



## Is Your Diet Making you Fat?

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**FROM: The New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)**

It's no secret that as a nation we are the fattest, and most unfit we have ever been. This is despite all the advances in health and science that should be helping us live a longer and healthier life. In fact the NZ Ministry of Health research puts one in four adults (aged 15 years and over) in the obese weight category (27.8%).

It's also no secret that we are spending a lot of money on diets and diet products in an effort to lose weight and be more healthy.

So why is it that in a country that spends a significant amount on weight-loss plans, food and products (In New Zealand low-fat food sales account for \$100 million a year alone), we are still getting fatter? Could it be that the many diet plans and products are in fact not helping us lose weight at all in the long run?

It's a case of, as the old saying goes - 'if something appears too good to be true, then it probably isn't true'.

So before you get out your credit card and start the latest diet fad, here are some clues that your diet programme, or product may not be all it's promising to be:

### **It contains an ingredient that promises to assist in melting away fat**

No one chemical, food or supplement is going to make you healthier. It's a combination of a balanced diet and regular exercise that will help you maintain a healthy weight.

### **It claims to take no effort**

Any change of lifestyle is going to be challenging, and changing your eating and moving more is no exception. Those who succeed know it takes effort, but work through the challenges. The added advantage of exercising is that it has other benefits such as improving your mood, and increasing your energy levels, which will make the effort worthwhile.

### **You don't need to exercise**

While the latest diet product may claim that you can lose weight effectively without exercise, the World Health Organisation reports that physical activity is fundamental to energy balance and weight control, and the Ministry of Health recommends lifestyle approaches rather than single factor approaches to weight loss. In the words of Dr Robert Butler of the Longevity Centre, USA: "If exercise could be put in a pill, it would be the most widely prescribed medicine in the world".

There is no magic diet plan, pill, or product required for improved health and weight-loss. The key is a combination of improving your diet, in conjunction with regular exercise. Rachel Marks, a REPs Registered Trainer from All Active says "any plan that says that it will help you lose weight in 6-12 weeks, will end in failure. The focus for any weight loss/exercise plan should be on what you can achieve and maintain for the rest of your life".

So instead of looking for a quick fix, the most effective and safest way forward in New Zealand is to talk to a Registered Exercise Professional about making exercise a part of your weight-loss plan... no pill required! They have all of the knowledge and skill required to help you make exercise part of your life.

#### References

- Ministry of Health Wellington NZ 2010. *Implementing the Clinical Guidelines for Weight Management in New Zealand 2010/11: Implementation Plan.*

- World Health Organisation - Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health

- US Surgeon General's report on activity and health

- A focus on Nutrition: Key findings of the 2008/09 NZ Adult Nutrition Survey

#### Contact Details:

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#### What is the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs)?

REPs is an independent non profit organisation administrating the New Zealand exercise professionals register to ensure that the public receive safe and effective exercise advice.

Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "Warrant of Fitness Check" that an exercise professional and facility meet New Zealand and international standards to deliver exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to over 35 other national exercise professional registers through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) [www.icreps.org](http://www.icreps.org).

