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THE FIT FACTOR

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

Being overweight makes it harder for the diaphragm and lungs to expand, reducing oxygen supply to vital organs. If this is you, take responsibility and understand how important a healthy lifestyle is to staying well and fighting illness

FITNESS TIP

Exercise is like medicine for your mind and body, finding time and consistency is the key to your health and longevity of life.

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

SOME very worrying stats are starting to emerge showing the impact the pandemic has had on the UK and worldwide obesity levels.

Even before the pandemic obesity was already one of the world's most pressing public health challenges.

According to the World Health Organisation, there are already around two billion overweight adults – around 39% of the world's population.

At least 650 million people are obese and it is a leading cause of premature death worldwide.

In the UK, startling numbers on child obesity in November prompted government action.

Around one in seven children in England are now obese when they start primary school (14.4%), and more than a quarter (25.5%) are obese by their final year.

British researcher Dr Andrea Smith from the University of Cambridge said her work over the pandemic had shown people were living in increasingly obesogenic households, in other words more screens, more stress, less sleep,

which are all known obesity risk factors.

Others blame the food and drink industry and governments for not tackling the issue, for example, by providing food boxes to vulnerable families in the pandemic full of processed foods.

There was also a significant decrease in time spent on moderate or vigorous physical activity, which added to the problem.

For now, it is still too early to say conclusively what the pandemic's impact has been on obesity and longer-term predictions are even harder. The question is whether it will reverse quickly or not.

The more overweight you are, the more fat you're carrying, the less fit you are and the lower your lung

Weight loss is a natural side-effect of a healthy diet

Motivational quote of the day

capacity. This means it is a bigger struggle to get oxygen into your blood and around the body.

This impacts on the heart and blood flow, therefore during an infection like coronavirus this can be very serious.

This is almost certainly one reason why overweight and obese people in intensive care with coronavirus are more likely to need assistance with breathing and support with kidney function.

Surely now is the time for us all to take responsibility and understand how important a healthy lifestyle is to staying well and fighting illness.

The implications of an unhealthy lifestyle are as clear for us to see more than ever before, so why wouldn't you want to try to help yourselves and your family.

For most it's all about making small consistent changes that could be life-changing. By simply cutting unnecessary everyday snacks, pulling back on your alcohol consumption, learning to buy fresh natural foods rather than fatty carb-based ready meals, cutting out sugary pop and fruit juice, plus adding regular



> The more weight you're carrying, the harder it is to get oxygen around the body

exercise, you could make a dramatic difference in a very short space of time.

It's then a case of implementing these changes over weeks and months, therefore forming new habits that will cement a new healthy

lifestyle, giving you the best opportunity for longevity of life in good health.

These horrendous obese stats should be enough of an incentive to do something about your own weight and lifestyle.