

GUIDE

How to choose a dietitian

Check the credential on the official register, then check fit: specialty, visit type, price and insurance. Do both before you book.

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Contents

Step 1: Verify the credential 5

Step 2: Check specialty fit 5

Step 3: Check logistics 5

Step 4: Book a consultation 5

Red flags 5

Sources 6

Choosing a dietitian has two parts: is the person credentialed, and are they right for you. Do the first check on the official register. Do the second with questions and a consultation.

1 Verify the credential

Each credential has a public check. In the US, the CDR verification system confirms RD/RDN status. In the UK, the HCPC register confirms dietitian registration. In Canada, provincial colleges and the Dietitians of Canada directory hold the records. In Australia, Dietitians Australia's Find a Dietitian tool lists Accredited Practising Dietitians. In Ireland, the CORU register lists registered dietitians. See our guide on checking a credential for the links.

A practice website that says "nutritionist" without a regulated title is not the same as one led by an RD, RDN, APD or HCPC-registered dietitian.

2 Check specialty fit

Look for experience with your actual goal: weight management, sports performance, diabetes, gut health, plant-based eating, children's nutrition or general family health. A dietitian who lists every specialty may be generalist. One who names yours may be a better fit. The Dietitians of Canada directory lets you search by area of expertise such as diabetes, sports or paediatrics. [Dietitians of Canada, accessed 2026-11-13.]

3 Check logistics

- Visit type: in person, virtual or both.
- Location and whether they see patients in your state or country.
- Price for the first visit and follow-ups, and whether they bill insurance.
- Languages spoken.
- Ages seen, if it is for a child.

On this site, listings that state these facts show them with the source and check date. Confirm anything that matters directly with the practice.

4 Book a consultation

A short first visit or consultation is the cheapest way to test fit. University clinics describe a first visit as an assessment of history, habits and goals, followed by a plan. [UC San Diego Health, accessed 2026-11-13.] Healthline reports that many dietitians offer short consultations for a small fee or free. [Healthline, accessed 2026-11-13.]

At the visit, notice whether the dietitian listens, asks about your life and sets goals you recognise. That is the signal that the plan will survive contact with a real week.

Red flags

- Promises a specific weight or result by a date.
- Sells supplements as the core of the plan.
- Will not say which credential they hold or where they are registered.
- Pressure to sign a long package before the first visit.

Sources

All sources fetched and checked 2026-11-13:

- HCPC: Check the Register
- Dietitians Australia: Find a Dietitian
- UC San Diego Health: Nutrition Counseling Services
- Healthline: How Much Does a Dietitian Nutritionist Cost?

Frequently asked questions

What questions should I ask a dietitian before booking?

Ask what their credential is and where they are registered, whether they have worked with your goal, whether they offer your visit type, what the first visit costs and whether they bill your insurance.

Is a dietitian better than a nutritionist app?

They do different jobs. An app tracks food. A dietitian assesses your history, sets goals with you and adjusts a plan over time. Many people use both.

Sources

hcpc-uk.org — https://www.hcpc-uk.org/check-the-register/
dietitiansaustralia.org.au — https://www.dietitiansaustralia.org.au/find-an-apd/
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