



## ***Stress and Weight Gain***

By

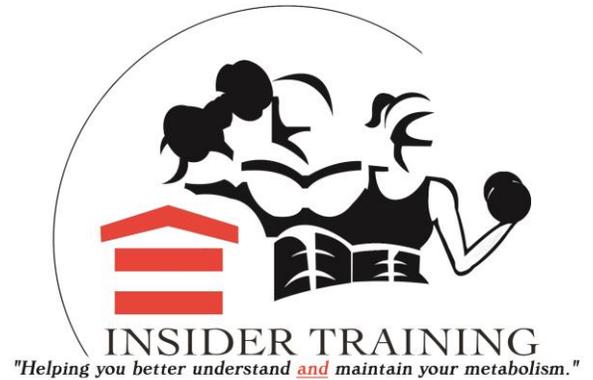
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In the fast pace world we live in stress is inevitable. If you work outside the home you may experience stress with your commute to and from work, disagreements with coworkers or tight deadlines. And if you happen to stay home with children you might find yourself running errands in between dropping your kids off at different events. No matter the type of stress it often leads us to put our health on hold to try and eliminate tasks such as cooking or exercising. According to a research study done by the University College London, constant stress on the job does not necessarily lead to weight gain.

Even though globally 1.9 billion adults are overweight or obese, stress may not be that much of a contributor. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that at least 40% of workers experience 'extreme' stress on the job. Stress triggers our nervous system to enter flight or fight mode which over time can lead to immune problems, heart disease, nervous system issues and mental health problems. One would think weight gain could also occur. There is some evidence that a person who has an easy going job that later turns stressful often sees an increase in weight. But when stress was reduced there was no evidence to prove a significant decline in weight.

So if stress does not directly impact weight, does it so indirectly? Often when people are stressed by work or their home life they cut corners on taking care of their health because it doesn't seem as important as other things. When life is simple it's easier to get your workouts in and plan meals at home rather than driving though a fast food restaurant. Exercise releases endorphins and relieves stress all while helping you maintain a healthier lifestyle. Eating

healthy and being active should not add stress to your life. Start incorporating healthy habits into your life by making small changes. Try taking a walk at lunch time or packing a salad rather than eating out. Cut back on eating out a few days a week by planning meals together with your family. Unfortunately, stress of some kind will always be present in our lives. We need to find ways to deal with stress in order to maintain our mental and physical health. This study showed simply taking stress away does not reduce obesity. It takes action on our part to make a choice to live healthier. What will your first step be?



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