

Watch the FAT

BY HAZEL LIN

Did you know that obesity is the most common illness in Western countries? Eastern countries however are steadily catching on the fat trend. Read on to learn more and find out our rather [larger font]drastic alternatives [larger font] to shedding that persistent fat!>

We inevitable gain weight during the festive season, when we face temptation in the form of chocolates and cakes piled upon our plates by well-meaning friends and relatives. How much is considered unhealthy and what constitutes a healthy weight in the first place?

♥♥ HOW HEAVY IS HEAVY?

First, calculate your Body Mass Index (BMI). This is done by dividing your weight (kg) by the square of your height (m).

BMI	Weight Category
> 30	Obese
25 -30	Overweight
18.5 – 24.9	Healthy Weight
< 18.5	Underweight

If you are overweight, you face the risk of suffering from a myriad of health problems, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea and certain cancers.

Although it is beneficial to lose weight by changing your diet and getting regular exercise, it doesn't work for everyone. Most people lack the motivation to control their weight and end up going to a doctor for prescribed medication (such as orlistat or sibutramine) or even surgery when their weight spirals out of control. Here are the alternatives you might resort to, when going for weekly workouts and eating less doesn't seem to help.

♥♥ ORLISTAT

Designated as a prescription drug in other countries, orlistat can also be bought without a prescription from

any pharmacy. It goes by the brand name of Xenical and should not be taken for more than 2 years.

Xenical targets the absorption of fat in your body, hindering the activity of enzymes which break down fat taken in your meals. This results in 30% of the fat consumed passing through the gut undigested. If you skip a meal or take a meal without any fat, there is no need to take that dose.

Where does all the undigested fat go too? Of course it gets excreted partially unchanged, leaving you with oily stools or discharge and flatulence. You may also experience abdominal pain and urgency in moving your bowels. Symptoms are generally mild and occur mainly after meals with high fat content. The absorption of fat-soluble vitamins like Vitamin A, D, E and K may even be impaired

