



Childhood Obesity



Obesity in children, adolescents and young adults has been on the rise for the past 30 years.

- In 2008, more than one-third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese.

Overweight or obesity results from a caloric imbalance: Consuming too many calories without expensing enough calories out (through exercise).

Complications

- Obese children are more likely to have high cholesterol, high blood pressure and hypertension. These risk factors can lead to cardiovascular disease.
- Obese youth is also more likely to have pre-diabetes, diabetes, and sleep apnea.
- They are at risk for bone and joint complications from the excess weight pushing down on them. This can lead to arthritis later on in life.
- Obese children are at risk for low self-esteem and social issues due to harassment from classmates and peers.
- Obese children are at risk to become obese adults.

Prevention

- Eating a healthy diet and exercising can lead to lower risk of obesity and associated health issues, and a better quality of life for everyone.
 - Consuming a diet that is high in vegetables, fruits, whole grains and low in fat can decrease the risk of obesity.
 - Exercise should be a part of a daily routine.
- Research indicates family support can help children to lose weight.
 - Try eating meals together.
- Consume smaller portions of food.
- Try eating more meals at home, instead of eating out at restaurants.
- Look at nutritional value of foods before eating, and consider healthier alternatives.



Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/>

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