

## NEWS REVIEW

# Pharmacy gains weight

The heavy-hitters of the banner groups' weight management programs



TEGAN FLEMING

Emerging from an era when the pharmacy was associated more with illness than wellbeing, banners are now branded as weight loss centres.

### Tony Ferguson

DEVELOPED by NSW pharmacist Tony Ferguson, this program has been a huge success for Terry White Chemists.

The program is a combination of a low-calorie diet (LCD) of 1000 to 1200 calories a day, and a low-carbohydrate diet causing ketosis.

When they join, customers pay a lifetime registration fee for regular consultations with a pharmacist and program consultant.

A separate maintenance program is also offered for those that have reached their desired weight.

The program replaces two meals a day with low-calorie, low-carbohydrate formula food. This formula food is a complete meal containing all the vitamins, minerals, protein, fat and carbohydrates the body needs.

The product is made up of 50 per cent carbohydrate, 30 per cent protein and 20 per cent essential fats and nutrients.

It is recommended that customers use the Terry White branded products Simply Fibre (fibre supplement), Simply Balanced (multi-vitamin capsules) and Simply Chromium (chromium supplement) in conjunction with the meal replacements.

A personal weight loss management book provides information and guidance on the program.

### Ultra Lite

Chemmart's Ultra Lite program is a balanced protein and carbohydrate program which is centred on eating the correct foods in the correct portion sizes.

The diet puts users into a "minor state" of dietary ketosis and aims to help customers develop good eating habits, reconfigure their metabolism, wean their bodies off sugar and reduce portion sizes without feeling hungry.

Supervision is key to the program, with customers receiving a weekly one-on-one consultation and advice.

The program is supported by sachet supplements to be taken between meals that contain vitamins, minerals and essential amino acids.

Ultra Lite is available as a five or 10-week weight loss program, a three-week detox and

weight loss program, or a maintenance program.

### Health-e-Weight

HIP's new program combines a meal replacement product with a health monitoring service and the principles of the CSIRO diet.

HIP founder, Ken Lee, said the program was focused on long-term, sustainable weight loss.

"It's not based on the very low calorie diet principle and ketosis — we don't send people into ketosis.

"We're saying you've got to retain muscle mass and at the same time change your lifestyle so you can maintain a long-term weight loss."

The meal replacement shakes contain a balance of protein, carbohydrate, fat, vitamins and minerals and fibre.

Mr Lee said the program was based on the CSIRO diet book which customers receive when they join the program. The program is currently in

the trial phase, with a full rollout planned for June.

### Club OptiSlim

Club OptiSlim Weight Loss Clinics are only in pharmacies and combine meal replacements with consultations and an online database.

Participating chains include: Blooms The Chemist, My Chemist, Pharmacy Express, Amcal, Megasave, Guardian, Priceline Pharmacy, Discount Drug Store and Chemist Warehouse.

The meal replacement shakes are sold in individual sachets providing one-third of daily protein, vitamin and mineral requirements.

Tim Perry, Blooms group purchasing manager, said the program is not based on the very-low-calorie diet principle, which makes it easier to follow.

Customers have an initial consultation with a trained staff member, who signs them up to the internet-based program.

A plan is worked out for the customer including goal weight, calorie requirements and a personalised meal plan — usually with one meal a day replaced by an OptiSlim shake.

The program has a database of 20,000 foods, which it uses to produce a personalised shopping list for the customer, who can then access the web site and home and further customise their program.

"There's an online dietician they can talk to, there's a forum — they can talk to other people that are on the program on there, which is really starting to gain some momentum actually.

"People like talking to each other about their successes and things they try and don't try. There's even exercise information on [the web site]," Mr Perry said.

Mr Perry said customers return to the pharmacy weekly, fortnightly or monthly for a consultation, during which their progress is checked and they are weighed and measured.

information. The program claims to help people lose between one-and-a-half and three kilograms a week.

### Celebrity Slim

Celebrity Slim was launched in March this year and is available exclusively from Priceline Pharmacies.

It is a high-protein, balanced-carbohydrate, low-fat and low-calorie meal replacement program. The meal replacement shakes contain green tea extract, dairy calcium, caseinate, whey protein concentrate and soy protein isolate.

The Celebrity Slim Guide to *Healthy Weight Loss* explains the program.

The guide covers information on the products as well as general information on foods to eat and avoid, when and how much to eat, carbohydrates and kilojoules, goal weight, eating out and take-away, exercise, maintenance and frequently-asked-questions.

### Medical Vita Diet

The Medical Vita Diet Weight Control Program was designed by doctors to combat obesity. It was launched in 1989 in Queensland and was initially supplied only to medical centres.

The program is now available through Australian Pharmaceutical Industries (API) banner groups Soul Pattinson, Chemworld and Pharmacist Advice.

The program is a form of the "protein-sparing modified fast" and replaces two meals a day with Vita Diet milkshakes, which provide a balance of protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals.

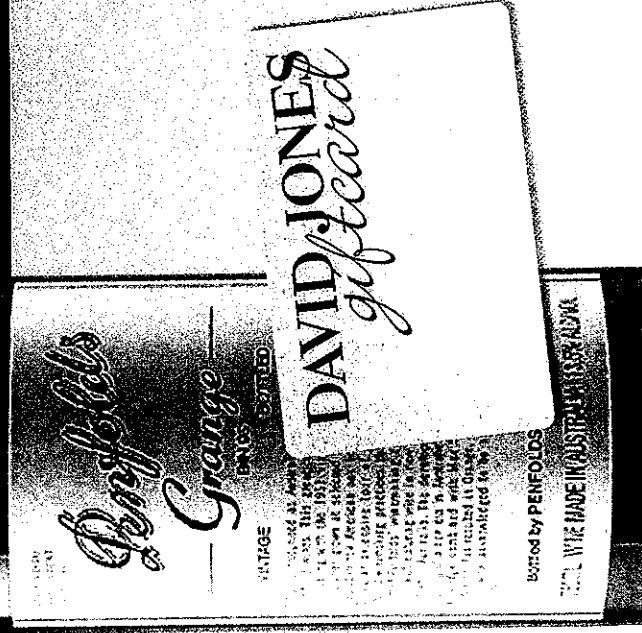
The plan also provides customers with an eating plan, an exercise regimen and a handbook outlining foods which are allowed to supplement the shakes, and other

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