

Case study Lawyer with fatigue and weight gain

Name Richard

Age 30 years

Problem Richard has gained 15lb (6.75kg) in the last year. He complains

of feeling tired all the time and has been drinking more and more coffee to stay alert. However, this keeps him awake at night so he is not getting enough sleep. He has sought advice from a nutritionist for his fatigue and to help him lose some weight. He also suffers from constipation but has no other serious medical problems.

Lifestyle Richard is a lawyer who eats most of his meals on the run. He skips breakfast, snacks on doughnuts at work, and drinks at least four 24fl oz (720ml) cups of coffee with cream and sugar every day. On work days, Richard mostly eats lunch in a fast-food restaurant where he orders a



double cheeseburger, large fries, and a large soda. On Fridays, he has two slices of pepperoni pizza with a large soda. Since he works late, he often orders take-out for dinner from local Chinese and Italian restaurants.

On weekends, Richard eats cereal and milk for breakfast, skips lunch, and eats out with friends in the evening, choosing appetizers such as chicken wings or mozzarella sticks, and entrées such as prime rib, London broil, or fried chicken, and French fries. He rarely eats any vegetables and does not take a multivitamin supplement. He usually drinks two beers on Friday and Saturday nights in the restaurant. He does not smoke and does not have time to exercise.

Advice Richard's main complaints are most likely related to his diet and sedentary lifestyle. He does not eat fruits and vegetables, so his diet is low in fiber as well as in vitamins and minerals. He has gained weight

because he takes in more calories than he burns, and this is not helped by the fact that he eats most of his meals away from home, where larger portions are served.

Richard's constipation and fatigue can be corrected by incorporating more fiber and water into his diet and decreasing his coffee and soda intake. He can increase his fiber intake by eating a bowl of bran cereal for breakfast, having fresh or dried fruit as an alternative to doughnuts, and including some vegetables in his lunch and dinner.

Richard's diet is high in saturated fat and calories. If he ordered grilled chicken instead of high-fat burgers and fries a few days a week, this would be a good start. He could opt for a vegetable topping or a slice of tomato pie with a salad instead of the Friday pepperoni pizza. For dinner, he could choose lean proteins, such as broiled or grilled fish or chicken, and order a salad.

Source:

Nutrition for Life by Lisa Hark, PhD, RD and Darwin Deen, MD

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