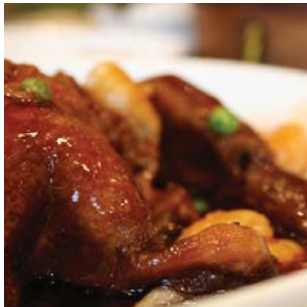


# Getting to a better PLACE

Obesity is currently reaching epidemic proportions and is a significant risk factor for heart disease and diabetes. Following these five simple rules can help you shed unwanted weight.



## Portion control

The quantities of food served and eaten are generally too generous, resulting in more calories being taken in than are required. Just cutting down on the portions on your plate can make a huge difference – as can refusing second helpings.



## Lose the booze

Alcohol intake continues to rise and many people have managed to convince themselves that wine drinking, especially red wine, is healthy. In fact, most alcoholic drinks are highly calorific, and beer drinking especially is associated with unsightly and unhealthy central obesity. You don't need to cut it out altogether – moderation is the key!



## Axe the snacks

Cutting out food in between meals is a good way of achieving calorie control. Most snacks are loaded with either calories or salt or both. Always sit down to eat – 'never eat on two feet' is a good maxim.



## Cut the carbs

Carbohydrates are not only a major energy source in their own right, but also promote insulin release, which drives the glucose into the cells; this in turn results in a hunger response within a few hours of eating. For example, sandwiches at lunchtime induce hunger by teatime and thereby encourage mid-afternoon grazing, increasing the risk of obesity. Sugary drinks and chocolates are just as bad. Try eating more fruit and vegetables and proteins without too much fat.



## Exercise every day

21st-century life seems to conspire against taking regular exercise. A heavy work schedule, combined with using lifts and escalators rather than the stairs, and taxis and buses rather than walking, all reduce the amount of exercise taken during day-to-day activities. A regular exercise regimen has been shown to reduce weight and cardiovascular risk and reverse pre-diabetes. Most people enjoy taking exercise; it is usually a question of getting organised to do so, against a backdrop of a busy and demanding working and family life.

## Reference

Kirby R. Getting to a better PLACE: helping patients counter obesity by achieving enduring lifestyle change. *BJUI* 2011;107:873-4.