

Slim Sally shows way to health



Fifty kilograms lighter, Nebo's Sally Symonds puts her weight loss down to consistent daily effort.

By HELEN WALKER

A NEW video campaign urging rotund rural and regional Queenslanders to fight the flab has been launched after recent alarming overweight and obesity statistics for those living outside cities.

Dr Shaun Rudd, in his first major campaign since taking over the AMA Queensland presidency, said rural and regional Queenslanders were facing a burgeoning obesity epidemic.

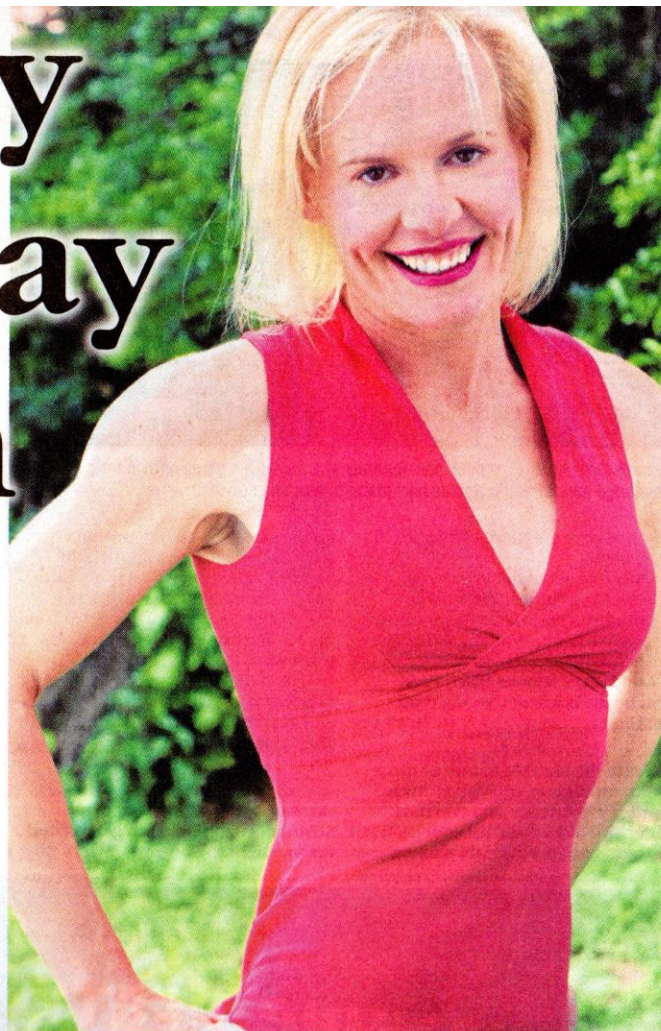
"On average, 67 per cent

around Townsville and Mackay regions, with 75pc overweight or obese - that's 226,000 adults carrying too much weight.

"On the Darling Downs and the south-west region, 70pc of the population, or 153,000 people, are overweight or obese."

Dr Rudd said obesity-related diseases increased and life expectancy dropped for Queenslanders living away from urban areas, with men more at risk than women.

"Heart disease accounts for a third of the high male death rates outside cities," he said.



Men aged 45-65 who live in a regional area are 30pc more likely to smoke, up to 1.5 times as likely to drink heavily, and 44pc more likely to die of heart disease and at 31pc greater risk of suffering a stroke than their city cousins.

Dr Rudd said the AMA Queensland video campaign - Lighten Your Load - should encourage regional communities to take up the war on wobble.

"People in rural and remote towns are less likely to exercise and they don't have the luxury of a gym and nutritionist on every corner but

cattle property Mt Flora Station, Nebo, in central Queensland, and struggled with her weight for a long time, said this was an important message.

"By 2002, I was 106.5 kilograms and told I was morbidly obese and that I could die from being so overweight," Sally said.

"I managed to lose 45kg in 33 weeks, keep it off for five years and then lost another 8.5kg."

Author and now director of her own online weight loss business after losing 50 per cent of her original bodyweight and keeping it

Sally Symonds, who grew up on Mt Flora Station, Nebo, is no stranger to weight loss and lost half her bodyweight of 106kg when she was told she could die from being so overweight.

“The best gym you will ever have is one built by Mother Nature.”

“Don't listen to all the must-do marketing tips from the fitness and weight-loss industries,” she said.

“The ABC of weight loss is CDE - consistent daily effort.

“The best gym you will ever have is one built by Mother Nature and the best weight you can use for exercise is your own body,” she said.

“A lot of mainstream exercises are actually derived from life on the land like the farmer's walk, wood-chopping and tyre-flipping.

“As for super foods, keep it simple. My super foods are things like eggs, meat and vegetables, which are all easily available no matter where you live.

“When I lost weight I'd never even heard of kale or quinoa or chia seeds or any of the other 'miracle' weight-loss foods.”

Dr Rudd said high body mass was now the leading cause of premature death and disability in Queensland.

“It is estimated obesity directly costs Australia's health system around \$2 billion per year and people who are obese face health care costs that are 30pc higher than those with healthy body weights,” he said.

“Keeping fit and healthy doesn't have to be complicated or expensive and rural Queenslanders are certainly resourceful enough to come up with fun ways to get fit.

“Our regions have an extraordinary fighting spirit so