

12 weeks to a better life

How do you measure up



Australian Better Health Initiative
A joint Australian, State and Territory government initiative.

You've decided to make changes to your lifestyle. Well done!

This 12-week planner can help you through it. Week by week, follow the simple suggestions and create some new habits to reduce the risk of chronic disease and kick start a healthier, more enjoyable life.

Kick start your healthy life:

- Aim for 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables every day
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit your intake of sugar, fats and salty foods
- Be active for 30 minutes or more every day
- Be active every day in as many ways as you can



Getting started

1 Set a start date for your 12-week plan. Write it down and stick to it. **I will start my 12-week plan on:**

Try to improve each week, building on your achievements. Slowly increase the time spent being active each week.

2 Set short term and long term goals. Make your goals specific and achievable. Rather than a vague goal like 'I will get fit', try a more specific goal like 'I will park five minutes further away from work every day'. When you achieve a goal, reward yourself. Not with food, but treat yourself to a new item of clothing, a massage or a movie.

| Short term goals | Reward |
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| Long term goals | Reward |
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Short term goals might include:

- Walking for 10 minutes three times a week
- Swapping sweet biscuits for fruit at morning tea every day this week.

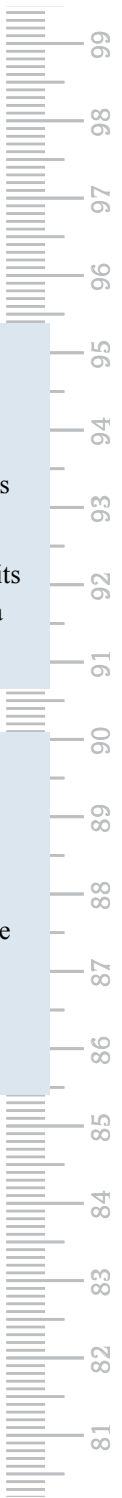
Long term goals might include:

- Working up to 30 minutes of moderate activity every day
- Losing centimetres off your waist line.

3 Check your local paper or library for community activities such as walking groups, social tennis or dance classes in your area. Commit to trying something new!

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Check out the Heart Foundation website www.heartfoundation.org.au for walking groups in your area.



Getting started (cont.)

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Think about your eating habits. What could you change immediately to encourage healthier eating? For example, could you cut down on sugary drinks? Replace processed muesli with hi-fibre cereal? Substitute cream with low fat yoghurt? Stretch instead of snacking? Choose vegetables instead of chips?

| Current foods/eating habits | What will I do/eat/drink instead? |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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Good habits include:

- eating regular meals
- choosing foods low in fat, sugar and salt
- drinking plenty of water
- making fruit and vegetables a big part of your diet
- limiting the amount of “sometimes” foods such as cakes, biscuits and fast food
- choosing healthy snack options like fruit, nuts and wholegrain bread with low fat cream cheese.

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Don't give up before you see the benefits. Be patient and keep at it! If you slip up, keep going. Getting into a routine makes it easier. Also let your friends and family know you're making healthy lifestyle changes and ask for their support to help you make those changes.

Note:

Individual dietary advice and support is best provided by an accredited practising dietitian. A list of qualified dietitians is available from the Dietitians Association of Australia. Go to daa.asn.au for more information.

