



Sustainable Weight Loss

Why slow and steady wins, and how to make it stick

Lasting weight change is not about a dramatic diet. It comes from a modest, consistent calorie deficit built into habits you can keep. Here is how it really works, a safe pace, and the everyday changes that add up.

How it actually works

Weight change comes down to energy balance: the calories you take in versus the calories you use. To lose fat you need to take in a little less than you burn. Every diet that works does so by creating this deficit, whatever it is called.

- Aim for around 0.5 to 1 kg (1 to 2 lb) a week.
- That is roughly a 500 to 1000 kcal daily deficit (there are about 7700 kcal in 1 kg of fat).
- Faster than this risks losing muscle, water and bone, more side effects, and quick regain.
- Very low calorie diets are only for use under medical supervision.

Pair food changes with movement. Losing weight through diet alone can cost you muscle, and muscle keeps your metabolism higher. Keeping some resistance training in the mix protects your results.

Do the macros matter?

For fat loss, total calories matter more than the exact split. Studies comparing many diets show weight loss happens across all of them when calories are controlled. Macros still help though: enough protein, around 1.2 to 2 g per kilogram of body weight, protects muscle and controls appetite, and the best split is the one you can actually stick to.

What keeps the weight off

Habits of people who keep it off

- Regular physical activity
- Eating regular meals, including breakfast
- Weighing in regularly
- Not letting small slips become big regains

Quality, portions and sleep

- Nutrient-dense, higher-fibre foods that fill you up
- Watching portions and reading labels
- Protein snacks to curb appetite
- Good sleep, since too little raises hunger

Why fad and yo-yo diets backfire

Fad diets promise fast results without the evidence, and they are hard to sustain. The body fights back with more hunger and a slower metabolism, so the weight returns. Repeated loss-and-regain cycles harm your health and your confidence. The aim is to leave the diet cycle behind for good.

Make it stick

- Commit to change for the long term, with small achievable wins.
- Build a balanced plate, a little higher in protein and fibre.
- Move more day to day, not just in workouts. Control your shopping, since you cannot eat what you do not have.
- Eat mindfully, manage stress, lean on support, and track progress in a way that suits you.

Set a realistic target. For example, aim to lose around 10% of your weight over 12 weeks with a 300 to 500 kcal daily change plus regular activity. Check in weekly and adjust as you go.

Where to learn more: NHS Better Health, the British Dietetic Association (BDA), and the British Nutrition Foundation. If weight is hard to shift despite consistent effort, or you have a condition that affects it such as thyroid problems or insulin resistance, please speak to your GP.

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