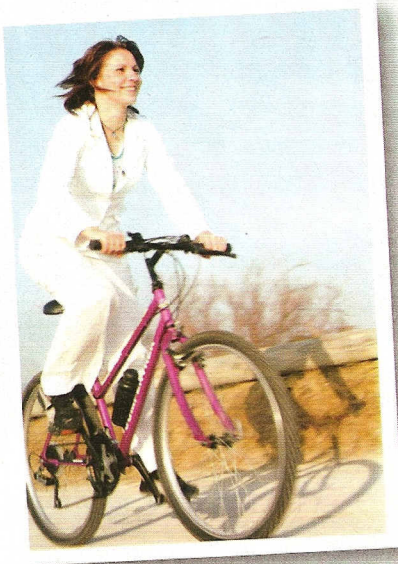


BIG FAT diet

The excuse I don't have time to cook healthily or exercise

The reality We're all busy, but a little careful planning can work wonders. If you want to lose weight, or keep yours down, try these healthy meal-time savers...



- 'Plan a weekly shop for a week's worth of meals. It's not just time-saving, it's cheaper too, as ad hoc purchases tend to cost more. Pick quick recipes too,' advises Dr Jacquie Lavin, nutritionist at Slimming World (0844 897 8000; www.slimmingworld.com). Check out *Slimming World's 30-Minute Meals*, £15.99.
- At the weekend, cook in bulk and freeze healthy meals.
- Buy a slow cooker, pop in vegetables, lean meat and a glug of wine and water first thing and you'll have a healthy meal by the time you get home. As for exercise: 'Everyone

can fit in some exercise, and the fitter you are the better you'll cope with daily tasks,' says Kathryn Freeland, celebrity trainer (she's worked with Cate Blanchett) and managing director of Absolute Fitness (020 7924 3311; www.absolutefitness.co.uk).

Kathryn recommends simple fat-burning exercises such as walking the kids to school, getting off the bus or train a stop early or cycling a section of your journey to work. All you're aiming for is 30 to 60 minutes of brisk walking, cycling or swimming three to five times a week.

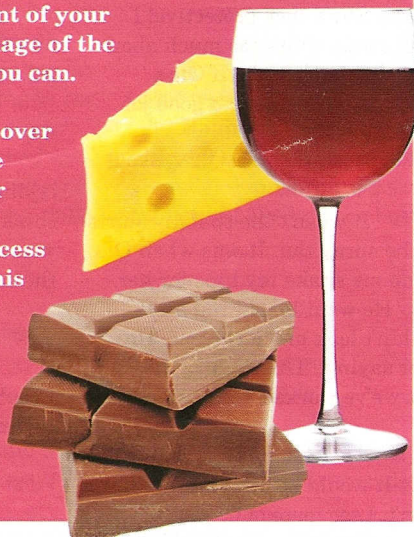


The excuse I love chocolate/wine/cheese too much

The reality You don't have to deprive yourself of your favourite food. If you do you'll simply become all the more fixated on it. Just cut down. Lindsey Agness, a trainer in neuro-linguistic programming (a method of changing your thought processes) and author of *Change Your Life With NLP* (Prentice Hall Life, £9.99; www.lindseyagness.com), recommends this mental exercise...

- 1 Think of a food you hate. You'll have a picture of this food in your mind. Move the image so it seems to be right in front of your face. It should make you feel uncomfortable. Now clear the image from your mind.
- 2 Next time you go to comfort eat, create an image of the food you want in your mind. This is likely to have positive emotions linked to it. Now move this image away from you, so it becomes small and dark in a box on the floor.

- 3 As you're doing this, replace it in front of your face with the image of the vile food as fast as you can.
- 4 Keep swapping over the images – the comfort food for your hated food, speeding up the process each time. Repeat this often enough and you should train your brain to stop wanting the comfort food. It does take practice though.



WARNING: Do seek professional advice before changing your diet or exercise regime if you have a medical condition or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.