

## **Workshop 14: Eating Well: Making Choices, Making Changes**

For most of us, drinking and eating is an important part of our daily lives. We like to choose what we like to eat and drink, and enjoy them at times and in the amounts which suit us.

Eating isn't just about satisfying our hunger and giving our bodies the nourishment it needs to remain well; eating and drinking is also about our mood, our habits and can be a social experience too.

Think about:

**Do we eat the same food every day or do we sometimes eat special foods?**

**Why do we sometimes want to eat different foods?**

**What feelings or emotions affect our eating and drinking habits?**

**Do we sometimes eat and drink even though we might not be hungry or thirsty?**

Eating well is important for everybody but it is especially important for people living with a health condition, although this does not necessarily mean we need to be following a rigid diet. But, with many health conditions, making small changes can make quite a difference and allow us to find a helpful balance in the foods we choose to eat.

Eating well for any health condition involves much the same as is recommended for the general population, which is:

- Low in fat, sugar and salt
- Some protein foods, which don't have to be meat
- Plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Some starchy, carbohydrate foods, like bread, potatoes, cereals, pasta and rice

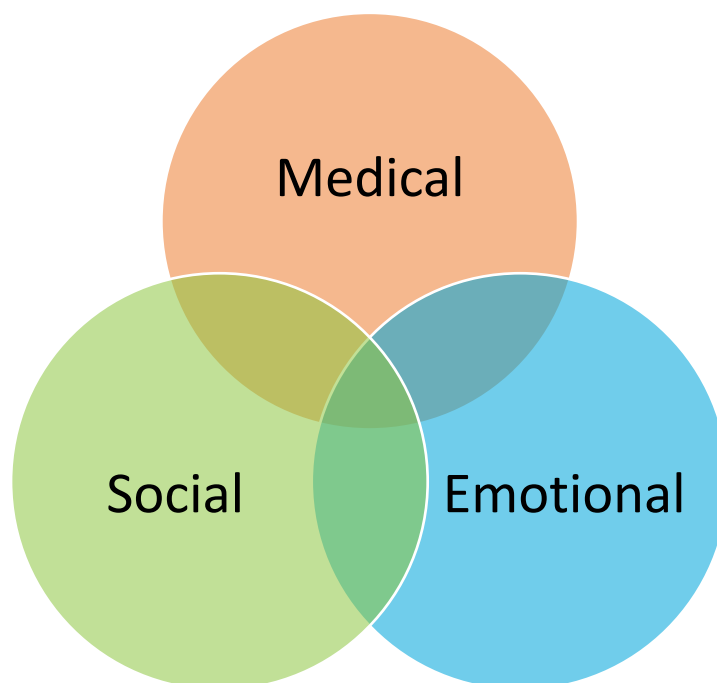
Perhaps we already know what healthy eating looks like, and yet we still find making choices about the types of food and the size of portions difficult. If we choose to make some changes, there are things we can do to help us to be successful.

It can help if we know about the foods which are good for us to eat and also which are helpful to avoid. (Medical)

We need to recognise and identify how the way we feel and think influences how, when and what we eat. (Emotional)

We can also consider those times and situations when our everyday lives and eating healthily don't match up. (Social)

Making healthy choices doesn't mean we'll never eat our favourite foods or that we need to buy special foods. It does mean making small changes we can stick to, which, in the long run, is so much better than completely changing what and how we eat and then not sticking to it at all.



## What are some small changes we could make in our eating and drinking?

Eat 2 portions of fish each week

Reduce sugary foods

Cut down sweetened drinks

Cut down on salt

Eat 3 regular meals

Eat some starchy, carbohydrate foods at each meal

Cut down fat

Eat more fruit/vegetables

Eat more beans, peas and lentils

Drink less alcohol

Reduce portion size

Read food labels

Most of us have a pretty good idea about what we need to do to eat well, but even so we still find making the healthy choice is quite difficult.