



## David Fairlamb

# THE FIT FACTOR

### LIFESTYLE CHANGE

It's easy to think, I will look at my lifestyle if I ever feel unwell or if I become ill. Unfortunately, too many people are making changes too late in life and the damage has already been done – particularly those with diabetes and the results can be catastrophic.



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**A**N estimated one in 15 people in the UK has diabetes. Ten per cent of them have type 1 diabetes, a largely genetic condition that has nothing to do with diet or lifestyle. The rest have type 2. There are 3.7 million people currently diagnosed and this figure is set to grow and it is estimated there are almost 1 million more people undiagnosed.

Diagnoses of type 2 diabetes has more than doubled in the last 20 years, and given that 66% of men and 57% of women are now either overweight or obese will mean these figures will only get worse.

By 2030, it is estimated that more than 5.5m people will be living with diabetes in all its forms and more than half of the people with the disease will have no symptoms. For many, the impetus to make lifestyle changes comes too late to prevent the disease's progression.

About 10% of the NHS budget is spent on diabetes and at least one in six people in a hospital bed has diabetes. Many people believe it is a relatively benign condition, something that can be managed with medicine, but almost 80% of diabetes money goes on

treating associated complications. For some people with type 2, an overload of carbohydrate will essentially wear out their pancreas.

Nationally, there are now a record 169 diabetes related amputations every single week. Many people after initially shrugging off their initial diagnosis can find themselves fighting serious illness and even if they eventually decide to lead healthier lifestyles it can be too late. People don't realise how serious it can be and especially don't understand the dangers of sugar.

My motivational lifestyle and wellness talk on the dangers of sugar leave many people shocked at the serious effect refined sugar can have and in the majority of cases are oblivious at how much they consume on a daily basis. The positive outcome of making

*There are two options – make progress or make excuses*

**Motivational quote of the day**

healthy daily lifestyle changes has been dramatic on a huge amount of people both physically and mentally.

The simple fact that 1 in 5 strokes in the UK are caused by diabetes also means it puts a monster strain on the NHS, a statistic that in many cases can be preventable seems unimaginable.

A study at our own Newcastle University's Magnetic Resonance Centre saw some people reverse type 2 diabetes very quickly. After just two months on a 600 calories-a-day diet, seven out of the 11 subjects were diabetes free. A larger study at Glasgow University in 2017 had equally dramatic results. Of the 306 recruits who were taken off their anti-diabetic drugs and placed on a restricted calorie diet for three to five months, almost half put the disease into remission. Incredibly, 86% of those who had managed to lose 15kg or more achieved remission. Proof that type 2 diabetes is not necessarily permanent, it can often be reversed into remission by sustained weight loss.

Small consistent everyday lifestyle changes can have a hugely positive effect on your health and well being. Make those changes now, it's something you do not want to regret later.



> A nurse giving a patient a diabetes test

### FITNESS TIP

Forget the intensity or level of fitness anyone else is at. Health and wellbeing is about you enjoying training and feeling fitter and better about yourself.