Want to slash risk of a stroke? Take the stairs

a study shows.

Researchers tracked hundreds of thousands of people in their 50s to see what proportion developed atrial fibrillation - an abnormal heartbeat which is a major risk for strokes.

They found adults who climbed at least 110 steps a day - roughly equivalent of going up a typical household staircase about seven times were 31% less likely to develop the potentially life-threatening condition.

The findings in the journal Nutrition Metaho-

daily steps on the stairs reduced the risk of atrial fibrillation

lism and Cardiovascular Diseases, prompted researchers to call for the promotion of stair climbing as an effective way to ward off strokes. One in four people in Ireland over 50 is at risk of developing atrial fibrillation, a fluttering of the heart which can be triggered by high blood pressure, chest infections, an over-active thyroid and even too much caffeine or alcohol

pain, dizziness and fatigue but a significant number of those with atrial fibrillation have no idea they are ill until they suffer a stroke

As the heart no longer beats in a regular fash ion, due to the irregular electrical activity blood which should get pumped round the body instead begins to 'pool' and thicken inside the left ventricle – the heart's main pumping chamber. If a clot then breaks away and travel up through the narrow blood vessels that feed the brain, it can cause a fatal stroke by blocking

the brain's supply of oxygen-rich blood. Experts at Tianjin Medical University, Tianjin, China, analysed data on stairs use and general health among nearly half a million people

taking part in a long-term health project.
All were free of any heart problems when
they joined the study and followed up for 12

years to see who got ill.

The results showed that those who climbed a minimum of 110 steps daily were much less likely to develop atrial fibrillation than those who rarely used stairs.

Previous studies have found taking the stairs helps to keep the heart healthy and boosts memory and concentration.

In their report, researchers said: 'Our find In their report, researchers said: 'Our find-the heart goes haywire and causes it to beat irreg-ularly. Some will have myntoms like charges and the properties of the properties of the properties and th

'Middle man' in 2005 murder to appeal conviction

A KILLER described as murder of Irene White almost 20 years ago intends to appeal his conviction, despite his guilty plea, on the grounds he was 'suffering a mental breakdown' at the time a barrister has told the Court of Appeal

Niall Power, 51, with a last address at Giles Quay, Riverstown, Dundalk, Co. Louth. had pleaded guilty to the murder of the 43-year-old Dundalk woman at her home at Ice House, Demesne Road, Dundalk, on April 6, 2005. He was sentenced to life in

was sentenced to life in prison in July 2019. Power - who described himself to gardai as 'the middle man' in arranging the murder of Ms White - was the second man to be given a life sentence for murdering the mother of

for murdering the mother of three 19 years ago.

The man who actually stabbed Ms White to death in a frenzied attack was Anthony Lambe, 41, of Annadrumman, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan, who was jailed for life in



Frenzied attack: Irene White was stabbed to death

January 2018 after he pleaded

January 2018 after he pleaded guilty to murder. Power turned himself in to gardai the day after the knife attacker had been sentenced to life for the same crime. Both men said they were acting under the substructions of men bower's case was raised at the three-judge anneal court

at the three-judge appeal court yesterday, Judge John Edwards noted the matter was listed for an Enlargement of Time applidate. A barrister representing Power said it was her understanding that the case was before the court for 'clarity on

the position of the appeal' The lawyer said she could now provide clarity on that issue going on to tell the court: 'Our osition is Mr Power wa suffering from a mental break down at the time.'

She confirmed vesterday that Mulholland Law has come or record to represent Power in his appeal and said she was

Turned himself in to gardaí

making an application for lega aid with two counsel. Judge Edwards directed that

Judge Edwards directed that a statement of means be filed and said legal aid would be granted once that was done. Adjourning the case to January 17, the judge said he would give Power's legal team four weeks to file a Notice of Motion greater of the control of

be dealt with once that matte



blence to the products they pur-ported to be.
Grainne Power, director of compli-ance, says the risks associated with buying prescription-only products from unverified and unregulated

sources are huge. 'It's alarming to see consumers

willing to take such dangerous risks

to their health by purchasing illegal medicines online and from unregu-

lated sources,' she says, appealing to the public not to buy fake and

dangerous products. This comes just a couple of weeks

after the death of Scottish nurse

Susan McGowan, a 58-year-old who died from organ failure, sepsis and pancreatitis after accessing pre-

of Saxenda and semaglutide in the

form of Ozempic is available via pri

prescribe to those with diabetes, due to the global demand for Ozem-pic causing shortages across the

pic causing shortages across the world, which means people desper-ate for the drug are turning to online and other unsafe places to source the drug. Doctors say that the generation of GLPI drugs to treat obesity should not be used as a quick fix for weight loss, nor should anyone be using them without seeing a doctor in

person. Dr Michael Crotty is a GP who

to lose weight.
'It's not like the skinny jab or the

quick fix that it is purported to be online, these are safe and effective

treatments for medical issues - like

blood pressure tablets, inhalers or

cholesterol medication.'
From the beginning of this year,

vate prescription.

GPs have been warned to only

scribed tirzepatide online. Tirzepatide is not yet available in Ireland but liraglutide in the form

mean that the medicine caused the adverse experience, and the events may be coincidental, for example, drugs.
The illegal versions of medicine due to an underlying disease or nat The illegal versions of medicine included Ozempic and Saxenda, which are available here, and Wegovy and Mounjaro, which are not yet licenced, and the HPRA said they pose a serious health risk to anyone who might take them. Indeed some tested bore no resemblence to the products they purported to be

ural causes.' Michael Crotty says the new generation of drugs must be treated in the same way as any other medi-cine, with the risks weighed up by

cine, with the risks weighed up by the patients.

With any medical treatment there are benefits and risks and that is a huge part of treating someone with these medications, he says the same the same the same the same the risks with these medications. If the medications are used appropriately, if they are monitored, if the doses are not starting too high and they are increased slowly and people are and nutritional advice that aligns with it, then people will have a better experience. But nausea, hearthurn, diarrhoea and constitution and such as the same than the same th burn, diarrhoea and constipation are common when people go on them first.'

These symptoms can be settled

and improved with some advice but Dr Crotty says any weight loss plan carries a risk of gallstones.
'We know that three in 100 people

> A Scottish nurse died from organ failure

will develop gallstones while on them but if someone goes on meal replacements or a very restrictive diet then that is a risk too, he says. One of the complications of this is pancreatitis, which three in 1,000 taking GLP is will suffer but the key to be suffered and know what to look out for and have a channel to contact their GP.

'One in four will have significant gastrointestinal issues, one in 20 will have to stop because of severe will be suffered by the complex of the comple Dr Michael Crotty is a GP who specialises in weight loss and runs the myneight.ie clinic.

"There is a difference between weight loss and obesity care,' he says. 'Obesty' is when excess weight is having a negative effect on health and that is a medical condition versus someone who wants to lose weight for cultural, societal or aesweight for cultural, societal or aesthetic reasons.

These medications are proven to be safe and effective whose health is affected medically, metabolically, physically and psychologically by coxess weight, whereas they are not proven to be safe or effective when used on someone who simply wants

risks.'
Dr Crotty says if someone is getting these medications outside the normal channels, they won't have the follow-up care or the support they need and will have no one to talk to if they have any concerns.

'About 50 per cent of people will

get a good response to these medi-cations, 'says Dr Crotty. 'It could be From the beginning of this year, the HPRA has received 43 reports of suspected side-effects associated with the use of Ozempic that have occurred in Ireland, including, it said in a statement to the Irish Daily Mail, 'il people who noted to have attended a hospital in relation to the events experienced. It is an improvement in medical condi an improvement in medical condi-tions, in physical function, a reduc-tion in pain or in sleep apnoea and for other people it could be reduc-ing the constant noise in their heads about food and diet culture

nave attended a nospital in relation to the events corperinged. The control of th



side-effects, that there are costs. You

Advice:

Ozempic, which isn't licensed for weight loss yet, just type 2 diabetes. I wish it was because from my health perspective these drugs are life-changing and population health-changing.

'Individually, monitoring is really important because we need to be sure about the clinical suitability of a medication for a patient, so we need to make sure that they are monitored and that they have no underlying conditions that

may potentiate any side-effects.

'These medications do have quite a good safety profile when used in accordance with the licence.' Mitchell, who runs Milltown Pharmacy in Dublin and the wondercare.ie site and podcast,

Obesity is seen as someone's own fault or

says there are serious issues around the supply chain for Ozempic, which is why she believes people are turning to unregulated channels to try to get hold of it. 'This month we can access the 1mg dose pens but we can't access the 0.25mg or the

responsibility'

very restricted supply of all

strengths.
'It has been an ongoing difficulty and people have obviously turned to online resources, which are

pen you buy and where it has

'Semaglutide must be kept between two and eight degrees and if it is not then the quality and integrity of the medication can't be guaranteed.'

Ms Mitchell says money is being ploughed into the marketing of ultra-processed foods that are system where those struggling

aystem where those struggling with obesity have been set up to fail, it is no wonder people are clamouring for the GLPI drugs.

To make ourselves more relevance of the GLPI drugs.

To make ourselves more relevance of the GLPI drugs.

To make ourselves more relevance of the construction of the weight-loss drugs but all drugs the Government does have an obligation to ensure we are competitive, she says.

The Government is very more pricing and cutting prices and not being held to ransom by the drug companies, which I can completely understand. But there have been severe the more pricing and the companies of the construction of the structure of the drugs of the d

pharmacies.'
'The overall approach to medication procurement is not proac-tive and this is all underpinned by the fact that in the Department of Health we don't have a chief pharmaceutical officer. That means the people who are making these decision have no expertise in the complexities of medication procurement and clinical need and population health.

"There is a market for Ozempic

and people are desperate – under-standably – to try and improve the quality of their life but people going outside of the normal channels, using it inappropriately without supervision or potentially being sold non-sterile water for

mjection in an empty Ozempic pen is a real risk.'
Mitchell does not believe that anyone should be able to get a prescription for a GLP 1 without physically sitting in a doctor's office.

"The problem I would have with online doctors and weight loss medications is that it is not really medications is that it is not really the most suitable and safe method of patient care,' she says. 'You really need an in-person con-sultation so that you get your bloods done and you can present and the prescriber can be confident that the medication is suitable and safe for you that the prescriber can be a properly that the presence of the pre-tail that the medication is suitable and safe for you.

about online doctors offering the service because I don't think a telephone or video consult consti-tutes the best patient interest

and care.'
Dr Michael Crotty says GPs treating obesity and there also must be more investment into the different treatments for it.

There is no point telling people to eat less and move more,' he says. 'That it is not an effective treatment - it is like telling someone with depression to cheer up 'We need to support people and treat them with safe

evidence-based treatments 'Patients are struggling to find ppropriate healthcare and that is a big challenge and it is some-thing we need to work on. People



Page 24 Irish Daily Mail. Saturday, December 7, 2024



Challenge: Dr Michael Crotty their pocket. We wouldn't

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

because they want to improve their health and that's why people may go outside of the regular channels seeking care. We would love to have the hest evidence-based treatments available and they will become available and there are many people who will benefit. But there is the issue of the cost of the medication and reimbursement of the medication and supply, which are very real issues

'At the moment, medications that are in use for obesity are not covered by the drug payment scheme, medical card or long-term illness so people are paying for them out of

expect people to pay for cholesterol medications, blood pressure medications or asthma inhalers in the same way but traditionally because obesity has been seen as someone's own fault or responsibility these medications haven't been covered.
'So there is a huge amount of

bias and stigma and lack of understanding about the treatments and that needs to Often times the neonle who

need the treatment most are the ones who are least able to afford it. There is a huge inequality and unfairness in that many people who would benefit from treatment are not able to access it and that goes for

bariatric surgery too. It is a very safe and very effective treatment but the number of people being treated is much less than it should be because that area of treatment in Ireland has not been resourced

the moment and there are new services launching in Gal-way and Cork to try and address some of these needs but they need investment and infrastructure.'

On the whole he feels the new generation of drugs will help many people get their health back - as long as they

'For many people, these are says. 'Changing will also help so many people realise that it is a biological issue, that it isn' their fault. They are not doing anything wrong, this thing over the years and the services are not at the level they their entire life is a medical red to be. condition that there are treat-'That is being addressed at ments available for. That is hugely positive for people. 'However, not everyone

going to get the same response so that is why, the same as any other medical condition, we put people on treatment but we need to follow them up and monitor it. 'But for so many, the benefits

to their health will be very



SUPPORTING IRELANDS CHILDRENS CHARITIES







PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY



Women aided Harrods boss in sex abuse campaign

EXCLUSIVE

By Lisa Brinkworth

and Vanessa Allen

A STRING of Ghislaine Maxwell-style female 'super-enablers' assisted Harrods boss Mohamed Al Fayed in his decades-long abuse of women and girls, it was revealed vesterday.

Keaton Stone – a journalist who spearheaded a six-year investigation into Fayed – said he had amassed evidence against the women who allegedly helped his vile abuse, who could

still face justice.

Police believe the former Harrods owner, who died last year aged 94, may have raped and abused at

'Evidence is stacking up'

least 111 women and girls over almost 40 years, including a victim who was only 13 years old.

Scotland Yard is investigating the role of at least five potential 'facilitators' as part of a wide-ranging review that is also looking at historical police corruption allega-tions. Mr Stone said he had the names of dozens of such 'enablers', and compared their role to shamed socialite Ghislaine Maxwell, who



Claims: Women like Ghislaine Maxwell 'enabled' Al Fayed

away with it. There are certain names which appear overwhelm-ingly in the women's testimonies. The evidence is stacking up.

Mr Stone has investigated Fayed since his then-fiancée, now wife Sophia, revealed she was sexually assaulted by the former Harrods boss while working as his personal assistant. She went to the police in

assistant. She went to the police in 2020 and gave a 31-page statement, but was later told the ease was being dropped because Fayed was said to be unfit to face charges. The couple were horrified that the couple of the couple

more such letters would follow.

Mr Stone compiled a dossier of
evidence that led to the BBC docuand compared users to see a second to the se