



Your weight, explained

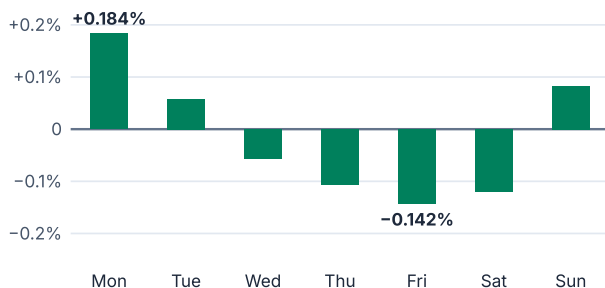
What your scale is really measuring, and why a jump isn't a disaster.

Body fat changes slowly. The number on your scale changes quickly, and most of what it shows from one morning to the next is water, stored carbohydrate and food that's still on its way through.

Five things that move the scale without adding fat

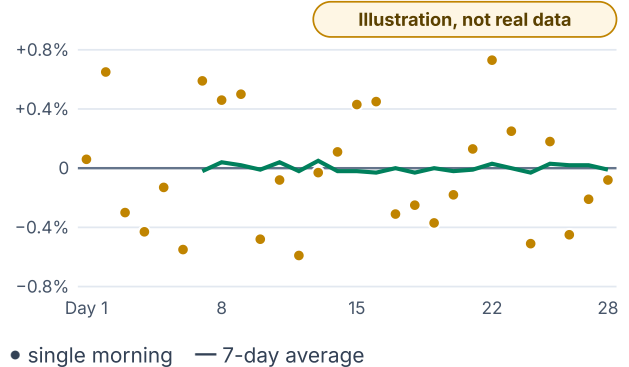
- 1 **Stored carbohydrate.** It's kept with water: at least three grams of water for every gram. A few carb-heavy days can add over a kilo (2 lb) of it, and none of it is fat.
- 2 **Food and drink still inside you.** A litre of water weighs a kilo until your body has dealt with it, and a big or late meal shows up the next morning.
- 3 **The weekend.** Most people are heaviest on a Monday and lightest on a Friday.
- 4 **Your period.** The rise around a period is mostly fluid, and it passes.
- 5 **Salt.** It probably plays a part, but the effect is smaller and less predictable than people think.

The weekly wave



Average weight by day of the week, relative to each person's own trend. Source: Turicchi et al., PLoS One 2020, Table 2, UK participants (476 adults weighing on smart scales).

Same body, four weeks of mornings



Built from published measurements, not anyone's data. The dots jump about; the weekly average barely moves. The body underneath never changed.

The one-morning rule

Just one reading?

Wait. One morning can't tell you about fat.



Did anything from the list happen?

Then it's most likely water.



Has your four-week average moved?

That's information, not a verdict on you.

Your body defends its weight, a bit

- After weight loss, hunger hormones can stay shifted for a year or more, so feeling hungrier is expected. It isn't a lack of discipline.
- The body uses a little less energy when weight is held lower, and a little more when it's held higher.
- Scientists now think of this as a range your body is fairly relaxed about, not one fixed number, and they still disagree about the details.

If you're coming off a GLP-1 medicine

- In the trials, weight usually came back after the medicine stopped. It happened gradually, over months.
- An average hides a wide spread. In one trial, 54 of 308 people regained less than a quarter of what they had lost.
- A slow change is one you can see coming, if you watch a trend rather than a single morning.

How and when to stop is for you and your prescriber to decide. This guide doesn't give a plan.

A calmer way to weigh

- ☐ Same scale, same time of day, same state.
- ☐ Read the trend over four weeks, not one morning.
- ☐ Expect Mondays, and the days around a period, to be higher.
- ☐ After a big, salty or carb-heavy meal, give it several days.
- ☐ If a number changes what you let yourself eat, weigh less often, not eat less.

Notes, not numbers

The scale moved this week. Did any of these happen?

- ☐ Carb-heavy days
- ☐ A big or late meal
- ☐ Salty food
- ☐ My period
- ☐ The weekend
- ☐ None of these

Whatever you ticked, the four-week trend will tell you more than today.

If this has stirred something up

Your doctor is a good place to start. So is the eating disorder helpline for your country. If you're in danger right now, call your local emergency number. **United States:** ANAD, 1-888-375-7767, 9am to 9pm Central, Monday to Friday. **United Kingdom:** Beat, 0808 801 0677 (England), 0808 801 0432 (Scotland), 0808 801 0433 (Wales), 0808 801 0434 (Northern Ireland), 3pm to 8pm, Monday to Friday.

Ireland: Bodywhys, (01) 2107906. **Australia:** Butterfly Foundation, 1800 33 4673. Anywhere else, most countries run a free, confidential eating disorder helpline. You don't need a diagnosis to call any of them, and none of them is an emergency service.

The science behind this guide, with every source: healthcount.app/blog/set-point-theory-weight. Key sources: Sumithran et al. 2011 (NEJM); Leibel et al. 1995 (NEJM); Speakman and Hall 2023 (Phil Trans R Soc B); Turicchi et al. 2020 (PLoS One); Schneditz et al. 2023 (Renal Failure); Horn et al. 2026 (JAMA Internal Medicine).

Information, not medical advice. If you're receiving eating disorder treatment, follow your care team's guidance on weighing. Partly inspired by the Centre for Clinical Interventions' information sheets on set point and weekly weighing (cci.health.wa.gov.au). This guide is original and isn't endorsed by CCI.

healthcount.app/blog/set-point-theory-weight · Information, not medical advice. Speak to your doctor about your own situation.

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