

# Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight in the workplace



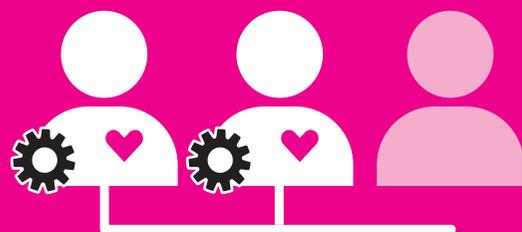
**Around a third** of adults in England are **damaging their health through a lack of physical activity**<sup>1</sup>



**1 in 4 women** and **1 in 5 men** in England are defined as inactive<sup>2\*</sup>

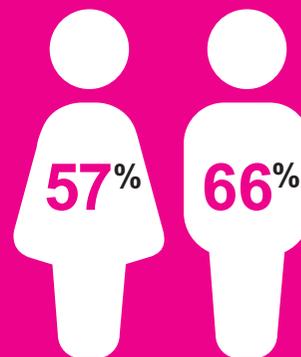


**Healthy eating** can reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke and some cancers<sup>7</sup>



Employees who are in **good health** are less likely to need time off work and are likely to be **more productive**<sup>4</sup>

In 2015, **57%** of women and **66%** of men in the UK were overweight or obese<sup>5</sup>



On average, obesity deprives an individual of an **extra 9 years of life**<sup>7</sup>



The **cost of an unhealthy workforce** to the UK taxpayer has been estimated at



at **over**

**£60 billion**

**per year**<sup>3</sup>



Latest data show that in the UK only **25%** of men and **28%** of women ate the recommended level of at least **five fruits and vegetables per day**<sup>6</sup>

\* **Inactive** – doing less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each week



Public Health  
England

# Actions for employers



## Understand the importance of physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight:

- ✔ Showcase the ways that your organisation champions physical activity, healthy eating and evidence-based weight management. What are you doing well and are you open to new ideas?
- ✔ Have you measured the extent and nature of any issues – for instance, through a staff health and wellbeing survey?
- ✔ What are you currently doing to help employees be more active, make healthier choices for food and drink, achieve and maintain a healthier weight (recognising that prevention and early intervention is best?)
- ✔ Have you communicated the importance of physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight to employees?
- ✔ Have you asked employees about barriers to physical activity and a healthy balanced diet in the workplace?
- ✔ Have you worked with staff to think about how the workplace can support them to achieve and maintain a healthy weight?

### Download the full toolkit:

<https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/toolkits/physical-activity-healthy-eating-and-healthier-weight-toolkit>

*(Source: Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight – a toolkit for employers)*

## Create an environment and culture that supports physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight in the workplace:

- ✔ Have you considered your responsibilities under health and safety legislation to promote physical activity and access to healthier food and drink options?
- ✔ Are the roles and responsibilities of individuals or groups in your business to promote physical activity, a healthy balanced diet and healthier weight clearly defined?
- ✔ Do you encourage and support open conversations about health and wellbeing with employees?
- ✔ Do you encourage and support self-management – i.e. signposting to existing tools and support services?
- ✔ Do you ensure employees know how to access occupational health services?
- ✔ Do you know which external resources you can use to promote physical activity, a healthy balanced diet and healthier weight?
- ✔ Do you review individual needs and make reasonable adjustments and adaptations to employees' work? For example, are night workers supported in a similar way to those working daytime office hours?
- ✔ Do you empower employees and managers to challenge the stigma of obesity in the workplace?

- ✔ Do you actively support employees' physical and mental health?
- ✔ Do you monitor engagement and uptake to ensure that your interventions are reaching those that need them?

## Signpost to knowledge and training:

- ✔ Does your health and wellbeing strategy or policy promote physical activity, a healthy diet and optimal weight management?
- ✔ Is there specific training for employees on workplace health and wellbeing?
- ✔ Does training include the complementary activity of tackling sedentary lifestyles, poor diet, unhealthy weight and other issues such as mental health?
- ✔ Does training include communication skills around conversations about physical activity, nutrition and weight issues?
- ✔ Is there feedback to ensure training meets needs?
- ✔ Is training evidence-based?
- ✔ Do employees know where to find information on physical health, healthy eating and healthier weight?
- ✔ Do managers proactively promote and encourage employees to take control of their own health and support them to take action?
- ✔ Is there a network of workplace health champions to coordinate and motivate employees?