Meals on Wheels
We deliver meals on wheels across Hertfordshire, 365 days a year, whatever the weather. Every visit includes delivery of a hot meal and dessert, along with a caring welfare check, at the subsidised cost of £4.55 per day.

You can order meals as a one-off, temporarily, or for as long as you would like them. Our meals are delivered hot and ready to eat between 11:30am and 2:00pm, and you will usually receive your meal at a similar time every day.

We have a wide range of delicious and nutritious hot meals and desserts for you to choose from. A menu is provided for you to select your meals, which highlights meals that are suitable for your dietary, ethnic, and religious choices. If necessary we can alter our menu just for you to suit your needs.

Our two day free trial can be requested for all new clients, so you can taste the food, try our service, and meet our caring team!

About HILS
Hertfordshire Independent Living Service (HILS) is the largest not-for-profit meals on wheels service in the UK. Established by Hertfordshire County Council in 2007 as a charitable social enterprise, HILS provides a range of caring services to help people to stay happy, healthy, and independent in their own homes.

We have been recognised with a number of local and national awards, and we offer a responsive and flexible service. We operate from four sites across the county, in Hemel Hempstead, Letchworth, St Albans, and Ware.

We make a real difference to people’s lives. We give support and peace of mind to thousands of Hertfordshire’s residents, their families and their friends, and we love doing it!

Contact Details
If you would like information about our other services, our Support Team would be delighted to tell you more about how we can help you.

Please contact us using the details below:

Call: 0330 2000 103 (local rate)  Email: info@hertsindependentliving.org
Visit: www.hertsindependentliving.org  Tweet: @HertsIndLiving
Write to: Hertfordshire Independent Living Service, Unit 16, Green Lane One, Blackhorse Road, Letchworth, Hertfordshire, SG6 1HB

HILS’ Services
HILS provides a range of caring services to help support older and vulnerable people in Hertfordshire. This includes:

- Meals service – 365 day a year meals on wheels service for those living in Hertfordshire
- Nutrition & Wellbeing Service – individual support available to all meals clients at no additional cost
- Medication Prompts – additional free service to meals and pop-in clients, reminding them to take their medication
- Pop-in Visits – short, five minute lunch-time visits which help you to feel safer in your home, with the reassurance of someone visiting you each day
- Advocacy – supports people to make the right decisions regarding their care and support in Hertfordshire
- Community Alarms and Telecare – this service is provided by Herts Careline. HILS installs and maintains the equipment
- Dementia Fun Clubs – welcoming and engaging, with an exciting mix of activities for people living with mild to moderate dementia
- Jubilee Centre – community centre in St Albans with a weekday drop in restaurant and rooms to hire seven days a week
- Food and Grocery packs – free emergency food packs containing three days’ worth of food delivered to your home for those in crisis
- Home from Hospital packs – free grocery pack containing essentials for those leaving hospital

Achieving Healthy Weight Loss

Helping you with meals
- Meals service – 365 day a year meals on wheels service for those living in Hertfordshire

Helping you stay well
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Helping you feel safe
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Achieving Healthy Weight Loss
Maintaining a healthy weight is important for good health. If you are aiming to lose weight, it is still really important to eat regularly and have a variety of nutritious foods.

Our Nutrition & Wellbeing Team have put together this booklet to give you some helpful tips and guidance on how to lose weight in a healthy way. It does not replace any individual, tailored advice given to you by a Doctor or Dietitian.

Please note, if you have a health condition or are taking medications which may be affected by a change in your diet, please speak to your Doctor before making any changes.

Does everybody who is overweight need to lose weight?
If you are aged 60 to 79 and have a BMI of over 30kg/m² and you are experiencing health issues related to your weight, this booklet may be suitable for your needs. It combines a calorie reduction diet with some activity and resistance training which aims to minimise muscle and bone density loss.

If you are aged 80 or over, and/or have a serious chronic illness or disability, a weight maintenance, rather than a weight loss approach is best.

Speak to your Doctor or a Dietitian if you are unsure about what is right for you.

How do I know if I am overweight?
To check if your weight is within the healthy range, you can use the Body Mass Index (BMI) chart on pages 8 and 9. This chart is suitable for people aged 65+ and advises that a healthy BMI for older adults should be between 20 and 30kg/m².

What about calories?
We refer to calories (kcal) when we are talking about how much energy we can get from food and drinks. The average man needs around 2,500kcal, and an average woman needs around 2,000kcal per day.

What are the benefits of achieving a healthy weight?
If you are overweight, by reducing your body weight by 5-10% and then keeping the weight off, it will have a positive effect on your health, such as:
- Improve mobility and reduce joint pain
- Reducing the risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis and some types of cancers

Should I be counting calories?
Some people like to count calories and use this as a guide for weight loss. However, just making small healthy changes and sticking to them can be just as effective.

Top Tip
If you are very overweight, you can promote healthy weight loss by having 500 calories less per day than your body needs. It is also beneficial to increase your activity levels too to burn a few more calories! Keeping active is a key part of aging well and can support weight loss. Exercise should include some resistance training to help maintain muscle. For more tips on exercises, see pages 12 and 13.

Where do I go from here?
Work through this booklet to learn about:
- What a healthy diet looks like
- Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Small Swaps = Big Difference
- The importance of activity
- Where to get additional support
- Realistic goal setting

Fact! As we get older and become less active, we require slightly fewer calories to meet our needs.
Eat well, live well

What does a healthy diet look like?
The ‘Eatwell Guide’ shows the proportion of each of the five food groups you should include in your diet. You should try to eat a varied diet to ensure you meet your nutritional needs. Drinking plenty every day is also important.

What is good nutrition all about?
Food and drinks are essential for good health. By eating a balanced diet with the right amount of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals we should all be able to meet our nutritional needs and achieve good nutrition.

Keeping active is also an important factor for general good health, and keeping your muscles strong. If you are looking to get more active, you can find out about classes and activities near you, by calling HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044.

Our booklet ‘Eating for Good Health’ explains in more detail what makes a healthy, balanced diet.

HILS healthy hints

1. Chew your food well and wait a little while after meals before deciding if you need more.

2. Be careful with your portions. For example, a portion of pasta or rice should be roughly the size of your fist.

3. Our sense of hunger can get confused with thirst. Have a refreshing drink before deciding whether you feel hungry. Aim to drink 6-8 cups of fluid each day.

4. Eat regular meals. Depriving yourself and skipping meals can make you feel tired and weak. You might also be missing out on essential nutrients.

5. If you have a tendency to snack, think of some tasty, filling and healthy options. A couple of crackers with light cream cheese is a good choice.

6. Labels. Read them well to help you choose healthy options. See page 11 for information on reading food labels.

This information is for people who are generally well, with a good appetite. If you have been given special dietary advice concerning a health issue, you should follow that advice.
Small swaps can make a big difference

Making a sandwich with lower-fat spread rather than butter can save up to 100 calories.

Enjoy drinking fruit squash? Opt for a ‘no added sugar’ version and, for every 2 glasses, you will save around 90 calories.

Swapping a serving of mayonnaise for the light version will save you around 120 calories.

2 malted milk biscuits rather than 2 milk chocolate digestives saves around 80 calories.

Swap and save with HILS!

Making sense of food labels

Whilst food labelling provides a role in promoting healthy eating, looking at individual nutrients may not always be useful unless you are a nutrition expert!

This yoghurt may be LOW in fat but it is HIGH in sugar!

The traffic light coloured labels are easier to understand:

- **Green means low**
- **Amber means medium**
- **Red means high**

In short, the more green on the label, the healthier the choice.

Fact! HILS have gone one step further and moved away from individual nutrient labelling to providing information that we feel is useful for our clients to ensure our meals meet your health needs such as our heart healthy range that looks at salt, fat and saturated fat content.

Achieving Healthy Weight Loss

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Swap and save with HILS!

Lunch…

Steak and kidney pie

Save

Savoury minced beef

228 calories

Apple and Blackberry Crumble

192 calories

Treacle tart and custard

118 calories

Golden syrup sponge (made with sweeteners)

Sieved apple and custard

Did you know?

There are almost exactly the same number of calories in a ‘light’ digestive biscuit, than in the original version; the fat has just been replaced by sugar.

Achieving Healthy Weight Loss
Physical activity – how much should I be doing?
If you are generally well and have no limiting health conditions it is recommended to do at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity each week.

HILS top tips:
Exercise can easily fit into everyday life as even 10 minute sessions count. Something is better than nothing, so don’t be discouraged if you aren’t able to do much to begin with. Start slowly and you will soon notice a difference.

Moderate intensity activities should cause you to get warmer, breathe harder, and make your heart beat faster, but you should still be able to carry on a conversation.

If you haven’t been very active for a while, aim to spend less time sitting still for long periods. You could do this by taking regular walk breaks, or by doing gentle seated exercises whilst watching the TV.

Even household jobs can count: for example, vacuuming, making beds, mopping, tidying, and gardening. Weight bearing activities such as climbing stairs and carrying shopping can help to strengthen muscles. Try to include activities like these on 2 or more days a week.

Top Tip
Try to identify enjoyable activities that suit you, such as walking, dancing, gentle chair-based exercise classes, to name just a few!

These activities (and many more) are available for older people in Hertfordshire. Just call HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044 to find out what’s on in your local area.

What are the benefits of physical activity?
• It can help us feel good
• We can learn something new and meet new people
• It’s great for keeping us mobile for everyday activities
• Being active helps us burn calories and lose weight
• It helps us to stay steady and prevent falls

The picture below shows an example of a simple exercise that you can do at home.

Mini Squats

For more sitting, flexibility and balance exercises, contact us or visit: www.nhs.uk/exercises-for-older-people

If you have any health conditions that may require you to limit your activity, it is important to check with your GP before changing your routine. Try to be as physically active as your ability and condition allows.

Worried about falling?
If you are feeling unsteady or you have had a fall, talk to your GP. They will be able to advise you and may refer you to a falls prevention service.
HILS’ Nutrition and Wellbeing service is a one of a kind in the UK, specialising in supporting people to stay happy, healthy, and independent at home. The team consists of registered Dietitians and Nutritionists, and Nutrition & Wellbeing Visitors, who offer a range of services for HILS meals on wheels clients in Hertfordshire.

Free nutritional expertise
✓ We design our menus to make sure that they are suitable for the needs of all our clients
✓ We can make changes to your menu choices to help you to meet your personal nutritional needs
✓ We offer extra one-to-one visits and support for those with more complex needs

Training & Education
✓ We train all of our staff in nutrition and hydration, so that they can help us to identify nutritional and health issues
✓ We teach people about nutrition and hydration through fun information sessions and provide resources
✓ We raise awareness of nutritional issues affecting older and vulnerable people by attending key events in Hertfordshire and across the UK

How HILS can help?
If you are a meals on wheels client, we have done the hard work for you in ensuring meals are suitable for your nutritional needs!

☑ All our meals are nutritionally balanced and contain 1-2 portions of vegetables per meal.
☑ All of our meals are suitable for a healthy diet, including for people with diabetes.
☑ Many desserts, such as mousses, fruit portions and hot stewed fruit, contain less than 160 calories.

To find out about local weight loss groups in your area, you can get in touch with HertsHelp, Hertfordshire’s free directory service on 0300 123 4044.

What if I am not a HILS client?
If you do not receive a meals on wheels service from HILS, you could seek support from the following services:
✓ Weight Watchers
✓ Slimming World
✓ Your GP, who could refer you to a community dietitian for 1-2-1 support
✓ Clubs and support offered by people with a recognised nutrition qualification (registered nutritionist or registered dietitian)

Free nutrition & wellbeing checks
✓ We will come to your home, and talk to you about your overall wellbeing, including any nutritional, lifestyle, and health issues that may be having an impact on your wellbeing
✓ We will tell you about other local services that are available, that might be able to support you in other ways
✓ We will provide you with more information about good hydration and nutrition, that is specific to your needs
✓ We will provide you with regular and ongoing support to help you to stay well

You should avoid seeking advice and support from
✗ Fad diets that are not evidence-based and could actually be harmful to health and wellbeing
✗ People without recognised nutritional qualifications who are not regulated by a health authority.

What if I need extra support?
There is a lot of support available for individuals and groups – it’s just about finding out what works best for you.

Helping you stay well

Top Tip
You should avoid any HILS meals labelled ‘HE’ or high energy as these meals contain the most amount of calories, which are more useful for people who need to gain weight rather than lose it!
Your personal goals

If after reading this guide, you decide to make any changes to your diet to promote good health, please use this space to make a note of any personal goals. Even small goals can make a huge difference. Make sure they are realistic and achievable for you.

For example

1. I will use semi skimmed milk instead of full fat milk on my cereal and in hot drinks
2. I will avoid the Higher Energy (HE) meals from the HILS menu
3. I will do 15 minutes of chair exercises each day

Your personal goals

1. ..........................................................................................................................................

2. ..........................................................................................................................................

3. ..........................................................................................................................................

This resource has been compiled using available current evidence and has been approved by a team of registered Dietitians and Nutritionists. This resource has also received external review and agreement from dietitians with an interest and actively working with older people, and by our Nutrition & Wellbeing Steering Group members.

Contact Details

For further information on HILS’ services including meals on wheels, please visit our website on www.hertsindependentliving.org or call us on 0330 2000 2013 (all calls charged at local rate).