

Name: Jake Johnson - Ginsters

Heart attack two years ago

Used to smoke 60 a day, 10 before work

Getting healthy doesn't have to be like climbing a mountain, but if that's what works for you . . .

Approaching his half century, smoking 60 cigarettes a day and doing no exercise, Jake Johnson was a heart attack waiting to happen. And it did, one day 18 months ago Jake found himself in hospital after his 'indigestion' proved to be a lot more serious. But that's where all stereotypes go out of the window, for today Jake is literally climbing mountains as part of his journey back to health.

Far from being the end of Jake's life, that fateful day back in November 2006 proved to be the beginning of a new one for him.

Thanks to his own determination not to become another statistic and the enlightened attitude of his employers Ginsters, who operate an active workplace programme, Jake has turned his life around. He's now a non-smoking, keen climber, who's living a healthier, happier life.

Jake lives in Liskeard in Cornwall and works for Ginsters at their Callington base in the stores department.

When he was younger he enjoyed climbing and other sports, but when his

family came along other things took priority and he gradually did less and less exercise.

It was only after having his heart attack that Jake realised he had to change his lifestyle.

His employer Ginsters is one of an increasing number of businesses, which has started to realise the benefits of keeping its workforce healthy and happy. Good health equals good business and Ginsters practises it from the Managing Director down.

Jake was off work three months after his heart attack. He attended a cardiac exercise clinic a couple of weeks before returning to work and then took advantage of Ginsters free to use on-site gym and advice from fitness instructor, Steve Smeeth.

In addition to overseeing programmes in the gym, Steve arranges a variety of off-site activities all aimed at finding something for everyone – making exercise something to enjoy, not just a chore.

Archery, ice-skating, deep-sea fishing, surfing and tennis are just some of the things Ginsters employees have tried. And their families are welcomed too, making getting and staying fit fun and something which the whole family can enjoy. Jake had done rock climbing in his youth, so thought he'd give it a go again when Steve arranged for a group try it locally.

*'I wanted to lose some of the weight I'd gained by stopping smoking and I was determined to get fit and healthy after the wake-up call of my heart attack.'*

*'Even though I just watched on the first climb because I'd had some chest pains a few days before, I loved being outdoors in the great weather and I was hooked again. I now have my own equipment and go climbing two or three times a week at a local indoor climbing centre and outside when I can.'*

*'I love it and it gives me a real buzz. One of my sons comes with me too. It's become a part of my life and I've set myself a goal to climb the Old Man of Hoy rock face in the Orkneys before I'm 60,' said Jake.*

*'It was a real help having the gym on-site and someone like Steve to get me interested initially and give me advice. Being able to exercise in your lunch hour at work makes a big difference and means you can fit it into your life that much easier,' he added.*

Dame Carol Black, the National Director for Health and Work is on a mission to create healthier workplaces throughout the country.

*'With everyone spending so much time at work, the workplace plays a key role in our health and wellbeing - it can improve our health or harm it.'*

*'An employer which enables its staff to take exercise, eat healthier and actively encourages health and wellbeing, will see the benefits reflected very quickly in its bottom line - productivity, turn-over and motivation. This helps business, but also can make a real difference to the quality of people's lives and that of their families,' she said.*

