

Body Types: The Big Excuse

with David Bretton

Introduction

In the last issue of *DentalTownUK*, I wrote about body types, discussing a scientific theory by William Herbert Sheldon, who classified three basic body types: ectomorphs, endomorphs and mesomorphs. This article will now challenge that theory.

If you believe in what I wrote in the April article, I suspect that it's most likely because the article validated some of your excuses. If you're short and chubby you could relax: 'I'm an endomorph; my body



favours fat storage!' Or the tall, skinny people aiming to gain muscle could justify their lack of 'gains' due to their 'high metabolism'. These are just excuses, and I'll use myself as an example.

Which body type am I?

When people meet me, they may see my physical appearance and classify me as a mesomorph—'It's easy for you, you gain muscle easily'. Had they met me when I was just starting out at the gym, they would have thought differently, because I never found gaining muscle easy. Who does? It's my experience to say that everyone I've met has found improvements difficult to make at first, whatever their goal. Nobody I know finds muscle gain or fat loss 'easy'. By making healthy eating and regular workouts an essential part of my life for the past 10 years, I've developed the body I wanted to achieve.

Blame your lifestyle. Blame yourself.

If your lifestyle consists of poor food choices and a lack of exercise, I promise that you will become an 'endomorph'. Develop healthy decisions for the foods you put into your body and become physically active, and you will develop a more desirable physique.

Training and diet are the same for all body types.

In the April article, did you notice that the advice for all body types was pretty much the same? Whatever your body type, food choices should be healthy, 'clean' ones, and training should generally centre around compound exercises, supplemented by isolation exercises and some form of cardiovascular training.



Don't be a victim.

While there is perhaps some truth that some of us are genetically predisposed to storing fat or gaining muscle, this is just a minor factor. The major factors are diet and exercise. If you eat and train the correct way to achieve the body you desire, no matter what your body type, you will achieve it.

Do all patients with diabetes, predisposed to periodontal problems, develop periodontal disease? No! Those who maintain good oral hygiene are often able to maintain health. As Stephen Covey said, 'I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions.'

Conclusion

Perhaps Thomas Jefferson was right—'all men are created equal.' It's the lifestyle choices we make, such as our diet and exercise regimes, that determine our 'body type'. Do not be a victim—take control and responsibility for your life. ■

