

Adolescent Obesity and Health Issues

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Obesity has doubled in adults in the last 30 years and has nearly tripled in children. Everybody has their theory and answer why there are so many obese and overweight people in the United States and the world today. No one told anyone to put down that chip to turn off the TV and take a walk outside. There has never been a lock placed on vending machines that are known to provide the public with unhealthy and a lot of times impulse causes people to buy food, which should not be consumed often. Maybe more of the blame needs to be put on the obese person or on society whatever the reason is many obese people find themselves embarrassed to have to ask for extension seat belts on planes, but yet they still are not changing their diets or lifestyles. It's more of a surprise that there are not more fat kids out there with the amount of cheeseburgers, pizza, and soft drinks available; then they go into the other room to watch TV or play video games for hours. It was recently reported that 16-33% of all children and adolescents in the United States are overweight or obese. Obesity is defined by an abnormal accumulation of body fat usually 20% or more over an individual's ideal body weight. People are labeled as obese because of the increased risk of illness, disability, or death. (Obesity, p2075) Overweight teens are 12 times more likely to develop type 2 Diabetes. The issue of weight loss is not vanity or so you look slimmer and more appealing by common standards but it is a critical health issue. (Patterson) Losing weight as a child or as an adolescent will help prevent later chronic diseases. Humans have added over the last 20 years between 150 and 300 calories daily and about half of this is from liquids (Brink). Every liquid calorie is a calorie that has to be added to the daily total intake. The increased

financial burden associated with obesity and disease, can be too much for a nation to treat; these complications this is why people need to do something now and get healthier. People who eat a healthy breakfast are less likely to have weight problems than those who don't. There is a growing problem of obese adults and children, our nation has to change so that people start losing weight and living a healthier life. With all the knowledge of nutrition and diet there is no reason we cannot fix these problems starting with the children, who are the adults of tomorrow.

The saying what you eat is what you are, is not fair off; in fact, whether you as a child or adolescent are fat, skinny or do drugs and the way you treat your body will have lasting consequences the rest of your life. Simply changing your diet and/or lifestyle can greatly decrease your risk factors of later developing chronic disease such as being overweight, obesity, and an increase of blood lipids levels or glucose production. More kids are overweight and obese than ever and have type 2 diabetes because of it, they are also more likely to have cardiovascular diseases and other chronic diseases (casazza). 50% of adolescents are not as physically active on a regular basis as they need to be, at least 30 minutes of physical activity a day. 25% of calories come from low nutrient density beverages such as sodas, lemonade, sweetened teas and the list goes on. 66% girls and 73% of boys get 10% of their calories from saturated fats and nearly another 25% is from empty calories. There has been a 197% increase in obesity associated hospitalizations in kids over the last 20 years. Around 1/3 of overweight kids are overweight or obese as adults. Obesity is a 3 Fold problem that will lead to type 2 diabetes, heart attacks, and/or death. Adolescents want to learn about being healthier. Only 34% of boys and 33% of girls

consume the 5 a day fruits and vegetables recommendations but 60% of young people eat too much fat. Tests showed kids that are overweight and those that are not overweight knew the same information about keeping themselves healthy and eating right but they all did not apply the information. There needs to be a change and the change will come from education and programs to help overweight and obese kids lose weight. Programs and interventions need to be set up to help in lifestyle changes before it is too late for these kids. Excessive and imbalanced nutrients have become one of the targets for improving the health of adolescents. We need more intervention programs that involve nutrition and overall health education to promote a healthier lifestyle. There needs to be more computer based health education programs that are specifically tailored to the needs and learning styles of adolescents(casazza)

Did you know that for a person that is overweight or obese simply losing weight and changing their lifestyle could prevent or delay them getting type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular problems and many other chronic diseases? The only way for this to happen is through education of diet and nutrition that effectively works. With a prevention program that keeps people healthier and for the people that are overweight that keeps them on the right path to losing weight and keeping it off. A diet is not something you go on it needs to be a way of life more a way of thinking. People should eat a balanced diet always and you would never have to change it. Just putting children and adolescents into class room and other kinds of nutrition education programs is just not enough. They did not work as well as planned and many kids remained the same size with no change to their diets. You have to find ways of making learning to eat right and learning about nutrition fun. But this is only

half the battle you have to also find a way to make exercise fun and a regular thing. In 1999 there was a study done that showed computer based knowledge programs worked better than just class room or other approaches. Even after this study we are not utilizing these resources like we need to. Computer based programs have a lower cost, are faster, and available 24 hours a day with no geographic barriers. Computer programs are more comprehensive and can be tailored to an individual's problem. It is a more personal resource that can be found inside the home because you have to remember that a lot of being overweight or obese can be mental issues. You have to hit a person from every angle to give them the best advantage to lose weight and keep it off. They can have interactive technology and multimedia on these sites. There can be places for feedback and post to talk to other people the sites could give people strategies to use and tips to keep them on track. This is a process that has to be handled in an order. On computer-based programs or web sites they can use things like email CD-ROMs and even DVDs to help with their education processes. These types of tools can also be used in or to an addition to a class room program (casazza).

There was a study done about a computer game Squire's Quest which was a computer based diet and nutrition program. The game was multimedia and appealed quite well to the 4th grade test group. The game's main goal was to increase kids liking of fruits and vegetables. After the game was introduced to the children parents reported them asking more for fruits and vegetables in the home and in restaurants. The game also showed the 4th graders how to prepare different fruit and vegetable recipes. They were able to see someone make it right in front of them on the computer screens and then make it themselves and eat it. Overall there was an

average increase of consumption of fruits and vegetables by one serving a day (Cullen).

Researchers in Massachusetts focused on one piece of the puzzle why people are gaining so much weight and not losing it. There were 103 volunteers veering in age from between 13 to 18 years old; one half of them drank sweetened drinks as they normally did which was about 2.5 servings a day, which is around 375 calories a day just from liquids. Sweetened drinks are cool aid, lemonade, sodas, energy drinks and many others. The other half drank no calorie drinks such as diet sodas, water, unsweetened tea, coffee, low fat milk or skim milk. Many fruit drinks fall in the sweetened drink category because of how much sugars are in them. There were arrangements made with the local supermarket for drop offs of the drink of the subjects choice, the subject picked enough for four servings a day and 2 extras for family members so there was no fights. The test went on for six months. The group that had to drink no calorie drinks had a magnet on their fridge that said "think before you drink" to remind them no calories and keep them on track. They would also get periodic pep talks to see if they wanted to change their drink or if everything was going alright. The control group that drank as they normally did gained a modest amount of weight. The people that drank the no calorie drinks lost around one pound a month. There have been many other studies that say sweet drinks will make you gain weight but this is the first one that states by not drinking them you will lose weight. The no calorie drink group was not perfect but reported an 82% cut in sweetened drinks. This is an important step in drink research which is something that is over passed often

(Brink) This is not the answer by any means but like Dr. Dietz said “the trend to reduce weight was modest but it was a trend in the right direction.”(Brink)

The nutrition scientists want the FDA to have a beverage consumption guideline. This could be set up much like the food pyramid that they already have. The pyramid would go something like water, unsweetened teas, coffee, low fat milk, nonfat milk and soy beverages followed by all your sweet drinks in very small proportions much like candies and cakes. Even some 100 percent fruit juice drinks are less desirable nutritionally than diet sodas (Brink).

Sodas and other Sweetened drinks are becoming the number one choice for maturing girls. According to a recent study of 2,371 girls ages 9-19 who were watched over a decade. The girls nearly tripled their sodas (sweetened and diet) intake and reduced their milk consumption by 25%. This is a big problem not only for weight but other health issues. Teen girl's bodies are changing rapidly like any growing child and milk provides your bones with calcium. Calcium is used to produce strong bones but in women drinking enough calcium will lower your risk for osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is yet another chronic disease that can be prevented through proper diet and nutrition (Brink).

There is more evidence now that your mom may not have been too far off telling you to wash your hands frequently and exercise to feel better. Human adenoviruses maybe the to blame for a portion of the obesity epidemic, more research is needed to prove this but it may be the leading case. The accumulating evidence is turning scientist heads to further research. This could even make obesity a contagious problem much like the flu. Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison found

that the human adenovirus Ad-37 caused obesity in chickens. A few decades ago Nikhil Dhurandhar while in India a poor country noticed the adenovirus SMAM-1 in chickens produced more fat on their bodies. This was way before anyone was looking for answers to obesity and before obesity was even a problem. Ad-36 is also thought to be associated with human obesity. Ad-37, Ad-36, Ad-5 are in a family of approximately 50 viruses known as human adenoviruses and any one or combinations of them could cause obesity. There has even been a growing problem in other poor countries with this same obesity epidemic not just in the United States. If this was the case with three steps we could be on our way to fixing obesity. We would have to identify the viruses, as well as a way to test for it and create a vaccine to get people better. The problem is some of these tests are inconsistent and may not even show up until you over eat. This would be a big mental leap for obese people to think they were sick and we could catch obesity before it spreads (na).

With few resources to fall back on many teen mothers have to start the parenting road overweight and single. As a first step in reducing the risk of obesity and an unhealthy life for the mother and the child it is important that we reduce the post pregnancy weight fast and get back to being healthy. There is a 5 year 3.5 million dollar study to help this group avoid obesity. There are over 1900 overweight teenage moms ages 15-18 in nine different states of all backgrounds in this study (Morsels).

The schools are not to blame for the growing obesity epidemic in children and in the United States. Schools can be a huge contributor to solving the obesity problem. They already have a unique setting with the kids to determine the “at risk” or unhealthy kids. Schools can promote obesity with non healthy cafeteria food and

poor facilities for exercise or prevent the rapid spread of obesity through knowledge and applying obesity to more subjects. To learn anything you need reputation and interesting materials. Schools already have the programs and classes in place they just need to use more obesity examples or apply things you learn about obesity. In classes like anatomy you can talk about the health issues and the changes an obese person's body will go through. In math you could use more percentages and graphs based around obesity and even in English you could assign papers about good health, proper diet, or obesity (casazza). Schools have everything they need to tackle this problem we just need to manage it and add healthy lifestyles though good habits and good diet in to all curriculums.

Many of us have spent too many winters hunkered down to good food and too few hours exercising in-between. It comes that time when you look at yourself and see you have a problem and need to fix it. You are obese and are at the end of the road and you look at Stomach Stapling or gastrobypass. The author Dorreen yellow Bird said "her two friends looked like snowman melting in the sun."p1(Bird) Her two friend were bigger men and had there stomachs stapled and had lost a combined weight off 440 pounds. This surgery is when they staple the stomach walls together to make a small stomach pouch thus reducing the stomach and hunger pains. It's a very painful surgery with a life changing results. One of her friends said he had more energy he could do things he had not done in years and was even jogging all the time now. His blood presser was normal and was not snoring at night anymore. There are many side affects like nausea, vomiting, dehydration, food intolerance to red meet or high fiber goods. You can even rupture you stomach from overeating after the

surgery. This is a life changing surgery because you have reduced the size of your stomach so you have to eat healthier and in smaller proportions. But like the author said no matter how you lose weight you have to do it your way, the way that works for you and your body chemistry (Bird).

I think that we need to work on preventing kids from becoming obese. The key is to keep children healthy and start them from day one knowing and eating a healthy diet. A study at Yale shows that fat kids with glucose tolerance usually precedes to type 2 diabetes (U.S.) There are many other chronic disease's that will be more prevalent if we do not do anything to change the weight of the public. Many overweight kids will get type 2 diabetes which have plenty of adult medications but only one that is allowed by the FDA to be used on children. Through furthered research and spreading of knowledge we can educate and get this country in the right path to a healthier life. I say healthier life because that is what we need not a better diet or a fix all pill but a better person that takes care of there body. You need to be aware that you affect your lifespan greatly and by being obese it is like holding a gun to your own head. Parents need to use common sense when dealing with there children's diets and amount of activity they receive (Patterson) Parents must be ready to learn also. Type 2 Diabetes will lead to blindness, kidney failure, heart disease, and even stroke (U.S.) Take your kids outside and play with them, make sure they get at least 30 minutes a day of activity it won't hurt you either to play with them. (Patterson) We to keep working on better intervention plans that can be applied in schools because schools are a place that kids go and can be helped. There are over 16 million people with diabetes don't let you weight problem lead you to this (U.S.)

Always remember what the doctors say moderation is the key to everything. A little bit of anything in moderation is not bad. So be involved help out your kids and help yourself by becoming active and losing weight.

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