Crunch Time For Waist Lines As More Brits Resolve To Be Healthy Than Frugal In 2009

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As we start a new year, money matters are undoubtedly at the forefront of everyone's mind.

But despite this, latest research from Mintel finds that when it comes to New Year's resolutions the age old ritual of starting a healthier lifestyle still tops the list, as the intention to get into shape outweighs being more financially responsible.

In December 2008, British consumers were asked about their planned New Year's resolutions.

The number one intention was to exercise more, with almost four in ten (38%) planning to do so. This was closely followed by eating more healthily (31%). Meanwhile, despite the economic downturn, only 28% of Brits plan to spend less money in the coming year.

"Although it is nothing new for people to begin diets in January, it seems surprising that in a time of escalating economic doom and gloom, this still takes precedence over better money management. When it comes down to it, being able to fit into a smaller dress size is a much more motivating goal than cutting back on the utility bill,â€• comments Jonny Forsyth, Senior Consumer Analyst at Mintel.

"In one sense the New Year is a fresh start from a depressing 2008 and people may be particularly attracted to aspirations that allow them to focus on a bright future rather than a bleak present," he adds.

Keeping off the pounds with as few pounds as possible
But in a nod towards keeping an eye on the pennies, the majority of those planning to exercise more, will choose a cost-free form of fitness, by walking their way to a healthier 2009.

Walking outdoors will be the most popular keep-fit option for those intending to get fit, with as many as 66% planning do just that. Meanwhile, less than half this number (30%) will be burning off the calories using cardiovascular machines (eg step-machines, tread mills and cycling machines), and just 17% will take part in general keep fit classes.

"With less money to spend, consumers may decide they donâ€™t need flashy gyms to get fitter when they can resort to a good old-fashioned stroll,â€• comments Jonny Forsyth.

But when this all said and done, more than a quarter of us (28%) still don't buy into the tradition of New Year's resolutions and simply refuse to make any at all.
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