**It's NOT in the genes! You can't blame your DNA for piling on the pounds, scientists reveal**

* **Carriers of certain 'fat genes' are known to be about 6.6lb heavier**
* **But the same genes do not stop them losing the excess**
* **For some, certain genes - notably a variant called FTO - increases the likelihood they will be overweight or obese**
* **But results from trials showed gene had no effect on weight loss**

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* [e-mail](mailto:?subject=Read%20this:%20It%27s%20NOT%20in%20the%20genes!%20You%20can%27t%20blame%20your%20DNA%20for%20piling%20on%20the%20pounds,%20scientists%20reveal&body=It%27s%20NOT%20in%20the%20genes%21%20You%20can%27t%20blame%20your%20DNA%20for%20piling%20on%20the%20pounds%2C%20scientists%20reveal%0A%0AFor%20some%2C%20carrying%20certain%20genes%20-%20notably%20a%20variant%20called%20FTO%20-%20increases%20the%20likelihood%20they%20will%20be%20obese.%20But%20results%20from%20eight%20randomised%20trials%20showed%20the%20gene%20had%20no%20effect%20on%20weight%20loss.%0A%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fnews%2Farticle-3799045%2FDNA-not-blame-piling-pounds-scientists-reveal.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top%0A%0A%0AMost%20Read%20Articles%3A%0A%0AMother-of-two%20who%20had%20an%20annoying%20spot%20on%20her%20chest%20in%20her%20wedding%20photos%20discovers%20it%20was%20skin%20cancer%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-3892634%2FMother-two-annoying-spot-chest-wedding-photos-discovers-skin-cancer.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0ACan%20you%20REALLY%20be%20a%20healthy%20vegan%3F%20Nutritionist%20gives%20his%20expert%20verdict%20%E2%80%93%20and%20reveals%20the%20safest%20way%20to%20follow%20the%20diet...%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-3892730%2FCan-REALLY-healthy-vegan-Nutritionist-gives-expert-verdict-reveals-safest-way-follow-diet.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0AGraduate%20ripped%20her%20eyeball%20as%20she%20tried%20to%20take%20her%20contact%20lens%20out%20which%20had%20become%20stuck%20after%20she%20left%20it%20in%20for%202%20hours%20too%20long%0Ahttp%3A%2F%2Fwww.dailymail.co.uk%2Fhealth%2Farticle-3893418%2FGraduate-lucky-not-blind-ripped-eyeball-spent-5-DAYS-darkness-left-contact-lens-long.html%3Fito%3Demail_share_article-top_most-read-articles%0A%0A)

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Blaming your genes is a handy excuse for being overweight.

But research shows that anyone is able to lose weight through diet and exercise – whatever their DNA holds.

Carriers of certain 'fat genes' are known to be on average 6.6lb heavier and 70 per cent more likely to be obese.

However, while they are more likely to pile on the pounds to begin with, the research reveals the same genes do not stop them losing the excess.

John Mathers, who led the study at Newcastle University, said: 'You can no longer blame your genes. Our study shows that improving your diet and being more physically active will help you lose weight, regardless of your genetic makeup.'

For some people, carrying certain genes – most notably a variant called FTO – increases the likelihood they will be overweight or obese. But results from eight randomised trials involving 9,563 adults showed the gene had no effect on weight loss.

Professor Mathers, whose findings were published last night in the British Medical Journal, added: 'We were excited to find that people with the risk version of FTO respond just as well to weight loss interventions as everyone else.

'This is important news for people trying to lose weight as it means that diet, physical activity or drug-based weight loss plans will work just as well in those who carry the risk version of FTO.

'For public health professionals, it means that the adverse effects of the FTO genotype on weight gain are not an impediment to weight loss interventions.'

His team found that the response to weight loss interventions for people carrying the risk variant of the FTO gene was similar irrespective of gender, age and ethnicity.

The authors wrote: 'This an important finding for the development of effective weight loss interventions in the context of the global epidemic of obesity.

'Future public health strategies for the management of obesity should aim to induce long term improvements in lifestyle behaviours, principally eating patterns and physical activity, since these will be effective in achieving sustained weight loss irrespective of FTO genotype.'

In a linked editorial in the BMJ, Dr Alison Tedstone, chief nutritionist at Public Health England, said tailored weight plans offered by many companies may initially seem plausible – but they do not stand up to scrutiny.

'Many companies offer personalised weight loss plans tailored to our DNA, selling the idea that the effectiveness of dieting is predetermined,' she said.

'Was it ever plausible that the FTO gene would have a noticeable influence on energy imbalance, and hence weight gain, compared with the influence of environmental factors such as food price, availability, and marketing?

'It is increasingly evident that the idea that personalised interventions based on the genome will yield population benefit, may not pay off, at least in the short term.'

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