

## Lockdown Lifestyle Can Lead to Overeating

By Park Don-kyoo

April 08, 2020 08:42

The couch-potato lifestyle forced on many Koreans in a time of coronavirus is causing them to eat more, exercise less and put on weight.

In a survey on March 30 by SM C&C of 4,010 people between 20 to 50, 43 percent of respondents said they gained weight over the last two months, while 39 percent weight remain unchanged and only 18 percent said they lost weight.

More women (47 percent) than men (36 percent) said they gained weight. Fifty-one percent of women in their 40s said they gained weight, while men in their 20s were the group who said they lost weight with 26 percent.



The biggest reason seems to be fewer outdoor activities.

Most respondents said their level of activity has dropped significantly as they stay at home even at the weekend (40 percent), watch TV a lot instead of going out (40 percent), or work from home (20 percent). Other reasons were lack of exercise and overeating.

Among women in their 20 and 30s, over 50 percent blamed their weight gain on staying at home even at the weekend.

One 42-year-old female office worker said, "I'd be lucky to put on no more than 2 kg over two months. It's been a while since I stepped on a scale." She said appointments outside the office have declined sharply, "and I don't get up from my desk at work unless I have to go to the toilet. At home I just sit around watching YouTube or TV."

Lee Duk-chul at Yonsei University's Severance Hospital recommends going out to exercise despite infection fears. "It's better to head outside when the weather is sunny and breezy for some walking or bicycling," he said. "Coronavirus is not spread by sunlight."

Staying at home for extended periods causes the metabolism to drop and could also lead to depression or a lack of motivation, gorging on food, drinking alone and putting on weight.

"Social distancing means we should avoid crowded, indoor places, but not outdoor exercise," Lee said. "In fact, sunlight boosts vitamin D and the immune systems and makes us feel better too."