

# Dear Jacquie

Your queries about natural health answered by **Jacquie Lane** from the College of Naturopathic Medicine

**Despite working with a personal trainer I still can't lose my belly. I eat healthily but I'm stressed. Is it true that this can have an effect?**  
AM, Brighton

Yes! Normally excess weight tends to settle around the middle for men, and around the hips and thighs for women, that is unless other factors come into play, such as one of the stress hormones like cortisol.

When your body gears up to deal with either mental or physical stress, the hormones adrenaline and cortisol are released to jump-start fats and carbohydrates, to give your body quick energy. These stimulate insulin to be released for the maintenance of blood sugar levels. The end result can be an increase in appetite so that you have the necessary energy to meet the increased needs of your muscles or brain to respond to the stress (think, running from a hungry lion). If you don't need the sudden power surge, however,



excess calories may end up being stored in the metabolically active fat cells around our middle.

Weight gain or loss is dependent on a number of factors including resting metabolic rate, food intake, amount of exercise, and even the types of food consumed and the times of day food is consumed.

So firstly, deal head on with your stress levels by addressing the

factors causing it. Add to your workout programme activities that may help reduce stress hormones like swimming, or try a regular massage.

Please check that your diet really is healthy by including seven daily portions of vegetables, fruits and salads. Choose healthy protein sources such as fish, turkey, beans and lentils. Omit refined carbohydrates such as white bread, biscuits, cakes and confectionary including cereal bars, which can be full of sugar. Unless you're doing a lot of aerobic exercise such as running or rowing, carbohydrates will settle around your middle, stored for future use, so avoid eating carbohydrates after 7pm, and stick to wholegrain choices at other times of the day.

A wide variety of supplements are useful for reducing body fat while exercising, such as CLA oil and green tea extracts.

See a nutritional therapist who can advise on a specific nutritional plan just for you.

*See your health professional for advice*

*If you have a general health query that you would like to raise here you can email Jacquie at [healthqueriesforWave@naturopathy-uk.com](mailto:healthqueriesforWave@naturopathy-uk.com). Please note that Jacquie cannot enter into individual correspondence unless your query is chosen for publication.*



*Jacquie Lane is a lecturer at the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) and the Director of Studies at CNM in Brighton. Jacquie also runs her own nutrition clinic in Brighton and manages a biological testing lab specialising in digestive issues.*

## CNM open evening

If you would like to train to become a nutritional therapist, please book to attend CNM's next open evening in Brighton on 01342 410505, [www.naturopathy-uk.com](http://www.naturopathy-uk.com)

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