



Ricardo Riskalla is one of Australia's leading Fitness and Health experts. Contacting Ricardo is the first step to living a healthy lifestyle.

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How to encourage your partner to make healthy life changes (on the sly)

By Dilvin Yasa | 3 weeks ago

Is your man looking a little ‘plump’ these days? If so, he’s far from alone, with the most recent data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealing 74.5 per cent of men are now considered to be overweight or obese.

You could speak to him, of course, and offer to help him return to optimum health, but if you suspect such a talk will only serve to upset him, there are plenty of ‘stealth health’ approaches you can also try.

Food, glorious food

Yes, we’ve long heard the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach, but it’s time to take a vastly different approach if you want to keep said heart healthy.

Personal trainer, nutrition expert and author Ricardo Riskalla of [Ricardo Riskalla Training](#) says the reprogramming must begin long before any groceries enter your home.

“Education is essential; set up some time to ‘stumble’ on nutrition documentaries together—there are some amazing ones on Netflix that can motivate your partner to make a few changes,” he explains.



A few tweaks to your groceries could make all the difference. (iStock)

“Be sure also to replace all crockery with smaller plates, cups and bowls.”

This means that even when your partner fills his plate, the portion will still be smaller than his usual size.

If you normally go grocery shopping together, invent reasons why you have to go by yourself and use this as an excuse to ‘try new things’, advises Riskalla.

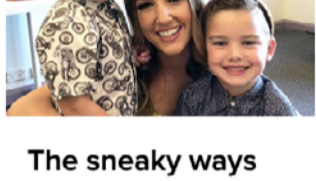
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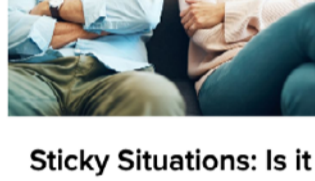
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“This means replacing all the bad things in the kitchen with their healthier version, such as ditching the butter for olive oil and so on.”

It also means resisting the urge to throw junk food in the trolley, instead loading up on plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and nuts to snack on.

While we would normally be huge advocates of sharing all domestic chores, it may assist if you take over the cooking duties for the next few months as well. This will give you a chance to drastically reduce the amount of pasta, rice, potatoes and fatty dishes such as curries hitting his plate, replacing it instead with lean cuts of meat with healthy serves of steamed or baked vegetables and a salad.



“Be sure also to replace all crockery with smaller plates, cups and bowls.” (iStock)

“Remove too all sugar and salt from the diet and increase the amount of spices you are use when cooking—spices are rich in antioxidants and taste amazing,” says Riskalla.

And remember that slow eaters tend to eat a lot less, so work actively to prevent him from wolfing everything down the minute it lands in his plate. Be disruptive, make conversation and ask him for random (and rather urgent) favours throughout meals to help slow him down.

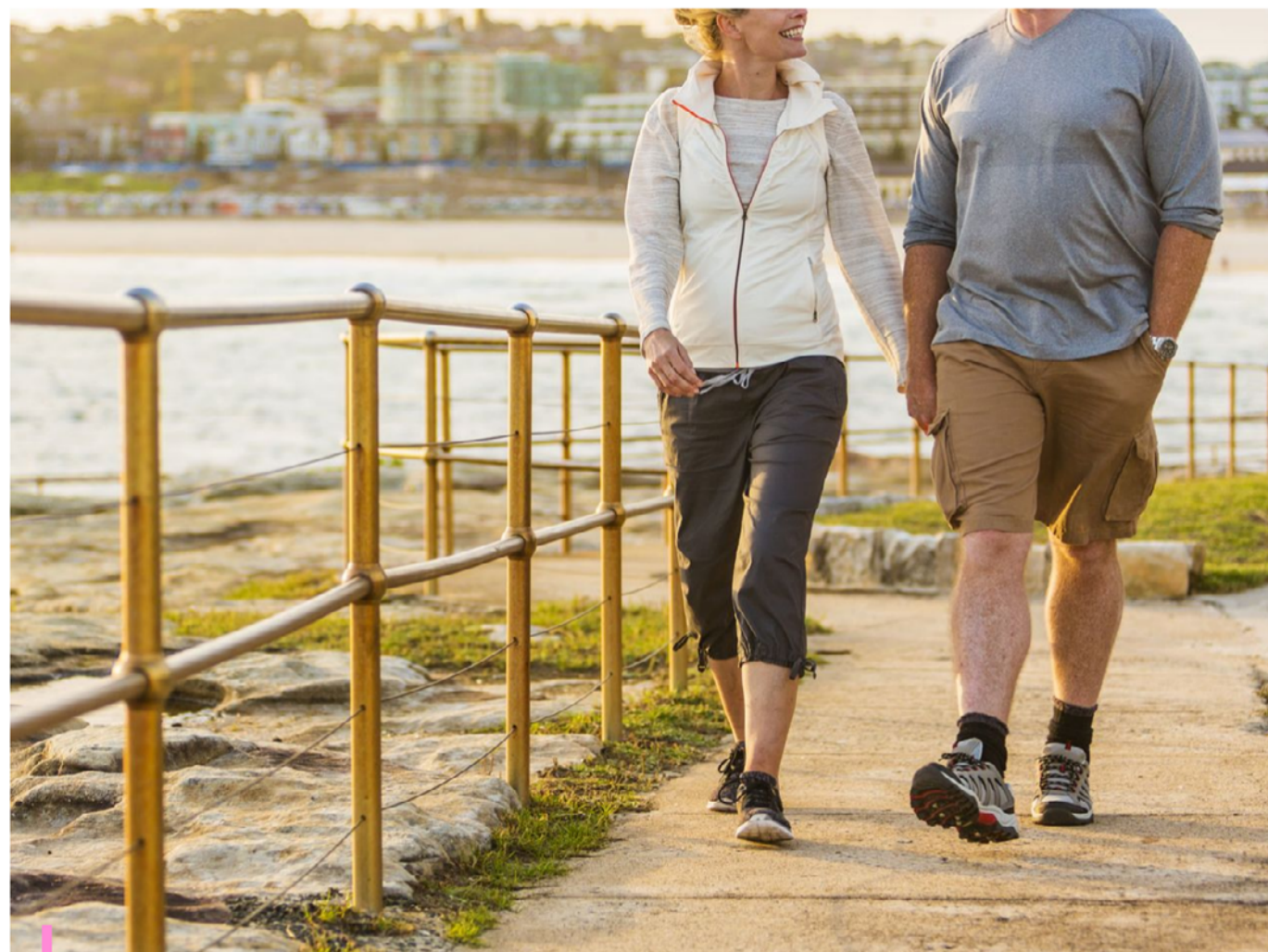
No, he may not love it and yes, he could get frustrated, but you’re doing it for his own good in the long run.

A good fit

First of all, a warning: countless studies show couples who exercise together are up to 94 per cent more likely to stick with their workout routine and see results.

This means that rather than pointing out your partner’s flaws and less than desirable lifestyle habits, you’ll have far more success in getting him to trim down if you get a little more active yourself.

A great way to get started is by ditching the car on weekends, says Riskalla.



(iStock)

“Say to yourself, ‘walking’, ‘walking’, and more ‘walking’ – it’s the best exercise around and best of all, it’s free.”

Sure, you could go to the gym and challenge your partner to beat you on the treadmill or rowing machine, but if such behaviour is unusual for you it’s highly likely he’s going to understand exactly what’s going on and call you out.

Instead, opt for swimming and walking sessions at the beach, book in fun activities which require movement and varying levels of physical fitness, such as horse riding and kayaking, and think about what your partner would like.

“Discover your partner’s sport passions and encourage that,” recommends Riskalla.

“It sounds simple, but it could be a trigger to help make him healthier.”

And, of course, if all else fails you could just turn the tables and make it seem as though getting fit is all about you. Simply tell him you’re looking to lose weight and need his help – a move that could make him feel as though he’s doing you a favour.

It’s a small psychological twist, but it could be all you need for a lighter, brighter future.



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