

MY LIFESTYLE
MOMENT

Shed those pounds with a big breakfast

EATING a big breakfast that is heavy in carbohydrates is the key to keeping slim, according to new research.

A new study found that women who eat half of their daily calories first thing in the morning lose more weight in the long term than those who start the day with a small breakfast, said Fox News. They are also less likely to pile the pounds back on.

Dr Daniela Jakubowicz from the Hospital de Clinicas in Caracas, Venezuela, who led the study, said: "A very low-carbohydrate diet exacerbates the craving for carbohydrates and slows metabolism. After a short period of weight loss, there is a quick return to obesity."

It is thought that eating a meal packed with protein and carbohydrates helps cut cravings for sweet or starchy foods and boosts the metabolism.

Scientists compared the "big breakfast" diet with a strict low-carb weight-loss regime.

Jakubowicz and a team at Virginia Commonwealth University studied 94 obese, inactive women and found that low-carb dieters initially lost more weight.

However, after eight months, the strict dieters had regained 18lbs (8.16kg). The big-breakfast eaters continued to drop in weight, losing another 16.5lbs (7.48kg).

Those who were on the big-breakfast diet lost more than 21 per cent of their body weight, compared with just 4.5 per cent for the low-carb group.

Women who ate a big breakfast reported feeling less hungry – especially before lunch – and had fewer cravings for carbs than the other women did.

LIFESTYLE

'Spiffiest Giant' wins Mandarin storytelling competition

JANET LIAU'S INFECTIOUS TECHNIQUE IMPRESSES THE JUDGES

RACHEL CHAN

THE best-looking giant in town took top prize at a Mandarin storytelling competition last Saturday at Woodlands Regional Library.

Ms Janet Liau, 42, a mother of two, had enlisted her husband, Mr Zulanan Ahmad, 43, and her eldest child Arif Zulanan, seven, to tell the story of a kind-hearted giant who gave his new clothes away to those who needed it more.

The original story, *The Spiffiest Giant In Town*, was written by British author Julia Donaldson and was published in 2005. It was subsequently translated into Mandarin.

They were part of a competition featuring eight teams of parents and their children who took part in the Daddy & Mommy Mandarin Storytelling Competition last Saturday. The event was organised by Eduplus Language Centre and supported by the Speak Mandarin Campaign and National Library Board.

Ms Liau, who played the main role of the giant, emerged champion as judges felt that she was the most infectious storyteller.

Although her husband speaks no Mandarin, he gladly took part too. He played a giraffe who benefited from the giant's generosity.

Ms Liau told *my paper*: "Our son Arif learns Chinese in school and my husband and I



FAMILY WIN: (From left) VIP Lee Peng Shu awards the first prize to Zulanan Ahmad, youngest son Aqil Zulanan, eldest son Arif Zulana, maid Sumi and wife Janet Liau. (PHOTO: NATIONAL LIBRARY BOARD)

want to encourage him to speak the language more often."

The family won vouchers worth a total of \$500 from Page One bookshop and Eduplus Language Centre.

Votes from members of the audience – largely members of public who filled the 230-seat auditorium – accounted for half the final results, while the other half came from the judges.

On the panel were Mdm Chua Puay Eng, head of department of Chinese Language at Catholic High School; Ms Chang Mei Hsiang, the principal of Eduplus Language Centre; and Mr Lee Choin Lan, deputy director of CL Lab, a Chinese language learning centre.

"Our aim is to create a platform for people to experience the beauty of the Chinese language," said Ms Chang.

"This is our third storytelling competition, but the first time I've seen participating parents put in 80 to 90 per cent of the effort involved. They choreographed their own dance steps, designed their props and chose their own costumes."

Mr Lee Peng Shu, 58, chairman of the community affairs committee at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry and member of the Promote Mandarin Council, which sponsored some prizes for the competition said: "The competi-

tion has managed to capture our target: Chinese Singaporeans who come from English-speaking environments.

He added: "Everyone has a story to tell. Why not tell it in Mandarin?"

rachchan@sph.com.sg

HELPDESK 我的字典

■ **Giant:** 巨人 jù rén

■ **Storytelling:** 讲故事 jiǎng gù shi

■ **Original:** 原版的 yuán bǎn de



And it's a wrap!

THE Singapore Arts Festival closed in grand fashion over the last weekend with Hydro Sapiens, a performance held by Dutch group The Lunatics. Held at Bedok Reservoir, the event was a musical spectacle on water which featured a floating factory, actors and special effects. Twelve local volunteers were also involved, and the show saw around 5,000 spectators. (PHOTO: JAMIE KOH)