

*Heart disease is one of the most common causes of physical illness and death in this country. There are many things that we can do in our daily lives to reduce our risk or even prevent the development of heart disease. The following information provides a brief outline of simple measures we all can take to reduce our risk*



### **Exercise:**

It is advised that people should exercise 20-30 minutes a day to the point of slight breathlessness. This should be carried out at least 5 times a week. If people are not able to achieve this, they should increase their physical activity gradually, aiming to increase their exercise capacity. Please start at a level that is comfortable for you.

If you are interested the NHS provides exercise programs on prescriptions. For more details please ask at the surgery. Here are a few examples:

- Exercise on prescription – ask at the reception for details
- Healthy Walks - 01642777738



### **Smoking:**

We know smoking has detrimental effects on health, but do we really know its effects on the body. Smoking is addictive and this is because of a substance called nicotine in the cigarettes.

Death from heart disease is 60% higher amongst smokers than non smokers

About half of all regular smokers will eventually be killed by their habit.

Second hand smoke (passive) is also harmful. It increases heart disease risk by 25%.

1 in every 8 deaths with heart disease is due to smoking.

Increased risk of cancers especially Lung, throat and mouth.

If someone halves the number of cigarettes per day, he/she reduces her risk of lung cancer by 27%. It is also known that by following a strict regime, one has a very good chance of stopping this unhealthy habit.

If you would like to stop smoking:

- Call Tees Stop Smoking service on 01642 223023.
- NHS smoking helpline on 08001690169
- Visit the website [www.gosmokefree.co.uk](http://www.gosmokefree.co.uk).
- Call the Chemist for advice; they have ‘stop smoking programs’ on 485651.

## **Food and diet**

A diet low in saturated fats, salt and sugar along with an increase in your daily fruit and vegetable portions can reduce your risk of heart disease. If you are unsure as to which particular foods are good or bad, you can pick up healthy eating booklets/information from the practice. Here are a few other sources:

- Visit [www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk).
- Attached is a diet sheet that gives a brief outline.
- Trim and Slim programme for 12 weeks that helps with diet and weight loss. Please call 01642777787 for more information



### **Salt:**

Too much salt can increase your blood pressure which increases your risk of heart disease. We recommend 6grams of salt a day as a healthy allowance. That is one level teaspoon of salt in total for the day! If you feel you consume too much salt, you are not alone. Here are some helpful tips to reduce intake:

- Use food labels to choose lower salt options.
- Add less salt to your cooking and avoid adding salt to your meal at the table – add herbs instead if you wish.
- Watch out for salty snacks and cooking sauces such as soy sauce.

For more information on salt in diet, please ask for a leaflet.



### **Fruit and vegetables:**

The daily recommended intake is 5 portions of fruit and vegetables a day. This at times can be difficult to quantify. Here is a list of what counts as a portion of the 5 a day:

- 1 apple, orange or banana
- 1 slice of a large fruit such as a melon
- 2 small fruits such as kiwi/plums/satsumas
- 1 cupful of grapes/raspberries/strawberries
- 1 glass of fruit juice
- 2-3 tablespoonfuls of canned fruit
- 1 tablespoonful of dried fruit
- 1 bowl of salad and 2 tablespoonful of raw/cooked/frozen vegetables



**Oily fish:** Eating oily fish regularly can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and improve the chances of survival after a heart attack. Omega 3 which is found

is oily fish reduces fatty substances found in the blood. Here are some examples of oily fishes:

- Trout
- Salmon
- Mackerel
- Herring
- Tuna(canned not considered oily)
- Anchovies
- Sardines
- Kipper
- Eel
- Whitebait
- Swordfish
- Bloater
- Sprats
- Carp



### **Alcohol:**

Alcohol intake above the recommended limit (21 units in men and 14 units in women) does increase your risk of heart disease by increasing blood pressure and your weight. Although a healthy intake of 1-2 units of alcohol in men over 40 and women post-menopause can help protect the heart. If alcohol addiction is a problem for you, please contact the following help centres:

- The Albert Centre on 01642 516715,
- Call Addaction on 01642498444

### **Cholesterol:**

This is a fatty substance which is mainly made in the body. It plays a vital role in how the body works. However too much of it in the system is another risk factor for heart disease which is easily controllable.

- You can help keep your cholesterol down by eating a high fibre diet. These include beans pulses, lentils, nuts, fruits and vegetables.
- Drinks such as Benecol and other cholesterol lowering products may be helpful such as margarines and yogurts containing plant sterols.



### **Weight:**

Being overweight, is also a risk factor for developing heart disease, along with other health problems such as stroke, diabetes, certain cancers, osteoarthritis. Recent health survey of England showed that a quarter of the adults are not their ideal weight. It is often difficult to assess what is ideal for an individual; therefore we use the Body Mass Index (BMI) to calculate a range that is healthy. BMI is categorised into labels such as overweight, obese, ideal. These categories help your doctor to assess your risk of health problems. In summary, the higher the BMI, the more at risk a person is of developing health problems. The table and chart below will help you calculate and assess your BMI. If your BMI is not ideal

for you the websites below can offer helpful information, alternatively contact us for advice:

- [www.bbc.co.uk/health](http://www.bbc.co.uk/health)
- [www.nhdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhdirect.nhs.uk) - under common health questions
- [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

Recommended BMI Chart	
Underweight	BMI less than 18.5
Ideal	BMI 18.5-25
Overweight	BMI 25-30
Obese - should lose weight	BMI 30-40
Very obese – lose weight now	BMI greater than 40

Figure taken from BBC healthy living website.

The BMI chart will not be useful if you are an athlete, very muscular, pregnant, or frail, as it will place these people in incorrect BMI ranges.

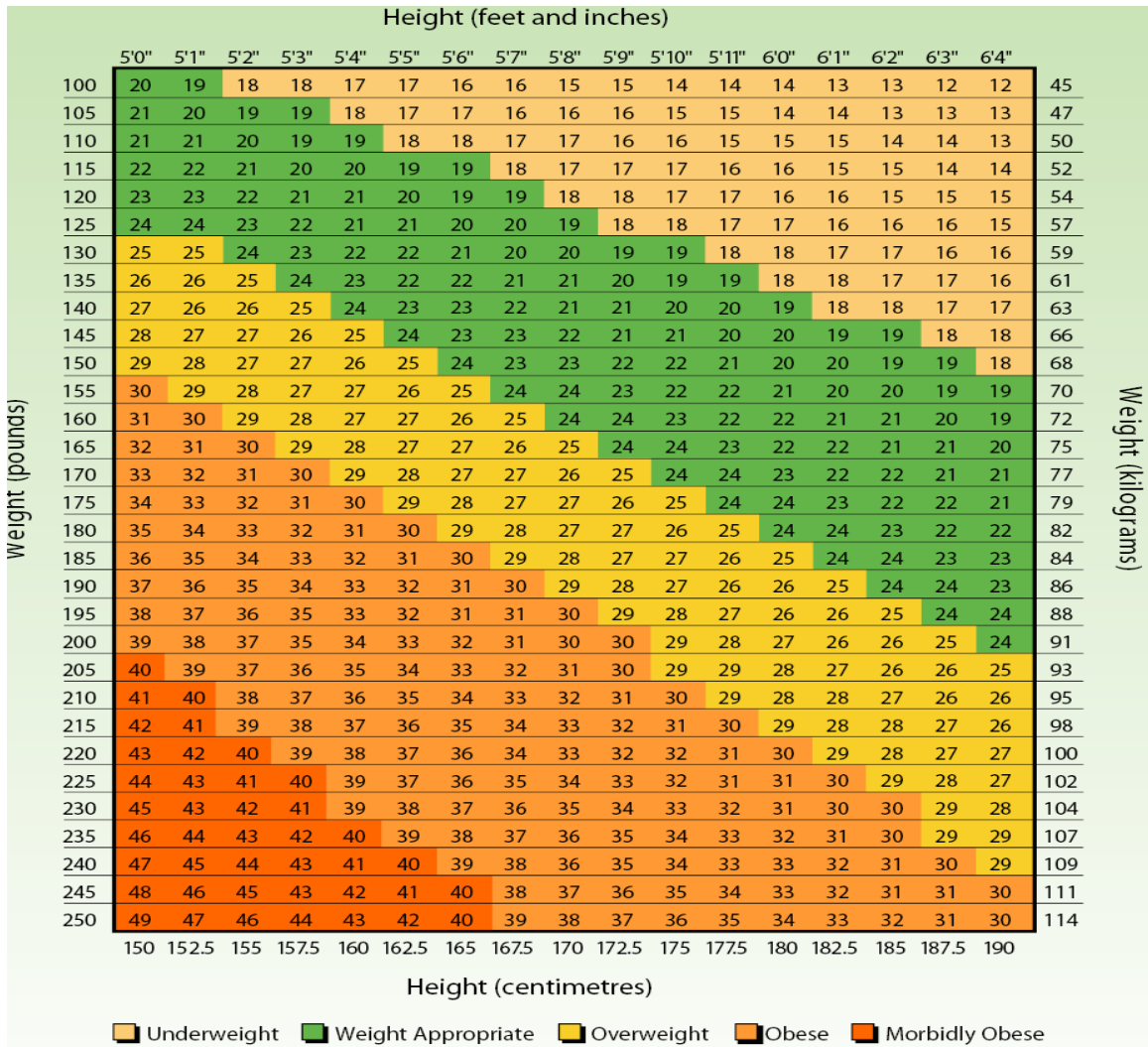


Figure taken from www.nhlbi.nih.gov/guidelines

*Healthy Living*



**ZETLAND MEDICAL PRACTICE  
MARSKE BY THE SEA**