



Narodowe Centrum  
Edukacji Żywnościowej



Centrum  
Dietetyczne Online



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# OBESITY

Obesity is a chronic disease characterized by excessive accumulation of body fat which is conditioned by metabolic, neuroendocrine, psychological, environmental, genetic and various other factors. It is one of the most common metabolic disease responsible for a variety of health conditions including hypertension, type 2 diabetes and many other health issues. It is also associated with lower quality and shorter life expectancy.

## Diet

Weight-loss diet should be varied and tailored to your individual nutritional needs and preferences. For gradual reduction of body weight, you should determine your individual caloric needs with the help of a nutrition specialist, taking into account a 500-800 calorie deficit per day. Your personal weight loss program will depend on, among others, age, gender and level of physical activity. A reducing diet should provide you with all necessary nutrients in appropriate quantities and the weight-loss process should involve education in healthy eating habits. Changes should be introduced gradually and in small steps. Using too restrictive diets that cause rapid weight loss may lead to nutritional deficiencies, affecting your health and well being.



## Key nutritional recommendations

1 Eat regularly. Avoid overeating. Do not snack between scheduled meals.

2 Eat slowly in a relaxed setting allowing you to chew each bite thoroughly – the feeling of fullness may come only some time after you have finished your meal.

3 When composing your menu, follow the Healthy Eating Plate – half of the plate should contain fruit and vegetables. If you eat 4 times a day, include vegetables in three of your meals and fruit in one meal to maintain the recommended proportions. Eat at least 400 g of colourful fruit and vegetables every day. Most of this should be vegetables (a 400 g portion can include e.g. half medium bell pepper, 1 cup of broccoli florets, a handful of green beans and 1 medium apple). Fruit and vegetables are a rich source of dietary fibre, which helps you feel fuller for longer. They also supply your body with vitamins and anti-inflammatory ingredients. Fruit and vegetables are best eaten raw or cooked to al dente. When fresh products are harder to get, choose frozen foods. Remember that each additional serving of vegetables provides more health benefits. Mind the temperature of your meals so as not to irritate your digestive tract. Avoid eating hot and cold foods.

4 Remember that carbohydrates should mainly come from whole grain cereal products – a good source of dietary fibre which, among other things, supports peristalsis and reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases and some types of cancer. Consuming the right amounts of dietary fibre increases the feeling of fullness after each meal and promotes weight loss.

5 Ensure adequate intake of essential unsaturated fatty acids from the omega-3 family (the so-called 'good' fats). Eat at least 2 portions of fish a week, including 1 of oily fish. The best way to prepare fish is by baking, grilling on electric barbecue, boiling or steaming. Choose vegetable fats – olive oil, canola oil or linseed oil. Add them cold to salads or other dishes. Good fats can also be sources from nuts, seeds and avocados.

6 Ensure appropriate quality of protein products in your diet. Reach for legumes, fish, lean meat, eggs and dairy products with up to 2% fat. Try alternating between these products to ensure greater variety on your plate.

7 Avoid highly processed products, such as fast-food, salted and sweetened snacks, confectionery products and instant meals. These products have high energy density which means that even a small portion delivers high amounts of energy and few valuable nutrients to the body. They are commonly referred to as "empty calories", usually containing a lot of salt, simple sugars as well as saturated and trans fatty acids which have negative effects on health if consumed in excessive quantities.

8 Limit your salt intake from all sources to 5 g per day (one teaspoon). Use aromatic herbs instead. Choose unsalted products or those with low salt content.



9

Drink at least 1.5-2 litres of fluids a day. Replace sweetened drinks with sugar-free drinks, preferably water, as well as light tea and herbal infusions. Make sure to keep your body well hydrated by drinking small amounts of liquid more often.

10

Use the recommended cooking techniques such as boiling, steaming, stewing and baking. Avoid deep frying.

## Physical activity

1

Get regular physical activity. If you have not been exercising regularly, increase your level of physical activity gradually. Optimise the type, duration and frequency of exercise to suit your individual capabilities. For this purpose, consider consulting a physical activity specialist or a physiotherapist. According to the guidelines, you should do at least 30 minutes per day of moderate intensity physical activity (e.g. walking, running, cycling or swimming).

2

Engage in spontaneous physical activity. Simple, everyday activities, such as active housework, also have health benefits. The effects of exercise on the body may vary depending on the person and the type of activity performed. Remember – any physical activity is better than none.

## Other lifestyle changes

1

Eliminate alcohol from your diet.

2

Quit smoking. This can help lower your blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

3

Look for effective strategies to manage your everyday stress. Try relaxation techniques based on mindfulness and meditation, breathing exercises or yoga. If you have eating disorders, e.g. compulsive eating or night eating syndrome, seek advice from a psychologist.

4

Get enough good quality sleep (7-8 hours a day). Try to go to sleep and wake up at about the same time every day. Avoid using electronic devices (smartphone, tablet, computer, TV) one hour before bedtime. This will make it easier for you to fall asleep.

### Literature:

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# Recommended food products and foods to avoid to lose weight











Remember that the overall profile of your diet, the composition of individual meals and the quality of individual products are all important aspects. The table below contains examples of products that should form the core of your diet and those that you should limit to the bare minimum. These guidelines should help you change your eating habits for the better.

Product group	Recommended	Not recommended
<b>Vegetables</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all fresh and frozen</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vegetables with fatty sauces and roux</li> </ul>
<b>Fruit</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all fresh and frozen fruit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>candied fruit, fruit in syrups</li> </ul>
<b>Grain products</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wholegrain flour</li> <li>wholegrain bread</li> <li>natural cereal flakes, e.g. oats, barley flakes, spelt, rye flakes</li> <li>bran, e.g. from wheat, rye or oat</li> <li>groats e.g. bulgur, buckwheat, barley, millet, quinoa</li> <li>rice e.g. brown, wild, red</li> <li>whole grain pasta e.g. wheat, rye, buckwheat, spelt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>refined flour</li> <li>confectionery breads, light bread (toast, kaiser rolls, bread, butter rolls)</li> <li>sweetened breakfast cereals, muesli</li> <li>fine groats, e.g. couscous, farina, cornmeal</li> <li>white rice</li> <li>light pastas and noodles e.g. from wheat or rice</li> </ul>
<b>Potatoes</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>boiled</li> <li>baked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>potatoes with fatty additives like cream or butter, e.g. puree</li> <li>fried potatoes</li> <li>french fries, chips</li> <li>fried potato pancakes</li> </ul>
<b>Milk and dairy products</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>skimmed or semi-skimmed (up to 2% fat)</li> <li>natural dairy products (sugar free) up to 2% fat, e.g. yogurt, kefir, buttermilk, skyr, cottage cheese, soured milk</li> <li>skimmed or semi-skimmed cottage cheese</li> <li>light mozzarella cheese</li> <li>natural cottage cheese</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>milk over 2% fat, condensed milk, powdered milk</li> <li>sour cream, coffee creamers</li> <li>sweetened fruit yogurts, dairy desserts</li> <li>full-fat cottage cheese, processed cheese, full-fat cheese, feta cheese, soft cheese such as brie, camembert</li> <li>full-fat mozzarella cheese, mascarpone</li> </ul>
<b>Meat and meat products</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lean skinless meat e.g. turkey or chicken</li> <li>moderate amounts of lean beef and pork e.g. pork loin, tenderloin, veal</li> <li>lean lunch meats, preferably homemade e.g. tenderloin, cooked ham, poultry cold cuts, pork loin roast, roast turkey/chicken breast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fatty meats such as beef and pork, e.g. ribs, chuck steak, ham hock, mutton, goose, duck</li> <li>fatty cold cuts, e.g. gammon, salami, bacon, spam</li> <li>canned meat, offal cold cuts, e.g. brawn, pâtés, hot dogs, kabanos sausages, sausage, blood sausage</li> </ul>
<b>Fish, fish products and seafoods</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>sea and freshwater fish, e.g. cod, sole, hake, blue grenadier, zander, bream, trout, mackerel, salmon, halibut</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fish in oil</li> <li>smoked fish</li> <li>canned fish</li> <li>breaded fish fingers fried in fat</li> </ul>
<b>Eggs</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>soft-boiled eggs, hard-boiled eggs, poached eggs</li> <li>steamed scrambled eggs</li> <li>omelette fried without fat or with little fat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eggs fried in a large amount of fat: butter, bacon or lard</li> <li>eggs with fatty sauces</li> </ul>
<b>Fats</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vegetable fats, e.g. olive oil, canola oil, linseed oil</li> <li>good quality fats e.g. soft margarines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lard, salo (slanina)</li> <li>hard margarine (blocks)</li> <li>tropical oils: palm, coconut</li> </ul>



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Product group	Recommended	Not recommended
<b>Legumes and legume products</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cooked beans, e.g. chickpeas, peas, lentils, beans, broad beans, soybeans</li> <li>• jarred or canned chickpeas, bean or lentils</li> <li>• legume spreads</li> <li>• soy flour, unsweetened soy drinks</li> <li>• soy products: tofu, tempeh</li> <li>• legume pastas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• low-quality, ready-made full-fat legume products e.g. soy sausages, breaded soy cutlets, soy pates</li> </ul>
<b>Nuts and seeds</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all types, e.g. walnuts, hazelnuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• salted</li> <li>• in chocolate, caramel or honey</li> <li>• with sprinkles, breaded</li> </ul>
<b>Sugar and sweets, salty snacks</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dark chocolate (70% cocoa minimum)</li> <li>• unsweetened fruit purees, mousses and sorbets</li> <li>• natural yogurt with fruit, fruit yogurt (without added sugar)</li> <li>• natural sweeteners e.g. xylitol, stevia, erythritol</li> <li>• low-sugar jam</li> <li>• fruit-flavoured jellies and starch jellies without added sugar</li> <li>• homemade pies and cakes without added sugar</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sugar e.g. white, cane, brown, coconut maple syrup, date syrup, agave syrup</li> <li>• honey</li> <li>• sweets high in sugar and fat e.g. cakes, cookies, chocolate bars, milk and white chocolate, halva, doughnuts, Angel wings (faworki), candies</li> <li>• salty snacks e.g. chips, salty bread sticks, crispy flakes, crackers, nachos, crisps</li> </ul>
<b>Drinks</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water, sugar free beverages e.g. coffee, cereal coffee, tea, herbal and fruit infusions, kompots, cocoa</li> <li>• vegetable and fruit juices in limited quantities</li> <li>• homemade, unsweetened lemonade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alcoholic drinks</li> <li>• sweet fizzy and non-carbonated drinks</li> <li>• energy drinks</li> <li>• nectars, high-sugar fruit syrups</li> <li>• drinking chocolate</li> </ul>
<b>Spices and sauces</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fresh and dried single-ingredient herbs, e.g. basil, oregano, turmeric, cinnamon, ginger</li> <li>• salt-free spice mixtures, herbs de Provence</li> <li>• homemade salad dressings with lemon, herbs and a small amount of oil or yogurt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• salt e.g. table salt, Himalayan salt, sea salt</li> <li>• spice mixtures containing large amounts of salt</li> <li>• bouillon cubes</li> <li>• flavour enhancing liquid spices</li> <li>• ready-made sauces</li> </ul>
<b>Soups</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soups based on vegetable or lean meat broths</li> <li>• soups seasoned with yogurt or milk up to 2% fat,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• soups based on fatty meat broths</li> <li>• soups seasoned with sour cream, thickened with roux</li> <li>• instant soups</li> </ul>
<b>Prepared meals</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• frozen stir fry vegetable mix, frozen fruit mix</li> <li>• cereal and legume blends</li> <li>• instant oatmeal</li> <li>• cream soups</li> <li>• ready-made stir-fry vegetable dishes</li> <li>• vegetable pastes and purees</li> </ul> <p><i>*read labels, compare ingredients and pay attention to added sugar, salt and fat content</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fast food e.g. toasted open-faced sandwich (zapiékanka), hot dogs, hamburgers, kebab</li> <li>• frozen pizzas, toasted open-faced sandwiches</li> <li>• delicatessen products in breadcrumbs, fatty sauces, made of refined flour</li> <li>• instant meals e.g. sauces, soups</li> </ul>
<b>Technological processing of food</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• boiling, steaming (cereal products, vegetables cooked to al dente)</li> <li>• grilling (electric grill, grill pans)</li> <li>• baking in foil, parchment paper, roasting bags,</li> <li>• heat-resistant dish</li> <li>• frying without fat</li> <li>• stewing</li> </ul> <p><i>* small amounts of the recommended vegetable fat e.g. olive oil or canola oil are acceptable for occasional use.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deep frying</li> <li>• stewing with prior deep-frying</li> <li>• baking in large amounts of fat</li> <li>• breading</li> </ul>



## Quality menu ideas for easily-digestible diet

### BREAKFAST:

#### Spring cottage cheese and tomato sandwiches

- whole-wheat bread
- skimmed cottage cheese
- natural yogurt (2% fat)
- radishes
- tomato
- chives

### LUNCH:

#### Yogurt with fruit and nuts

- natural yogurt (2% fat)
- oat flakes
- nuts e.g. walnuts, hazelnuts, almonds
- fruit e.g. peach, nectarine, strawberries

### DINNER:

#### Baked cod fillet with buckwheat and salad

- baked cod fillet
- buckwheat groats
- salad: Chinese cabbage, carrot, cucumber, radish, homemade sauce (olive oil, lemon juice, spices)



### AFTERNOON SNACK:

#### Chocolate millet pudding with fruit

- millet groats
- milk (1.5% fat)
- berries, e.g. raspberries, lingonberries, blueberries or strawberries
- a piece of dark chocolate >70% cocoa
- chocolate cube >70% cocoa

### SUPPER:

#### Broccoli salad

- broccoli
- boiled egg
- wholemeal pasta
- tomato
- bell pepper
- sunflower seeds
- homemade sauce (natural yogurt 2% fat, garlic, pepper, dill)

