



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Healthy consistent changes work. Dump the fad diets, make a commitment to yourself by changing some day-to-day unhealthy habits and hold that focus.

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WITH millions of people all round the world looking to lose weight, the business of weight loss is a multi-billion pound industry. Social media has a huge influence, especially with younger people looking for a quick fix, that will supposedly instantly make them lose weight and have the body they have always desired in a matter of weeks.

Unfortunately, the reality is often very different and many are sucked into believing the hype and the before and after pictures which are often photo shopped showing amazing but often false changes.

People who wish to lose weight have been warned to stay away from social media influencers who claim to have the latest diet fix, researchers say.

A study by a team at Glasgow University found that just one out of nine leading UK bloggers making weight management claims actually provided accurate and trustworthy information.

The health researchers studied the country's most popular influencers, based on those who had more than 80,000 followers on at least one social

media site, verification from at least two sites such as Twitter and who had an active weight management blog.

Although the social media stars were not named in the study, blogs by nine top influencers published between May and June 2018 were analysed and scored against 12 criteria to demonstrate credibility.

The university team examined whether the health and diet claims made by influencers were transparent, trustworthy, nutritionally sound and included evidence-based references.

They also looked at the role of bias in what was put online.

Blogging and having a huge following is one thing but having the real life evidence to back it up is another.

*If you're persistent
you will get it. If
you're consistent
you will keep it*

**Motivational quote
of the day**

The author of the study concluded: "Social media influencers' blogs are not credible resources for weight management. Popularity and impact of social media in the context of the obesity epidemic suggests all influencers should be required to meet justified criteria for the provision of weight management advice online."

Tam Fry, chairman of the National Obesity Forum, said: "This study adds to the evidence of the destructive power of social media. Any Tom, Dick or Harry can take to the ether, post whatever they like and be believed by their followers.

I feel at least the younger generation are more aware of the types of food they should be turning to for health and well-being though social media.

However, I categorically believe health, well-being, weight management and nutrition should be part of the national curriculum from a very young age, including GCSE and A-level. This is the only way to have the next generation fully engaged and therefore in a better position make their own, better educated health choices though life.



FITNESS TIP

That extra few minutes on your run, adding 10 more squats to your normal routine or higher reps on the bike gives you a real sense of achievement and progression, boosting your fitness level and self-confidence.