

# AMAZING YOU

by scottishslimmers

Issue 15 | £2

Spring flavours:

your 7-day  
eating plan

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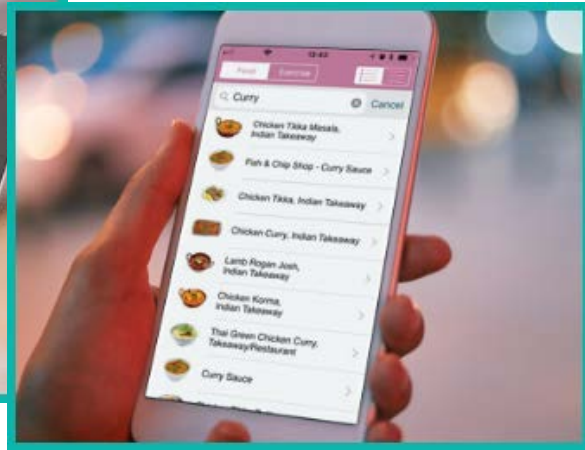
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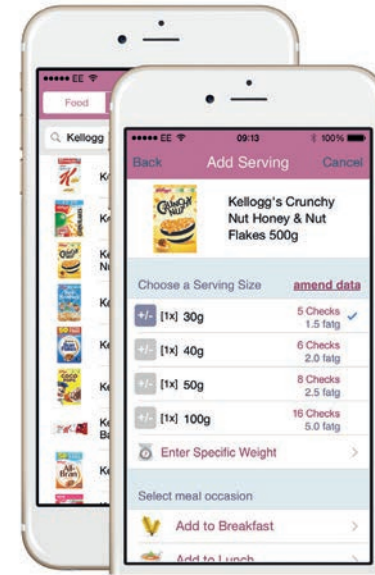
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# Welcome to AMAZING YOU

by **scottishslimmers**

Is it just us, or does the arrival of spring feel like a really magical time of the year? Wildlife is coming out of winter hibernation, there's finally some colour in the garden and slowly but surely the temperature is starting to rise.

It's truly a time of rebirth – and that means there's no better time to focus on your journey to becoming an even better version of you. Inside this issue we'll be helping you to harness the feel-good vibe of spring, with fresh flavours and styles.

Get out and make the most of the brighter days and lighter nights with our guide to walking in Scotland, and ensure you make the most of your time by spending as little of it as possible in the kitchen! We've got some great tips on batch cooking so you can stock up your freezer.

Fed up of winter comfort food? Then look no further than our fantastic seven-day eating plan and a selection of recipes for mouthwatering smoothies packed with fruit and veg. And we're also celebrating honey and the humble honey bee!

While it's certainly starting to heat up, it's not quite shorts and t-shirt weather. This edition's fashion spread teaches you the tricks of layering, and if you need some inspiration on accessories for rainy days, look no further than our April showers ideas.

We've also got some great motivational stories from members who are looking and feeling amazing after following a Scottish Slimmers eating plan.

So, make spring the season of your rebirth – the time when you become even more amazing you!

**Rachael Smillie**  
Nutritional Advisor



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*"I refused to go up another dress size"*

A sedentary lifestyle, office treats and convenience foods saw Natasha Frizzel pile on the pounds but now she's looking and feeling great.

Outfit by John Lewis

When Natasha Frizzel started work in an office, the career change resulted in a huge lifestyle change too.

Her busy schedule led to her relying on convenience foods in the evenings and her desk-based job – coupled with her commute to work – meant that she was very rarely active.

And, when the weekend came and she could finally relax, Natasha would meet up with friends to enjoy meals out or a catch-up over coffee and cake.

"To make matters worse, there were so many treats in the office. Someone would always be coming in with cake or a box of chocolates to share," said Natasha, from Peebles.

"My clothes were getting far too tight and I remember one day sitting at my desk and feeling so uncomfortable. I refused to go up another dress size, so I knew then that I had to do something about it."

Natasha (29) joined her local Scottish Slimmers class and started on the Feel Good plan. She loved how easy the plan was to follow and, with so many free foods, she could still have her little treats using her extra points.

But while sticking a pizza in the oven used to be an almost nightly occurrence after a busy day at work, Natasha now only enjoys that or a chicken kebab from her local takeaway once a week after her Monday night weigh-in.

“ I already see so many positive changes in myself. Not only do I look different, I have much more energy. ”



She said: "What I like most about the Feel Good plan is the amount of recipes that you get and also the fact that you can make so many different meals using the same ingredients. It's so easy to work with.

"I remember going into the class for the first time and fearing the worst. Even though I knew the numbers wouldn't be good it was still a shock to see how heavy I was – I didn't realise it even though my clothes were really tight.

"My first goal was to get to 11st 7lbs and I was so happy when I got there. My next goal is to reach 10st 7lbs and I know with the help and support of the class I will do it.

"I already see so many positive changes in myself. Not only do I look different, I have much more energy. I used to sit in front of the TV, but now I'm going to the gym and have great fun dancing at a Clubbercise class.

"Having a weigh-in on a Monday night too also helps. While I can still have my treats, I know that I can't overindulge too much at the weekend when I have to get on those scales and have a target to reach."



Not only has Natasha's weight loss journey seen her join a gym, she's also picked up the running bug. She never thought that running was something she could do, but found herself thrown in at the deep end when she stepped in to take a colleague's place in a run that was organised through her work.

She loved the experience so much that she's now clocking up the miles in training for a kilomathon – a 13.1-km run that will take place in Edinburgh in April – and is also considering signing up for the city's half marathon.

"I'm really enjoying it," said Natasha. "I never thought that I would be able to run and probably never would have tried it before I lost the weight."

#### FACTBOX

Natasha Frizzel, 29, from Peebles  
Membership Manager - Lucy Bryant  
Weight before - 14 stone 1 lb  
Weight now - 11 stone 1lb  
Starting dress size - 16  
Current dress size - 12



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# Finding the balance



Being busy has become a routine in the 21st century and we all experience this in our own different way. Throughout our lives we have different pressures that we try to keep on top of; study, work, family, exercise, finances, looking after ourselves or caring for others.

Quite often we find ourselves juggling multiple tasks and responsibilities at the same time. It's a bit like spinning plates: life suddenly becomes very hectic and we struggle to fit everything in.

Worrying over how you are going to balance everything without letting yourself – and others down – is common. You wonder how on earth you will manage and the truth is there is no one right answer.

However, it is possible to find a balance that works for you and can help to make life a little easier.

Getting into the routine of a healthy lifestyle takes time and you might make mistakes along the way, but that's just the nature of life. Always remember to be kind to yourself and make changes and tweaks to find what works for you.

Physical health and mental wellbeing are important, so make it a goal to exercise daily, eat well and rest. But try and take time out of your schedule once a

day and do something you enjoy such as reading, meditating, listening to music or simply watching the clouds drift by.

We all need to have fun in our lives and therefore friends and family are important. They are your support system so take the time to come together, enjoy each other's company, listen and laugh together and, most importantly, be there for one another.

Set goals that are realistic and attainable in every aspect of your life in order to achieve balance. Once you have set goals, it is time to get organised!

Organisation allows us to achieve everything we want to do in a day and prioritise what is important. Being organised can minimise stress and keep you feeling calm.

Achieving life balance is an on-going process, however, by maintaining a balance in our lives we can alleviate stress and anxiety, have more energy, improve our health and wellbeing and be happier.

There is no magic answer and ultimately you are the one in control. Consider what is important to you and then work towards finding an overall balance and happiness.





# A Gut Feeling

Our digestive system is an amazing machine, working tirelessly to process and extract nutrients from the food we eat.

But when we don't look after our gut and show it the love it deserves, problems such as bloating and constipation can occur.

Gut health is important to our overall well-being, and it all starts with the food that our gut has the task of digesting.

In addition to helping your body stay strong and healthy, eating well will provide the right kind of feeding grounds for the trillions of bacteria living in your gut.

Unlike the bacteria that can be found on kitchen work surfaces, plugholes and other places where germs breed, these are good bacteria - gut microbiota - that are essential for efficient digestion and strong immunity.

However, these bacteria can be damaged easily. Processed foods are just one cause - other issues such as stress, lack of sleep, and antibiotics can also impact on overall gut health.

Just like we all have our own fingerprint, our gut bacteria composition is unique. That means that different foods will impact in different ways - each person has to find the best food for their own gut bacteria to thrive.

While you may think that finding the right combination is an impossible task, there are a few simple tips to follow to improve your digestion - and luckily they will also help you to lose weight and improve your overall health.

## GET YOUR 5 A DAY - AND THEN SOME!

Eat a variety of fruit and vegetables to develop a healthy range of gut bacteria. Think of your plate as a rainbow, and fill it with as many different colours as you can find.

## THE FIBRE THINGS IN LIFE

Increase your fibre intake. In the UK, the recommended daily intake of fibre is 25g for women and 30g for men. Excellent sources of fibre include fruit, vegetables, pulses and grains which keep gut bacteria healthy and happy.

## A LOT TO PROCESS

Limit your intake of processed food. Meals high in saturated fat not only add pounds and inches to your waistline but also disrupt the community of bacteria, causing digestive issues.



## BE A HEALTHY EATING PRO

Commonly found in yoghurts, probiotics contain live, active bacteria that may promote the growth of good bacteria, resulting in healthy digestion.

## QUENCH YOUR THIRST

Aim to drink at least 1.5 litres of water per day. Proper hydration ensures good digestion of food, preventing digestive issues.







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WAY

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Scottish Slimmers  
section of our website for  
lots of oaty inspiration!*



[hamlynsoats.co.uk](http://hamlynsoats.co.uk)

by **scottishslimmers** **STYLE**

*What's the buzz  
about honey?*

The humble bee may be small in stature, but the winged beastie is huge in importance. Responsible for pollinating more of the world's food crops than any other insect, we rely on them to put fresh, flavoursome food on the table.



The bee is also singularly responsible for producing a wonder substance – honey. Known to have a range of healing properties and health benefits, in recent years honey has become fashionable as a key ingredient in numerous natural remedies and beauty products.

Honey is rich in antioxidants and certain types, in particular Manuka, have been found to strengthen the immune system, helping to ward off colds and flu. It is also known to be anti-bacterial and anti-fungal – and a great treatment for coughs and sore throats.

But bee-ware! While honey is a great alternative to refined sugar, it is still part of the sugar family and should not be eaten in large quantities. Moderation is key!

So as bees come out of winter hibernation and get to work gathering pollen from the beautiful blooms of spring, we celebrate them with a range of fantastic honey-themed products for the face, body and home.



Bee Good Honey and Wild Flax Daily Moisturiser £14.50

Marks and Spencer Royal Jelly and Pure Honey Foot Balm £3.50



TK Maxx Apricot Happy Honey £3.99



Laura Ashely Honey Bee Jumper £55



Home Sense Honey Vinegar £7.99



Oliver Bonas Bee Stud Earrings £18



Manuka Doctor Api Nourish Revitalising Day Cream £25.00



British Heart Foundation Bee PomPom Cushion £9.99



Benecos Natural Cosmetics Lipstick Honey Pink £6

George at Asda Nspa Fruit Extracts Honey Jelly Scrub £3



Sainsburys Home Botanist Pillar Bee Candle £10



# Destination dream wedding dress

Horrified by how she looked in a holiday snap, Lara Walker fastened her seatbelt and took off on a weight loss journey.

Outfit by John Lewis



Like most new mums, Lara Walker feared she would struggle to shift her baby weight after giving birth to her little boy, Dylan. So, it came as a pleasant surprise when she was able to get back into her regular size jeans just days after leaving hospital.

But that joy of having a happy and healthy son to take care of - and maintaining her pre-baby figure - soon evaporated when Lara (39) sadly developed post-natal depression. Shortly before Dylan arrived, her relationship with the little boy's father broke down and she had no option but to move back in with her parents.

"My eating was all over the place," admitted Lara, from Edinburgh. "In an evening I wouldn't just eat a little bit of chocolate, but a whole big bar. I was eating to make myself feel better, but it was just making things worse."

“ The wedding is just a few months away: I already have my dress, and I know that I am going to have to get it taken in. I really want to hit my Target Weight in time for the wedding – that would be the icing on the cake. ”

"When Dylan was about 18 months old, we went on holiday to Ibiza. It was only after seeing a photograph of myself that I realised that something really needed to change and that I couldn't do it on my own."

"I was so nervous about going into the Scottish Slimmers class for the first time and I got a shock when I stood on the scales as I was half a stone heavier than I thought I was. They couldn't have been more supportive though and I knew that I'd made the right decision in joining."

By the time she went on holiday to Malta the following summer, Lara had lost over a stone. She found that her weight fluctuated up and down, but with the help of her class manager she remained determined to stay on track with her eating plan.

Dylan would accompany Lara to her weekly class: other members loved to fuss over him and read him stories - and he was the only person to receive a gold star each and every week from class manager Janice Mackenzie!

Lara found the confidence to join a gym, mixing up cardiovascular and resistance sessions, and the weight started to come off little by little. She returned to Ibiza last summer and - having lost over four stones - looked like a different person in her holiday snaps.

She still has a little way to go to achieve her Target Weight but now has some added incentive to keep striding towards that final goal.

Lara said: "I was incredibly lucky to meet a wonderful man called Richard. The day after I came back from holiday, Richard asked me to marry him and I said yes."

"The wedding is just a few months away: I already have my dress, and I know that I am going to have to get it taken in. I really want to hit my Target Weight in time for the wedding – that would be the icing on the cake."





"Dylan is at school now so that means I have a routine of going to the gym in the mornings, and Richard has been really supportive too by eating exactly the same meals as me. It's so much easier when you are not having to cook different things.

"It's been a slow process for me because my weight has gone up and down, but I've always been determined to get there, and Janice is always there at the weigh-in, encouraging me through good weeks and bad."

### FACTBOX

Lara Walker, 39, from Edinburgh  
 Membership Manager - Janice MacKenzie  
 Weight before - 17 stone 7 lbs  
 Weight now - 13 stone 11lbs  
 Starting dress size - 20-22  
 Current dress size - 14

# Strictly 4 Checks



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Exercise and healthy eating provide the right combination for weight loss success. But if you've never led an active lifestyle before, putting the puzzle together can be a daunting prospect.

It's completely natural to feel self-conscious pulling on your trainers to head out for a jog or to feel nervous about stepping across the threshold of a gym for the first time.

If you've never been into fitness, it's going to be a challenge to go it alone. How do you know what

exercises to do and, most importantly, how do you know if you are performing them correctly?

The answer could be to join a group fitness class. Whether it's a Zumba session at the local community centre or a recreational running group such as JogScotland, the possibilities for buddying up are endless.

Still not convinced? Here's six reasons why you should think about working out with others and giving group exercise a go.

#### KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

If you take part in a class or an organised activity, you will have the benefit of tuition from a qualified instructor or coach. If you decide to go it alone, you risk not using proper form and getting injured. It's the job of the class leader to make sure you are exercising correctly and getting the most from your work out.

#### GET MOTIVATED

If you plan to go on a five-mile cycle, it's easy to turn back a mile in when the going gets tough. But if you are surrounded by a group of other people, suddenly it's not so easy to call it quits. Being among other like-minded individuals will help keep you motivated and focused on your fitness goals.

#### FIND YOUR TRIBE

Think that everyone else will be fitter or more advanced than you? Think again. Many group exercise classes and sports clubs split their sessions to suit different levels of experience. Check the timetable or ask the instructor – they'll help find the right level for you. And just think how satisfying it will be when you get so good that it's time to move up a group!

#### STRUCTURED SUPPORT

We all know that you're supposed to warm up, stretch and cool down properly when exercising. But there's always a temptation – especially for those of us who are time-poor – to skip what we see as being non-essential. Instructors will deliver a structured session, ensuring all the critical elements of exercise are delivered.



#### TOP TIP!

Don't want to join a formal group setting? Why not round up some friends and set up an online step challenge using apps and fitness tracking watches? There can even be a prize for the most steps each month.



#### TIME TO SWITCH OFF

One of the best things about letting someone else lead is the ability to switch off. You don't need to think about how to structure your workout, what exercises you need to perform or how long you should spend doing each one. All you need to do is turn up on time, listen to the class leader and move!

#### MAKING FITNESS FUN

Exercise should be an enjoyable activity and not one that fills you full of dread. Joining in with others will introduce you to new people and widen your social circle. Not only will you make new friends, you'll have people to share the highs and lows of your fitness journey with.





# Working together for a healthier workforce

We've teamed up with employers to create healthier, happier and more productive workforces by making Scottish Slimmers more accessible in the workplace.

The average employed Scot will spend a staggering 1,791 hours in their workplace every year. We're known to have longer working hours than any country in Europe, with many of us regularly putting in more than 10 hours of overtime each week.

We practically spend as much time at work as we do at home with our family and friends, so it's only right

that we should place just as much importance on our health while we are in the office as we do when we're outside it.

Research shows that fitter and healthier staff are happier and more productive in their work, which benefits them and their employer. In a bid to help employers give staff the support they need to develop a healthier lifestyle, Scottish Slimmers has developed a unique workplace programme – Scottish Slimmers Works (SSW).

Lindsey Currie, head of business to business at Scottish Slimmers, said: "The programme takes a holistic approach, informing employees not only about nutrition but about activity and mindfulness too.

"It's known that overweight employees are more likely to have higher absenteeism; encounter difficulties with using equipment or seating; and be less able to cope with the physical demands of their employment.

"The health benefits of losing weight are well documented: maintaining a healthy weight can reduce the risk of developing serious conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, strokes and some cancers.

"However, it also has incredibly positive benefits for mental health too. It boosts self esteem and confidence, and those qualities then filter through into their working life, making them more effective and happier in the workplace."

SSW classes are held in a private area in the workplace. Scottish Slimmers' engaging and motivated team of membership managers deliver the classes, giving a presentation on a relevant topic each week before a discreet weigh-in. There is also an option to have a weigh and go session.

All those who attend SSW classes are encouraged to set themselves goals and receive an eating plan that will help them to get there. The programme also includes advice on exercise and being active and hints and tips on staying motivated and focused on developing a healthy lifestyle.

Lindsey added: "Employers can understand that absenteeism can have a direct impact on the profitability of the business, but SSW also allows them to appreciate the wider benefits that investing in the health of their staff can bring.

“ Organising an SSW class gives employees a convenient way to lose weight and as they work together on their goals, it really does help to create a supportive workplace environment. ”

"Organising an SSW class gives employees a convenient way to lose weight and as they work together on their goals, it really does help to create a supportive workplace environment. Not only that, employees will value working for an organisation that supports and invests in their wellbeing."

Want to know more about SSW and how Scottish Slimmers could help you to create a healthier and happier workforce? Contact us on [works@scottishslimmers.com](mailto:works@scottishslimmers.com) to get further information.

*Don't just take our word for it!*

**A major international company with a base in Aberdeen recently held an SSW programme for its employees.**

**Of those who responded to a survey about the class:**

**100%** said they found the service helpful  
**100%** said they'd improved their eating habits  
**100%** said they were more physically active





# Tasty Spring 7 Day Menu Ideas

If winter is the season for homely comfort food to keep the chill out, then spring is definitely the season of fresh, new flavours. Why not try our seven-day eating plan to keep you help keep you on target to reach your goals?

We've chosen seven days' worth of tasty and delicious meals that are perfect for the spring time. Each meal uses ingredients to keep you fuller for longer, helping you to eat right and feel good.

## HOW IT WORKS

Each day simply choose 1 breakfast, 1 lunch and 1 dinner and 1 everyday bonus food.

## BONUS FOODS

One item from:  
275ml skimmed milk  
1x 125g pot of yoghurt  
200g 0% fat Greek yoghurt  
30g cheese  
2 average sized portions of fruit  
1 apple, orange, pear, kiwi, 2 figs/dates  
225g berries

**At least 3 portions of vegetables**

**Drink at least 8 glasses of water, tea or coffee**

Choose snacks using your FlexiCheck allowance (80 per week)



## BREAKFAST

### Berry Booster Smoothie

**Serves 4** **FG** 3 / **CC** 6

2 small ripe bananas broken into chunks  
115 g/4oz blueberries  
60 g/2oz cranberries fresh or frozen  
115 g/4oz strawberries hulled  
1 tbsp oats  
200 ml/7fl oz cranberry or apple juice  
200 ml/7fl oz water

Blend the fruit in a food processor with the oats. Add the fruit juice and blend again. Finally, with the food processor running, add enough water for your preferred thickness of smoothie. Serve in a glass

OPTION: Add an extra 30 g/1 oz of porridge oats to make this a really satisfying start to the day (add 1 Check and 25 calories per serving if you do add this)

## LUNCH

### Roasted Vegetable and Feta Pitta Bread

**Serves 1** **FG** 5 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 11

1 wholemeal pitta bread halved  
1 tbsp coconut oil  
½ red pepper  
½ courgette  
½ aubergine  
30 g feta  
Few basil leaves to garnish

Preheat oven to 180°C/160°C fan. Melt the coconut oil in a baking tray. Cut all vegetables into chunks and toss through coconut oil. Season with salt and pepper. Bake for 25-30 minutes until veg are cooked. Toast pitta bread and fill with vegetables. Crumble over feta and basil leaves

## EVERYDAY BONUS

125ml skimmed milk  
125g small pot fat-free yoghurt  
2 melon slices  
225g berries

## DINNER

### Coconut Sweet Potato Curry

**Serves 4** **FG** 5 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 10

Spray oil  
1 large onion halved and sliced  
2 garlic cloves crushed  
1 cm piece root ginger peeled  
1 tsp paprika  
½ tsp cayenne  
1 red chilli deseeded and sliced  
1 red pepper deseeded and sliced  
500 g sweet potatoes peeled and chopped into chunks  
150 g passata  
300 ml coconut milk (light)  
2 tbsp smooth peanut butter  
Small bunch fresh coriander chopped

Spray oil in a large non-stick pot and add the onion. Fry on medium to low heat for 10 mins until soft then add the garlic and grate the ginger straight into the pan. Stir in the paprika and the cayenne and cook for another minute. Add chilli and red pepper to the pan. cook for 4-5 mins. Add the chunks of sweet potato to the pot and cook over medium heat until potatoes start to soften slightly. Pour the passata and the coconut milk over the sweet potatoes, stir to mix everything together and cover the pot with a lid. Bring to the boil and then reduce to simmer for 30-45 minutes or until the sweet potatoes have softened down. Lastly, stir the peanut butter through the curry, season well with salt and pepper and serve with chopped coriander scattered over the top.





**BREAKFAST**

**Asparagus Scramble**

**Serves 2** **FG** 0 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 8

100g fresh asparagus  
4 eggs  
2 tbsp fat-free fromage frais  
1 tbsp chopped parsley  
Salt and pepper  
2 small slices wholemeal toast

Trim the woody ends off the asparagus. Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and add trimmed asparagus. Boil for 5 minutes until tender. Drain well and cut into pieces. Break the eggs into a bowl and add the fromage frais, herbs and seasoning. Whisk together. Spray a non-stick pan lightly with oil and place over a low heat. When the pan is hot, tip in the egg mix and stir gently until it starts to set. Add the asparagus pieces and stir until scrambled. Pile on top of slice of toast.

**LUNCH**

**Spicy Beans on Toast** **Serves 2** **FG** 0 / **CC** 8

Spray oil  
1 small onion chopped  
1 small chilli diced  
8 cherry tomatoes diced  
1 x 200g can cannellini or butterbeans drained  
1 tsp tomato paste  
Dash balsamic vinegar  
2 medium slices wholegrain bread  
2 tbsp parsley chopped  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Lightly spray a pan with oil and cook the onion and chilli for 5 minutes until tender. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the drained beans and tomato paste and heat through gently. Add the balsamic vinegar and seasoning. Lightly toast the bread and spoon the beans over the top. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

**DINNER**

**Lamb with Lentils and Herbs**

**Serves 4** **FG** 0 / **CC** 11

200g Puy lentils or green lentils dry weight  
2 cloves garlic crushed  
4 sprigs rosemary  
4 x 100g lean lamb chops or cutlets all visible fat removed  
Spray oil  
A splash of balsamic vinegar  
1 tsp Dijon mustard  
4 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Pick the lentils over just in case there are any little stones. Put the lentils in a large saucepan with a pinch of salt, 2 rosemary sprigs and the garlic, and cover with plenty of water. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a simmer and cook gently for 25–30 minutes, until tender. Meanwhile, lightly spray the lamb with oil and rub with the remaining rosemary. Cook on a hot griddle pan or under a preheated grill for 3–4 minutes each side (depending on how pink or well done you like your lamb). Drain the lentils and return to the warm pan. Stir the balsamic, mustard and crème fraîche. Season to taste. Serve the lamb with the lentils and some No-Check green vegetables.



**EVERYDAY BONUS**  
275ml skimmed milk  
225g berries  
1 apple

**BREAKFAST**

**Super Charge Green Smoothie**

**Serves 1** **FG** 0 / **CC** 0

1 peeled kiwi  
50g pineapple, chopped and peeled  
1 handful spinach  
Juice of ½ lime  
150ml water, skimmed milk or dairy-free milk

Place all ingredients in blender and blitz.

**LUNCH**

**Tomato and Chickpea Pitta Bread**

**Serves 4** **FG** 2 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 9

300g tomatoes  
100g slow roast tomatoes  
low-calorie spray  
1 small red onion finely sliced  
1 tsp paprika  
1 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
220g chick peas tinned  
Seasoning  
2 whole wheat pitta breads  
4 tsp 0% fat Greek yoghurt  
Handful fresh coriander leaves

Quarter the fresh tomatoes and roughly chop the slow roast tomatoes. Put together in a bowl. Heat the oil in a small pan, add the onion and fry slowly until very soft and just beginning to brown. Stir in the paprika and cook for another minute. Remove from the heat and add the balsamic vinegar. Stir this mixture into the tomatoes and add the chick peas. Season with salt and pepper. Warm the pitta bread and open to form a pocket. Pile the salad into the bread and top with Greek yoghurt and scatter with coriander leaves.

**EVERYDAY BONUS**  
40g half-fat cheddar cheese  
1 banana



**DINNER**

**Cheesy Chilli Quesadillas**

**Serves 4** **FG** 4 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 10

4 x 60g whole wheat tortilla wraps  
100 g reduced-fat Cheddar cheese grated  
1-2 red chillies deseeded and diced  
2 spring onions thinly sliced  
4 tbsp coriander chopped  
100 g reduced-fat tomato salsa  
4 tbsp Greek 0% fat plain yoghurt

Take 2 tortillas and sprinkle them with the cheese. Top with the chillies, spring onions and coriander. Cover with the remaining tortillas and press down gently to flatten them. Place a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. When it's hot, add one of the quesadillas and toast for 1-2 minutes until lightly browned underneath and then turn it over and cook the other side until it starts to brown and the cheese melts. Repeat with the other quesadilla. Cut each hot quesadilla into 6 triangles and serve them immediately with the salsa and yoghurt.

**Recipe Notes**

Tip: these quesadillas are delicious served with guacamole. 100g reduced fat guacamole will add 1.5 Checks and 3g fat per serving.



## BREAKFAST

### Scrambled Egg and Spinach

**Serves 1** **FG** 0 / **CC** 6

Beat 2 eggs in a bowl and season. Add few drops of skimmed milk. Scramble in frying pan then add spinach. Serve on top of 1 grilled large mushroom.

## DINNER

### Cheeseburger

**Serves 1** **FG** 3 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 19

120 g lean minced beef 10% fat or less  
½ small onion grated  
1 tsp tomato ketchup  
Shake Worcestershire sauce  
1 small egg beaten  
Spray oil  
Salt and pepper  
15 g half fat Cheese slice  
1 whole wheat burger bun  
Lettuce leaves  
1 tomato sliced  
1 pickled gherkin sliced

Mix the mince, grated onion, ketchup and enough beaten egg to form a firm but moist mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Shape the mixture in your hands into one thick burger. Spray lightly with oil and cook under a hot grill for 5 mins each side or however you like your burger cooked. Place the cheese slice on top of the burger and melt under the grill. Split the bun and add lettuce and tomato slices. Top with the burger and cheese and add the sliced pickle and mustard and enjoy!



**29**  
CHECKS

**DAY 4**

**EVERYDAY BONUS**  
125ml skimmed milk  
2 satsumas  
1 apple

## LUNCH

### Spiced Green Pea Soup

**Serves 4** **FG** 0 / **CC** 4

1 onion chopped  
1 medium potato peeled and diced  
2 cloves garlic crushed  
2.5cm/1in piece fresh ginger peeled and chopped  
1 tsp cumin ground  
½ tsp coriander seeds crushed  
900ml hot vegetable stock  
225g peas frozen  
1 fresh chilli deseeded and chopped  
Juice of ½ lemon  
Few coriander leaves chopped  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
150ml low-fat yoghurt  
Fresh coriander to garnish

Put the onion, potato, garlic, ginger, spices and stock in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Cover the pan and simmer for 25 minutes. Stir in the peas and chilli, then bring back to the boil before lowering the heat and cooking for 5 minutes until all vegetables are tender. Add the lemon juice and chopped coriander and season to taste. Puree the soup in batches until smooth in a blender or food processor, and then chill in the refrigerator. Just before serving, swirl in the yoghurt. Spoon into serving bowls and top each one with a sprig of coriander.



## BREAKFAST

### Courgette Fritters

**Serves 1** **FG** 2 / **CC** 5

1 medium courgette grated  
2 tbsp self-raising flour  
1 medium egg beaten  
1 clove garlic minced  
3 spring onions finely chopped  
Spray oil  
1 tbsp sweet chilli sauce  
Spinach to serve

Combine ingredients. Shape into balls and flatten. Heat a non-stick frying pan to medium heat and spray oil. Fry the fritters for 2-3 mins on each side until golden brown. Serve with sweet chili dipping sauce and spinach.

## LUNCH

### Beetroot and Chicken Chilli Wraps

**Serves 4** **FG** 5 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 11

150g cooked skinned chicken breast  
180g beetroot- sliced  
1 small avocado- sliced  
¼ red onion- finely sliced  
Handful lamb's lettuce  
Small bunch coriander- chopped  
4 small wholemeal wraps  
4 tbsp sweet chilli sauce

Tear the chicken into pieces and mix with the beetroot, avocado and onion. Mix in the lettuce and coriander. Warm the wraps in a low oven. Divide the filling between the wraps and drizzle with chilli sauce. Fold each wrap up and slice diagonally to serve.

**27**  
CHECKS

**DAY 5**



## DINNER

### Spaghetti Carbonara

**Serves 1** **FG** 1 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 11

60 g whole wheat spaghetti  
1/2 onion chopped  
1 clove garlic crushed  
2 turkey rashers chopped  
2 tbsp half-fat creme fraiche

Boil spaghetti until al dente. Soften some finely chopped onion in spray oil. Add crushed garlic and chopped turkey rashers and cook 2-3 minutes. Drain spaghetti, mix with the rashers and onions. Stir in 2 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche or extra light cream cheese and season to taste. Serve with a large side salad.

**EVERYDAY BONUS**  
200g fat-free yoghurt  
2 kiwi fruit  
115g berries



## BREAKFAST

### Sweet Potato and Egg

**Serves 1** **FG** 0 using 1 **GG** / **CC** 7

100g sweet potato, cut into chunks  
1 medium egg  
Spray oil  
Salt  
Handful spinach

Preheat oven to 200°C. Lay sweet potato on baking tray and spray oil over and a sprinkle of salt. Place in oven for 25 minutes. Fry an egg. Once cooked, remove egg from pan and add handful of spinach to wilt for a few minutes. Place sweet potato in bowl, add spinach and top with egg.

#### EVERYDAY BONUS

40g light feta cheese  
225g berries  
3 apricots

## DINNER

### Chicken and Kale Stir Fry

**Serves 4** **FG** using 1 **GG** / **CC** 8

180g wholegrain rice (dry weight)  
spray oil  
500g skinned chicken breast cubed  
2.5cm piece fresh root ginger peeled and diced  
1 garlic clove crushed  
1 red chilli deseeded and shredded  
100g kale shredded  
100g tender stem broccoli  
1 tbsp soy sauce  
1 tbsp oyster sauce  
1 lime grated (zest and juice of)

Cook the rice according to the packet instructions. Meanwhile, spray a large frying pan or wok lightly with oil and stir-fry the chicken for 5 minutes until slightly browned all over. Add the ginger, garlic and chilli and stir fry for 1-2 minutes. Add the kale and broccoli and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes. Stir in the soy sauce, oyster sauce, lime zest and juice. Serve immediately with the boiled rice.



## LUNCH

### Tzatziki Chicken Salad

**Serves 2** **FG** 8 / **CC** 16

125g low fat natural yoghurt  
1 tbsp mint chopped  
1 small clove garlic crushed  
1 tsp lemon juice  
1 tsp Cajun seasoning  
2 small chicken breasts skinless & boneless  
4cm inch piece cucumber diced  
2 mini naan breads  
1 small red onion finely sliced  
4 tomatoes chopped  
200g can chickpeas drained  
Rocket leaves

Mix together the yoghurt, mint, garlic and lemon juice. Divide the mixture in half, add the Cajun spice to one half and place in a polythene bag. Make 4 slashes in the chicken fillets and place in the bag with the yoghurt mix. Place the bag in the fridge and marinate for at least 30 mins. Mix the diced cucumber into the remaining yoghurt mixture and chill until ready to serve. Heat the grill to a medium setting. Remove the chicken from the marinade and grill for 7-8 minutes each side, until cooked. Let the chicken rest for 5 minutes. Grill the naan breads or pop in a toaster. Slice into fingers and divide between 2 serving plates. Combine the chickpeas, onions and tomatoes and add to the naan bread. Slice the chicken, place on top of the other ingredients, top with rocket leaves and drizzle over the cucumber mix (tzatziki)

## BREAKFAST

### Spiced Vegetable Omelette

**Serves 4** **FG** 6 / **CC** 10.5

2 large eggs  
½ red pepper deseeded and sliced  
50 g mangetout shredded  
2 spring onions shredded  
1 tbsp Thai sweet chilli dipping sauce  
1 spray oil  
2 tbsp fresh coriander chopped  
Salt  
Freshly ground black pepper

Spray a medium non-stick frying pan with oil, add the vegetables and stir fry for 2 minutes. Transfer to a dish and stir in the chilli sauce. Beat the eggs with coriander and seasoning. Return the pan to the heat and pour in the eggs. Cook, stirring with a spatula to push the set egg to the centre of the pan, until there is no more runny egg left. Cook for a further 30 seconds until the base is golden. Scatter the vegetables over the omelette and fold it over.

#### EVERYDAY BONUS

275ml skimmed milk  
1 mango

## LUNCH

**Serves 4** **FG** 3 / **CC** 6

### Carrot and Ginger Soup

600g carrots peeled and chopped  
2 medium onions peeled and chopped  
1 clove garlic peeled and crushed  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp powdered ginger  
1 tsp medium curry powder  
1½ litres chicken or vegetable stock  
Sea salt and black pepper  
Rind of 1 lemon  
For the Lemon Herb Cream  
4 tbsp half-fat crème fraiche  
Rind of half a lemon finely grated  
2 tsp chopped parsley  
2 tsp chopped chives

Heat the olive oil in a saucepan and add the onions and carrots, cook for several minutes, stirring from time to time. Do not brown the vegetables. Add the garlic, ginger and curry powder and cook for a further minute. Add the stock and lemon strips to the pan, half cover the pan with its lid, and simmer gently for 20 minutes until the carrots are tender. Cool slightly then liquidise until smooth. Taste and season with sea salt and black pepper. Reheat to serve.

To make the cream  
Stir all of the ingredients together gently, or the crème fraiche will go runny, then spoon into the middle of each bowl of soup

## DINNER

### Thai Green Vegetable Curry

**Serves 1** **FG** 5 using 1 **GG** / **CC** 12

45g dry brown rice  
Spray oil  
1 small onion chopped  
1 clove garlic crushed  
1 tbsp Thai green curry paste  
150 ml/5fl oz vegetable stock  
1 small courgette sliced  
60 g/2oz fine green beans fresh or frozen  
60 g/2oz peas frozen  
1 tbsp desiccated coconut  
150 ml/5fl oz skimmed milk  
1 tsp light soy sauce  
Handful fresh coriander chopped

Boil the rice according to instructions on the pack, or by your usual method. Set aside and keep warm. Spray a medium saucepan with oil and heat. Add the onion and cook gently until softened. Add the garlic and curry paste and stir 1 minute. Add the vegetable stock and bring to the boil. Add the courgettes, beans and peas, bring to a simmer and cook 5 minutes. Stir in the desiccated coconut, milk and soy sauce. Cook gently about 5 minutes or until vegetables are crisp tender, stirring frequently. Stir in the coriander and serve the vegetable curry together with the rice.



# Let it Rain!

April showers bring May flowers.... but no one wants to get soaking wet while they come into bloom! Whatever the weather you can ensure you stay stylish – and dry! – with our top picks on waterproofs, from wellies to brollies.

Flying Tiger Watermelon Umbrella £4



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Elvi Trench Coat £75



Primark Parka £20



Cotton Traders Waterproof Jacket £55



# Walk Your Way to Health

Put a spring in your step and enjoy the great outdoors by walking your way to fitness.

Now that the days are getting longer, it's a great chance to get out in the fresh air, enjoy the beauty of nature and burn off some calories.



Walking is a great form of activity and you don't need to buy any expensive gear, just pull on a pair of comfy walking boots or trainers, dress for the weather, take a bottle of water to keep hydrated, and away you go.

Wherever you live in Scotland you'll find some great routes close to you. And whether it's a gentle stroll through a city park or a more challenging hill climb, all you need is some simple get up and go! To show you just how varied Scotland's walking routes are, here's a small selection to whet your appetite.

## CULBIN FOREST, MORAY

This offers a great network of trails and borders the ever-shifting and vast Culbin Sands, home to seals and a wide range of birdlife. Its 3.5 mile (5.6 km) Hill 99 Trail is mainly flat, passing ponds full of insect life and has a gentle climb to Culbin's highest sand dune, making it a great one for families. Children will love climbing the viewing tower for dramatic views over the treetops to the Moray Firth.



## ARTHUR'S SEAT, EDINBURGH

See Auld Reekie in a new light on this hill walk in the heart of Edinburgh. Arthur's Seat's rocky summit towers over the capital, and offers breathtaking views in all directions, and the extensive parkland surrounding it is an oasis of calm in this busy city. It's a 3 mile (4.75km) trek, with some steep and rocky ground, but well worth it for the views.





### ST MONANS TO ANSTRUTHER

Part of the Fife Coastal Path, this 3.7 mile (6km) coastal footpath links the pretty East Neuk villages of St Monans, Pittenween and Anstruther and offers plenty to see along the way. A return to the start can be made by bus.

### BEN LOMOND

Fancy bagging a Munro? Regarded as Glasgow's mountain, Ben Lomond is 3196 feet (974 metres) and the most southerly of the Munros. It's a good one to try if you want to head out to the hills as the incline is steady but never overly steep, while the views over Loch Lomond are glorious. It is a lengthy hike though, so allow about four hours for the return trip.



# Debunking unhealthy food myths

If you were to create a list of all the foods you would identify as being unhealthy choices, what do you think would appear on it? Crisps and sweets? Absolutely. Sugary drinks? Almost certainly. Burgers? Well...not necessarily.

There is a perception that foods we commonly associate with being less healthy are lower in nutritional content and, quite simply, not very good for us. But when it comes to the burger, it's important to remember that not all burgers are created equal!







Burgers – particularly those made by John Davidson, Artisan Butcher – are made with the leanest cuts of meat and are packed with all-important protein – a nutrient which is absolutely essential in a healthy, well balanced diet.

Not only will protein help to make you feel fuller for longer, it is an important building block for the body. If you are regularly performing physical activity as part of a healthy lifestyle, especially resistance training, protein will help to repair the muscle tissue that is broken down during your workouts.

Burgers aren't the only food at the butchery counter that you may have been led to believe is in some way unhealthy. It may be that some cheaper sausages which aren't made from high-quality meats are high in saturated fat, but get them from John Davidsons and they will be leaner.

Scottish Slimmers has teamed up with award-winning butcher John Davidsons to create a range of products that can easily be fitted in to our meal

plans. The Scottish Slimmers range is both tasty and nutritious – and certainly debunks some myths around foods typically thought of as unhealthy.

John Davidsons, based in the north east of Scotland, has created a very varied product line, combining lots of different flavours. All of the products are made by hand using traditional butchery methods and use only high-quality meats.

The range includes beef steak burgers and sausages, as well as flavour combinations such as chicken and sweet chilli, pork and apple, and venison and cranberry. Although John Davidsons stores are located in the north east, the range is available to buy online at [www.johndavidsons.com](http://www.johndavidsons.com).

The products are produced fresh and then blast frozen at their optimum quality prior to shipping. Deliveries are shipped directly from the butchery and, in most cases, are delivered within a 24-hour period of being dispatched.



The team at John Davidsons

Want to make your burgers and sausages even healthier? Try some of these top tips

### GET GRILLING

Grilling meat instead of frying it is generally a healthier way to cook it. However, if you do prefer to fry, then you should use low-calorie spray oil in a non-stick pan for the best results.

### ON THE SIDE

You don't have to serve chips on the side. Think about other alternatives, such as sweet potato wedges and corn on the cob – every bit as easy to prepare as traditional chips! However, if nothing else but fries will do, think about using oven chips instead of deep frying.

### ROLL WITH IT

Wholemeal or half-and-half rolls tend to have a higher nutritional content than white bread rolls. And if you like to use butter or margarine, spread it thinly instead of layering it on.

### RELISH THE OPPORTUNITY

Some relishes and sauces can be a little high in sugar. Again, a little bit of what you fancy does no harm, but if you like to add a big splodge, have a look in the supermarket to see if you can find reduced sugar and salt versions of your favourite relish.

### GO GREEN

Increase your veggie intake by adding some greens to your burger bun. Garnish it with veg like lettuce and rocket, along with tomatoes – sliced beef tomatoes always work best!

Do you feel inspired to head out to the butcher and stock up on burgers and sausages? If so, why not get started with this deliciously spicy recipe using John Davidsons sausages.

## Spicy Sausages

**Serves 2** **FG** 0 using 1 **GG** / **CC** 15

4 X John Davidsons pork steak sausages  
Spray oil  
1 onion, sliced  
1 green pepper, de-seeded and sliced  
1 yellow pepper, de-seeded and sliced  
1/2 tsp garlic paste  
1/2 tsp cumin  
1 tsp chilli powder  
Pinch of chilli flakes  
400 g chopped tomatoes  
200 g kidney beans  
100 g brown rice

Grill the sausages under medium heat until browned and cooked through. Spray a non-stick pan with oil and heat. Add the onions and peppers and cook gently until softened and starting to colour. Stir in the garlic paste, cumin, chilli powder and chilli flakes and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the chopped tomatoes and bring to a simmer. Cut the grilled sausages into thick slices and add the sauce together with the kidney beans. Simmer for 15 minutes. Cook the rice according to the instructions on the pack. Serve the rice topped with the spicy sausages





# Quitters can be winners... and losers!

People have many different reasons for wanting to lose weight. For some, it's to look and feel better in their own skin; for others it will be to help address health issues which are compounded by being overweight.

If you fall into the latter category and want to shed the pounds as part of an overall approach to being happier and healthier, you may also be looking at other elements of your lifestyle in addition to your nutrition.

Perhaps you want to exercise more, reduce the amount of alcohol you consume or – the big one for many people – give up smoking. However, smoking cessation and weight gain are known to be unhappy bedfellows.

It certainly doesn't happen to everyone and it is by no means a given that you will put on weight, but it's not unusual for people to gain an average of 11lbs in the 12 months after they quit the habit.



## TOP TIP!

If you feel ready to give up cigarettes, why not make the first step towards positive change on No Smoking Day on March 13. Use resources like the website [www.nhsinform.scot](http://www.nhsinform.scot) to get support and formulate a plan.

Lots of studies have been carried out over the years examining why people who are in the process of giving up cigarettes put on weight, and a number of factors combine to create the perfect storm.

Firstly, cigarettes affect the body's metabolism and eliminating them will mean that your body needs fewer calories than it did before.

Smoking is thought to suppress the appetite, and in tandem with this, tastebuds that have been smothered by nicotine suddenly burst into life. Smokers often report that food tastes better after they have quit. Naturally, we all want more of a good thing!

People mistake nicotine cravings for feeling hungry – the result being that they eat to distract themselves from the desire for a cigarette. In addition, smokers also say they need to do something with their hands – and end up raising a snack instead of a cigarette to their mouth.

So how do you kick the habit without sabotaging your hard work on the healthy eating front? As with most things, the key is moderation. Don't try and address everything at once, rather deal with one issue at a time.

Losing weight and sticking to a healthy eating plan is challenging even for those who have the strongest of wills. Simultaneously trying to remove another ingrained habit like smoking may well be a step too far.

That's the key message here: decide to either look at your eating habits or your smoking habit as a priority and once you have conquered one issue, start looking at the other.

Once you are ready to stop smoking, take preventative steps against weight gain rather than dealing with them afterwards.

Keep your metabolism high by making exercise a regular part of your routine – you'll be amazed by how your lung capacity will increase! – and ensure you surround yourself with healthy snacks so you don't reach for fatty or sugary foods when the cravings hit.

If you are struggling to go cold turkey, approach your GP to discuss different treatments that might help you. Although there are numerous medicines that can assist people with stopping smoking, your GP could also suggest alternative therapies like hypnotherapy or acupuncture.



“Losing weight has made me a lot happier”

Kaitlyn MacRory was fed up feeling self-conscious in her clothes - now she's two stone lighter and happier than ever.



Like most young women there's nothing Kaitlyn MacRory enjoys more than getting together with her friends for a night out on the town. But when she had to start dressing differently from them because she was self-conscious of her shape, Kaitlyn (21) knew it was time to change.

She said: "Seeing photos of myself in a group photo with my friends always made me feel like the 'bigger one.' It was difficult to find clothes to wear for a night out, not because I couldn't fit into them but purely for the fact I couldn't dress for my age because of my size.

"Wearing crop tops and skirts emphasised how big I was, so I had to cover up. Being body conscious all the time was so hard to deal with, it was tiring. That was basically the last straw for me: I felt I wasn't enjoying the prime time in my life due to being so overweight."

Kaitlyn, from Aberdeen, signed up to her local Scottish Slimmers class and realised that her whole mindset towards eating was going to have to change if she was going to reach her goal.

She admits that her weight had crept up over the years because she was eating all the wrong things - takeaways were her weakness. However, with the help of class manager Sylvia Strachan she began to understand that she could still enjoy her little treats as part of an overall healthy eating plan.

"Whenever anyone says to me, 'How did you manage to do that diet?' I always tell them that it's not a diet. It's all about making healthier lifestyle choices and that's why it's so easy to stick by. You can have treats here and there - it's all about moderation.

"I won't lie, when I look at a takeaway now, I still think it looks good but my whole mindset has changed. I actually consider how many calories are in everything and make sure I'm not going overboard because I don't want to go back to the person I was before," explained Kaitlyn.

As well as changing her eating habits, Kaitlyn decided to become more active and signed up to do a Metafit class at her local hall. Metafit is a 30-minute workout, usually performed in a group setting, which fires up the metabolism.



Although the bodyweight exercise workouts burn around 300 calories during the session, the body's metabolism keeps working for several hours afterwards, burning around an additional 200 calories.

Kaitlyn added: "Losing 2 stone has drastically changed how I feel as a person. I can go out with friends and not have to worry about what I am wearing because I feel great in almost everything that I wear.

"I cleared out my wardrobe of all my old clothes because I am determined to never go back to being overweight. Losing weight has made me a lot happier as a person. When I look back at photos of me before, it makes me incredibly proud and chuffed at how far I've come."

### FACTBOX

Kaitlyn MacRory, 21, from Aberdeen  
Membership Manager - Sylvia Strachan  
Weight before - 12 stone 2 lbs  
Weight now - 10 stone 2 lbs  
Starting dress size - 14  
Current dress size - 10



# Lovely Layers

Layers are the way to take your wardrobe from winter to spring and into summer. From lightweight blazers to woolly cardigans, wearing layers allows you to cool down and warm up with the temperature inside and out!



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# Layer Slayer

Too hot to handle? Or too cold to bear? Make sure your wardrobe is ready for every kind of weather spring can throw at you with lots of layers to suit the season.



[www.joebrowns.co.uk](http://www.joebrowns.co.uk) | [www.topman.com](http://www.topman.com) | [www.burton.co.uk](http://www.burton.co.uk)  
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# Better by the Batch

cooking up simple mealtimes

All it takes is a little forward planning, but it can save time, effort, stress and keeps you on track for making the right eating choices all week.

Batch cookery is the saving grace of busy people who want to have tasty homecooked food but may be strapped for time.

Family commitments, leisure activities and work all put pressure on time and enthusiasm for cooking, and this is when it can be easy to slip into making the wrong food choices.

But by devoting some time and planning on the days that are less busy, you can have superfast suppers at your fingertips with batch cooking.

## THE BENEFITS ARE MANY:

- Healthy homecooked meals that you just need to heat and eat
- You know exactly what's in your meal so there are no hidden sugars or processed ingredients
- As well as saving time, it saves money

- It takes the thought and hassle out of deciding what to eat on busy days
- It keeps your weight loss on track

## BATCH COOKING IS SIMPLE IF YOU FOLLOW THESE POINTS:

Make a list of all the ingredients you need and purchase them then set aside some time, say once a month, to get busy in the kitchen.

Once you've had your cookery session, the dishes can be portioned up and frozen in food containers or freezer bags.

Remember to label and date your containers – prepared food should keep for three to six months in the freezer.

Keep frozen vegetables on standby as an accompaniment to your meals, these are quick to cook and require no preparation.

To get you started, we've got a couple of mouthwatering meals that freeze well – all ready to have on standby for busy days. Happy cooking!

## Chicken Spaghetti Bolognese

Makes 4 portions **FG** 0 using 1 **GC** / **CC** 16

Spray oil  
230g whole wheat spaghetti (dry weight)  
2 small red onions- finely chopped  
2 small red peppers- deseeded and chopped  
2 garlic cloves- crushed  
350g chicken mince  
2 X 400g can chopped tomatoes  
2 tsp tomato puree  
170ml chicken stock  
2 tbsp chopped fresh oregano

Cook the spaghetti in a large saucepan of boiling water for 12-15 minutes until cooked. Spray a frying pan lightly with oil and place over a medium heat. Cook the onion, red pepper and garlic until softened. Add the chicken mince and cook, stirring for 3-4 minutes until colour changes. Add the tomatoes, tomato purée, chicken stock, seasoning and herbs. Turn up the heat and let the sauce bubble away for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain the spaghetti and divide into 4 portions. Top with the Bolognese sauce. Allow to cool completely before freezing.







## Veggie Lentil Curry

Makes 4 portions **FG** using 1 **GG**/**CC** 9

Spray oil  
1 onion- chopped  
2 carrots- sliced  
2 celery sticks- chopped  
2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped  
400g can of green lentils (drained)  
1 tbsp paprika  
400g can chopped tomatoes  
300ml vegetable stock  
200g button mushrooms- halved  
125g low-fat natural yoghurt  
Handful chopped parsley  
120g brown rice (dry weight)  
Salt and pepper

Spray a large pan lightly with oil and place over a low heat. Add the onion, carrots, celery and garlic, and cook gently for 10 minutes until tender. Stir in the lentils and paprika and cook for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and vegetable stock. Bring to the boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes. Stir in the mushrooms, season to taste and simmer for 5 minutes. Swirl in the yoghurt and sprinkle with parsley and extra paprika. Meanwhile, cook the rice according to the instructions on the packet. Serve the curry on a mound of rice. Allow to cool completely before freezing.

# Sharon is in good health

Shedding four stone has helped mum-of-two Sharon Prior beat diabetes and get fit for a new job.

Outfit by John Lewis





### FACTBOX

Sharon Prior, 25, from North Berwick

Weight before - 19 stone 7 lb

Weight now - 15 stone 6 1/2 lb

Starting dress size - 24

Current dress size - 16

Since joining Scottish Slimmers Sharon (25) has dropped from a size 24 to size 16. As well as looking great, she's gained more energy for her new job as a care assistant – and to keep up with her active daughters Charlotte (6) and Ellie (15 months).

It was while pregnant with Ellie that Sharon was diagnosed with gestational diabetes which meant that her pregnancy was regarded as high risk.

She was closely monitored by health professionals throughout and had to take blood tests three times a day as well as prescribed medication to control her blood sugar levels.

Outfit by John Lewis

Sharon said: "That gave me a scare and made me think, 'what if this turns into type two diabetes?'"

"Up until that point I had always been very lucky and I'd had no health problems but it made me think that if I continue to put weight on, that wouldn't help.

"I just decided one day to go to Scottish Slimmers. Me and my mum signed up together and have supported each other throughout."

Baby Ellie was born in October 2017 and Sharon has since been able to put her diabetes scare behind her – and her determination to keep well and be a healthy mum has helped in her remarkable weight loss.

Her most significant personal milestone was when she realised she had lost the weight equivalent to her toddler daughter.

"I lost my first stone quite quickly. Then when I lost two and a half stone I lifted my daughter and I thought that was amount of weight I had lost which really made me realise how well I was doing.

"I've lost over four stone and my mum is doing well and has lost two stone. It's about everything in moderation, I've swapped to treat size snacks like mini caramel shortcakes that are four checks and mini rice krispie bars that are two checks. I feel I am still having the same as everyone else but I use my checks to allow for treats."

“ People think when you are on a diet you eat boring food like salad but I haven't had a single salad since starting ”



*Before ....*

Sharon says that being in the right mind set and having the support of her mum Heather, along with an encouraging class leader, has kept her motivated.

So much so that she even managed to lose weight over the challenging festive season – recording a 3lb loss at her first meeting of 2019. She did this despite attending a spate of family birthday celebrations during the month of December.

Sharon's also become more active in her leisure time, and enjoys family walks with partner Ian and their girls along the North Berwick coast where they live.

Sharon is continuing to attend her weekly classes and following the programme but doesn't have a target in mind.

She added: "I haven't set a goal but I'd like to get into size 14 clothes. I'm just going to keep going and see how I get on."



# Keeping it real!

All that glitters is not gold – an age-old proverb which rings so true today when photoshopping and filters mean that what you see is not always what you get.

Altering and airbrushing images for Facebook and Instagram might be a drastic example of how looks can be deceiving, but we've probably all done it on a lesser scale.

Think about the last time you were snapping away taking selfies on a big night out. How many of those photos did you discard before posting the one that showed you at your best?

We all want to show ourselves in the best light – whether it's from the best angle or taking part in activities that show we're 'living our best life'.

Next time you are scrolling through your social media feeds, think about that before you compare yourself and your own achievements to those you see on screen.

You know that social media influencer you follow? The one who shares photographs of his perfectly poached eggs on beautifully brown toast and sprinkled with seeds in a way that makes the plate look like a work of art?



That's what you saw at 8am yesterday morning when he didn't have to be in work until the afternoon and his wife took the kids to school.

Chances are he won't share the photograph of the crumbly bits of cereal from the bottom of the box he wolfed down with far too much milk this morning when he was struggling to get out the door on time amid the general chaos of family life!

Or how about that mum you see at the school gates every morning? The one you're friends with on Facebook and who's always posting her gym selfies, showing off her toned abs and post-workout glow?

What you didn't see was her make-up free face as she lounged in front of the telly last night, her tummy rounded from eating a pizza with extra cheese and pepperoni that she ordered in from the local takeaway.

What you are comparing yourself to is not always realistic – more likely you're comparing yourself to what someone else sees as a perfect moment in time.

As human beings, we are unique and made of different shapes and sizes. What is real is our own health, our own bodies and our own wellbeing.

It might be that someone else's body will at first provide you with inspiration and motivation to make positive lifestyle changes, but it's not a competition. Accept yourself and focus only on what you can do to make a better version of you.







A healthy lifestyle is more than just losing weight and being active. It is about eating in a way that allows your body to receive essential nutrients for daily function.

# Smooth Operators

Start your day right with a nutrient-packed smoothie.

Supermarket and chemist shelves are packed full of vitamin tablets and supplements, allowing us to have an instant boost of nutrients that help keep our body healthy.

But did you know that drinking a homemade smoothie each day is an effective way to get those essential vitamins – and they taste delicious too!

Not only will you be giving your body a real treat and making strides towards a healthier you, creating your own smoothies also has benefits for your wallet.

You don't need to stick to the freshest of fruit and veg into your blender: food that is past its best for cooking with or eating raw is great for smoothies, ensuring that the items you buy at the supermarket won't go to waste.

Almost any type of fruit or veg works well in a smoothie – along with added ingredients like ginger, turmeric and mint – and here are some of the health benefits of the most popular ingredients:

**BANANAS** - contains high levels of potassium to maintain the body's fluid balance

**BLUEBERRIES** - contains cancer-fighting antioxidants

**KALE** - contains vitamins A, C, E & K along with dietary fibre, calcium, iron and manganese.

**ORANGES** - contains high levels of vitamin C which is great for fighting off the common cold.

**SPINACH** - contains vitamins A and C along with iron and calcium

Have you been convinced by the health benefits of making your own smoothie? Why not give these recipes a go? Tasty and delicious and packed full of vitamins, all you need to do is place the ingredients into a blender and blitz them together.

## HANDY TIP

Chop the fruit and vegetables up and divide into portions. Place each portion into zip lock bags and keep in the freezer for a quick and easy smoothie.



### SUPER CHARGE GREEN SMOOTHIE

Serves 1 **FG** 0 / **CC** 0

- 1 peeled kiwi
- 50g pineapple, chopped and peeled
- 1 handful spinach
- Juice of ½ lime
- 150ml water, skimmed milk or milk alternative

### BERRY SMOOTHIE

Serves 1 **FG** 0 using 1 **CC** / **CC** 3

- 1 small ripe banana
- 140g berries
- 15g porridge oats
- 100ml skimmed milk
- Few ice cubes

### IMMUNE BOOSTING SMOOTHIE

Serves 1 **FG** 2 / **CC** 2

- Handful spinach
- 1cm fresh ginger
- 1 green apple, peeled and cored
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Juice of ½ orange
- 1 tbsp honey



# by **scottishslimmers** **Works**



*Supporting the health and wellbeing  
of employers makes business sense*



## Scottish Slimmers Works Bringing weight loss to the workplace

With weigh-ins and coached workshops, we can fit in to suit individual work patterns, backed up by optional online and app services and a country-wide network of local classes.



- **On-site support**  
delivered in 12-week blocks
- **On-site weigh & go**  
quick check-in and weight loss advice
- **Online web service**  
self-directed, cloud based
- **On the go app**  
scan barcodes while you shop
- **Beyond work support** through  
extensive class network



### Weight loss guaranteed

Everyone who follows our plans loses weight, and research shows that people who attend classes lose more weight than when they try alone.



### Fantastic food

Our easy to follow eating plans are packed with nutritious, delicious and filling food ideas.



### Motivational mentors

Friendly, fully trained Membership Managers support staff through every step.

Sickness absence costs UK businesses an estimated £29bn each year, with the average worker taking 6.6 days off each year due to sickness.

Weigh-in at lunchtime, before or after work! The ultimate in convenience, Scottish Slimmers can come to your workplace. Healthy employees perform better, feel happier, and are more able to manage challenges.

## Delivering Results

With discounted packages offering a more effective and less expensive solution than gym membership, our weight loss programmes are guaranteed to deliver results.

- **Join free**
- **Discounted passes**
- **Discounted starter packs & recipe books**
- **Personalised eating plans & recipe books**
- **Food diaries to stay on track**
- **We can supply posters and flyers, and an email announcement to promote the service within your workplace**

*Scottish Slimmers Works helps leading employers across Scotland to keep their staff healthy and happy.*

Call us on 0800 36 26 36 or visit [www.scottishslimmersworks.com](http://www.scottishslimmersworks.com)



# Look inside

Stock up and save time with batch cooking recipes.  
Feeling fruity? Get a taste for nutritious and delicious  
smoothies



## INSIDE THIS EDITION

Rain, rain go away – perfect  
accessories for April showers