



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

The awareness is out there and we all need to be mindful of our weight and work on good health, it doesn't just happen. Now, more than ever, we need to make this a priority in our lives.



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

THIS week Boris Johnson launched yet another new policy on obesity in England.

For more than 20 years health experts have been asking for the government to act on the obesity crisis that has been sweeping this country.

After two decades, it has taken a pandemic and the Prime Minister believing his excess weight contributed to his inability to fight Covid-19 the way he would have wanted to, to finally take notice and make hard changes to address this issue.

Since 1997 there have been at least 12 papers announced to fight obesity, yet have any made a significant impact? With two thirds of the population overweight or obese, I am sure you can draw your own conclusion.

Of course, it is easy to just blame the government but I do believe they have been very weak in dealing with this crisis.

They have now openly admitted obesity is one of the greatest long-term health challenges the

country faces. The virus has given them a wake-up call and they admit if everyone who is overweight lost five pounds it could save the NHS more than £100 million over the next five years. Plus, more importantly, given the link between obesity and coronavirus, losing weight could be life-saving.

The government's new policies are a way of directly tackling a second wave of the coronavirus.

The measures include a ban on junk food TV adverts before nine in the evening, calorie counts on menus in chain restaurants and takeaways, an end to buy-one-get-one-free on unhealthy prod-

ucts, and calorie labelling on alcohol.

For the specific purpose of tackling a second wave, there are measures hidden away in the government's proposals that could prove useful.

The NHS-offered weight management services, for instance, will be expanded so more people will receive the support they need to lose weight, including providing more self-care apps and online tools for people with obesity-related conditions.

If weight itself is a risk factor, these diets and targeted support could make a difference over a short term.

This is a good start - but it is only a start! The awareness is out there and we all need to be mindful of our weight and work on good health - now more than ever we need to make this a priority in our lives.

I urge you to look at your lifestyle and form consistent new healthier habits. Do it now because your future health and longevity of life depends on it.

► **Boris Johnson walks his dog Dilyn as he marks the launch of the Government's obesity strategy**



FITNESS TIP

As most of us are now out and about post-lockdown, each day you will be burning more calories. If you continue to keep the habit of one hour's daily exercise, even if it's four days a week, your calorie burn will be much higher, helping you drop weight.

Every new day is another chance to change your life

Motivational quote of the day