

weight & health now

Spring 2010

Slimming
WORLD
because you're amazing



Welcome to the 10th edition of Weight & Health Now, the Slimming World newsletter for health professionals.

We've had a busy quarter and I do hope you find the articles of interest. For more information about our Let's Beat It Together community campaign, our research into pregnant Slimming World members or the Honorary Masters Degree awarded to our amazing founder Margaret, please contact us using the address overleaf.

Best Wishes

Jacquie Lavin

Dr Jacquie Lavin, R.Nutr Slimming World Head of Nutrition & Research

Pregnant members 'feel healthier' with Slimming World

Women who attend Slimming World during their pregnancy make healthier food choices, become more active and report that their general health and wellbeing has improved, according to a survey of pregnant members.

Eighty four pregnant Slimming World members, who responded to an online survey, reported that they had been less likely to have unhealthy snacks, ready meals or takeaways since they began attending group and more likely to consume five daily portions of fruit and vegetables, cook from scratch and enjoy regular meals with a wide variety of foods.

Members who joined Slimming World since they had become pregnant said they did so to avoid gaining excess weight (89%) and to improve their health and the health of their unborn baby (78%). Most respondents reported feeling healthier since joining Slimming World (62% 'strongly agreed') and 89% stated that they were planning to breastfeed when the time came.

Dr Jacquie Lavin, head of nutrition and research for Slimming World, says: "Maintaining a healthy weight before, during and after pregnancy is incredibly important to the health of both mums and their babies.

"As the only national slimming organisation to offer healthy lifestyle support to expectant and breastfeeding mums we have a very important role. Guiding members towards making healthier choices not only helps ensure a safe pregnancy, it also enables expectant mothers to set the foundations for a healthy life for themselves and their family right from the very start."



University honours for Slimming World founder

Slimming World founder and Chairman Margaret Miles-Bramwell (married name Whittaker) has received an Honorary Masters Degree from the University of Derby.

The award, presented at a ceremony on January 23, was given in

recognition of Margaret's achievement in founding Slimming World, a company that has improved the health, happiness and wellbeing of millions around the country, pioneered an NHS referral scheme now used in over 60 health trusts and donated more than £2.5 million to charity since 1996.

Margaret started Slimming World from her home in Derbyshire in 1969, at the age of just 21. Having become disillusioned by the low standards of support available for overweight people at that time, her vision was to create a radically different approach to weight loss, built on the twin pillars of a healthy eating plan and a group environment where slimmers are treated with warmth, dignity and respect.

By banishing hunger and feelings of guilt surrounding food, while helping to raise self esteem, her approach at one stroke removed the major obstacles faced by people with weight problems.

"Margaret is greatly admired by millions of slimmers who have discovered that losing weight needn't equal hunger or humiliation," says Caryl Richards, Slimming World's Managing Director. "Her vision and passion have truly changed the face of slimming in Britain."

Margaret added: "Coming so soon after the OBE that I received in November, the honorary degree makes me feel truly humbled. It is a real accolade for Slimming World to be acknowledged for the role that we are playing in helping to tackle obesity."



Slimming World launches

community-based campaign to tackle obesity

A Slimming World survey of the general population has found that the average person in the UK has a BMI of 27.5kg/m² and some 4% of the population (around 2 million adults) have a BMI that places them in the morbidly obese category.

While one in three respondents with an obese BMI believed that there was a genetic explanation for their size, a significant **73%** felt that the environment around them was the cause of their being overweight.

There is no doubt that while obesity is a national problem the causes are often very local. For most people high calorie food is increasingly locally available and there are fewer amenities to encourage physical activity. At the same time lifestyle habits and perceptions of 'normal' body weight are passed through families and social networks.

The survey found that around one in three people believe the government should do more to encourage people to become healthier, but reaching local communities can be hard.

That's why Slimming World is launching the Let's Beat It Together community weight loss campaign. With over 6,000 groups around the country and over 300,000 members attending every week, the club is perfectly placed to reach local people and their families at the very heart of communities.

Weight & Health Now is published quarterly. If you'd like to receive future copies, please email your name, job title and address to weightandhealthnow@slimming-world.com. Your details will be used for this purpose only and will not be shared with anyone else.

Slimming World works because it tackles the psychological, physiological and behavioural factors associated with being overweight. It's a powerful package of group support, a unique eating plan based around low energy dense satiating foods and a stage-by-stage activity plan designed to get people moving.

Having been overweight themselves before joining Slimming World as a member, Consultants who run groups have a deep understanding of the issues and difficulties faced by overweight people, of the commitment needed to make long term lifestyle changes and of the benefits of working together as a group.

Groups provide a platform where overweight members learn to share and celebrate success, uncover deep seated issues around food, recognise potential obstacles and develop practical solutions to overcome them as they support fellow slimmers and make gradual long term changes to their lifestyle together.

As well as this deep understanding of the emotional issues faced by overweight people, Slimming World Consultants become known as weight loss experts in their local communities. Throughout the 12-week Let's Beat It Together campaign Consultants will work with local MPs, GPs, mayors, schools, hospitals and employers to raise awareness of how losing weight can benefit health and happiness, while also demonstrating the local support that is available to help people tackle it.

The campaign starts on **February 22nd**, when over 400,000 leaflets and 30,000 posters will be distributed. If you're a health professional and want to get involved simply visit the website www.slimmingworld.com/health for more information.

As part of the campaign Slimming World will be running a 12-week Community Weight Loss Challenge to encourage slimmers to lose 5-10% of their body weight and improve their health.

Group activities will invite new and current members to taster sessions, showing that with a few tweaks even foods that are off-limits on most diets – like fish & chips or chocolate desserts – can be enjoyed as part of a healthy, balanced eating plan.

The local groups that achieve the most success during the Let's Beat It Together campaign will be rewarded with **£1,000** to donate to a local community project, meaning their weight loss will directly benefit the local area.

For more information on the Let's Beat It Together campaign go to: www.slimmingworld.com/health

The National Slimming Survey was conducted by Slimming World and YouGov and polled a nationally representative sample of 2,148 people about their weight, eating habits, activity levels, general health, relationships, career and family as well as their attitudes to weight and the issues surrounding it.

