

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

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Obesity and Overweight

A Public Health Epidemic**USA Obesity Rates Reach Epidemic Proportions**

- 58 Million Overweight; 40 Million Obese; 3 Million morbidly Obese
- Eight out of 10 over 25's Overweight
- 78% of American's not meeting basic activity level recommendations
- 25% completely Sedentary
- 76% increase in Type II diabetes in adults 30-40 yrs old since 1990

Overweight and Obesity Among Children and Adolescents

Overweightness is one of the nation's biggest health problems - and it's growing by the day. The CDC now estimates that approximately 19 percent of children (6-11) and 17 percent of adolescents (12-19) are considered overweight. To offer some perspective, these numbers have nearly tripled among children and quadrupled among adolescents during the last 25 years. And then, there's the future: Researchers predict that nearly half the children in North America will be overweight by 2010, and data indicates that 80 percent of these children will likely be overweight as adults, placing them at higher risk of developing health problems.

Health risks associated with obesity

Overweight and obese individuals (BMI of 25 and above) are at increased risk for physical ailments such as (NIH pp.12-20; Stunkard p. 224)—

- High blood pressure, hypertension
- High blood cholesterol, dyslipidemia
- Type 2 (non-insulin dependent) Diabetes
- Insulin resistance, glucose intolerance
- Hyperinsulinemia
- Coronary heart disease
- Angina pectoris
- Congestive heart failure
- Stroke
- Gallstones
- Cholecystitis and cholelithiasis
- Gout
- Osteoarthritis
- Obstructive sleep apnea and respiratory problems
- Some types of cancer (such as endometrial, breast, prostate, and colon)
- Complications of pregnancy
- Poor female reproductive health (such as menstrual irregularities, infertility, irregular ovulation)
- Bladder control problems (such as stress incontinence)
- Uric acid nephrolithiasis
- Psychological disorders (such as depression, eating disorders, distorted body image, and low self esteem).

Reference:

Stunkard AJ, Wadden TA. (Editors) Obesity: Theory and Therapy, Second Edition. New York: Raven Press, 1993.

National Institutes of Health. Clinical Guidelines on the Identification, Evaluation, and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity in Adults. Bethesda, Maryland: Department of Health and Human Services; National Institutes of Health; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, 1998.