



## DAVID FAIRLAMB THE FIT FACTOR

**T**HE recommended daily calorie allowance for men is 2,500 and for women 2,000. However, a third of people in the UK underestimate how many calories they are eating, according to an Office of National Statistics analysis.

It suggests British men eat more than 3,000 a day while only claiming to eat 2,000, whereas women say they eat about 1,500 while actually consuming nearly 2,500.

Over the last 40 years, official statistics show the number of calories we consume has dropped, yet the population has continued to gain weight. This could be down to people failing to accurately assess the amount of calories they eat.

The damning statistics show one in four UK adults are classed as obese, putting Britain at the top of Europe's obesity league table.

But too many calories is not the only problem. Many adults and children are failing to get enough daily exercise, also a major factor when in maintaining a healthy weight.

Why are we underestimating the amount of calories we consume?

Some will be down to individuals being in denial. You may think the odd biscuit, piece of chocolate or glass of wine won't make a difference - wrong. A large glass of wine can contain as many calories as a doughnut, and a pint of lager has about the same calorie count as a packet of crisps.

More than likely you may have no idea of the calories you are eating. Food manufactures often make it very difficult for you to understand their nutritional amounts by breaking it into per 30 grams or per square, etc.

Cooking for yourself from scratch is the best way to monitor exactly what you are eating.

There is also the hidden extras such as calories in a coffee bought at a shop with extras, such as syrup and whipped

cream, can add up to the same as a dessert.

This culture of fast, convenient on the run eating makes it impossible to keep track of the amount of calories you are eating.

The hidden sugars especially in fizzy drinks, cereals and snack bars is also rocketing the amount of calories consumed throughout the UK, especially among children.

Here are a few ways to cut your calorie intake:

- Be organised at home, know what you are eating and cook from scratch using natural ingredients.

- Cut your portion size by using a smaller plate.

- Refrain from eating bottled sauces as they are usually high in sugar and calories.

- Bulk up your meal with vegetables, this will cut back on high calorie alternatives.

- Drink water before your meal to fill you up.

- Make healthy swaps eg swapping fries or potatoes for extra vegetables will also give your vitamin and mineral intake a boost, while also cutting back on calories.

### NUTRITION CORNER

Start cooking healthy home-made soups which can last a few days. If you usually reach for an unhealthy snack in the evening, exchange it for your soup instead. Over time this will cut a huge amount of calories from your diet.



Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal



### FITNESS TIP

Just because you have trained does not mean you can eat and drink anything you want and expect to stay the same weight - you can't out-train a bad diet.

### Motivational quote of the day

Watch your habits more than your weight