

Next steps to **BREAK Free**



BMI close to or over 30, or carrying excess weight around your belly?



Regaining weight, even after dieting?



Experienced excess weight-related health concerns for many years?



Assumptions from others about your lifestyle?



Knocked down by judgements about your size?

Answered yes to several of the above? You are not alone.

We often hear that weight management is about “eating less and moving more”. But weight loss and management isn’t linear, simple or a reflection of your willpower - keeping weight off means fighting your body’s energy-regulation system.

It may not always feel easy, but support is at hand. Talking to your GP, nurse or pharmacist about all aspects of your health, including your weight, can help to build positive foundations for your overall health.

The discussion points below may help guide the initial conversation with your GP, nurse or pharmacist to take the next step on your weight management and health journey.

1 **I'd like to talk specifically about my weight today**

Be prepared to share some details of your weight history and explain how your weight is making you feel emotionally, physically and whether it’s preventing you from doing anything. To help you feel prepared for your appointment, it’s worth weighing yourself, calculating your BMI and measuring your waist circumference (around your belly) prior to your appointment. This will help to support your discussions, particularly if it’s a telephone appointment.

To find out how to calculate your BMI and measure your waist circumference, visit: [Breakfreecampaign.com](https://breakfreecampaign.com)

2 **Are there any changes I can make to my sleep routine, stress levels, activity level or food intake to help with my long-term weight management?**

One of the first things your GP, nurse or pharmacist is likely to do is assess these factors and identify where you can make small but achievable changes to support your weight management goals.

3 **Can my emotional wellbeing influence my weight?**

If you have been feeling upset, depressed, anxious, stressed or just haven’t been feeling like yourself, it’s important you let your GP, nurse or pharmacist know. Firstly, so you can get support, but also because your emotional wellbeing may be affecting your weight by altering your eating habits, activity levels or the amount of sleep you are getting.

4 **Are there any treatments or support available to me to help manage my weight?**

It’s important to help your GP, nurse or pharmacist understand what you’ve already tried when it comes to weight management and discuss a treatment plan that is tailored to your individual needs, including your biology, emotional wellbeing and behaviour. Prior to your appointment, spend some time collecting information on what changes you’ve previously made and note what impact they had on you and your weight.

5 Do I need to see a specialist about my weight?

There are many different factors that can contribute to weight gain and it might be that your GP, nurse or pharmacist can refer you for specialist support to tackle your specific needs. There are weight management services located around the UK.

6 How frequently should I follow up with you to ensure my weight management is continuing in a safe and healthy way?

Your GP, nurse or pharmacist may advise follow up appointments to ensure your specific treatment plan is working for you and adjust if necessary.

7 Where can I get more reliable information about weight management?

Weight loss advice is available on the internet but it's not always reliable, safe or right for you. Your GP, nurse or pharmacist will be able to advise where to get more reliable information to support your weight management journey.

8 Are there any signs of other physical or mental wellbeing/emotional conditions connected to my weight?

Your GP, nurse or pharmacist will be able to assess whether your weight is contributing to other health conditions and provide advice and support on how to manage these.

Important points to remember:



Your weight is not your fault. Don't be discouraged if you are initially told by your GP, nurse or pharmacist to alter your food intake or change your lifestyle. The important thing is to be honest with your GP, nurse or pharmacist about your food and exercise habits, to see if there is any guidance they can provide. A change in food intake is often the first recommendation but, by using the discussion points above, you can delve deeper into other weight management tools that might be available and suitable for you.



Your doctor may provide terminology about being "obese" or "living with obesity". These are medical terms which will help them to tailor the support and treatment plan which they provide to you. **Don't feel ashamed or upset** if they say you are "obese", the important thing is you are in the right place for taking the next steps in your weight management journey.



It's important that you **speak to a GP, nurse or pharmacist that you feel comfortable** enough with to be **open and honest** about your weight and your health. If your first appointment doesn't go the way you had hoped, consider seeing a different GP, nurse or pharmacist instead, to get the support you deserve.



Keep going, you've got this! You are taking a fantastic step for your health, now and in the future, so don't lose hope, continue speaking to your GP, nurse, pharmacist or other healthcare professionals for the ongoing support you deserve – for your body and your mind.