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# Top doctor: Ban deadly blades from our kitchens

ONE of Scotland's leading doctors has called for a ban on "killer" kitchen knives.





A top doctor has called for a ban on pointed kitchen knives

Dr John Crichton, the new chairman of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Scotland, wants the sale of pointed kitchen knives to be banned to help reduce the number of fatal stabbings.

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He first suggested the move three years ago, but his proposal did not win enough support from policy-makers. Since then dozens of people, including schoolchildren, have lost their lives as a result of attacks involving bladed instruments.

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Dr Crichton, who took on the role of chairman in June this year, is championing a switch to so-called “R”-bladed knives, which have rounded points and are far less effective as weapons.

He said that research shows many attacks, particularly in households where there has been a history of violence, involve kitchen knives because they are so easily accessible.

Dr Crichton believes a switch from sharp-pointed, long-bladed knives to the new design could save lives.

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He said: "This is a public health measure and public health measures are always about society deciding on a self-imposed restriction for the public good."

Dr Crichton's research showed that 45 per cent of the homicides he looked at involved a knife and of those that could be identified, 85 per cent were kitchen knives.

He described the findings as "extraordinary" and asked the Scottish Government to be more specific in their weapon reporting as the official statistics simply labelled them "sharp implements".

**Why do we need these potentially deadly weapons in the home?**

Dr John Crichton

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The expert said: "They took it under consideration but it has not been taken any further forward." He added: "We are very quick to be critical of our American cousins and the prevalence of guns but this is an issue which doesn't even occur to us."

He would like to see households where there has been a violent incident or weapon misuse to be subject to a "safety check", including switching to safer kitchen knives.



The "R"-tipped knife was created by industrial designer John Cornock after he watched a documentary on knife crime.

Dr Crichton said he would like to see such knives introduced in all schools and colleges and added: "Why do we need these potentially deadly weapons in the home? I think if one of our celebrity chefs were to popularise it, it might be a solution in itself.

"Fashions change but in practical terms, it might be something that could be thought of in relation to bail conditions or licence conditions for people coming out of prison."