

Contributors to Weight Gain - It's not only what you eat-

- **Stress** – When the body is under stress- including excessive physical activity- the adrenal glands release cortisone hormone. Excess cortisone often causes the body to hold on to excess weight- particularly around the middle.
- **Lack of Sleep** – Regular sleep deprivation can lead to depression, as it lowers serotonin levels in the brain. In addition, lowered serotonin levels cause cravings for sweets and starches - ultimately leading to weight gain.
- **Mistaking Fatigue for Hunger** – People often mistake fatigue for hunger. Regular sleep deprivation also decreases one's ability to correctly interpret what their body is telling them- thus what it needs to thrive.
- **Skipping Meals** - Many people think if they skip a meal their body will use fat for fuel. Nothing could be further from the truth. When there is no food for fuel, the body holds onto fat and uses lean muscle tissue, which is a cleaner burning fuel for the body. Consequently, people often lose muscle mass and become softer. Going any longer than 3.5-4 hours between meals can cause blood sugar levels to drop dramatically - leading to hypoglycaemia and in some cases, diabetes long term. It is common practise for people to fuel the late morning and afternoon “crash” with more adrenal stimulating substances such as caffeine, chocolate or sugar filled products. The adrenal stimulation often leads to more cortisone being released, and the vicious cycle is repeated once again.
- **Food Choices** – Foods that are high on the Glycemic index -sugary and refined foods- contribute to weight gain. Overeating and choosing chemical laden food can also lead to Leaky Gut Syndrome. This occurs when the small intestine becomes more permeable (leaky) –allowing food particles to escape the intestinal wall and to circulate freely in the blood stream –which further impairs digestion, contributes to weight gain and a host of health problems. This syndrome also causes the immune system to overreact to the freely circulating food particles- ultimately leading to food allergies/intolerances, anaphylaxis allergies and autoimmune diseases/responses.
- **Metabolic Rate** – Low thyroid function makes losing weight more difficult. Thyroid hormones control our metabolic function. The thyroid and adrenal glands work very closely together. If your body is under excessive stress – including excessive physical activity- your thyroid will be as well.
- **Impaired Digestion** – If a person's digestion is impaired, the pancreas will be forced to produce and release more digestive enzymes than it would have to under normal conditions. This not only forces the immune system to bring in white blood cells to aid the pancreas in digestion- which in turn prevents the immune system from performing other important tasks- but it also depletes the body of digestive enzymes over time. It is a normal occurrence for people to produce fewer enzymes as they get older, but when combined with years or even decades of poor eating habits – we have an understanding of the events leading up to the present day billion dollar Gastro-intestinal drug industry. For many, indigestion, bloating, gas and flatulence, heartburn or GERD (gastro-intestinal reflux

disease) is temporarily relieved by the use of antacids containing calcium, as the body utilizes calcium to neutralize excessive acid in the digestive tract. However, the stomach must remain acidic – in order to digest the foods we eat, as well as to ward off harmful parasites and bacteria that enter the stomach cavity. When we consume antacids we further reduce our ability to properly digest our meals. Once again a vicious cycle is created that for some, leads to a life-long prescription of medication to treat GERD, ulcers, IBS, Ulcerative Colitis, or other digestive related disorders and obesity.

- **Liver Dysfunction** – The liver processes hormones, eliminates toxins, cleans the blood, metabolizes proteins and carbohydrates into energy, manufactures bile to help break down fats, and performs hundreds of other functions. It's important to keep the liver squeaky clean, as it is like the control tower at an airport- crucial to keeping order. As the liver is bombarded on a regular basis from both the environment and poor food and lifestyle choices, it becomes overburdened and lethargic. In the end, it will begin to negatively impact other bodily functions. Individuals who are “tired all the time” or who suffer from bad “PMS” often have a sluggish liver.
- **Hormonal Imbalance** – The liver regulates hormones in the body. We are bombarded on a daily basis with toxins, both in the foods we eat and the environment around us. The disruption of liver detoxification (overworked and sluggish liver) contributes to an excess or imbalance of different hormone levels, particularly estrogen. Often referred to as “Estrogen Dominance” this state may contribute to weight gain and fat around the abdominal area, as well as various hormonal cancers. Sometimes there is enough estrogen and progesterone made by the body, but the ratio between the two causes problems. A saliva hormonal balance test is one of the best ways to identify these problems. Re-balancing hormone levels as well as supporting the liver and adrenal glands helps tremendously.
- **Lack of Exercise** – Exercise burns calories and builds muscle, both of which are required for maintaining a healthy weight. It is important to exercise regularly- period.
- **Filtered Water** –Don't underestimate the importance of water. Dehydration affects your ability to think clearly and concentrate. It also affects all of your bodily functions – since we are approximately 60-70% water, it is important to drink 6-8 glasses of water daily. This is crucial to optimal health and weight loss. It is also important to understand that unfiltered water contains many toxic substances such as the birth control pill, heavy metals, xenoestrogens –from plastics which mimic estrogen in the body causing an array or hormonal issues-, chlorine, prescription/recreational drugs, as well as a host of other toxins people flush down the toilet on a regular basis – that are not currently flushed out through the city's filtration system.