



11 Sundial Crescent

Dundas, ON

L9H 7R6

905.628.0279

[www.keepcanadaslim.com](http://www.keepcanadaslim.com)

### **June 12, 2006: Keep Canada Slim joins Canadian Obesity Network**

DUNDAS, ON: Keep Canada Slim President Lee Fairbanks announced today that his company has joined the Canadian Obesity Network/Reseau Canadien en Obesite (CON). The network, headed by McMaster University Professor Dr. Arya Sharma brings together the top Canadian obesity experts from universities, governments, hospitals, non-government and non-profit organizations and the pharmaceutical industry.

“We are the first actual weight control program to join the CON,” said Fairbanks. “We believe our consumer-focused approach will bring some balance to the research-dominated network.” Fairbanks attended last week’s Toronto conference of the CON. “The statistics are staggering – some 60 per cent of Canadians now overweight with almost 25 per cent clinically obese. Twenty-five per cent of our medical costs today are directly related to weight issues,” points out Fairbanks. “If we don’t turn the tide on this pandemic the health costs of future overweight generations will bankrupt our country’s health system.”

Fairbanks, a former president of the Hamilton Council on Smoking & Health says that weight has now surpassed smoking as the number one health risk for Canadians. “We have turned the corner on smoking and every year the numbers decrease. Obesity on the other hand increases every year. Twenty years ago not one province had more than 15 per cent of its people in the obese category. Today, every province is over 25 per cent.” Conference participants were told that Canada ranks 7<sup>th</sup> as the world’s fattest nation, but that our children are the third-fattest in the world. Fairbanks says that one problem facing educators is getting people to understand that they are actually obese and not just overweight. You can measure your Body Mass Index on [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca). A BMI higher than 30 is considered obese.

“Most of us think the term ‘obese’ only refers to the ‘morbidly obese’ person – that person who can’t fit into an airline seat for instance. But ‘clinical obesity’, the point at which health is seriously affected is generally considered by most people to be simply overweight.

“The experts are telling us that low-calorie diets don’t work, that almost all of us are nutritionally-deficient, that exercise suggestions are being ignored,” continues Fairbanks. “This is exactly why I created Keep Canada Slim.” says the former journalist, “to help

people make sense of what the scientists are saying. With our focus on better communication and education materials we are able to help people understand and embrace the minor lifestyle changes necessary to take control of weight. And with our focus on nutrition we are meeting that challenge also. The combination of the two creates a program that is more successful than either approach individually.”