

Live your Life

Living with and beyond lymphoma

Module 4: Diet and nutrition





My appetite was very up and down and often completely disappeared in the days following treatment - it was a case of eating small things when I felt like it rather than worrying about set mealtimes. Since my treatment there are certain foods I associate with treatment that I'd stay clear of.

Callum

Module 4: Diet and nutrition

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Notes

You can use this space to make any notes from module 4 of the Live your Life workshop.



Action plan to help me eat well.

Action	How often
Eat 5 portions of fruit and/or vegetables	Every day

What is a healthy diet?

A balanced diet is essential for good health. Although there are no foods that can treat or cure lymphoma, eating well can help you to cope with treatment and support your recovery.

The Eatwell Guide is a resource that shows what proportion of each food group should make up your daily diet.

On the following pages, you'll find:

- The Eatwell Guide for people who are following a diet that doesn't restrict any food groups – page 77.
- The Eatwell Guide for people who are following a vegetarian diet – page 78.
- The Eatwell Guide for people who are following a vegan diet – page 79.

Please note: percentages given for each food group are approximate, and add up to 99% due to rounding up.

If you follow any other diet, eating plan or have other specific dietary requirements (such as paleo, halal or kosher), you can adapt the following guides to suit your needs. Ask your clinical nurse specialist if you'd like support in doing so.

Eatwell Guide

Use the Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g LOW	Saturated fat 1.3g LOW	Sugar 34g HIGH	Salt 0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ / 167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

40%



Eat less often and in small amounts

12%

Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins
Eat more beans and pulses, 2 portions of sustainably sourced fish per week, one of which is oily. Eat less red and processed meat

Dairy and alternatives
Choose lower fat and lower sugar options

8%

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS



Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar



6-8 a day
Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.
Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

38%

1%



Oil & spreads
Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts

Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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You can download this guide on the government website. Search 'eatwell guide' at gov.uk



Vegetarian Eatwell Guide

Use the Vegetarian Eatwell Guide to help you get a balance of healthier and more sustainable food. It shows how much of what you eat overall should come from each food group.

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g LOW	Saturated 1.3g LOW	Sugars 34g HIGH	Salt 0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

40%



Eat less often and in small amounts

12%

Vegetarian proteins: beans, pulses, eggs, nuts etc.
Eat a wide variety of vegetarian proteins including plenty of beans and pulses. Choose vegetarian meat-alternatives lower in fat and salt

Dairy and alternatives
Choose lower fat and lower sugar options

8%

Choose unsaturated oils and use in small amounts



Oil & spreads

1%

Choose wholegrain or higher fibre versions with less added fat, salt and sugar
Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates

38%



6-8 a day

Water, lower fat milk, sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count.

Limit fruit juice and/or smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.

Per day 2000kcal 2500kcal = ALL FOOD + ALL DRINKS

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You can download this guide on the [Vegetarian Society website at vegsoc.org](http://vegsoc.org)

Vegan Eatwell Guide

Check the label on packaged foods

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g	Saturated 1.3g	Sugars 34g	Salt 0.9g
	LOW	LOW	HIGH	MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/167kcal

Choose foods lower in fat, salt and sugars

Good nutritional planning is about balancing food groups well and using fortified foods and supplementation wisely. Use the Vegan Eatwell Guide to help you get all the nutrients you need without animal products.



Water, sugar-free tea and coffee, and plain/unsweetened milk alternatives all count. Limit fruit juice and smoothies to a total of 150ml a day.



40%

Walnuts
Ground linseed
Omega-3 fat

Vitamin D (autumn and winter minimum)
Vitamin B12
Iodine
Selenium

Vitamin and mineral checklist

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You can download this guide on the Vegan Society website at vegansociety.com



Benefits of a healthy diet

Eating well is just as important once you complete your treatment for as it is during treatment.

Good nutrition can support:

- healthy immune functioning
- mental wellbeing
- weight control
- lowered risk of infection
- fatigue management
- general physical health, including heart health and reducing the risk of conditions like type 2 diabetes and arthritis.



- **For tips to help if you're having eating difficulties, search 'diet and nutrition' on our website at lymphoma-action.org.uk**
- **World Cancer Research Fund has recipes and tips to help you eat well during cancer at wcrf-uk.org/uk/here-help/eat-well-during-cancer/about**
- **Search 'healthy eating' at macmillan.org.uk information and recipe ideas specifically tailored for people with cancer.**
- **Search 'food' at cancerresearchuk.org to find the scientific facts about foods and cancer.**
- **Search 'cancer myths' at cancer.gov for information on common cancer myths and misconceptions.**



Note down any changes you could consider making to your food and lifestyle. For example:

- Swap ice cream for low fat frozen yoghurt or sugar-free jelly.
- Reduce alcohol intake (see page 84).



The NHS Change4Life website has ideas to help you lower your sugar intake. Although it's aimed at children, it lists sugar swaps that are relevant to adults.

Healthy weight

A healthy weight is an important part of good overall physical and mental health, before, during and after your treatment.

If your weight is low

If your weight is too low, for example, because you've lost weight during your treatment, make sure that you're eating enough calories (energy). Don't rely on foods that are high in saturated fat and sugar, such as cakes and biscuits, as this can lead to other health issues.

You can also boost your energy intake in the following ways:

- Choose full-fat options over low-fat alternatives.
- Add cheese or sauces to pasta or vegetables.
- Add butter or oil to bread, pasta, potatoes and vegetables.
- Snack between your regular meals. Choose healthy foods that are high in energy, such as unsalted nuts, dried fruit, full-fat products and starchy carbohydrates.

If you continue to lose weight, you could ask your GP or a member of your medical team for a referral to a dietitian.



Aim for gradual weight gain. The NHS website has guidance about how to gain weight safely. Search 'underweight adults' at [nhs.uk/live-well](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well)

If your weight is high

In general, it's best to avoid dieting during treatment as it can make it harder for your immune system to recover. Your height and weight are also important in calculating treatment doses. Instead of dieting, focus on eating a healthy diet, being active and giving your body the energy it needs to recover.

Healthy lifestyle factors can help to manage weight. For example:

- Increase your physical activity levels.
- Plan healthy meals (see pages 77 to 79).
- Drink plenty of water and limit your alcohol intake.
- Avoid foods that are high in saturated fat, salt and sugar.



Avoid 'crash' diets where you reduce your calorie-intake very quickly for a short amount of time. The general guidance from the NHS is to aim to lose 1lb to 2lb a week. Search 'weight loss plan' at [nhs.uk/live-well](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well) for a free 12-week weight loss plan.

Carrying too much fat around your tummy can cause health risks. Try to lose weight safely if your waist is more than 94cm (37ins) if you are a man, or more than 80cm (31.5ins) if you are a woman. The best way to lose weight is through a combination of diet and exercise.

If you are concerned that you are overweight, speak to your medical team for advice.

Alcohol

Alcohol can increase your risk of developing a range of physical health problems, including heart disease, liver disease and some types of cancer. It can also affect your mental wellbeing by increasing your risk of experiencing anxiety, depression and memory problems.

To lower these risks, the NHS recommends drinking no more than 14 units of alcohol a week (see opposite for examples).

Tips to help lower your alcohol intake

- Set aside alcohol-free days each week.
- Alternate alcoholic drinks with soft drinks.
- Choose lower strength drinks, such as beer over wine.
- Have smaller measures. For example, swap a pint for a half-pint, or a smaller over a larger glass of wine.
- Try topping-up wine with soda or beer with lemonade.
- Make an alcohol-free cocktail or 'mocktail' – search 'mocktails' on the drinkaware website at: drinkaware.co.uk for ideas.

If you drink no more than 14 units a week you will be at low risk of alcohol affecting your health

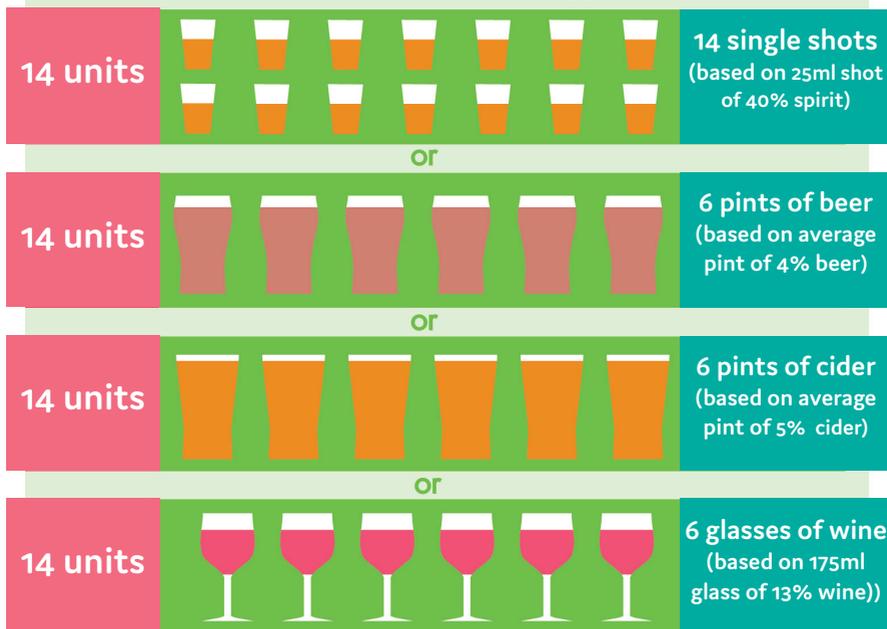


Figure: Weekly alcohol intake guidelines

Visit [drinkaware.co.uk](https://www.drinkaware.co.uk) for more information on alcohol and its effects. You'll also find tools and guidance on how to cut down the amount you drink.

Smoking

Stopping smoking, or not smoking at all, has lots of health benefits. As well as increasing your life expectancy and increasing your energy, the advantages can include:

- greater effectiveness of your lymphoma treatment
- fewer side effects of treatment
- quicker recovery after treatment
- lower risk of developing lung infections
- lower risk of developing late effects of lymphoma treatment, including second cancers, heart disease, lung disease and stroke.



- **Search 'quit smoking' on the NHS website to find resources to help you quit.**
- **Search 'stop smoking' on Cancer Research UK's website at cancerresearch.org to find out about options to help you quit smoking.**



Tips to help you stop smoking

- Find out about your options and consider which approach you think could help you.
- Talk to your GP about what help is available, join a local stop smoking service or find online support.
- Set a stop-smoking date that gives you time to plan your approach and prepare yourself mentally.
- Tell people who'll encourage you to reach your goal that you're trying to quit.
- If smoking helps you to relax, find new ways to unwind and relieve stress (see page 44 for tips).
- Avoid triggers to smoking, such as alcohol.
- Keep your hands and mouth busy.
- Avoid reminders of smoking, such as ash trays or lighters.
- Keep trying – it takes most people a few goes before completely quitting.



Think about any of your triggers to smoking and what you could do to avoid them.



Note down any plans you have to help you stop smoking.

Reasons to quit

What I think will help me to quit

Quit date

Notes

You can use this space to make any additional notes from this module.

Information and support

If you'd like to talk to someone about anything to do with lymphoma, get in touch.



Call our **Helpline** (freephone) Monday to Friday, 10am to 3pm, on 0808 808 5555. You can also use Live Chat on our website



Join one of our peer support services such as **Support Group, online support meeting** or **closed Facebook support group**. Find one at lymphoma-action.org.uk



Use our **Buddy Service** to share experiences with someone in a similar situation to you. Call our Helpline for details



Visit lymphoma-action.org.uk/TrialsLink to search for clinical trials that might be suitable for you



Check out our **YouTube channel** to watch personal stories and medical films

See our website for full details of our services. For our latest news and updates, follow us on social media:



@LymphomaAction



lymphoma_action



If you're interested in finding out more about any of the topics in this book, we have lots more information available on our website.

We also produce a number of books, which are available free of charge. In particular, you might find the following books helpful:

- *Introduction to lymphoma*
- *Living with and beyond lymphoma*
- *Active monitoring (watch and wait) for lymphoma*
- *Caring for someone who has lymphoma*

We also have some wellbeing videos available to watch. Search 'wellbeing videos' on our website.

Find our full range of books and information, including accessible information and Easy Reads, at lymphoma-action.org.uk/Books or call 0808 808 5555 for more information.

Useful organisations

We list some organisations below that you might find helpful. You can find more useful organisations on our website. If you don't find what you're looking for, please get in touch through our Helpline Services (see page 112).

Cancer Research UK has information about cancer, including about treatment and coping strategies.

www.cancerresearchuk.org

Citizens Advice provide free advice on matters such as housing, consumer, money and legal issues.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Every mind matters – NHS is a website from Public Health England with tips and advice for good mental health.

www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters

GOV.UK is the UK government website. It outlines the financial benefits that people affected by cancer and their carers might be entitled to.

www.gov.uk

Look Good Feel Better helps people to manage the visible side effects of cancer treatment with free group and self-help skincare and make-up workshops

www.lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk

Macmillan Benefits Advice Service offers financial advice, including welfare benefits, housing, work and debt to people with cancer and their carers.

Macmillan Cancer Support provides support for people affected by cancer from diagnosis through treatment and beyond.

www.macmillan.org.uk

Maggie's gives practical, emotional, financial and social support to people with cancer, their family and friends.

www.maggies.org

Mental Health Foundation has information about mental health, including resources designed to introduce techniques to support mental wellbeing.

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Mind offers support and advice in relation to mental health. You can email their infoline at info@mind.org.uk or call on 0300 123 3393.

www.mind.org.uk

NHS website has health information.

www.nhs.uk

NHS inform is a health information service from NHS Scotland covering health and welfare, and including self-help resources that are free to access.

www.nhsinform.scot

Relate is the UK's largest provider of relationship support. Their services include information, workshops and counselling.
www.relate.org.uk

Samaritans offer emotional support to anyone who is struggling with difficult feelings. Their service runs 24 hours a day, all year round. Call 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org
www.samaritans.org

Shine Cancer Support offers support for people in their 20s to 40s who have been diagnosed with cancer.
www.shinecancersupport.org

Shout offers support to anyone struggling to cope. They have a free and confidential text service available 24/7. Text 85258
www.giveusashout.org

Teenage Cancer Trust offers information and support for young people living with cancer and for their families.
www.teenagecancertrust.org

Working with Cancer helps employees, employers, the self-employed, job seekers, people who are self-employed, and carers to manage cancer and work.
www.workingwithcancer.co.uk

Young Lives vs Cancer offers clinical, emotional and practical support to children and young people with cancer, and to their families.
www.younglivesvscancer.org.uk

About our information

Our information is evidence-based, approved by experts and reviewed by users. By keeping up-to-date with latest developments, we ensure that our information stays relevant and reflects current practice. Learn more at lymphoma-action.org.uk/HealthInfo

How you can help us

Volunteering is at the heart of what we do. If you'd like to volunteer with us, visit lymphoma-action.org.uk/Volunteering

We continually strive to improve our resources and are interested in any feedback you might have. Please visit our website at lymphoma-action.org.uk/BookFeedback or email us at publications@lymphoma-action.org.uk with any comments. You can also call our Information and Support team on 0808 808 5555.

References

The full list of references is available on request. Please email publications@lymphoma-action.org.uk or call 01296 619400 if you would like a copy.

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This book is part of Lymphoma Action's Live your Life peer-led, self-management workshops, but can also be used on its own. It is designed to support you to live well with and beyond your lymphoma, and includes lots of information, suggestions and places for you to write your own notes.

Lymphoma Action is the UK's only charity dedicated to lymphoma, the fifth most common cancer. Our mission is to make sure no one faces lymphoma alone.



Helpline (freephone) **0808 808 5555** (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)



Email **information@lymphoma-action.org.uk**



Visit **www.lymphoma-action.org.uk**



Live Chat via our website (Mon to Fri, 10am to 3pm)

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Evidence-based



Approved by experts



Reviewed by users