



Healthy Living: The Bigger Picture

How food, movement and body composition shape your health

Nutrition is one piece of a bigger picture. The World Health Organisation defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease." This guide sets out how eating well, moving more and a healthy body composition work together, and where to turn for trusted advice.

The habits that matter most

- Not smoking.
- Keeping alcohol within limits.
- Eating a healthy, balanced diet.
- Managing stress.
- Getting good-quality sleep.
- Moving more and sitting less.

Why movement matters

A sedentary lifestyle harms health as much as smoking. Regular activity lowers your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, several cancers, osteoporosis, and depression and anxiety, and it supports weight management, stronger bones and muscles, and overall wellbeing.

The UK guideline for adults: at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous, plus muscle-strengthening on 2 days. Anything is better than nothing, and less sitting helps too.

Body composition, not just weight

Body composition is the balance of fat, muscle and bone. Healthier means less excess fat and more muscle. Carrying more weight around the middle raises health risks, so how your weight is distributed matters as well as the number on the scale.

Diet and your health

A healthy diet helps

- Reach and hold a healthy weight
- Protect against illness and infection
- Fuel performance and recovery
- Support wellbeing and healthy ageing

Poor diet plus inactivity raises

- Risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease and high cholesterol
- Nutrient deficiencies
- Fatigue and poor recovery

When to see a dietitian or GP

Some situations need a registered dietitian or your GP rather than general guidance: a diagnosed condition such as diabetes, heart, kidney or liver disease, coeliac disease or IBS; an eating disorder; pregnancy; being significantly under- or over-weight; or any symptom that concerns you.

Where to learn more: the NHS Eatwell Guide, the UK Chief Medical Officers' physical activity guidelines, the British Nutrition Foundation, and the British Dietetic Association (BDA).

This leaflet is general nutritional guidance for education only. It is not medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, and it does not replace advice from your GP or a registered dietitian. Always check with a qualified professional before making significant changes, particularly if you have a health condition, are pregnant, or take medication.

Ready to take the next step? Book a free call or start your food diary analysis at performancenutritionlondon.co.uk