

## **Special Report – Child Obesity and Associated Risks**

### **Guide on the Risks Involved with Child Obesity**



## Special Report – Child Obesity and Associated Risks

### Introduction

Obesity is a big problem in this country. People weigh more than they did even forty years ago. What has changed? One thing that is different is the fact that adults are not the only ones who are being affected by obesity in developing nations. Our children are becoming a casualty of the war on weight.

What were once a few kids who were a little chunky or still shedding their “baby fat” has become an entirely new section of the population that is off the BMI charts even from an early age. Here are a few statistics that may help you to understand why this is such an important issue.

The percentage of toddlers who are overweight has almost tripled in the last thirty years. For young children, the rate has quadrupled. The number has tripled for teens as well. Our children have been passed the traits of an unhealthy lifestyle and are paying the price.

The change has to start with us, the parents and the community, to free our children from a life of medical and personal issues as a result of too much weight on their bodies. From there, we can then help ourselves to overcome the condition of obesity.

In this report, we will discuss what exactly it means to be clinically overweight and obese. As far as children are concerned, we will talk about the causes that contribute to this surging population of unhealthy children as well as the risks that are developing as a result. Finally, we will discuss ways that we can fight back and help our children to achieve the healthy life that they deserve. And, for those of you with small children who have not been touched by this epidemic, you will learn how to prevent it from ever being a problem in their lives.

Help our children to help themselves.

### **OBESITY - What is it?**

Obesity is the condition that results from having too much weight on your body proportional to your age and height. While it is not uncommon for people to carry around five or ten extra pounds that fluctuates from year to year, obesity is a more serious condition.

We are not talking about a few extra pounds but a weight gain of about that much each year or so. Dieticians recommend that your weight not fluctuate more than a few pounds (five at the most) each year. In children, the amount of extra weight is increasing and at a younger and younger age than was seen in past generations.

### Rising Risk in Children

So, what has changed in the last thirty years to lead to an epidemic of childhood obesity? The lifestyle of our children has changed. But we are getting ahead of ourselves.

How will you know that your child is at risk for being overweight?

Enter the body mass index (BMI) chart. There is a different chart for children depending on their age, weight and height. For adults, the scale is simple to read: A BMI number between 25.1 and 29.9 is considered to be overweight. When you reach a number at 30.0 and above you are in the range of obesity. Over 34.5 is considered morbidly obese.

With children, the chart reads a bit different. For one, there are four categories: Underweight, Healthy weight, at risk of overweight and overweight. There are different charts for girls and boys. It takes into account gender, age, weight and height.

The categories can be a bit confusing. A child that falls in the “at risk of overweight” category can be interpreted in two ways: One, they can be bordering on a weight problem and two; they may not be overweight per se but can become overweight in the future. Most parents would contend that a child who is two or three pounds above what their weight should be need not be in the category of “at risk.”

The range of a healthy weight in children is larger, extending from the fifth to the eighty-fifth percentile. Hopefully this takes into account the fact that children’s bodies are always in a state of flux. A child is steadily growing until they reach their early twenties. In that time, they may look a little stout at one point, but experience a growth spurt and be tall and skinny a year later.

Parents don’t want to unnecessarily overwhelm or worry their children. Body image is a crucial and touchy subject for adolescents and teenagers. Believing that they are overweight can lead to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia in an effort to fit in with their peers.

One way to evaluate your child’s weight in addition to the BMI chart is to consult your pediatrician. They can determine better how tall your child will grow and if their present weight will spread out over time and remain healthy or develop a weight problem.

### Causes of Obesity

So, back to the question we asked before: What has changed in society that has pushed our children into the obesity epidemic category. There are several causes of obesity that we will examine here.

### Diet

What are our children eating? The ready availability of fast food and convenient food is greater than it has ever been. In a “now” generation, no one has to wait for anything. Processed snacks like chips, crackers, cookies and even lunch meats are all around. Kids can grab a soda or a bag of Fritos while they wait for dinner. For dinner, they may eat a meal that was heated in the microwave or already fixed and heated up in the oven.

Foods that we feed our kids and ourselves are higher in fat these days. Fast food restaurants are on every corner and easy access means more meals out than in. While these foods look harmless, they are filled with empty calories that turn into fat when no energy is expended.

Kids don’t eat at the table anymore. Meals are often eaten on TV trays in the living room in front of the television. Poor digestion becomes a factor as eating from a tray leads to slouching, whereas eating at a table helps you sit up straighter and digest food better.

In order to get kids to eat their vegetables or fruit, they are topped with fattening dressings and super sweetened dips. The natural taste of foods is often masked. Feeding kids condiments such as salt and sugar at an early age gives them a taste for it that is hard to reverse as they get older.

Mindless eating is also a problem. We all know about that. Sitting and watching a scary movie eating popcorn. Before you know it, the entire bag is gone. But, our kids are not eating popcorn, but greasy, salty chips, cookies and other unhealthy snacks. In one sitting half a day's worth of calories may be consumed.

### Socioeconomic

When once children returned home each evening after school to home cooked meals, the family dynamic has changed. Kids spend hours on the school bus and parents (usually both) spend more hours at work. It is easier to grab a bite at McDonald's than it is to go home at seven o'clock and prepare a meal.

For lower income families, making ends meet means buying what food you can. The cheaper items in the grocery store are not necessarily the healthiest ones. Fresh fruits and vegetables are increasingly expensive and have a short shelf life.

Children who are home by themselves are not going to fix a home cooked meal. They will reach for a microwave pizza or a can of Chef Boyardee spaghetti. Canned foods contain preservatives not found in fresh meals.

### Inactivity

Technology is a double edged sword. We have developed so many gadgets and games that kids don't even have to go outside of their homes to have fun. They can sit in front of the television and watch their favorite shows or play the most popular video games on the market.

This lack of physical activity combined with eating too many non-nutritive foods has led to too many pounds being added to young frames each year.

There was once a level of physical activity in school but that is also beginning to change. Depending on where you live, requirements for high school graduation may stipulate one year of physical education. What about the other three years? Kids don't have to choose an elective in that category if they don't want to.

Busy parents can also mean a lack of physical activity in their lives as well. Parents who don't exercise aren't reinforcing that activity in their children's lives either. Kids are less likely to choose an active sport or game over a video game or television in that situation.

### Heredity

Some people are more prone to obesity than others. A child with one or both parents dealing with being overweight or obese is more likely to adopt the habits that will lead to their overweight lifestyle as well. This is a cause that some children can escape. It doesn't always end up that they are overweight as children or adults.

### Hormonal Issues

There are people who claim that they have overactive thyroids and other metabolic processes going on inside that predispose them to obesity. While this is true, it is not as true for as many people as you think. These conditions can be diagnosed through tests and treated with medications and other therapies to help maintain a healthy weight.

Along the same line as hormonal changes, certain medications have a side effect involving weight gain. If your child is prescribed a medication that increases weight, talk to their pediatrician about switching to an alternative therapy.

## **ASSOCIATED RISKS**

When people mention diseases such as high blood pressure and heart disease, they conjure up a picture that is far different than the population that is developing these conditions today. Usually you picture a person in their middle or late years of life. What about a child?

Obese children are young but their weight problems put them at risk in increasing numbers for these and other diseases that normally wouldn't show up (if at all) for another thirty or forty years down the road.

### **Hypertension**

High blood pressure is a condition that can lead to heart attack or stroke. The heart pumps harder to move blood through the body's blood vessels. This increased pressure can damage arterial walls. Children with high blood pressure are at risk for problems with their lungs, kidneys and liver.

Children are not usually diagnosed with primary hypertension but obesity is changing all of that. A child can have their blood pressure checked repeatedly to determine if it is indeed high. Treatment begins with diet, exercise and losing weight before medication.

### **Diabetes Type 2**

Diabetes is another condition that can develop especially in kids that have hypertension. In children with diabetes it is often juvenile diabetes they are diagnosed with. Type 2 diabetes is usually developed in overweight adults.

There are many things that can influence whether or not diabetes will show up in a child. First, excess weight is a big risk factor. A child who has a family history of diabetes and/or a racial background that can predispose them to it, they are at greater risk.

With diabetes Type 2, the body may not make enough insulin to deal with the need or the body develops an insulin resistance and ignores it. Insulin helps glucose to travel to the cells where it is used for energy sources.

Children that are at risk for developing diabetes Type 2 may or may not exhibit classic signs like increased thirst and increased urination. Some children develop dark patches on the skin of their neck and where their skin folds. This condition is called acanthosis nigricans.

### **Sleep Apnea**

It is hard to lie flat on your back when you have excess weight. This can lead to sleep apnea. It is a condition when a person stops breathing several times during sleep due to an obstruction. It can occur in someone with large tonsils or adenoids but also in overweight children and adults.

Signs of sleep apnea can include but are not limited to: sleepiness during the day, snoring, breathing through the mouth and problems concentrating to name a few. A pediatrician may advise that the child lose weight to lessen their apnea or have their tonsils and adenoids removed.

### Poor Self-Esteem

In children, self-esteem is linked to the way that others think about them. A child who is accepted by their peers will feel a greater confidence in their abilities. This can all change when a child is overweight.

Children can be quite unforgiving in their honesty. A comment about being “fat” or “tubby” can damage a child’s fragile image of themselves in an instant. Their weight sets them apart from others. They may begin to withdraw from others, even developing emotional problems or using food to soothe their pain.

Children with low self-esteem are prone to emotional disorders like depression and anxiety. They don’t interact well with others leading to poor social skills. No matter what they do, their weight is foremost in their minds.

## **HOW TO COMBAT THESE RISKS**

### Weight Loss

The advice from your pediatrician will be for your child to lose weight. As an adult, you know that this is easier said than done. One saving grace is that children are young and resilient. When they latch on to better eating habits they can continue to lose weight until they reach a healthy stopping point.

There are a few tips and techniques you can use to help your child get in shape and your family as a whole. The key is to start slowly and learn along with your child. Maintaining a healthy weight is a lifelong commitment that begins right now.

Read – It is hard to know where to begin if you don’t have the knowledge. Read books on childhood nutrition and also how to lose weight. From here you can plan meals and try work in new foods that are healthier for everyone to eat.

Eat dinner together – Statistics show that families who eat meals together talk more. Children are less likely to engage in risky behaviors like drinking, smoking, drug abuse and promiscuity. When you eat dinner together, you know what is in your food. Each person can take turns preparing a meal to try on the family.

Grocery shop together – This is one way to teach your child about food’s benefits. Show them the difference between fresh and canned vegetables and fruits. Encourage them to try new foods and also to read food labels. You don’t have to calculate the caloric value of each thing you put in your cart, but you can develop guidelines to help them decide at a glance, if certain foods are healthy for them to eat.

Teach portion control – Many of us eat until we are full. When we eat in front of the television, we overeat. Demonstrate proper portion size at meals. Be sure to let them know that they can eat as many fruits and vegetables as they want without guilt.

Educate them on empty calories – Soft drinks and many juice beverages are full of empty calories. Have you ever looked at a soda nutrition label? An eight ounce glass has over 120 calories. A drink of soda will never get you full, so why not opt for something else like water? You can add flavoring packets to it if you aren't too fond of the natural taste.

Use proper chewing technique – Chewing your food completely actually works to help you eat less. Most of the time, we throw the food at the back of our throat. When you take the time to chew until all the big pieces are gone, you get the sensation of feeling full faster.

### Physical Activity

Exercise together – Working out in a group or with one other person aids in motivation. You can both challenge each other to increase your fitness level. Above all, listen to your child and encourage them to listen to their body. If something hurts, slow down. Take a few minutes to recover and then begin again. It is wise to have a complete physical before beginning any program.

Find an activity that you like – Children are no different from adults. They won't stick with an activity long if it is hard and not very exciting. Allow your child to pick what you do at least on certain days. Show them that exercise can be fun and not all work.

Try interactive video games – Video games aren't all bad as long as they are handled in moderation. Virtual reality video games like those for the Wii game system encourage activity. While you and your child are having fun simulating Olympic events and obstacle courses, they will be increasing their physical activity each day.

## **PREVENTING OBESITY**

### Start as the Beginning

Obesity doesn't happen overnight. It is process that escalates until one day, your child is obese and you are scratching your head. Things happen. Life happens. This is not to blame parents. Now that you know how to gain knowledge on diet and nutrition, you and your child can do better.

So, for those with children who are not overweight but could be headed that way, it is time to cut it off at the pass. Learning to prevent obesity can better your child's life and teach them healthy habits for a lifetime.

### Diet

Introduce fresh fruits and vegetables – Kids are a blank palate. Their taste buds don't know the difference between salted and unsalted veggies. Allow them to taste the natural flavors and decide if they like them. The fewer preservatives in their system, the healthier they will feel.

Monitor sweets – Kids may develop a like for sweets but if you don't encourage it, things may not get out of hand. Instead of processed cakes and cookies, opt for fresh or frozen yogurt (if they are

not lactose intolerant). Fruit with gelatin or whipped cream is also a treat. Save cookies and cake for birthdays.

### Stay Active

Kids have boundless energy and love to play. Encourage that play by joining in. signing them up for group activities like peewee soccer or a tumbling class teaches group dynamics and a love of movement early on in their lives.

Walk when you can ride. Walking is healthy and as long as you are not traversing a desert, your child will not suffer for it. Keep plenty of water on hand and stop for breaks just in case they get tired.

### CONCLUSION

Childhood obesity is a problem that we as parents and community leaders can't afford to ignore. The legacy of our next generation is one of high medical bills and lower life expectancy. Reverse that revelation by defeating childhood obesity right now. It is never too late to teach your child how to eat and how to get and stay active.

If you have an overweight child, don't make them feel bad about their condition. Help them to realize how much they mean to you. Help them and yourself by getting active and eating better along with them. Children learn by example.

If your children are young, start them off on the right foot. Introduce foods in their natural state. Encourage them to play and have fun outdoors instead of staying cooped up inside with the television or the video game system.

Children are our future. Teach them to live a long healthy life and pass it on to their kids.



# The Quest to Manage Weight

Whether it's weight loss or weight gain, whether it's five pounds or fifty, almost everyone in our society – irrespective of gender or age – has dealt with **some form of weight issue**.

Often excess weight and weight loss issues revolve around slow metabolism and lack of energy. So, detoxification and system cleansing are frequently needed to boost both metabolic rates and energy levels.

**Achieving weight loss and maintaining a healthy weight** are crucial factors in sustaining both physical and psychological wellbeing. Shedding those extra pounds not only helps protect the body from heart disease, hypertension, arthritis, diabetes and other physical ailments, but also from mental problems like stress and depression.

At [Native Remedies](#) you will find a comprehensive set of herbal remedies to help you manage and optimize your body and weight health – naturally and safely.

## View Natural Products for Weight Management

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- [Detox & Cleansing](#)
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**CelluTight Massage Oil:** Nourishing massage oils promote smoothness and improve the appearance of dimpled, bumpy skin

**EcoSlim:** Helps maintain a healthy weight & balanced metabolism, plus assists slimming programs

**TeenSlim:** Helps maintain a healthy weight & balanced metabolism in teens, plus assists slimming programs

**JuniorSlim:** Helps maintain a healthy weight & balanced metabolism in children and preteens, plus assists slimming programs

**Slimmer's Assist:** Homeopathic remedy improves sluggish digestion, boosts metabolism & increases weight loss

## ***Two Important Differences in Native Remedies Products***

We use the **Full Spectrum Method** of extraction to create our products. Many so-called *natural remedies* are manufactured using standardized extractions which – although often cited as being more scientific method – is not approved by the manufacturers of holistic medicines.

To us, it makes little sense for companies to go the natural route, while being unable to guarantee that their product is free of contamination with chemicals known to be harmful to health! Using the Full Spectrum Method helps us to maintain the integrity, balance and therapeutic effect of herbs with the least risk of side effects or harm to your health!

Read more about the our [\*Manufacturing & Full Spectrum Approach\*](#) »

We utilize a unique **dual-modality approach** to complete holistic wellness because we know that natural medicine works best in combination (herbal, homeopathic, flower essences and tissue salts) for fast relief and long-term care. Our approach provides a complete solution by offering OTC homeopathic remedies for relief of symptoms as well as compound herbal remedies for complete support of your physical, emotional and mental well-being.

While each of our natural remedies works well on its own to address a specific body function or relieve a particular symptom, we believe that by combining our herbal and homeopathic remedies you will find a complete solution that is safe and highly effective.

Read more about the our [\*Dual-Modality Approach\*](#) »

## **Supplements are not the only way to manage your weight!**

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