

PRESS RELEASE

UK Survey Confirms that Calorie Counting is not the Answer for Healthy and Sustainable Weight Loss

London, 16th November 2016 – The popular digital health and fitness brand [Freeletics](#) recently carried out a survey of 1036 people, looking into the diet habits of people across the UK. The findings did not only confirm that calorie counting does not work long-term for many people, but also showed that it has a detrimental effect on people’s relationship with food and their general wellbeing. Findings that affirm the company’s move to create a digital nutrition product which deliberately avoids dieting and counting calories.

Calorie counting has been seen as an effective weight loss method in the past, with more than three-quarters (77%) of calorie counters aiming to lose weight. This number is even higher amongst women, with 84% of female respondents identifying weight loss as their main goal when calorie counting. The method involves controlling and limiting one’s daily calorific intake and documenting everything which is eaten every day, so as not to exceed a certain – often low – limit. The survey revealed that, although calorie counting is usually done in order to lose weight, almost a fifth (19%) of participants actually gained weight once they started.

CALORIE COUNTING INCREASES CRAVINGS, STRESS AND DISSATISFACTION

Taking a closer look at people’s experience of calorie counting, it confirms that the dieting method is not an ideal way to achieve the desired results. On the contrary, it appears to encourage unhealthy eating habits: more than half (55%) of respondents said that calorie counting led to increases in their cravings and a further 10% admitted to binge eating when they tried calorie counting. This is the key problem when it comes to such diets – the more we restrict ourselves, the more we think about food, making us eat more.

In addition to this, over a third (36%) gained lost weight back as soon as they stopped counting calories. The average person gained 5.7kg (approx. 12.6lbs), with those in London seeing the biggest increase – 7.3kg (approx. 16.1lbs) – compared to other regions in the UK. Considering that calorie counting requires a lot of time, patience and work to be effective, this underlines the fact that it is not a practical or sustainable way to lose weight and lead a healthier life.

When calorie counting, many people feel as if they are trapped in a “calorie prison,” constantly obsessing over numbers and limits, afraid of food with too many calories and sometimes feeling guilty about eating. *“Calorie counting in particular often leads to psychological issues where people obsess over calories, which makes them think about food more and more, thus creating an unhealthy relationship with food,”* explains Katharina Kaiser, Nutrition Specialist at Freeletics. The experience left half (50%) of participants hungry and unsatisfied and over a

third (36%) said it took the joy out of eating and left them feeling stressed. A further third (31%) found calorie counting exhausting and no longer want to quantify the food they eat.

WHY CALORIE COUNTING DOESN'T WORK

Over half (51%) of participants feel that calorie counting is not a long-term weight management solution, with a further 21% being unsure. One of the key problems restrictive diets such as calorie counting poses, is a lack of education - 27% believe that counting calories equates eating healthy food, which is just not the case. Foods and drinks low in calories can contain other, very unhealthy substances, so calories are not an indicator of how healthy foods are. Katharina Kaiser explains why: *“For example, if we compare 250g of crisps with 250g of avocado we see that they have roughly the same amount of calories, but the crisps are full of “empty calories” and harmful trans fatty acids, while the avocado is full of healthy omega 3, potassium and fibre.”*

It is important to realise that not all calories are equal. Whereas an avocado has a relatively high calorie density, it is still a very healthy food, and far healthier than crisps. Calories are not the foundation of a healthy diet and counting them does not offer any guidance on what is healthy and what isn't. The body doesn't just need calories – it needs nutrients. This is why the key to sustainable weight loss lies with macronutrient composition rather than calorie value.

THE BEST DIET IS NO DIET

When asked what their preferred weight loss method was, 62% of respondents said eating healthy, balanced but tasty meals – the most popular option. Only 18% named calorie counting. *“By integrating balanced eating principles into your daily routine, you can avoid the laborious activity of calorie counting or the classic yo-yo effect as you come on and off intense diet regimes. Enjoying high quality, natural and unprocessed foods offers flexibility to your diet and can be adapted for all dietary preferences. It also provides a long-term and sustainable method for achieving your weight loss goals and staying healthy and energised,”* confirms Katharina Kaiser.

This is exactly why the Freeletics Nutrition app actively counteracts the calorie counting trend, instead bringing wholesome and healthy food into people's kitchens and educating users about “clean eating” – eating wholesome, unprocessed foods rich in everything the body needs. This is not only a more natural approach to weight loss, but also helps to create a healthy and balanced life. And perhaps the most important detail: it is not a restrictive diet, but a sustainable, healthy lifestyle with various long-term benefits and many easy, delicious meals along the way.

FREELETICS NUTRITION

The Freeletics Nutrition app is nothing short of a nutritionist in your pocket. It creates meal plans, gives personalized advice and even healthy eating-out alternatives. Its foodie-grade recipes and plans help users reach their specific goals, whether weight loss, muscle gain or overall health improvement. Users can even indicate that they completed a training session to automatically recalibrate their meal plan. The Nutrition Coach also learns from the user and adapts its suggestions over time, following feedback and weight developments. And all of this 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for the same price as a single consultation with a nutritionist.

Freeletics Nutrition can be downloaded for free in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#).

FREELETICS: THE COMPANY

Freeletics has been built around a single vision since day one: to help everyone in the world unleash their full physical and mental potential and become the greatest version of themselves. Freeletics promotes and increases physical fitness as well as mental strength, willpower and self-confidence – all of which are vital tools for shaping a life in accordance with one's desires and goals.

Founded in June 2013, the company has already created one of the most successful fitness movements in the world, with more than 11 million users in over 160 countries. Freeletics also sets new standards as an employer: teamwork, passion and performance are all central values within the company – values that continue to motivate the team of more than 140 employees on a daily basis, to continuously develop Freeletics as an international sports and lifestyle brand and constantly optimize and expand the company's product portfolio.

OTHER FREELETICS APPS:

[Freeletics Bodyweight](#)

[Freeletics Running](#)

[Freeletics Gym](#)

ONLINE CHANNELS

Website:

- <https://www.freeletics.com>

Instagram:

- <https://www.instagram.com/freeletics>
- https://www.instagram.com/freeletics_nutrition/

Facebook:

- <https://www.facebook.com/freeletics>
- <https://www.facebook.com/freeleticsnutrition/>

Twitter:

- <https://twitter.com/freeletics>

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