

Obesity.

Small changes toward a healthier lifestyle.

Obesity is increasing worldwide and is becoming the world's biggest health problem. Recent reports suggest that it may soon overtake cigarette smoking as the most serious health risk.

In the UK, based on population data from 2002, 11.1 million men and 9.0 million women are overweight and 11.8 million people are obese, meaning their weight is putting their health at risk. The levels of obesity have also been rising in children: in 2002, one in 20 boys and one in 15 girls aged 2-15 years were obese.

The level of obesity has tripled in the past 20 years, and is still rising.

What causes Obesity?

- Genetics
- Physical Inactivity
- Alcohol
- Sedentary Lifestyle
- High Calorific Intake



Obesity increases the risks of developing:

- Coronary Heart Disease
- Stroke
- High Blood Pressure
- High Blood Cholesterol
- Diabetes (type 2)

Why Fad Diets don't work?

Quick-fix diets are usually short-term with a rigid set of rules. While you may lose weight, the diets are often too difficult to sustain for long. They're also unlikely to be nutritionally balanced and could lead to problems such as iron deficiency or poor bone health and don't help you to address your real obstacles to losing weight and keeping it off. Also, once you have lost the weight, you tend to go back to your normal eating habits and put the weight back on and the cycle continues. By doing this, your energy cells start holding onto fat as energy as they are unsure where their next food source will come from.

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Make small changes that lead to a healthier lifestyle

Do's

- Plan to make small and sustainable lifestyle changes
- Plan your meals to avoid temptation
- Keep a food and thoughts diary to help you identify problem areas/habits and stay conscious of what and why you eat
- Set realistic goals and aim to lose no more than one to two pounds a week
- Eat regular meals, starting with breakfast. This will kick start your metabolism for the rest of the day
- Restrict salt and sugar intake
- Keep your activity levels high. Take the stairs instead of the lift or do some gardening or other extra activities daily
- Experiment with your low-fat cooking skills, grilling, steaming or boiling
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Avoid buying sweets and junk food to tempt you
- Drink water so that your urine colour is transparent; this shows you are hydrated
- Eat more fish, meat and pulses
- Adopt a flexible rather than all-or-nothing approach to eating
- Learn how to cope with feelings, not feed them
- Make time for 30 minutes moderate activity most days
- Talk to a Fitness advisor for further support.

Don'ts

- Be lured by claims for rapid weight loss offered by quick-fix diets
- Use appearance as your only motivation to lose weight - improved health and wellbeing are also vital
- Give up if you feel you have had a bad day or eaten too much. The lapse is not the problem, but your reaction to it could be
- Rely on a diet to solve your weight problems. It is a start, but with increased activity it will help define your new lifestyle change
- Get impatient with the gradual weight loss. You should only aim to lose 1-2 lbs a week to ensure that it is actual fat you are losing
- Eat foods that are saturated with fat
- Eat simple sugars such as cakes and sweets, these can negatively affect your energy levels and can leave you feeling hungry shortly afterwards.

Remember:

If you do what you have always done, you will get what you have always got.

Long term weight management is about change.