

Crew Health: Maintaining a healthy weight on board

In today's world, activities at work and at home are generally less physical than previous generations. Given the proliferation of convenience foods and snacks on offer, and at low prices, diets are becoming increasingly unhealthy.

Our more sedentary lifestyle is also reflected onboard ships and can lead to overweight crew members. Eating healthily and keeping fit are two vital principles that help individuals maintain a healthy body weight and in turn reduce the likeliness of getting ill, improving lifestyle onboard.

Claims related to illness are frequently notified to the Club with the number of claims reported remaining steady in number over the last five policy years. The Club has [partnered](#) with the International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN) to raise awareness of crew-related illness and to assist our Members in mitigating against related incidents.

As part of this partnership the Club is able to offer Members two publications concerning maintaining a healthy weight which give guidelines and share advice on the topic. **These publications can be found to the right of this page.**

What are the effects of being overweight?

If body weight increases this can lead to individuals being overweight and if not curbed can result in obesity. Being overweight is associated with a range of illnesses, such as hypertension, type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and strokes, to name a few. Those who are overweight are therefore at a greater risk of premature death from health problems related to weight.

How can you tell if a person is overweight?

There are two main ways of telling if a person is overweight:

- Through using the BMI (Body Mass Index) formula, which is explained in more detail in the guides to the right of the page, in which a person can find out if their weight is normal in relation to their body length.
- Through measuring waist circumference which provides an independent prediction of risk over and above BMI.

How do you combat being overweight?

As highlighted in our previous articles in association with ISWAN, the two main ways of reducing body weight are:

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- [Maintaining a general good level of fitness.](#)
 - [Through a healthy diet.](#)

It is vital that you look after your own health and well-being at sea and ashore. Make healthy, nutritious food choices and ensure a balanced diet consisting of carbohydrates, protein, fat and fibre, vitamins and minerals with minimum levels of salt, fat and sugar. Proper nutrition, along with adequate rest and sleep, regular exercise and good hygiene help to prevent diseases and improve health overall. Access to healthy food options and variation are cornerstones of healthy food on board.

This article is the fourth in a series of articles in which the Club shares guidance and practical tips to our Members to promote good crew health on board. [All articles in this series can be viewed here.](#)