

GARY FETTKE

M.B.,B.S.,F.R.A.C.S.(Ortho), F.A.Orth.A.
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON

THE NEW JOINT

19 Lyttleton St, Launceston
Facebook: Gary Fettke No Fructose
www.NoFructose.com

OBESITY MANAGEMENT

You are probably reading this because you are overweight or obese – that is the concern. I believe from literature and experience that being overweight is a significant contributing factor to your problem, symptoms and treatment options. Please don't take offence to this advice. It is an opinion given because I believe you, and only you, can make a change that will be of benefit to you in the short and long-term.

Surgery may have a role to play in your care but you have the bigger part to contribute. If you are really ready to manage your weight issue the following may help you. It is not a prescription. It is a list of thoughts and ideas that may have some relevance and practical answers for you. What are YOU going to do?

Firstly, you need to REALLY want to lose weight.

Seek advice from your General Practitioner. Consider Dietician advice.

Take in fewer calories and exercise more – that is the simple equation.

90% of the problem is what you eat and 10% is about doing more exercise.

FOOD

Have your calories at the beginning of each day - then you can burn them off.

Have a good breakfast, lighter lunch, and very light dinner.

NO AFTER DARK CALORIES

Two large glasses of water 30 minutes before each meal will distend the stomach and make you less hungry when it comes to the actual meal time.

Chew each mouthful – take your time to eat.

Next time you're hungry, have a large glass of water. A lot of times when you are thirsty, the brain registers that as hunger.

Give up the alcohol. Two glasses of wine or two stubbies of beer have roughly the same number of calories as a 'Big Mac'.

FOOD IS FUEL - Nothing more. How much do you REALLY need to get to the next fuel stop?

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EXERCISE

Take some Paracetamol regularly – a modern convenience to make the pain easier.

A walking stick or hiking pole will take a lot of load off a painful leg.

Light arm weights can take the role of leg activity – you just need to do more.

Polish the joint – don't punish it.

Exercise bike – move the seat around to find the right height.

Swimming pool, hydrotherapy.

Air Walker- exercise machine that allows the body and legs to swing without any impact.

ATTITUDE

Aim for small goals. Check your weight regularly at the same time of day – but not every day.

Find someone to support you and preferably train with and 'compete' against. It is going to be hard work.

You feel hungry – that's okay. Remember the water.

WHY TAKE NOTICE OF WHAT I SAY?

I believe that there is a significant increase in risks associated with surgery as your weight increases, and particularly that of infection. No matter what your scenario is at present, the complications of infection in Orthopaedic Surgery makes your situation a greater disaster than whatever you are confronting at this point in time. This is only compounded in the diabetic patient where the risk of infection is magnified once again. As your body weight goes up, the complications become more common and severe. The recovery is generally slower.

Being overweight is not simple. There are problems of self-respect, motivation, attitude and support.

Losing weight is not about the next diet. Losing weight and keeping it off requires a change in motivation, lifestyle and attitude. You will need support from family, friends and the medical profession - it is there but you might need to just ask for that support.

I believe that some of these suggestions can help you to help yourself. You have the potential. However, YOU are the one that has to do it.