

Managing a patient's dietary needs

by Marie McCullagh & Ros Wright

NURSING LESSONS TRANSCRIPT

Karl (BMI 25) has been referred by his GP to the Practice Nurse for advice on his weight.

Transcript

- PN:** Now then Karl, you've been referred by Dr Ahmadi so that we can have a little chat. She's concerned your weight's been creeping up recently and you're complaining of shortness of breath.
- Karl:** Well yes, especially when I'm playing with my little boy. But you see tons of overweight people these days. This is what I tried to tell Dr Ahmadi; half the country has a weight problem if you read the papers.
- PN:** That may well be the case, Karl, but I think we have to consider the long-term effects. I've had a look at your journal and I just have a few more questions for you, if I may?
- Karl:** Ask away.
- PN:** OK, so how much physical exercise are you getting? How do you get to work, for example?
- Karl:** I take the car. It's not far but if I didn't, I'd be late.
- PN:** What about football? I remember you being pretty good at that as a kid.
- Karl:** No, gave up footie when I left school. I have a bit of a kick around with Thomas at the weekend, but he's only six, so it doesn't last long, plus I get out of breath. There's a five-a-side team at work, but ...
- PN:** OK, Karl. Well, I want you to consider rethinking your diet. I'll be giving you a diet sheet to follow, but in general you're going to need to keep a close eye on your carbohydrate and your sugar intake. And make sure you include fruit and vegetables in your diet. You should really be eating five portions a day, and at the moment you're barely eating one.
- Karl:** Well my sister's a veggie and Mum prepares salad and stuff in the evening, so I've no excuse really. I'm not that keen on it, but I'll give it a go.
- PN:** I notice you're skipping breakfast and you're snacking quite a bit too. If you start the day with a healthy breakfast, you'll probably not need anything before lunchtime.
- Karl:** My problem's the afternoon. I get this real sugar low around 3 o'clock...
- PN:** A piece of fruit? I'd also try and cut out the fizzy drinks; take water with your meals instead of coke or whatever. And as for your alcohol consumption, can I suggest you try to cut down to one or two pints at a time?
- Karl:** One or two pints? Yeah, but it's my only form of relaxation, a drink with my mates.
- PN:** I know, I appreciate that, but it is important you reduce your intake, Karl. So how do you feel about what I'm proposing so far?
- Karl:** I suppose it's not that bad.
- PN:** OK, could you also try and incorporate some exercise into your daily routine? It would be a good idea to get back into the football – something you enjoy. But start with a little brisk walking first – take the bus to work if you're worried about being late, and then walk home. You can build it up from there. And join that five-a-side team at work!
- Karl:** I'll have a think about it.
- PN:** I know it's going to be difficult for you at first Karl. But it's imperative you stabilize your weight if you're going to avoid further complications in the future – and I'm sure you're aware of those. It's also going to have a bearing on your relationship with your son, which I know is important to you.



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A Professional usage

1. Before listening, read the case study and the entries in the patient's food journal. Based on the information in worksheet A, what areas do you expect the nurse to be concerned about?

Case Study

Karl, 26, lives with his mother and sister in a bungalow. He drives half a mile to and from work, spends his evening in front of the TV or in the local pub with friends and takes care of his six-year-old son on a Saturday afternoon. He played football at school, but no longer does any physical exercise. Karl (BMI 25) has been referred by his GP to the Practice Nurse for advice on his weight. He has been asked to complete a food journal prior to his visit.

FOOD JOURNAL: Karl Buckland		
Tuesday	Time	Typical food intake
Breakfast	08:30	none
Mid morning	10:30	Bacon sandwich + 2 cups of tea with 2 teaspoons of sugar per cup
Lunch	12:00	Pie + chips ¹ , ice cream, fizzy drink (at work canteen)
Mid afternoon	15:00	Chocolate bar, fizzy drink
After work	17:30	2 pints of beer (on average)
Dinner	19:00	Fry up ² and beans, milk or fizzy drink (prepared by mother)
Supper	22:30	Toast or biscuits / Weekends – 4-5 pints of beer + kebab or curry

¹Meat pie made with beef and onions served with chips (US English – French fries)

² Fried egg, pork sausages, bacon and mushrooms served with fried bread and beans (haricot beans in tomato sauce). Similar to an 'English breakfast'. The dish may also be served with chips.

2. Before you listen, write down three things that you would expect the nurse to ask him to change.

- a) _____
 b) _____
 c) _____

3. As you listen, check whether the nurse gives the advice you expected.

B Colloquial language

1. The patient uses a number of colloquial expressions. Match the phrases to the definitions.

to creep up
veggie
to skip
to keep a close eye on something
to give it a go
to cut down
to cut out

to intentionally avoid something
to try something
non meat-eater
to stop doing something
to increase slowly
to reduce something
to check regularly

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C Communication focus

1. Match each of the following phrases from the transcript to one of the functions below. The first one is done for you.

acknowledging asking permission explaining giving advice observing

That may well be the case.	<i>acknowledgement</i>
If I may ...	
I want you to consider ...	
I'll be giving you ...	
You should really ...	
I notice that ...	
How about ...?	
I'd also try ...	
Can I suggest ...?	
Could you also ...?	
It's imperative that you ...	

2. Seven of the phrases above relate to giving advice. Some of them are normal suggestions and others are strong suggestions. Put them in the appropriate category.

Normal suggestions	Strong suggestions

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D Handover

In pairs, use the information from the patient records below to role play an encounter with a practice nurse.

Practice nurse: Use the information from Worksheet A to determine what changes the patient needs to make to their diet. Try to include some colloquial language and appropriate language for giving advice, e.g. *How about walking to work?* You should consider how to reassure the patient, negotiating a diet plan that suits the patient and takes into consideration their fears.

PATIENT RECORD: Marie Adams

Marie is 25 years old and single. She lives on her own and works in a high-pressure sales job. She is a member of a gym and works out every day for an hour. Her BMI is 18.7. She has visited the GP complaining of dizziness and insomnia.

FOOD JOURNAL:		
Wednesday	Time	Typical food intake
Breakfast	08:30	None
Mid morning	10:30	An apple and small natural yoghurt
Lunch	12:00	Small salad
Mid afternoon	15:00	A banana
After work	17:30	None
Dinner	19:00	Half a baked potato and salad
Supper	22:30	None

PATIENT RECORD: Jonathan Price

Jonathan is 55 years old and married with four children. He works as a driver and gets very little exercise. He has a BMI of 26.5. He has visited the GP complaining of very bad indigestion.

FOOD JOURNAL:		
Tuesday	Time	Typical food intake
Breakfast	08:30	Cornflakes, tea, toast, boiled egg
Mid morning	10:30	Sausage roll, coffee
Lunch	12:00	Sausage, chips, coke
Mid afternoon	15:00	Tea, packet of crisps
After work	17:30	Two pints of beer
Dinner	19:00	Chicken, mashed potatoes, veg
Supper	22:30	None

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ANSWER KEY

A Professional usage

- The main areas are diet, drinking and lack of exercise.

B Colloquial language

to creep up – to increase slowly

veggie – non meat-eater

to skip – to intentionally avoid something

to keep a close eye – to check regularly

to give it a go – to try something

to cut down – to reduce something

to cut out – to stop doing something

C Communication focus

1. That may well be the case.	<i>acknowledgement</i>
If I may ...	<i>asking permission</i>
I want you to consider ...	<i>giving advice</i>
I'll be giving you ...	<i>explaining</i>
You should really ...	<i>giving advice</i>
I notice that ...	<i>observing</i>
How about ...?	<i>giving advice</i>
I'd also try ...	<i>giving advice</i>
Can I suggest ...?	<i>giving advice</i>
Could you also ...?	<i>giving advice</i>
It's imperative that you ...	<i>giving advice</i>

2. Normal suggestions	Strong suggestions
I'd also try Can I suggest ...? Could you also ...? How about...?	I want you to consider You should really Its imperative that

Glossary

- cut down:** to reduce something
- cut out:** to stop doing something
- five-a-side:** football with five on each team
- footie:** football
- get out of breath:** become breathless
- give it a go:** to try something
- keep a close eye:** to check regularly
- kick around:** an informal game of football
- pint:** a large measure of beer
- pretty good:** quite good
- skip:** to intentionally avoid something
- stuff:** similar things
- to creep up:** increase slowly
- tons of:** a lot of
- veggie:** non meat-eater