

A look at waist trainers and high heel shoes

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By Dr Brighton Chireka

We all want to lose weight and look good in the clothes we wear . We go and see our doctors and the advice we get is not pleasing to us . We hear the same old story that we need to eat a healthy diet and exercise regularly. The challenge we have is to find the time to exercise and how to find the healthy foods. We just hope for a magic pill that will do all the work for us and the weight is gone in a few seconds. Weight management is a big business so companies bombard people with their products. We all appreciate that we need to shade a few pounds off but at times we do not know how to do it or the will power to even attempt to do so.

Some women have jumped on to the waist trainers in the hope of losing weight and looking good. It is claimed that wearing these "corsets" for a certain amount of time daily will help you lose weight and shed off the fat around the waist line. We are told to wear a corset-like contraption to cinch the hips and back. Celebrities like Jessica Alba claimed that the waist trainer helped her to lose the baby weight. Other celebrities like Khloé and Kim Kardashian , Kylie Jenner, and Amber Rose have posted selfies wearing these waist trainers. This sounds very good if it works but the whole truth is not being told and sadly some people have had severe medical problems after using these corsets.

One does not need to be a doctor to understand the flaws of the corset. One is asked to wear an outfit that will press the abdomen, the ribs and the chest wall hoping to lose weight. How can squeezing your body help it to lose weight ? How safe is it to squeeze your body especially the

chest area when your body need to move the chest wall to breathe properly . This is very dangerous especially those people that have breathing problems such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease . There is no scientific evidence that these corsets work in reducing the weight so they must not be used for weight management.

Is there any place for corsets?

The aim of this article is to provide you with information so that you make an informed decision. Like with many lifestyle issues people will do as they wish regardless of medical advice. There are some who feel that the waist trainer will boost their confidence at a party as they look trimmed. If you are one of them then my message is that wear it wisely. Get the right size for you as a too tight one will press your tummy and chest too much which can result in you failing to breathe properly that may need a trip to the hospital . You must not wear it for a long time and your body will guide you on the duration. Listen to your body if it starts to feel uncomfortable , too tight or restricted then it's best to remove it . If you are at a party go to the bathroom with someone as you may need help to remove it. Do not sleep wearing a waist trainer and also do not wear it very often. A one off use or a once in a while use may be a better compromise but if you want to lose weight the the old message is still the same. The best way of losing weight is by healthy eating and regular exercise.

I have heard of people that are being advised to exercise whilst wearing a corset. This is dangerous and you must not try it. It is advisable to wear sports clothes when exercising to avoid any injuries. Exercising wearing a corset is like jogging whilst wearing high heeled shoes. You will injury your feet , legs , knees and back so wear flat comfortable trainers. When you exercise you are challenging your body , heart and lungs and depending on your level of fitness you may find yourself gasping for breath. The last thing you would want is to be restricted by a corset. The restriction may be too much resulting in one collapsing because of lack of oxygen. Those who have used these corsets know how challenging there are to put on and one can imagine how more challenging it is to remove them in case of a breathing restriction. In emergency every second counts so any restrictive clothing is dangerous as it will result in further delay in getting oxygen to the vital organs of the body.

Looking at high heels

In the quest to look good and be confident women wear high heels and I get asked whether its safe to wear heels. I appreciate women who dress up and I am amazed about how determined women are in their battle to look good. We all want to look at our best and some of us want to look like some of our role models. We tend to forget that we are created in different form and shapes and we are all beautiful or handsome in one way or another . There is no one size that fit all of us. Before one thinks of wearing high heels one needs to look at the shape of their feet and body weight. Sadly the medical advice on heels is that they are not good for our feet. We know people want to wear them then the advice is that do not wear very high heel shoes and if you do, wear reasonably high heels , try to wear them for a short time. You can always carry two sets of shoes so that you can wear your flat shoe after the occasion as high heels are not ideal for walking long

distances or to be worn for a long time.

The take away home message (**THM**) after reading this article is to avoid waist trainers and very high heel shoes altogether. If you cannot then the best advice is that wear them less often and for a short time only to look good for that important occasion. If you need long term weight management then stick to health eating and regular exercise. To avoid back pain and sore feet then wear flat or small "heeled" shoes that are comfortable to your feet.

Next article will look at hundreds of the diets being promoted. Do they work or is just money making business?

This article was compiled by **Dr. Brighton Chireka** who is a GP and a Patient Engagement Advocate (PEA) in Folkestone Kent, UK. He is also an NHS Certificated Change Agent (CCA). You can contact him at: ***info@docbeecee.co.uk***

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