

FIZZY

The Academy of Medical Royal Colleges have just released a report calling on government, the NHS and food companies to do more to encourage people to eat more healthily. In particular they have proposed a tax on fizzy drinks.

We Brits are getting bigger and bigger. The Academy states that obesity is the UK's biggest health crisis, and it's likely to get worse. It's a bigger problem here than in other countries in Europe.

Unsurprisingly, those who make fizzy drinks don't agree with taxes on their products. While admitting there *is* a health problem they've suggested that soft drinks alone should not be the target. What would help would be if people examine their overall diet – and levels of activity.

The government have to be seen to be taking this seriously and sending out a bigger signal. But it's also true that fizzy drinks are not the sole cause of our health issues.

There's a very interesting verse in the Bible where it says that the *"body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit."* (1 Corinthians 6:19)

One thing that means is simply that our bodies matter. Despite the concentration the church has placed on what people believe in their heads and the apparent downplaying of *'physical'* in favour of *'spiritual'*, this verse is a reminder that our physical bodies matter and should be treated with care and respect. We should look after ourselves, in other words.

Personal economics, and particularly poverty, can impact on the choices we make about what we eat and drink, and a proclamation from the state won't necessarily make a difference.

Yet it's worth remembering that fast food is not the most inexpensive food, and the most obese children are not the poorest. In actual fact, the real temptation for most of us is not so much about cost as convenience. For busy people it's just quicker and less of a hassle.

And that's where the real challenge lies. Given that most of us lead busy lives, it's vitally important that we build in time for things that matter. We all have been given the gift of life and we each have a responsibility to take care of ourselves and our children.

And that includes setting some space for exercise and thinking about the food and drink we select and consume day by day.

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