

HOME | HEALTHY HABITS

Can your home affect your weight?

BY JENNIFER HAN

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFFREY M. SMITH

A study of 10,000 homes in the United States found that the average home has 100 pounds of extra food in the pantry and 100 pounds of extra food in the refrigerator. The study also found that the average home has 100 pounds of extra food in the freezer.

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hugs, sits crossly, really notes that cradles your back like a well-washed glove is probably not in the best interests of your remaining ribcage. Casey generally means that you're moving as little as possible, and that can cost you about 100 calories a day, according to the Quirk & Simple article, which cited Kluge's study.

So opt for a sturdier couch next time and compensate by incorporating more movement into your day. The article advises that you put the remote on the coffee table or in a drawer in a room where changes tend to your leg. Place the phone at the opposite end of the room, and stand to the chair. Or better yet, Quirk & Simple says, get off the couch and stretch out on the floor.

"What your house reflects is what your life becomes. If you have this vision of greatness, but your house is still kind of messy and chaotic, your vision falters," said Alison Barlow, who dispenses lifestyle wisdom with her show at www.alisonbarlowliving.com.

A 70-hour organizing class Clive Keeling and Lois Hinkel of *Just Is Our Inc.* agree that your house is part of your lifestyle. Your lifestyle affects your weight.

"If people feel overwhelmed and can't deal with their clothes, that causes anxiety and low self-esteem and all that can result in weight issues," Keeling said.

The same goes for other aspects of your life, not just weight, according to organizers.

"We've done lots of consultations for single women who have a goal to meet someone, and we walk into their bedrooms and they have one lamp, one night stand and one piece of bedside inspired artwork featuring one woman," Barlow said. Her point is that bedrooms should show things in pairs and include romantic art work. If you like single-featured art pieces, animal or objects, that's fine, but buy two.

Barlow said so that the point of the article is not to blame your house, but to point out that making changes to your house can make a change in your life. The next time you're doing your goals—including your goal weight—it's hard enough without compromising the problems with bad habits that are encouraged because of your house's design.

Our experts chimed in with some things to consider, such as maybe you need a screen so that the kitchen isn't the first thing you see when you come home. Maybe your morning shoes need a prime location by the back door, not behind your boots in the upstairs closet. Maybe the sofa Kluge in your home office was not such a good idea. Maybe taking the clothes off of the stationary exercise bike and relocating it to those of a window will encourage you to use it.

"I guess I know a lot of these things but it's good to see it in black and white," especially advice like don't put in the dark, Barlow said. The article encourages people to sit with the lights on high and the drapes wide open if there's natural light outside. Why? People may not mean it they find they are doing it in secret.

"If you want to really have a credible... just don't make it easy to eat the whole hog," Barlow said.

Take a little out of your home's fat content

Keep the kitchen clean. You're more likely to cook and less likely to eat out if the kitchen isn't messy.

Use a small, separate one small space that you use every day, even if it's a drawer.

Create open space. There's no doubt you surface, maybe your kitchen table or counter, where you tend to pile things up. Look at vertical options for storing books or mail. Invest just one item, if only.

Put the things together. If you've got books from different around your house, collect all the spines in one spot. If you have flowers in pots, take them to a central place.

Don't block traffic. If it's in your way, don't stop over it. Pick up and shift it when it's out of the way. On the same note, you walk somewhere in your house. Don't leave a room until you've picked up three things, then do anything, and you'll clean up in time.

Track down your organizing habits. Before putting things in their proper place, take a peek at the calendar. End the day with a 10-minute clean-up.

Define your boundaries. If you can't walk around the room freely without bumping into things, you're probably not managing your belongings in the space.

Ask for help. People make sitting, standing or the others. It's not a sign of failure. What's your guess at what would