

HALF OF US THINK WE'RE OVERWEIGHT

Survey reveals Ireland's health issues

BY EMMA McMENAMY

ALMOST half of the population believe they are overweight, a survey has found.

A total of 47% of people classified themselves as being heavier than they should be, especially the over-55s.

And more Irish women (37%) than men (32%) consider themselves "unhealthy".

The survey, commissioned by leading protection specialist Royal London, asked 1,000 respondents around the country how they would describe their weight and health.

Speaking about the findings spokeswoman Colette Houton said people's perception of their body weight may not be entirely accurate.

She added: "It may be hard to believe that nearly half of those surveyed

described themselves as either 'overweight' or 'obese' given the upward trend in healthy lifestyles in Ireland.

"However, when compared with recent official data from the 2017 Healthy Ireland Survey which stated 62% of the Irish population are now either overweight or obese, it would indicate a level of understatement by our survey respondents.

"Whether or not a person is aware of their weight classification, there's no denying being overweight or obese has an impact on their wellness and could be putting their overall health at risk.

"People classed as obese are at a significantly higher risk of suffering from many chronic diseases like heart disease, certain cancers,



Type 2 diabetes, mental ill-health and respiratory problems.

“Looking at the current obesity statistics, it’s likely Ireland will face a dramatic increase in chronic diseases like these in the future.”

Less than half (48%) of respondents described their weight as being “normal” and a similar amount (52%) described themselves as “averagely healthy”.

One in five of those aged 18 to 34 consider themselves “very healthy” while 30% of people classified themselves as “a little unhealthy”.

Ms Houton said: “Our health should

always be a priority, we all know the saying, ‘Your health is your wealth’.

“Our advice on how to get started is to know your weight, understand your BMI and take steps to keep it within the World Health Organisation’s guidelines on maintaining a healthy body weight.

“It goes without saying, illnesses can occur in the healthiest of people too.”

Research published in a 2017 report put the estimated costs attributed to childhood obesity at €4.6billion here.

news@irishmirror.ie

IRISH MIRROR COMMENT: PAGE 6

