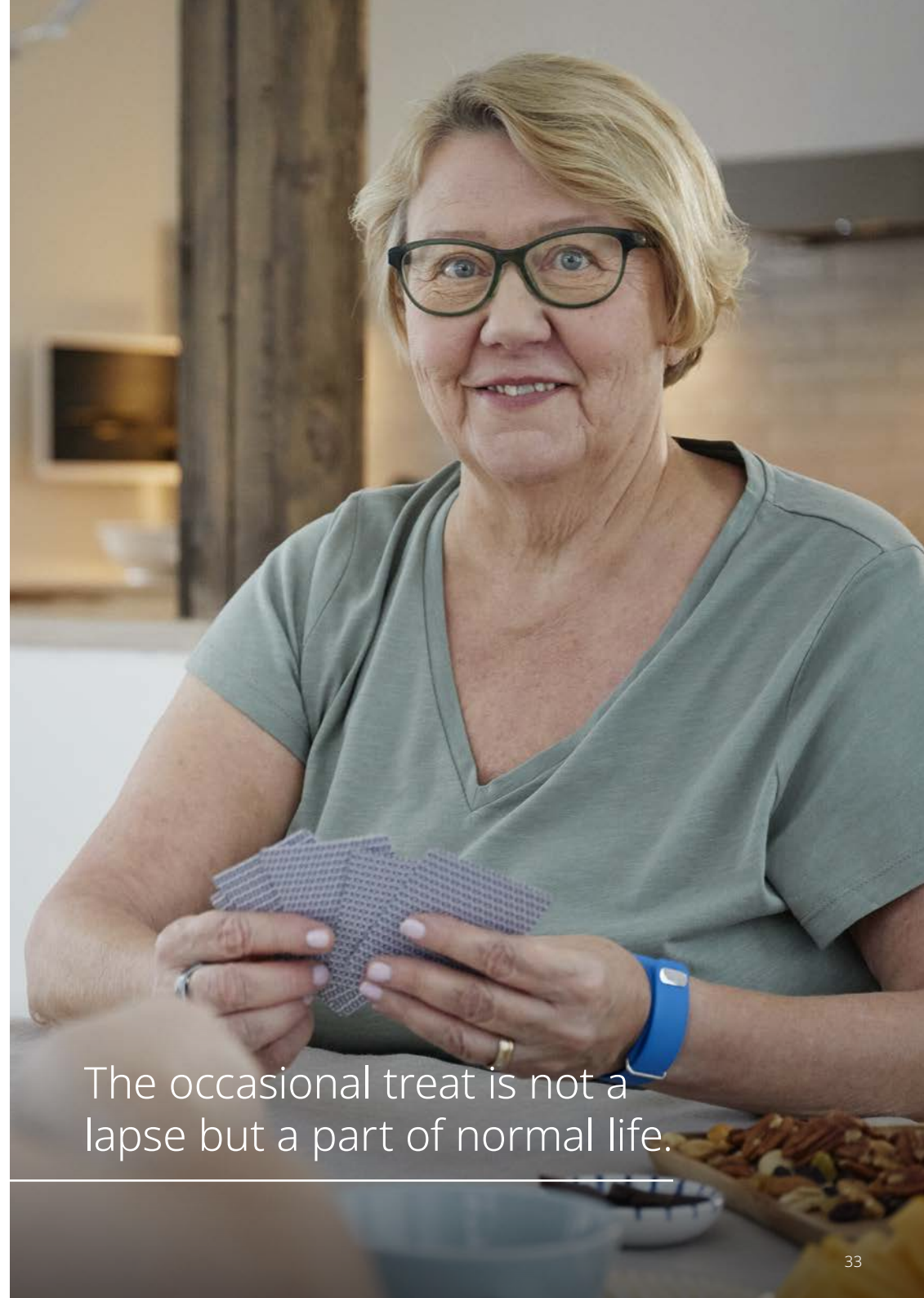
Enjoying food is vital to successful weight management

We often think that healthy eating means avoiding delicious meals and tasty treats. While it's great to build your meals and snacks around healthy foods you enjoy, your overall well-being doesn't require you to completely give up all processed foods that are high in sugar and fat and generally considered unhealthy.



A flexible diet is fundamental to weight management. It's worth embracing a flexible attitude towards sugary treats and fatty delicacies during the weight-loss phase of your journey. If you'd like to continue eating these foods, simply practice moderation. Eating enticing and exciting foods at parties, at meals with friends and family, and even enjoying a delicious meal alone are all part of, and improve the quality of life.

If your attitude toward food is flexible, a single meal won't affect your big-picture plans. An occasional treat is not a lapse, but a part of normal life. Moderation is a virtue, and absolutism rarely takes you very far. From a psychological viewpoint, abstinence leads you to extremes like a swinging pendulum. If you find difficult to consume treats in moderation, that's a good sign that practicing moderation is worth your effort.



The occasional treat is not a lapse but a part of normal life.



Everyone occasionally uses food to accentuate joy or cope with feelings, like stress, fatigue, boredom, and anxiety.

When pleasure turns into emotional eating

Emotional eating refers to situations where eating or fasting is used to regulate feelings or escape from reality. Everyone occasionally uses food to accentuate joy or cope with feelings like, stress, fatigue, boredom, and anxiety. If you have other strategies for regulating your emotions and if you can live in the moment with all kinds of emotions, there's no harm in occasional emotional eating. Emotional eating becomes a problem when it harms your well-being.

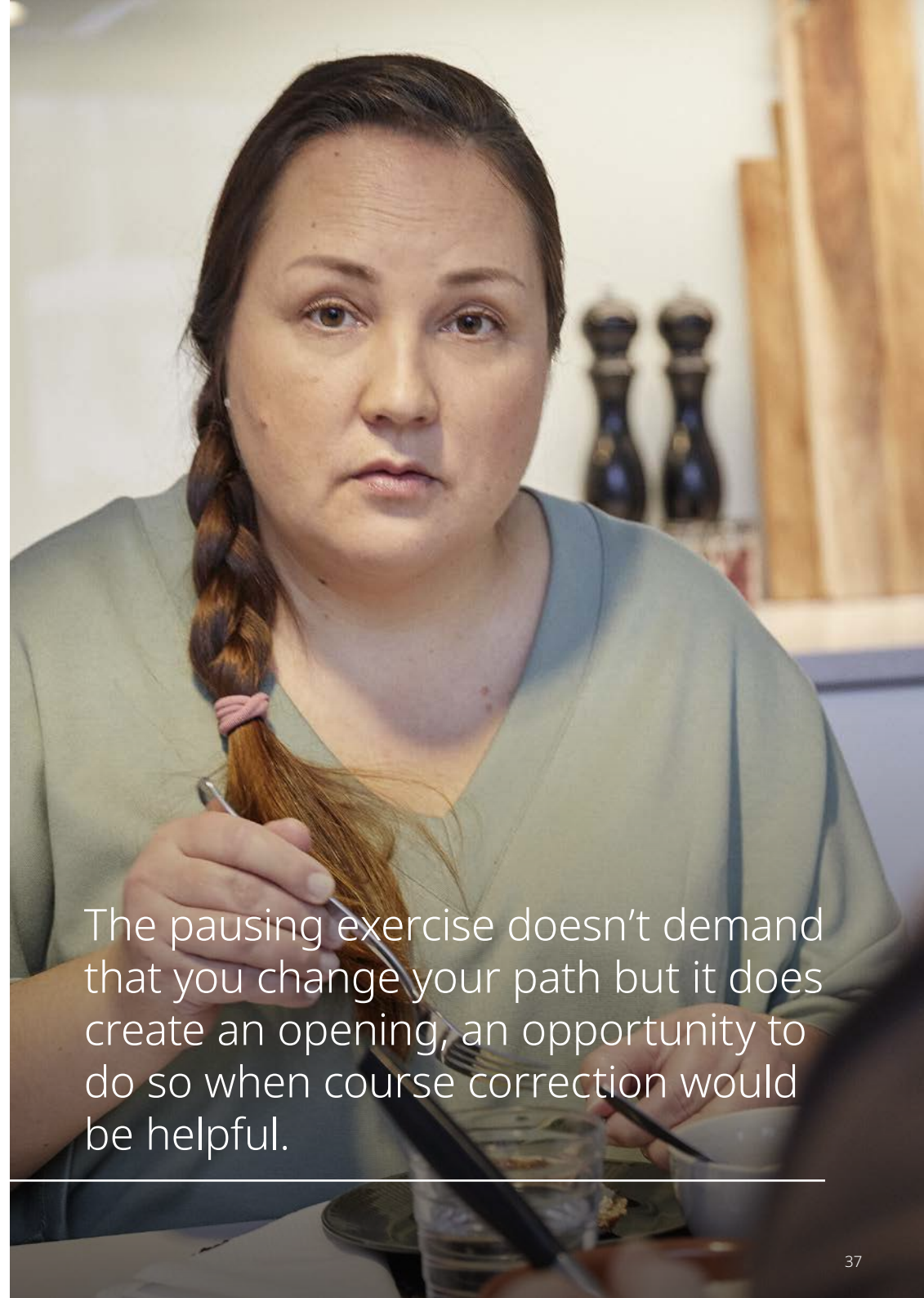


Eating too few calories or nutrients increases sensations that can lead to emotional eating. Undernutrition affects both mind and body, intensifies emotions, and increases cravings for sugar and fat. Addressing emotional eating therefore begins with listening to the messages your body is sending and consistently eating enough food. If emotional eating persists despite these habits, it can be addressed with the help of a professional, such as a psychologist or dietitian who specialize in emotional eating.

Exercise 3: STOPPING FOR 90 SECONDS

Before you eat or drink, try this 90-second exercise. The purpose is to pause before taking action in order to help you make conscious decisions. The exercise can be completed anywhere and without anyone noticing.

- 1 Stop and notice your body position (whether you're standing, sitting, or lying down), how your body feels, which parts of your body are touching the floor, and how your muscles feel (i.e., relaxed, tense).
- 2 Take a few deep breaths and notice how you feel. By focusing on your breath, you gain awareness of the yourself in the moment. If you're alone, close your eyes and slightly slow your breathing. If you can't do this, it's fine to breathe at your usual pace with eyes open.
- 3 Observe what you're doing. What are you about to eat? Are you physically hungry? What kind of feelings and thoughts come up? Is your choice to eat deliberate and in alignment with your values? Do you feel in charge of your actions or do they feel like a reaction to your emotions, thoughts, surroundings, or something else?
- 4 Make the choice to proceed as you wish and take conscious action.



The pausing exercise doesn't demand that you change your path but it does create an opening, an opportunity to do so when course correction would be helpful.

Physical activity, sleep, and stress management are key

It's healthy and natural for people to move about during the day. The human body isn't designed to stay put for extended periods. Modern environments however, make sedentary lifestyles possible in ways that undermine health. Physical activity is important for weight management in a number of ways that go beyond just burning calories.



A moving body is hormonally active. Physical activity maintains muscle mass and function, and thereby a healthy metabolism. Exercise also affects the mood and increases feelings of success, which is particularly important for successful lifestyle change.

For anyone aspiring to lose weight in a manner that supports a greater sense of well-being, physical activity is a critical part of the change process. Any kind of physical exercise is good. The most important thing is to move in a way that you enjoy.

Any kind of physical activity is good. The most important thing is to move in a way that you enjoy.

Exercise guidelines for adults

Feel free to adopt ideas the exercise recommendations below. If you don't currently exercise much, remember that any additional movement is helpful. Just progress at your own pace. If you already engage in regular exercise, consider adding variety to your training routine.

Weekly exercise recommendation for 18-64-year-olds

Source: UKK institute

Muscle-strengthening and balance training

2 TIMES PER WEEK

Vigorous physical activity

1 HOUR 15 MINUTES PER WEEK

or **Brisk exercise**

2 HOURS 30 MINUTES PER WEEK

Light movement

AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE

Breaks from sitting

WHENEVER POSSIBLE

Recuperative sleep

SUFFICIENT

Physical activity: Formal exercise and simply moving about

The exercise pyramid shown on the previous page provides an overview of the significance of physical activity and recovery for well-being. In the updated pyramid, the emphasis on physical activity that's not formal exercise training has increased. The foundation is adequate recovery. It's important that everyone takes breaks from sitting, and this is actually the first step towards impactful physical activity.

Moving about refers to any kind of everyday exercise like doing household chores, taking a walk, playing with children, and gardening. This type of movement can be important for weight management because it imperceptibly increases energy expenditure and also affects metabolism. If you'd like, you can then add formal exercise to this as well.



From the perspective of weight management, the most important thing is to make sure that you move about and reduce time spent sitting or lying down. It's also necessary to maintain muscular strength though so that fat loss, rather than muscle loss, is mostly taking place. Of course, if you have time and energy, other types of exercise training are also beneficial.

The joy of exercise comes from doing things that feel good to you. It's also worth remembering that, if you've taken a long break from exercising, it may take a few months for your fitness level to improve to the point that you again find joy in exercising. It's easier to establish a consistent exercise routine if you have a plan. When you schedule your exercise sessions, they're more likely to happen. It can also help to exercise with a friend. Finding the right form of exercise for you, an environment where you enjoy doing it, and company that makes the process more enjoyable are all helpful in developing an exercise routine you can enjoy and stick with in the long-term.

Exercise 4: GETTING STARTED WITH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This exercise may help if you want to increase physical activity but struggle to get started.

**For two weeks, twice a week,
put your sneakers on, pack
your training gear in a bag,
and walk to the mailbox or
take out the trash. Then
come back home.**

The purpose of this exercise is to practice leaving, not exercising per se. Significant physical activity only comes after two weeks. It may seem silly but this exercise helps people overcome the invisible barrier that stands in the way of getting out of the house to go exercise. These sorts of barriers are only rarely tangible, so it's important to practice overcoming them in small, incremental steps.

Pamper your muscles with stretching

Try some simple stretching exercises.

The only equipment you need is a chair and a small stool.

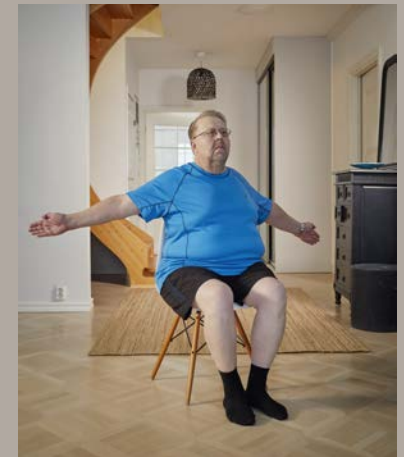
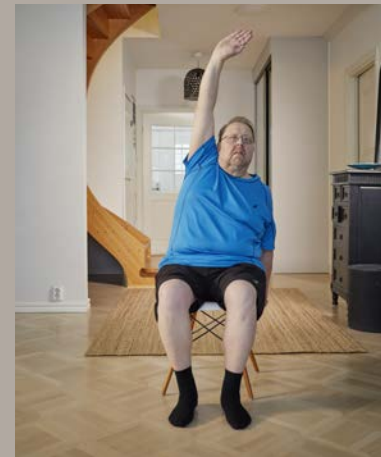


Stand up with the leg you want to stretch straight behind you and the other leg bent in front of you. Hold onto a chair or wall for support. Lean forward and down until you feel a stretch in your calf.

This stretch targets the quadriceps and hip flexors. For assistance with balance, you can lean against a chair or table.

Another stretch begins by supporting yourself with one hand by holding onto a chair. Lift one leg behind you by bending your knee and holding your ankle with your hand, pulling your heel towards your buttocks. Don't overextend your other leg.

Keeping your back straight, lean forward at the hips until you feel a stretch behind your thigh. Make sure not to overextend your knee.



To stretch your glutes, sit in a chair with the ankle of the leg you'll be stretching on top of your other knee. Lean forward, keeping your lower back as flat as possible.

You can also stretch the muscles of your upper back. Stand or sit upright and push your shoulders forward. Then stretch your arms diagonally down and forward while keeping your chin tucked in.

To stretch the muscles on your sides, make sure your hips remain planted firmly in the center of a chair. Then bend sideways and reach one arm toward the ceiling.

For a chest stretch, sit or stand with your back straight. Pull your shoulder blades together and, at the same time, twist your thumbs and palms outward. Breathe slowly.

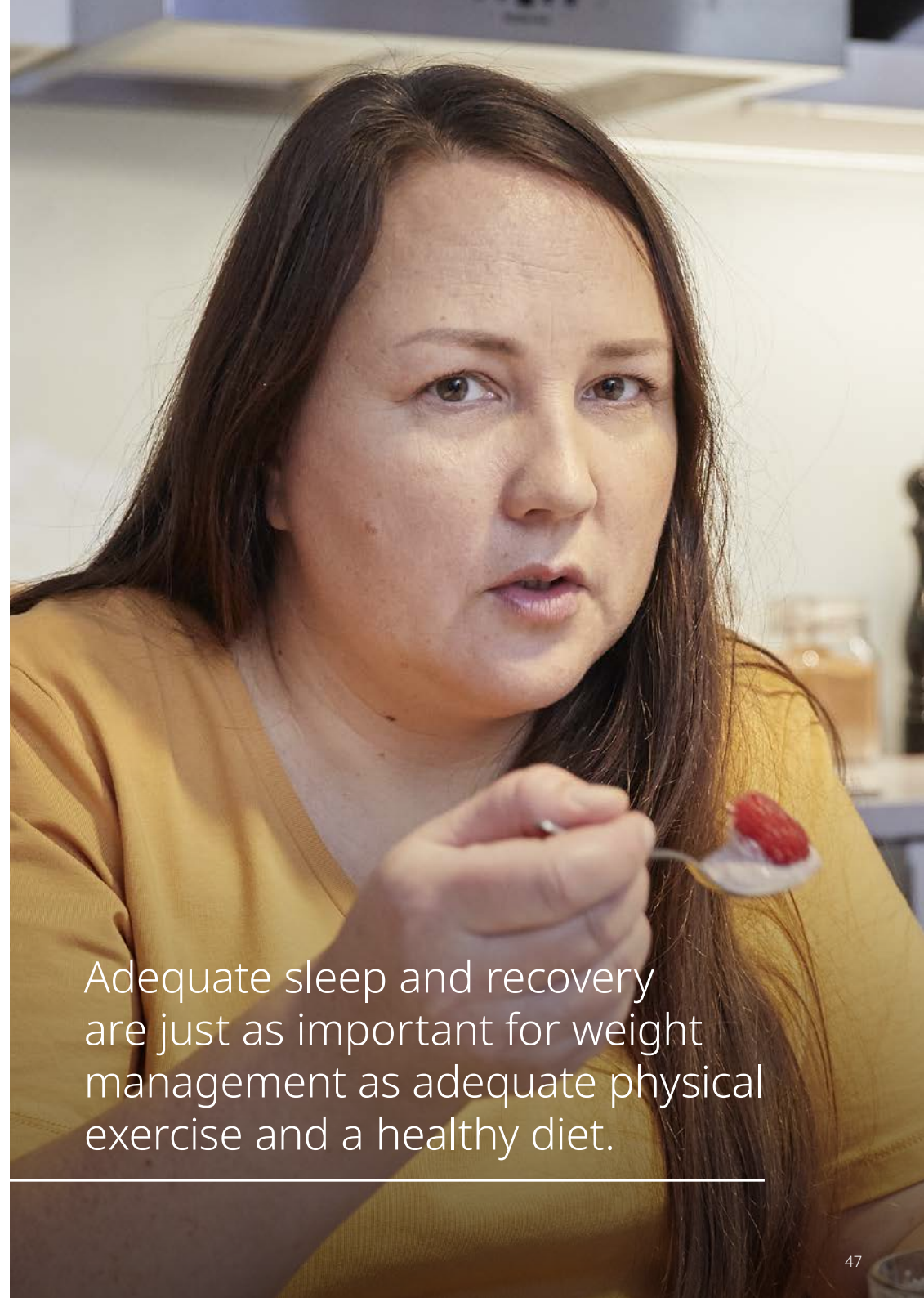
Relaxation and sleep are important for weight management

Adequate sleep and relaxation are just as important for weight management as adequate physical exercise and a healthy diet. If your body and mind don't get the recovery they need, the mental resources you're able to devote to changing your diet diminishes, and your cravings for sugary and fatty foods increase. You also lose the motivation to exercise when you're tired. You spend all of your energy on required daily tasks and may not feel up for spending time with people who are important to you, doing the things you enjoy or find meaningful, or even leaving home for recreational activities.



When you lose the joy and sense of meaning from physical activity, social interactions, and hobbies, the role of food as a source of pleasure may become more pronounced than usual.

Inadequate sleep and relaxation affect hormonal activity, which in turn, influence cravings and feelings of fullness. This translates into craving foods high in refined carbohydrates and fats and results in hard-to-satisfy hunger when you're tired and really just need rest. It's difficult to fight these cravings because hormones can powerfully influence our actions. It's therefore accurate to say that adequate sleep decreases cravings and helps us maintain control of our eating.



Adequate sleep and recovery are just as important for weight management as adequate physical exercise and a healthy diet.



What do you do to get a good night's sleep? Think about this while you complete the exercise on the next page.

Adequate sleep supports well-being

There are many kinds of sleep-related problems, but inadequate sleep is actually usually caused by our own rectifiable choices. Life is so interesting that we oftentimes don't want to go to bed, or the events of the day keep us alert even when we're in bed. It's absolutely worth investing in sleep and recovery however, because these are the cornerstones, not only of weight management, but overall well-being too.



When you're rested and alert, you're in a better position to make deliberate choices that promote your well-being. If you can't tackle sleeping problems on your own, you may want to consult a professional.

Small changes can improve sleep quality

Regular physical activity promotes high-quality sleep and daytime alertness. However, you should avoid vigorous exercise in the evening before going to bed. When you're in good health, you also sleep better.

Alcohol may help you relax, but even small quantities impair sleep quality. According to clinical research, 1–2 servings of alcohol in the evening affect the quantity and quality of deep sleep people experience.

Caffeinated drinks affect both our ability to fall asleep and our quality of sleep. Some people are more sensitive to caffeine than others, but generally speaking, it's best to avoid caffeine-containing drinks for 6–8 hours before going to bed. People who regularly consume lots of caffeinated beverages don't necessarily notice its effects, so if you fall into this category, you may want to experiment with decreasing your caffeine intake and pay attention to how it affects your sleep and feelings of restfulness.



Consistent and healthy eating provides energy during the day and makes it easier to fall and stay asleep at night. In the evening, it's a good idea to have a balanced snack like oatmeal with berries. A warm meal or drink in the evening can have a soothing effect that sets the stage for a good night's sleep.

Exercise 5: REFLECTING ON YOUR SLEEP

A cup of camomile tea, soft music, and gentle lighting can set the stage for better sleep.

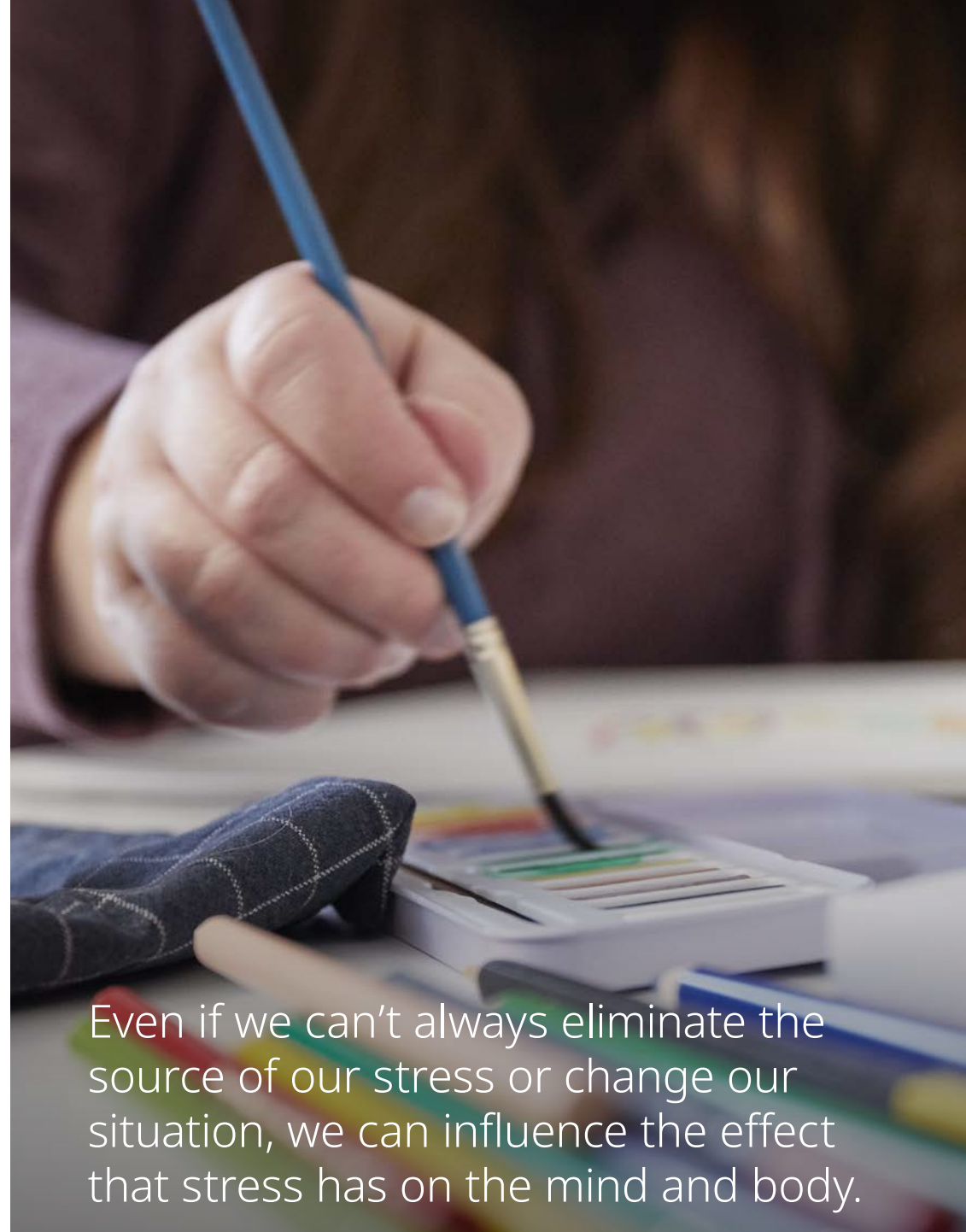
*What do you do to get a good night's sleep?
Write down the most useful things:*

Stress management supports weight loss

Weight management and stress management go hand-in-hand. If you experience lots of stress in your day-to-day life, these stressors can carry over to weight management too. When you're under too much pressure and tap out your mental resources, you're forced to focus on day-to-day survival. When this happens, you devote any extra bandwidth to mitigating the cause of your stress, and less capacity remains to support your overall well-being.



The first step in stress management is to identify the burdens you experience. Acknowledging these factors increases your chances of modifying behaviors to minimize or eliminate them. It's not always possible to make the necessary change right away, but becoming aware of underlying sources of anxiety can move the process forward. There are also highly effective tools that support efforts with stress management.



Even if we can't always eliminate the source of our stress or change our situation, we can influence the effect that stress has on the mind and body.

Exercise 6: USING STRESS MANAGEMENT TOOLS

You can't always control the amount of stress you experience. In these situations, it's important to use tools that support recovery and help the mind and body to relax. There are many ways to manage stress and it's worth learning which of these methods you find most appealing and effective.

*Which stress management techniques do you use?
Make a list of the ways you manage stress that
you find most effective.*

During stressful situations, look at the list and consciously try to make use of these techniques.

Stress management techniques

- Breathing is a stress management tool that you can access at any time. Just a few deep breaths can relax the mind and body.
- Having alone time is important for everyone. During this time, you can do what you want without any demands from others. Do you have time for yourself?
- Physical activity in all its forms supports recovery of the mind. Choose the form that you like best.
- Meditation and yoga.
- Humor can ease tension.
- The ability to be happy and go with the flow is an important skill, especially when you're stressed out. What brings you joy in life?
- Food, drink, and regular meals are the cornerstones of stress management.
- Taking pleasure in good food is a wonderful opportunity to stop and enjoy yourself for a moment during a hectic day.
- Sleep and adequate relaxation.
- Culture in all its forms takes your mind off stress.
- Arts, crafts, and manual work.
- Spending time in nature is proven to help.
- Playing and listening to music.
- Reading.
- Playing games.
- Creative hobbies.
- Movies and TV shows.
- Studying.
- Friendship and peer support.
- Taking breaks from work to decompress.
- Scheduling vacations and taking enough time off from work.
- Establishing a sustainable rhythm with work.
- Self-knowledge and emotional skills can be strengthened throughout life.
- Living in accordance with your values lays the foundation for making life your own.
- Spending time with family.
- At its best, the relationship with one's partner is a source of support and refuge when the going gets tough.
- Friendship is meaningful for everybody. Ideally, friendship involves mutual sharing of joys and sorrows.

Exercise 7: RELAXING IN NATURE

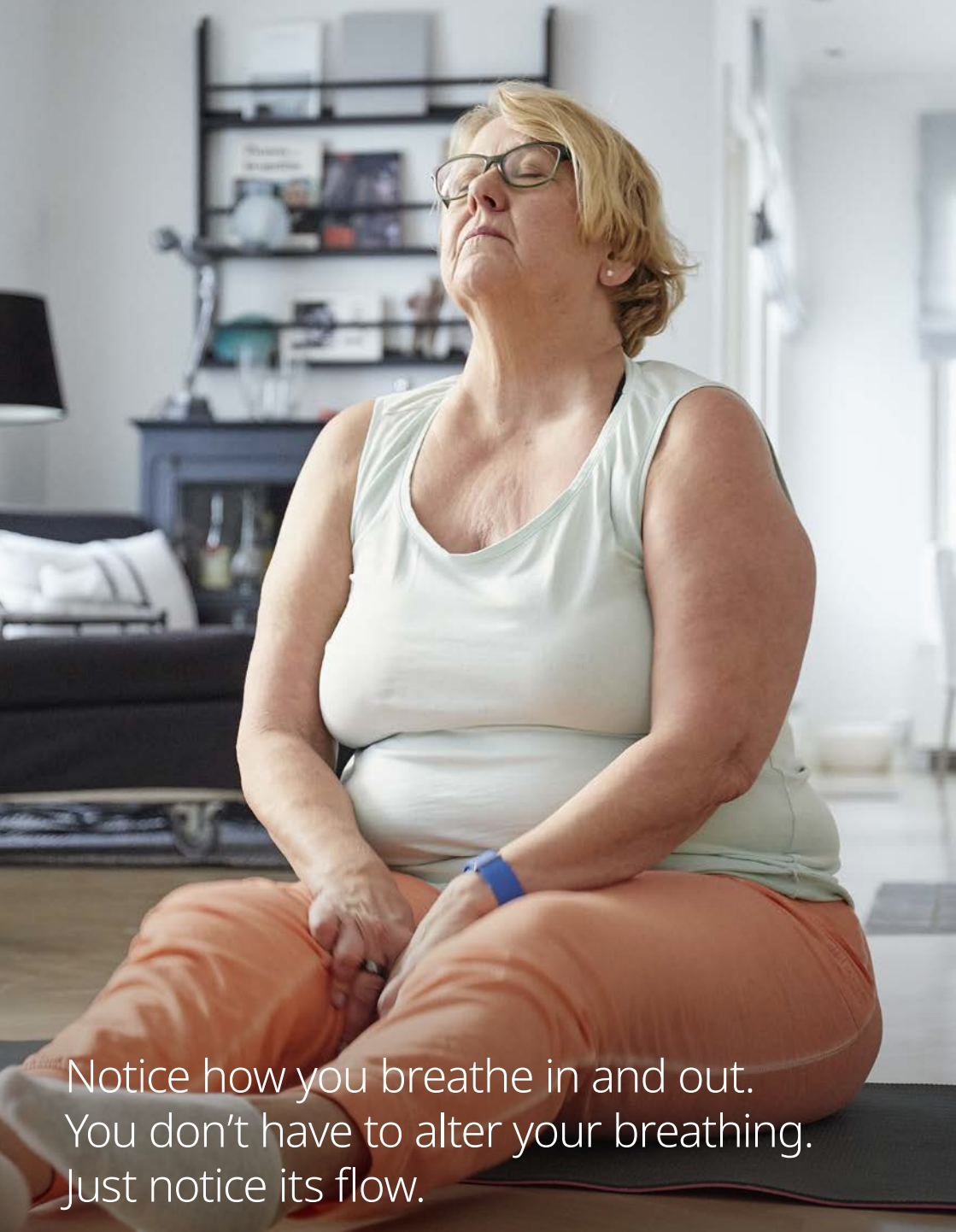
- 1 Start by sitting in a quiet place, perhaps on a rock or a park bench.**
- 2 Now spend a few minutes observing your surroundings: Look, listen, and feel the wind, heat, or coolness on your body.**
- 3 Then close your eyes and direct your attention to the parts of your body that are touching the ground or the platform where you're sitting.**

You can strengthen the experience by imagining that you're growing roots into the area where you're sitting and that the ground is supporting you. Sit upright but relaxed, without unnecessary tension, and draw power from these roots. Observe what's happening in your body, notice the thoughts coming into your mind, and let them go. Pay attention to what you feel in your body, what you hear and taste.

Let sensations and thoughts come and go without feeling the need to do anything about them. You can alter your focus during the exercise by concentrating on your bodily sensations, sensing your surroundings, or experiencing these internal and external events simultaneously.



The aim of the exercise is to experience a situation where you don't need to interfere with anything or do anything in particular.



Notice how you breathe in and out.
You don't have to alter your breathing.
Just notice its flow.

Exercise 8: **OBSERVING YOUR BREATH**

Sit or stand in an upright but relaxed position. Observe the parts of your body that are touching the chair or floor and let your body relax into this support.

Now consider your breath. If you'd like, you can place one hand on your chest and the other on your upper abdomen. Your hands will help you notice your breathing.

Observe how you breathe in and out. You don't have to alter your breathing. Just notice its flow.

If you catch yourself assessing or analysing something, try to let go and give yourself permission to breathe in your own way, the way it comes naturally to you right now. Continue observing your breath for at least 2–3 minutes.

In the second phase of the exercise, aim to have your inhalation and exhalation last for the same amount of time. The exhalation can also be a bit longer than the inhalation. Do this gently and don't force it. If prolonging your breath feels distressing, or if your breathing doesn't flow at a natural pace, return to the first phase of the exercise.



Easy and delicious
recipes for weight
management

Turkey hummus sandwich

1 portion

- 2 slices whole wheat bread
- 3 tbsp prepared hummus or trans fat-free margarine
- 2 slices turkey cold cuts
- 1 slice cucumber
- 1 slice sweet bell pepper
- 1 bundle of shoots or sprouts

1. Spread the hummus or margarine onto the bread. Top with turkey cold cuts.
2. Rinse and slice the cucumber and bell pepper. Put the vegetables on the bread and garnish with shoots or sprouts.

TIP:

Complement your breakfast with a serving of yogurt or a fermented soy product, fruit, and nuts.



Apple raspberry raw porridge

1 portion

- 1 apple
- 1/2 dl frozen Finnish raspberries
- 1 dl fermented, Greek-style soy product
- 1 dl soy milk
- 1 dl oat flakes
- 1 tbsp chia seeds
- A sprinkle of cinnamon

1. Peel and grate the apple. Put the grated apple, raspberries, soy product and drink, flakes, seeds, and cinnamon in a blender.
2. Blend the ingredients until smooth. Pour into a bowl and let it sit for at least an hour so the oats can absorb the liquid. Serve with additional raspberries.

TIP:

Prepare the raw porridge in the evening and let it sit in the fridge overnight. Now your porridge is ready for the morning. A simple raw porridge can be made by mixing 2 dl of natural, fermented oat or soy product with approximately 1 dl of oat flakes. The flavor can be enriched with any of your favorite fruits.



Porridge for the whole family

3-4 portions

7 dl water

3 dl milk or plant-based milk such as oat milk or soy milk

1 tsp salt

4 dl wholegrain oat flakes

Garnish, according to taste

1. Bring the salted water to boil in a saucepan and add the oat flakes. Mix quickly.
2. Reduce the heat and let the porridge simmer for approximately 8 minutes. Stir occasionally.
3. Turn off the heat and add the milk to the porridge. Let simmer for a few more minutes with the lid on.
4. Taste and add your favorite garnishes directly into the porridge or put them on the table. You can make your breakfast more nutritious by adding, for example, cottage cheese, berries, fruit, and nuts.

TIP:

Start your day with more protein and energy by eating a boiled egg in addition to the porridge.



Red fish soup

4 portions

400 g filleted saithe

Juice of 1 lemon

1 shallot

2 cloves of garlic

2 large carrots

3 stalks of celery

4 large tomatoes

2 tsp olive oil

1 tsp fennel seeds

1 liter water

2 fish stock cubes

1/2 tsp salt

2 tbsp tomato paste

Flat-leaf parsley

1. If frozen, let the fish thaw. Cut up the fish and season with lemon juice. Peel and chop the onion and cloves of garlic. Peel and slice the carrots. Cut up the celery stalks and tomatoes.

2. Sauté the onions, carrots, and celery for a few minutes in oil in the saucepan. Then add the tomato. Grind the fennel seeds, add into the blend, and mix.

3. Pour in the water. Crumble and add the fish stock cubes. Boil for 5 to 8 minutes. Add the fish, salt, and tomato paste. Let boil for a few more minutes. Chop the parsley and sprinkle on the top of the soup. Serve steaming hot. Serve salad, bread, and spread with the soup.



Meatballs

4 portions

1 small onion

1 tsp rapeseed oil

1 small potato, boiled with the peel on

400 g minced beef (10%)

5 tbsp milk or stock

1 tbsp potato flour

1 tbsp mixed herbs

1 tsp salt

1. Peel and chop the onion. Sauté in oil in a frying pan until soft. Peel the potato and grate into a bowl.
2. Mix all the ingredients in the bowl and shape the mixture into balls.
3. Bake on the middle level of the oven in 250° C for approximately 15 minutes.

TIP:

You can replace the meatballs with "Boltzi" products or use pulled oats instead of minced beef.



Weight watchers are also allowed treats

A piece of dark chocolate with your afternoon coffee, enjoyed slowly with all of your senses, raises spirits and prevents overeating.



Various nuts are healthy energy bombs. Enjoy about two tablespoons every day.

Notes

Series of horizontal lines for taking notes.

LITTLE BIG GUIDE

to weight management

Rethink your lifestyle change. Instead of focusing directly on weight, concentrate on the things you can control that, in turn, impact your weight. The practical tips and exercises in this guide will help you plan your meals, engage in physical exercise, and get the rest you need.