

# 1 in 5 gain weight using diet shakes

Canstar Blue releases Weight Loss Shakes 2014 – Most Satisfied Customers Award

One in five dieting Australians blame weight loss shakes for making them fatter.

That's one of the findings from a new survey undertaken by customer satisfaction research company Canstar Blue, which also found that men (28%) were more likely than women (18%) to pile on the pounds.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, three in five Australian adults are overweight or obese, while 5% more adults are overweight or obese than in 1995.

And the Canstar Blue survey, of 750 Australian adults who have bought and used weight loss shakes in the last six months, shows that being overweight is the biggest cause of stress in life for 45% of respondents, while a hefty two thirds said they feel other people judge them based on their appearance. And around a third of consumers feel embarrassed when buying weight loss shakes.

Almost half of men and women questioned said they turned to weight loss shakes as a last resort, while 16% claimed to have been addicted to them, with men (22%) more likely than women (13%) to get hooked.

"Consumers should be aware that weight loss shakes are considered a dietary supplement, not a substitute for eating healthy whole foods," exercise physiologist and nutritionist Dr Bill Sukala says.

"I'm not surprised that one in five Australians think weight loss shakes made them fatter. Many people are already unknowingly overeating, so when they cut down on their food intake and replace it with a shake, it just puts them back to square one. If they're not helping it along with exercise and reduced energy intake, then it will be difficult for them to lose weight and keep it off."

Just over half of dieters who took part in the survey said they have successfully lost weight using weight loss shakes, but of those, one in two said they put the weight back on after they stopped using them. Just over 40% said they don't think weight loss shakes work.

"Consumers want to get value for money and they want great-tasting shakes. But above all else they want a product that helps them lose weight," Canstar Blue spokesman Simon Downes says.

"Weight loss shakes can offer hope and motivation to those looking for a lifestyle change and consumers often have high expectations. Many of our survey respondents told us they continued to feel hungry after drinking shakes, meaning they often turned back to food and struggled to lose weight as a result."

While they don't have the desired effect for some, 30% of those questioned by Canstar Blue believe using weight loss shakes is the best way of losing weight, and a third said they find it hard to lose weight without them.

ALDI has received Canstar Blue's Most Satisfied Customers Award for Weight Loss Shakes for its Slim and Trim range. With five-star ratings for taste, value for money and overall satisfaction, ALDI wins the award for the second year in a row, topping the table ahead of 11 other brands, including Tony Ferguson, Celebrity Slim and FatBlaster.

Isowhey was the only brand to achieve a five-star rating for effectiveness.

"They [weight loss shakes] can give a boost to someone's weight loss efforts, but I still stress that focusing on a reduced energy diet that is high in nutrient-dense fruits, veggies, lean meats and healthy fats will deliver the most bang for the weight loss buck," Mr Sukala adds.

"You could virtually overdose on broccoli and you would still have a hard time overeating.

"Whilst it may not be the sexiest advice, the age old adage to 'eat less, move more, and don't smoke' is still the best advice for overall lasting health, wellness and weight control."

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