

Singapore scientists develop unique pill to fight obesity



PILL An overweight woman measuring Waist.-FILE

Aggrey Omboki

aomboki@ke.nationmedia.com

Scientists in Singapore have developed a self-inflating pill that can help obese people lose weight by making them have sense of fullness by filling up part of the stomach.

In achieving this, the technology will help obese patients to reduce the amount of food they eat.

Researchers from Nanyang Technological University and the National University Health System (NUHS) announced they



EndoPil's main advantage is its simple method of administration. All you would need is a glass of water to help it go down"

PROF LOUIS PHEE | LEAD SCIENTIST IN THE RESEARCH

had successfully developed the

capsule, which is swallowed before it enlarges within the stomach under the influence of a hand-held magnet.

Led by Prof Louis Phee, Dean of Engineering, and Prof Lawrence Ho, a clinician and innovator at NUHS, the team's "capsule could represent a non-invasive alternative to tackle the growing global obesity epidemic".

Results of the innovation are published in a joint press release dated January 24, 2019.

The capsule is a non-invasive alternative to current therapies used in managing obesity known as intragastric balloons.

With intragastric balloons, a patient is usually sedated or put to sleep before they are placed in the stomach using an instrument called an endoscope.

The patient is forced to undergo the procedure all over again six months later when the balloon is removed.

But with the capsule dubbed the EndoPil all a patient has to do is take it with a glass of water.

"EndoPil's main advantage is its simple method of administration. All you would need is a glass of water to help it go down and a magnet to activate it," said Prof Louis Phee, who is also the Tan Chin Tuan Centennial Professor in Mechanical Engineering at NTU.

The technology could also help to reduce side-effects associated with intragastric balloons because it does not need tubes to be inflated slowly without tubes.