



養和醫院  
Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital

For Immediate Release

## **HKSH Dietitians Caution Against Over-generalised and Unreliable Weight Management Methods that May Bring Long-term Undesirable Health Effects**

(22 July 2014 – Hong Kong) A survey conducted by Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital (HKSH) has found that over 30 per cent of 263 respondents are “overweight” with 20 per cent considered “obese”. Seven out of ten respondents said they obtained reliable health information from the web while another 17 per cent said they relied on social media for the information. HKSH dietitians remind the public that weight control will be most effective with tailor-made programmes catered for individual needs and conducted with professional assistance.

The findings on overweight and obesity matched with 2012 figures from Centre for Health Protection of Department of Health<sup>1</sup> which indicated that 36.6 per cent of adults aged 18 and over were overweight (BMI $\geq$ 23.0) and obesity accounted for 18.8 per cent (BMI $\geq$ 25.0). According to the World Health Organization<sup>2</sup>, overweight and obesity has become the sixth leading risk factor for global death with common health consequences including cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, musculoskeletal disorders and cancers.

The HKSH survey was conducted in early July with a view to gauging public knowledge and practices on overweight management. Respondents in general were concerned about their weight but while many tried to obtain health information through various channels, less than half possessed knowledge of the optimal values

<sup>1</sup> Centre for Health Protection (25 February 2013) <http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/25/8802.html>

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization - Fact Sheet No.311 ( May 2014 ) <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/>



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of BMI and waist circumferences<sup>3</sup>, and only a few knew that overweight might have higher risk in gout and cancer.

As for weight control measures, “workout more (64.4 per cent)” was most popular among those who have attempted to reduce weight, followed by “reduced carbohydrates intake (44.3 per cent)”, “eating less (40.9 per cent)” and “reduced meat and fat intake (40 per cent)”. However, only 20 per cent of the respondents consulted professionals like dietitians.

“People nowadays are becoming more mindful of their body figure and weight and at the same time, weight management information is available everywhere. Some of these diets may not be as reliable,” said dietitian of HKSH, Miss Jessica CHOW.

Some of these weight control “programmes” may be sugar-coated, cautioned senior dietitian, Miss June CHAN. “For example, some “low-carb/high protein” diet may increase the risk of gout, kidney stone and osteoporosis,” she noted.

HKSH has introduced weight management programme since 2004 and as dietitian Miss Vivian LAU said, most participants join in the programme with two major goals in mind: improving on body figures and health conditions. “More professionals are trying our service because they are unable to maintain a healthy lifestyle with busy work schedule and eating out too often which leads to poor diet. The programme provides them with proper guidance in weight control,” she said.

Senior dietitian Miss Flavia U added that there is a growing demand for dietitian service in recent years, reflecting on an increasing public awareness on health issues.

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<sup>3</sup> Optimal BMI for Asian: 18.5-22.9 ; Central Obesity: Female > 80 cm or 31.5 inch & Male > 90cm or 35.5 inch





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She also noted that more men are using the service and they have a higher rate of success as far as weight reduction programme is concerned.

“We have more middle-aged male patients and interestingly, they have a higher chance of success in weight reduction since they are more target-oriented and focused in the approach recommended for them,” Miss U said.

Overweighting problem can be prevented and controlled, Miss U said, adding that to step up public education on the issue, the dietitian team has put together a book entitled “*Weight Management for Everyone*” with a view to offering a critical review of popular weight management methods and recommending a balanced approach to address the issue.

The book, in two volumes, offers 45 healthy recipes offered by the dietitians and is now on sale in local bookstores at \$128 each.



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### **Additional information**

#### **Case study 1: Mr. Cheung lost 24 kilograms in six months**

Mr. Cheung, a middle-age businessman, was diagnosed with gout, diabetes, high triglyceride and fatty liver in January after receiving a comprehensive health check at HKSH. He was then referred to the Dietetic Unit for follow up and has successfully reduced 24 kilograms in six months.

“I think I have changed a lot since then - not only do I look slimmer in appearance, my health has also improved. Now I don't even have to put on any medication to control my diabetes and blood lipids!”

Learning how to choose the right food and taking up regular exercise are the tips to share.

#### **Case study 2: Eric lost over 40kg in 15 months**

Eric was chubby ever since he was a kid. All along, he has applied his “willpower” to keep fit but never succeeded. “I tried to eat less but very often failed to resist the temptation. To me, staying fit has always been a lip service only,” Eric said.

Things started to change after he has joined in the programme. “It is not as hard as I would have thought. I feel really good and get more relaxed now that I know how to read food labels and choose food with high nutritional values. Besides, I will pamper myself once in a while – enjoying one “free will” meal after several healthy, portion controlled meals! “Get professional help and never try to be your own weight control expert” is one of his smart tips to share.



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### **About Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital**

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital is one of the leading private hospitals in Hong Kong. With the motto “Quality in Service Excellence in Care”, the Hospital is committed to serving the public as well as promoting medical education and research.

### **HKSH Health Series**

The HKSH Health Series is a collection of books and articles written by our doctors and medical specialists. This series would cover a wide range of health-and medical-related topics, providing the public with the most updated information and health advice.

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Photos

1. In a new book, *Weight Management for Everyone*, HKSH Dietitians, Miss June CHAN, Miss Flavia U, Miss Jessica CHOW and Miss Vivian LAU, advised the public not to rely on over-generalised weight management methods, and to pay attention to their own weight parameters such as BMI and waist circumferences.



2. Mr. Eric LIU and Mr. CHEUNG achieved weight reduction in a healthy way through HKSH's Weight Management programme, and encouraged people with weight problem to seek professional help.



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3. Mr. CHEUNG succeeded in managing his weight and regaining health in 6 months with the guidance of Dietitian Vivian.



4. Under the guidance of Dietitian Flavia, Eric realised that it is easy to reduce weight with proper knowledge and method.



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5. Delicious and healthy food for weight watchers – recommended by HKSH Dietitians. (Recipes extracted from “*Weight Management for Everyone*”)



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