

"I'M TOO STRESSED TO EXERCISE - OR EAT WELL"

Office obstacle: With one in five of us working more than 50 hours a week* – and even longer in the last-minute rush before Christmas – it's far too easy for healthy eating and exercise to slip down your priority list.

Trim-down tip: Plan, plan, plan, says dietitian Alison Miles. "Stock your fridge at home or work with microwave meals to control portion size." Also, try exercising in the morning – studies show 90 per cent** of people who exercise in the morning stick to the routine.

"THERE'S ALWAYS CAKE AND TREATS ON OFFER"

Office obstacle: It feels like you're forever fending off offers of chocolate and chips from kind colleagues, or trying to resist the all-too-regular birthday shout.

Trim-down tip: It's time to have a chat with your co-workers. Surveys show that 55 per cent of women want to actively start losing weight† – so chances are they'll be receptive. "Ask your colleagues to pick healthier alternatives; so instead of a birthday cake, get a fruit platter," suggests Reid.

"I WORK FROM HOME AND AM CONSTANTLY GRAZING"

Office obstacle: Nearly one in four people works part of the time from home†, which means the fridge is a constant temptation when you take a quick break.

Trim-down tip: Not needing to travel to work saves you valuable time – think of this as your exercise time, says Caitlin Reid, author of *Health & The City* (Pan Macmillan, \$22.95). "Schedule a walk or swim before 9am or after 5pm and make sure you do it – you can always keep working after your exercise session." Plus, exercising first thing will kick-start your day.

"I CAN'T STAY AWAY FROM THE VENDING MACHINE"

Office obstacle: It starts with the occasional mid-afternoon treat – and before you know it, you've acquired a full-blown vending machine habit. Be warned: a daily soft drink can add up to 8kg to your weight over a year.

Trim-down tip: "It's simple: don't bring coins with you to work – that way, you're less likely to succumb," says Reid. Instead, plan ahead and keep healthy snacks at work, stashed away in the office fridge or pantry. One US study† found workers were 71 per cent more likely to snack if they could see the food in question.

"I'M ALWAYS AT EVENTS AND EATING CANAPÉS"

Office obstacle: Summer means one thing – socialising. But business lunches, cocktail parties and after-work drinks can put a serious dent in diets. Studies show dining in a group of more than seven causes people to eat a whopping 96 per cent more‡, while canapés generally contain 400–600 kilojoules each.

Trim-down tip: At parties, carry a glass of sparkling water in your dominant hand to stop you reaching for canapés, advises Miles. At dinners, try to use the "rule of two": as well as your main course, only have two extra items, such as a glass of wine, entree or dessert – each counts as one item, says dietitian Arlene Normand.

IS YOUR JOB MAKING YOU FAT?

What to do when you're gaining more from your job than experience

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