

Weight Loss - Obesity & the link between metabolic disorders - by Julie Dargan RN, BHSc, ND.

As published in Positive Health Online, October 2015, Issue 225

The weight loss industry has been booming for decades, with over \$20 billion spent annually on diets and weight loss products in America alone. I distinguish between weight loss and diet as they are quite distinct. Diet means among other attributes, good nutrition, healthy eating practises, exercise, relaxation and lifestyle. The weight loss industry on the other hand puts its emphasis on losing weight, yo-yo dieting and cosmetic enhancement. Regular on and off dieting can in fact be harmful as in many cases lean muscle is lost rather than excess fat.



The **Slim Factor Program** is a healthy dietary programme that I developed based on years of experience in clinical practise. As the **Slim Factor diet** is based on very low calorie intake initially, I recommend you seek practitioners' advice. I had read the work of Dr. Albert. W. T. Simeons, (1900 -1970), an endocrinologist who specialized in obesity and its contribution to other adverse health effects such as diabetes, cholesterol, gout, and rheumatism¹. Clearly Dr. Simeons was ahead of his time, as science has since validated the connection between excess weight/obesity and the aforementioned conditions which are now classed as diseases. Those diseases apart from debilitating effects on the individual are now fast becoming burdens on the state and society as the whole. For the individual it is reduced energy levels, fatigue, absenteeism and reduced productivity which impacts on personal income and ultimately on the State income.

As an example, diabetes is a growing epidemic. In Ireland 120,000 people were identified as suffering from diabetes in 2007², with an expectation of 100% increase by 2020². One of the many adverse effects of diabetes is diabetic retinopathy (severe damage of the retina) which can affect up to 50% of diabetics³. Some experts believe that as much as 10% of diabetics could become totally blind a good reason for people to control their body weight and diabetes. U.K. health authorities have indicated they expect that 17.5 million citizens will be suffering from arthritis by 2030, indicating that half of that number are already diagnosed as being obese or diabetic. Other complications are increased risk of stroke and kidney failure.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that worldwide obesity has more than doubled since 1980⁷. Overweight and obesity are linked to more deaths worldwide than underweight, and this is preventable. The Limbic System or 'emotional visceral brain' is a system of functionally related neural structures in the brain that are involved with emotional behaviour and the autonomic nervous system. Homeostatic imbalance results from the body's internal environment variables becoming unstable or disturbed. Aging is a natural cause of inefficiency but disturbances may also manifest in the form of stress, poor diet, toxins and electromagnetic fields. Excess environmental demands are seen by the body as discordant energies, which drain or imbalance natural reactions. Psychological disruptions are included as detrimental to stable environments. Stress and excessive toxins block pathways that communicate natural coping mechanisms for the body to remain healthy, thus alluding to weight gain and other chronic conditions.

The Fat Bank

Fat should not be classified as an undesirable part of the body's make-up, rather it is an extremely important organ playing a key role in metabolic function. Fat plays a further role, important in our times as a collector of modern-day toxins - the man-made nasty ones. However those toxins need to be detoxified if they are not to cause other chronic adverse health conditions⁴. Up until 20 years ago it was understood that excess fatty tissue served no purpose other than a bulging waist line until scientists discovered that fat cells produced a hormone called leptin. This hormone is released by the fat cells, enters the blood stream and is transmitted to the brain after crossing the blood brain barrier. Leptin is now highly regarded as the principle modulator in regulating the fat to lean muscle ratio, i.e. reducing excess fat by converting it to lean muscle or as fuel (energy for the body). If leptin was working correctly excess fat, particularly triglycerides, would be broken down and used for energy instead of being stored which gives the unwanted waistline and future health problems. It is often referred to as the obesity gene because as fat surplus increases so also does the production of leptin. In fact I read in Dr. Simeons book that many times in his career, which spanned more than four decades, he could not tell in some instances whether obesity caused the individuals diabetic condition, or was it the other way around.

One function of leptin is to communicate with endocrine glands including the hypothalamus, which is part of the limbic system. It informs the hypothalamus of the fat content in the body, when the correct level of stored fat is achieved and when to release fat as energy so as to prevent build up of excess and to convert excess fat to lean muscle. In effect it is the signalling system which tells the hypothalamus to inhibit food intake and informs the brain of satiety, the feeling of fullness, thus telling the body to stop eating. Leptin therefore is the key coordinator in the endocrine system which regulates feelings of hunger, satiety and sufficiency. A properly functioning hypothalamus is therefore the key endocrine gland in the process.

Reset Your Hypothalamus

The hypothalamus, a small gland right in the centre of the brain plays a key role through its integration with other organs in regulating autonomic body functions such as breathing, heartbeat, digestion, sleep, sex, the urinary system, the autonomous or vegetative nervous system. This is conducted through connection via the pituitary and the entire endocrine system. It controls appetite, thirst, motivation, behaviour, long term memory and pain and pleasure centres. With leptin as its message carrier it regulates the complex operation of the intake, storage and issue of fat as fuel for the body. Like all organs, glands and body systems, it is subject to malfunction from time to time and needs nourishment and support for correction.

Back in his time, Dr. Simeons used hormones at his clinic in Rome and it was with injectables he carried out his research. However, that form of presentation is no longer available but I have found that homoeopathy is an ideal medium for regulating hormones and returning them to balance.

Homoeopathy can be used to stimulate changes, be it drainage of toxins or nourishment of cells. Through healthy food choices, exercise, good quality water, rest, cleansing and cleaner living, it is possible to encourage smooth functioning of all organs and systems, and thus

optimising improved neural communication. Maintaining clear pathways enhances self-regulation. Chronic or unresolved stress and toxic build-up blocks these pathways.

In fact, homoeopathic remedies have a long and distinguished history in the treatment of weight problems, not just excess fat but also bulimia and anorexia. Kali Carbonicum is well known for its contribution for resolving obesity in the elderly⁵, whilst Hyoscyamus is a constitutional remedy for the undernourished and anorexic⁵. Sulphur is useful if one is predisposed to obesity whilst China is suited for young people who encounter weight problems⁵.

Homoeopathy is very much an individualised medicine, specific to the individual and specific to a vast array of conditions, whether it be oedema, swollen ankles or calves. One well known combination remedy, designed to support the Nervous System has had in addition to a positive outcome for its primary purpose, a positive impact on body weight with significant reductions happening over the six months following commencement. The likely explanation for this is the impact on the autonomic nervous system which interacts with the hypothalamus calling the body to restore itself to its ideal weight. Furthermore, an improvement in emotional well-being will in itself reduce excess weight through improved lifestyle and exercise. Which is why the limbic system is significant when looking at weight-related issues.

Continuous excess weight or under-weight (i.e. anorexia) can often be caused by a genetic or an inherited state which in homoeopathy is known as a miasm. There are combination remedies which address both the inherited weight problems as well as the modern-day causes such as overuse of white sugar and artificial sweeteners. For identification of such issues I recommend you see a homoeopath or a naturopath who uses kinesiology in their practise to help identify people who might be predisposed to obesity and other conditions.

Benefits to Self and Society

The benefits of maintaining the correct body weight are many. Excess weight lowers self-esteem, causes emotional upsets, can interfere with relationships and so on. A healthy weight management program like the Slim Factor can reverse all this. Make you feel good, look better; improve your energy, productivity and output. Most important of all it will greatly enhance your self-esteem. The full program is laid out in my book ⁶.

Important as those objectives are, we must have a longer term objective for ourselves and for society. As individuals we are spiritual beings made up of body, mind and spirit. We vibrate at different frequencies which means, we connect with our surrounds, the earth, and the cosmos in different ways, but we are all part of the same whole. Consciousness is the term used to identify where we stand in the overall spectrum of enlightenment. We can actually communicate with our higher selves through simple meditation and communication as a means of resolving issues in our lives including excess weight, obesity or other health issues.

The growing financial burden of healthcare on society, our fellow taxpayers, is a concern in many countries. The WHO have already issued concern as the obesity rate continues to climb. The health service as we know it is not sustainable. The number of people presenting with a variety of conditions and diseases continues to rise. Look at particular diseases resulting from lifestyle and diet - excess weight, diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, kidney failure, arthritis, blindness and cancer.

When you need help, which consultant will you see first; how will you prioritise, will there be enough consultants to meet demand? Do you think many of the consultants, or indeed any, are likely to say “let your food be your medicine”. I recommend that each of us as individuals connect with our higher selves and say, ‘I will take as much responsibility as I possibly can; I will improve my diet and take exercise for half an hour every day.’

Holistic wellness is the backbone to optimal health. Considering each facet - mind, body, spirit and emotions - is a modern, integrated and thorough approach to feeling good, looking good and revitalising enthusiasm for life. It can be the marker which distinguishes existing from living. Through the support of CAM providers and natural, traditional philosophies, better health is within an attainable and sustainable reach. Advice on improved eating habits and wholesome food choices is easily accessed. Natural healthcare practitioners can offer direction and guidance on lifestyle choices, all of which play a part in the well-being of an individual. It is important to make time for exercise and meditation. See them as an enjoyable hobby or a natural inclusion to one’s day, as opposed to a chore. People naturally know to eat every day and will not go without meals. Similarly, work-outs and mind-calming activities should play an essential component to daily routines.

The mind will pick up on negative perception. Healthy living should not be viewed as a ‘quick fix’. It is in the interest of future societies, future generations and future wellness that the obesity epidemic is brought under control. Healthy living needs to be taken on-board as a continual way of life; part of an on-going journey that will result in less ill-health, less absenteeism, less stress and an overall improved quality of living.

References:

1. Dr A.T.W.Simeons. *Pounds and Inches: A New Approach to Obesity* en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albert.T.W.Simeons
2. Diabetes Federation of Ireland. www.diabetesaction.ie/campaign-archives/2012/05/
3. Dr Tony Sullivan, Diabetes Federation of Ireland. The Way Forward - www.diabetes.ie/wp-content/uploads/strategy_paper2006-2010
4. Sherry A. Rogers, M.D. *Detoxify or Die*, Sand Key Publishers Inc. ISBN 1887202048.
5. Rosina Sonnenschmidt. *The Way to your Ideal Weight*. Pg 115. Narayana Verlag. Germany. ISBN 978-3-941706-78-1.
6. Julie Dargan. *The Slim Factor*. Authorhouse U.K. Ltd. UK. ISBN 9781456774165
7. World Health Organisation. Media Centre Fact Sheet, no. 311. www.who.int

About the Author:

Julie Dargan trained and practised as a general nurse for 20 years. Returning to college she completed her Advanced Diploma in Naturopathy followed by a BHSc (Bachelor of Health Sciences). She is a member of the Australian Naturopathic Society. She can be contacted on julie@darganvitality.com or visit www.menopausewhisperer.com

September 2015