

Does he like you fluffy?

MANY Jamaican men have confessed to being attracted to fluffy women, and we've all heard the stories of women going to various lengths to ensure that they get to that stage.

Being large in Jamaica is no taboo, in fact, some women focus more on staying fluffy to try to please the man who wants a little more "meat" to hold on to, than on the health issues associated with being a larger size. Being overweight increases your chance of heart attacks.

But the health issues cannot be ignored, and some are so risky that they affect a woman's ability to conceive; to live longer, and to build immunity to disease.

Some of the risks associated with excess weight include:

- * High blood pressure (hypertension): This is a chronic medical condition in which the blood pressure is elevated. One-third of all cases of high blood pressure are associated with obesity, as it is twice as common in adults who are overweight.

- * High blood cholesterol: This is where there is too much cholesterol in the blood. Your blood cholesterol level has a lot to do with your chances of getting heart disease. Some 50 per cent of larger women are more likely to have elevated blood cholesterol levels.

- * Type 2 diabetes: This is a chronic (lifelong) insulin resistance disease marked by high levels of sugar (glucose) in the blood. People who are overweight are more likely to have insulin resistance, because fat interferes with the body's ability to use insulin.

- * Congestive heart failure: This is a condition in which the heart can't pump enough blood to the body's other organs. Being overweight increases the risk of congestive heart failure, a potentially fatal condition.

- * Heart disease: Being overweight increases your chance of heart attacks, congestive heart failure, sudden cardiac death, chest pain, and abnormal heart rhythm.

- * Stroke: Being overweight can lead to a stroke, especially for those fat around the abdominal region.

- * Being overweight can lead to gallstones and gallbladder disorders.

- * Osteoarthritis: Obesity may be a major factor in the development of osteoarthritis, particularly of the knee and especially in women.

- * Being overweight can cause complications during pregnancy. During pregnancy overweight women are subject to risk of miscarriage, preeclampsia, diabetes and hypertension to a greater degree.

- * Poor female reproductive health: Being overweight can lead to menstrual irregularities, infertility and irregular ovulation.

- * Bladder problems: Being overweight can lead to stress incontinence.

- * Psychological disorders: It can aggravate depression, eating disorders, distorted body image, and low self-esteem.