

Locals the biggest losers in battle of the belly bulge

HEALTH experts say more than half of Gold Coast residents are overweight or obese.

A health status report conducted last year shows 50.1 per cent of Gold Coasters over the age of 18 are far above the healthy weight range.

Director of nutrition from Queensland Health, Simone Braithwaite, said locals' love of fast food had contributed to the epidemic.

"People are choosing fast food because it is perceived to be low-cost and convenient," she said.

"But a diet that is nutrient-poor and energy-dense, coupled with a person having low levels of physical activity, contributes to an increased risk of becoming overweight or obese and of developing chronic diseases."

She said the solution was to make better choices as not all fast food had to be unhealthy.

"Always ask for extra salad when you order sandwiches, hamburgers, rolls and kebabs," she said.

"Choose steamed rice instead of fried with your

Asian meal, and order stir fried meat and vegetables rather than battered or deep fried dishes.

"Go for tomato-based rather than creamy sauces for pasta, rice, vegetables and meat and always ask for reduced fat or skimmed milk in coffee and milkshakes."

Coolangatta dietician Amanda Clark said most take-away meals were over-sized and up-sizing meals may be seen as good value for money ... but it was not good for waistlines.



Losing the weight fight.



Gold Coasters' love of fast food is badly affecting their health and experts have some helpful advice