

Key points supporting residents with healthy, gradual weight loss

What is an ideal BMI?

BMI (body mass index) guidelines are different for older adults.

Although being overweight or obese is defined in adults as having a BMI of above 25 kg/m², the National Institutes of Health suggest that an ideal BMI for those above aged 65, is between 23 and 28kg/m².



Obesity can increase risk of..

Cancer (specifically breast and colon)

Joint and mobility problems

Pressure wounds and skin issues

Stroke

Coronary Heart Disease

Fatty Liver Disease

Asthma

Osteoarthritis and back pain

Type 2 Diabetes

Sleep Apnoea

Depression and Anxiety

Cognitive Impairment and Brain Aging



Additional considerations

 Respect residents informed choices, consider what is important to them

 No resident should have their diet restricted against their wishes

 Consider goals of weight loss and what the benefit would be to the resident

 Remember! Residents with obesity can still be at risk of malnutrition

Tips for Weight Loss:



-  Ensure there is access to healthier foods.
-  Reduce portion sizes of fats and starchy carbohydrates (aim for higher fibre) – you could reduce plate size
-  Aim for 3 regular, balanced meals a day. If appropriate, discourage snacks.
-  Fill half the plate with veg or salad and include a hand size portion of protein
-  Reduce intake of foods high in sugar and saturated fat
-  Offer gentle reminders somebody has eaten if they have forgotten
-  Offer distractions e.g. an activity or television to take their mind off eating

Physical Activity

It may be difficult to meet the physical activity recommendations for care home residents, some tips include:

- Do as much as they can
- Get outside if possible
- Regularly stand up during the day – maintain leg strength
- Encourage residents to help with daily tasks if possible



Practical tips:



- Set a realistic goal (e.g. between 5-10% over 3-6 months/ 0.5-1kg/week)
- Consider on 'non-scale victories' (e.g. sleeping better, improved mobility)
- Choose 2-3 small changes to begin with
- Discuss goals with the resident/ family
- Avoid faddy or overly restrictive diets
- Aim for daily physical activity and strength activities twice a week
- Reduce time spent sitting or lying down
- Break up long periods of not moving with some activity



QR code for more information on menu planning.
BDA Care Home Digest.