



case scenario, it is a combination of the two factors. "Fat people are often criticised for their lack of willpower, but this is absolute nonsense," she says. "Biochemical imbalances are the problem and you need to correct them. Until you do, no eating plan will help."

These biochemicals include leptin, which regulates the burning of energy, and insulin, which regulates blood sugar. Imbalances can be caused by a number of factors, such as stress, genetics and hormonal problems. "As we age, our hormones become unbalanced and this is why we pick up weight," says Paula. "Another problem that develops as we age is insulin resistance, a blood sugar disorder. It causes carbohydrate cravings and increases fat storage." Insulin resistance is also caused by an unhealthy lifestyle and Paula says 90% of people who are overweight are insulin resistant.

Interestingly, her programme does not recommend a fat-free diet, which is so popular. Often, the fat which is lacking in food is replaced by refined sugar. Instead her eating plan encourages a moderately high protein intake and low fat choices, because certain good fats are essential to the functioning of the brain.

Traditional medical thinking is that diets moderately high in protein raise cholesterol. Not so, says Paula. "Eating correctly can enhance your growth

hormone levels, which break down cholesterol. In addition, combining meals correctly triggers the release of the fat-burning hormone glucagon."

Paula's clientele include a number of celebrities, such as Miss South Africa finalist and TV personality Sandy Ngema, *Isidingo* actors Tumisho Masha (Modise Tladi) and Robert Whitehead (Barker Heynes), consumer journalist Isabel Jones and singer PJ Powers. For all of them their weight loss has been significant, but they have also gained back their health and quality of life. Robert Whitehead, for example – who lost 31 kg, 150 cm and 28% body fat in ten months – went from being a borderline Type 2 diabetic with fatty liver disease and high cholesterol to completely normal blood test results.

"Obesity management is actually nothing new," Paula says. "All we do at Eden Life is create the correct environment for weight loss. The rest happens quickly and easily." *

• Celebrities Tumisho Masha (first page), Robert Whitehead (top left) and PJ Powers (top right) have all experienced great weight loss success at Eden Life

• **Bottom Right:** Local pharmacist Paula Galvão advocates individualised weight loss programmes at her clinic Eden Life

