

Working women more likely to put on weight 'as they put office needs over their health'

- **Scientists claimed career-driven women are inclined to forsake healthy home-cooked food and exercise less**



Dr Au said: 'Longer work hours may reduce the time spent preparing home-cooked meals'

Women who work more than 35 hours every week are more likely to put on weight, according to a new scientific study.

Research found career-driven women are inclined to forsake healthy home-cooked food, exercise and sleeping for the office. As a result, many are at risk of piling on the pounds.

The study also found that women who work more than 49 hours a week are much more likely to drink and smoke.

The findings were revealed in a study into how employment status and the number of hours worked affects weight.

The research, led by Dr Nicole Au, from the Centre for Health and Economics at Monash University,

Melbourne, analysed 9,276 women aged 45-50 over two years.

Findings showed 55 per cent put on weight in that time - with the average women gaining 1.5 per cent of her initial weight.

Some were also reported to have experienced 'extreme' amounts of weight gain.

And those most likely to experience the problem were working more than 35 hours a week.

Dr Au put the findings down to women spending less time maintaining their health and fitness levels.

She said: 'This study highlights the increasing number of women entering the workforce and the effects on their ability to maintain a healthy weight.'

'Longer work hours may reduce the time spent preparing home-cooked meals, exercising and sleeping which are risk factors for obesity.'

'Policies that assist women who work long hours to reduce the time costs of sustaining a healthy diet and their physical activity routine may have positive benefits.'

The research, published in the International Journal of Obesity, also found women working more than 49 hours were more likely to smoke and drink alcohol.

As many as 65 per cent were drinking to 'risky' levels and 36 per cent did not do any form of exercise.

Lucy Green, an office manager from London, said she'd found herself losing control of her weight as a result of long working hours.

The 41-year-old said: 'I start work at 8am and don't usually finish until 7pm.'

'As a result, I've had to put my exercise regime on the back burner because I just don't have the energy to go to the gym.'

'Unfortunately, it's really starting to take it's toll on my figure.'

'The office is always full of junk food like cakes and biscuits and I find myself eating them all too often.'

'I'm putting on weight because I'm not taking time to work off the extra calories, so I'm going to have to make a special effort to start doing exercise again soon.'