

# MEDIA RELEASE



23 January 2012

## What's your health worth?

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During Australia's Healthy Weight Week (22 – 29 January 2012), ACT Medicare Local is encouraging Canberrans to look at their weight and consider if they need to reduce it.

ACT Medicare Local Chair Dr Rashmi Sharma said obesity rates are high in Australia and have been increasing faster than in any other OECD country in the last 20 years\*.

“We know that one in two Australians are overweight. We also know that being overweight or obese puts people at higher risk of developing a range of diseases and many chronic health conditions such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers,” said Dr Sharma.

The formula to losing weight is well known, eat healthier food and be more physically active.

“The good news is that often at this time of year we have great ideas and new-found motivation to start making healthy lifestyle choices,” said Dr Sharma.

Making small changes gradually to lose weight is often easier and more successful than going on a fad diet only to return to old, unhealthy habits.

“I say to my patients, just start by doing simple things. For example, eat smaller serves just by using a smaller plate. Then only go back for more food if you're really still hungry,” said Dr Sharma.

Increasing your physical activity bit by bit can help get you on the path to moving more.

“If your kids ask you this Australia Day to play backyard cricket with them, will you be the parent who makes an excuse to avoid it or will you be the parent actively playing?” said Dr Sharma.

“Take a moment to consider whether you are a healthy role model for your kids,” said Dr Sharma.

Talk to your local family doctor or health professional about your weight and health concerns.

\* source - OECD. 2010. *Obesity and the Economics of Prevention: Fit not Fat*



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