

# OBESITY

South Africa has the highest overweight and obesity rate in sub-Saharan Africa, with up to 70% of women and a third of men being classified as overweight or obese. A staggering 40% of women in our country are obese, which means they have a body mass index greater than 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. However, this is no longer just an adult problem, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 5 boys between the ages of 2 – 14 years are overweight or obese. Obesity is associated with a number of diseases including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, hypertension (high blood pressure), joint pain and certain cancers.

Our modern diet is the equivalent of putting rocket fuel into a Volkswagen beetle! Our sedentary activity means that we require small portions (airline portions) of food but on average we consume three times our daily requirement.

## 9 ways you can beat obesity!

### 1. Be honest

Admit you've got a problem and get help. Women tend to talk about their feelings and seek help. Men? You need to man up and tell your partner you want to make a change, or find a mate that can become your partner in health and fitness. It's all part of the process.

### 2. Stop waiting

Doctors receive little to no training on nutrition and fitness - they dish out pills, not healthy diet plans. Major pharmaceutical companies love this. Stop waiting for the cure ... we all know what preventative measures we can take in the gym and kitchen. They are the only cures we've got.

### 3. Build strength

A man (and woman) should have a certain level of strength. Build some strength with push-ups. All of us should be able to do 20 push-ups, because more muscle means less fat.

### 4. Get cardio fit

Run, because you shouldn't struggle to reach the top of the stairs. If there's trouble, we should all be able to run for safety, and for weight loss. Running still works.

### 5. Invest in your health

Organic meats, leafy greens and fresh fruits may be a bit more pricey, but we must think of food as an investment in health and preventing sickness. Same goes for an investment in fitness.

### 6. Be patient

Losing five kilograms in a month is achievable for all. How quickly does a year pass? No matter what your ideal weight is, just give yourself six months of healthier living, and you can change your life forever.

### 8. Think

Think about this: everything that goes from hand to mouth is either helping you, or it's helping kill you. Try thinking like this for one day, then two ... then one week.

### 9. Take the time, and make the time

Life won't stop if you're not in the office for an hour while exercising. Life does stop when you're in the hospital due to obesity-related disease. Five hours is 4 per cent of your week. Get moving.

### 10. Get serious

Joking at work on Monday morning about our beer guts and how many champagnes we consumed at the races is cliché. South Africans needs to start treating obesity like the internet is down. Like the car is broken. Like the television doesn't work. What do you do? You get angry, then you get serious and fix it.

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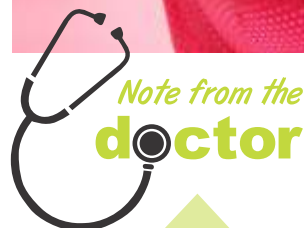


**“Prevention is better than cure.”**

- Desiderius Erasmus

This month we focus on:

## Breast Cancer & Obesity



**Breast Cancer** is a significant condition. Statistics show that 1 in 8 women in will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. This can be prevented through, self-examination and screening at the appropriate age. This article will give insight into early detection – as in this modern day – we should not have such high incidents of breast cancer.

**Obesity** - Only one thing leads to being overweight. Taking in more food energy than one burns. Be clever! Eat correctly and you will not become overweight. Being overweight can lead to many medical complications. Speak to your clinic nurse on site regarding how you can control your weight and the benefits thereof

Dr. RB Malkin

## References

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**KEEP CALM and FIGHT ON**



## Breast Cancer

The term 'Breast Cancer' is a general term for various types of cancer that can develop from breast tissue cells. This happens when abnormal cells divide in an uncontrolled manner where they can form a mass of extra tissue, or a tumour. This can be either benign (these do not spread to other parts of the body and usually do not occur again) or malignant (these invade surrounding tissue and can form secondary tumours in the body).

### CAUSE OF CANCER?

The cause is unknown but may be as a result of genetics (family and history thereof), environmental (where and how you live, work and play) nutritional (what you eat) and hormonal factors (in your bloodstream that controls your chemical levels).

Certain people are at higher risk for developing cancer. **Some of these identified are:**

- Females
- Older age: (is noted that 77% of women diagnosed with breast cancer are over 50).
- Having one relative (mother, sister or daughter) with breast cancer increases the risk 2 fold;
- Risk increases if you have had cancer of the breast, ovaries, uterus or colon. Cancer in one

breast means there is a 1 percent chance per year of developing cancer in the other breast.

- Exposure to oestrogen increases risk.
- Women with early onset of menstruation, late menopause, a menstrual cycle shorter or longer than average, no pregnancies or first pregnancy after 30, have slightly higher risk.
- Using oral contraceptives may slightly increase risk.
- More than 8 years of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) increases the risk.
- Recent research suggests that smoking may increase the risk.



### SYMPTOMS

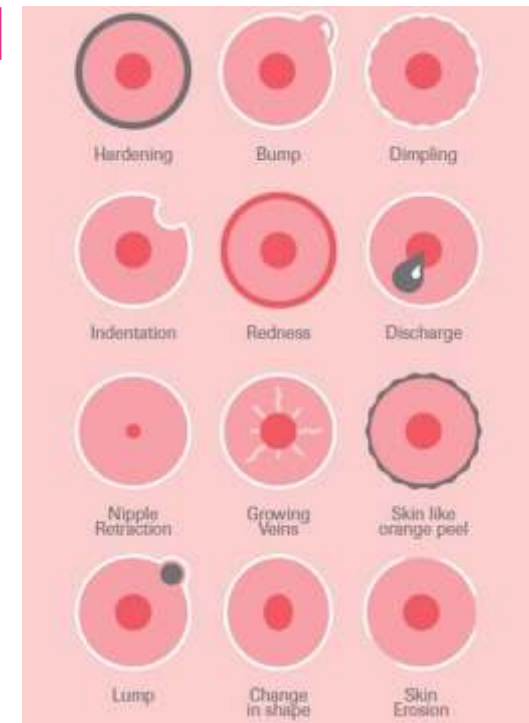
Symptoms of breast cancer are not obvious in the early stages. Women **MUST** get advice if they notices any change in the breast.

#### Later symptoms may include:

- Breast lumps: these are usually painless, but some cause a prickly sensation
- Change in nipple appearance: the shape or the skin may change
- Unusual nipple discharge: especially stained with blood
- Change in the skin of the breast
- A lump or swelling under the arm

It is critical to perform breast self-examination from the age of 20 onward. This should be done every month. Regular breast examinations will help you become familiar with the makeup of your breast allowing you to detect any changes such as lumps, early enough to seek help.

Specialists additionally advise that women should have a baseline mammogram at the age of 40. Between 40 and 50 years of age, mammograms are recommended every other year. After age 50, annual mammograms are recommended. Between 20 and 39, women should have a clinical breast examination every three years, and annually from 39 on.



### REDUCE RISK!

Currently breast cancer cannot be prevented but it can be diagnosed much earlier than before. The earlier cancer is found, the better the chances of a cure.

#### The following may help prevent breast cancer:

- A low-fat diet (less than 20 percent fat), with plenty of fruits and vegetables, and ideal weight maintenance.
- When cancer is found and treated early, there are more treatment choices and a better chance of recovery. Talk to your doctor about symptoms look out for and an appropriate check-up schedule.
- Between clinical check-ups, do a monthly breast self-exam.
- Strenuous exercise in youth might provide life-long protection. Even moderate physical activity as an adult can lower risk.

**Our message:** Screening and regular self-examination to prevent breast cancer is crucial. No woman should die from breast cancer.