



RUTH'S UCLP[®] STORY



Ruth, 56, like many women, struggled to find the time and motivation to live a healthy lifestyle while juggling work and family commitments. As well as dealing with several side effects of the menopause, she discovered her cholesterol was worryingly high following a Well Woman check. This prompted her to consider making lifestyle changes. She wanted an approach that was grounded in science and results driven, but also gave her plenty of flexibility – so she committed to following the Ultimate Cholesterol Lowering Plan[®] (UCLP[®]) for 10 weeks.

STEP 1 OF THE UCLP[®] JOURNEY – MANAGING MINDSET

The first step was to identify Ruth's motivation. She wanted to feel more energised so she could be more active with her seven-month-old grandson and she wanted to lower her cholesterol levels. She kept a journal to track her progress, note down what she was eating and offload her worries. A nutrition professional helped explore her relationship with food and provided guidance and support.

STEP 2: GETTING THE FOUNDATIONS RIGHT

Next, Ruth focussed on making small, realistic changes to ensure her every day eating habits were as heart healthy as possible. She cut down on takeaways, fast food and increased the amount of water she was drinking.

She swapped from toast to a cholesterol-lowering breakfast of porridge with berries and seeds for breakfast. Oats provide a specific type of fibre, beta-glucan, which has been shown to lower



blood cholesterol levels; seeds are an exceptional source of mono- and polyunsaturated fats, which can also lower blood cholesterol when they replace saturated fats in the diet.*

She didn't eliminate foods entirely but concentrated on reducing the less beneficial ones (especially saturated fats) and increasing wholegrains, plant proteins and oily fish. The overall theme was colour, flavour and diversity – but simplicity too.

STEP 3: ADDING IN THE UCLP[®] FOODS

The final step was to add in foods specifically shown to help manage cholesterol. The UCLP[®] highlights four foods*: soya, nuts, foods fortified with stanols or sterols and oats or barley.

Ruth identified the ones she'd be most open to trying and found simple recipes so that the new way of eating could fit effortlessly into her life. Her new meal plan included smoothies made with calcium fortified soya drink, Buddha bowls full of colourful veg, beans and grains, plus soya chocolate desserts piled up with berries, nuts and seeds.



EXERCISE SNACKING

Improving physical activity was important to help Ruth with anxiety and improved sleep as well as keeping her heart and muscles healthy. Although she'd previously been an avid runner, at the beginning of the programme Ruth was lucky to reach 5,000 steps a few times a week. By the end of the 10 weeks, she was regularly hitting 10K and had found a passion for group workouts. She started with just 10–15-minute sessions of different types of exercise ('exercise snacking') and suddenly fitness didn't seem so all-consuming.

THE IMPRESSIVE RESULTS

At the end of the 10 weeks, Ruth's **cholesterol dropped by 23% from a high 7.5 mmol/L to much lower 5.8mmol/L**, which is much closer to target levels. More importantly, her LDL (bad) cholesterol, dropped by one third, from 5 mmol/L to 3.4 mmol/L. Ruth's new healthy lifestyle also resulted in an impressive **weight loss – dropping 7.7kg (over one stone)**. This took her **BMI from over 30 (obese) to a much improved 27.2 (overweight)**.

Beyond this, she embarked on a journey of discovery where she grew in confidence and found a new respect for her body. Ruth is sure she'll continue to reap the benefits of her new lifestyle.

"I've learnt that looking and feeling great isn't about boring food and gruelling workouts. There are so many ways to stay on track and enjoy the process too."

Ruth's daughter Emily says, "Mum often puts the needs of others before her own and genuinely delights in everyone else's successes, so it's incredible to have witnessed her journey over the last few months. The whole family hopes her newfound confidence continues to grow...this is definitely her time to shine."

GET THE UCLP[®] PLAN & GET
INSPIRED BY OUR DELICIOUS RECIPES

[HEARTUK.ORG.UK/UCLP-MENOPAUSE](https://heartuk.org.uk/uclp-menopause)