

Childhood Obesity

Facts, Complications & Risks of Childhood Obesity

Managing and Treating Obesity



Facts and Trends

- Childhood obesity has more than tripled in the past 30 years.
- In 2008, more than one third of children and adolescents were overweight or obese

Complications & Risks

There are many risks and complications with obesity.

Physical consequences include:

- increased risk of heart disease
- high blood pressure
- diabetes
- breathing problems
- trouble sleeping

Child and adolescent obesity is also associated with increased risk of emotional problems. Teens with weight problems tend to have much lower self-esteem and be less popular with their peers.

Treating and Managing Obesity in children

- start a weight-management program
- change eating habits (eat slowly, develop a routine)
- plan meals and make better food selections (eat less fatty foods, avoid junk and fast foods)
- control portions and consume less calories
- increase physical activity (especially walking) and have a more active lifestyle
- know what your child eats at school
- eat meals as a family instead of while watching television or at the computer
- do not use food as a reward
- limit snacking

What Causes Obesity?

- poor eating habits
- overeating or binging
- lack of exercise
- family history of obesity
- medical illnesses
- medications (steroids, some psychiatric medications)
- stressful life events or changes (divorce, moves, deaths, abuse)
- family and peer problems
- low self-esteem
- depression or other emotional problems

