

Long Term Health Risks Of Childhood Obesity

Since the 1960s, the rate of obesity in America has doubled. The problem with obesity is, while it is very easy to diagnose, it is incredibly difficult to treat. Besides the obvious psychological issues that children afflicted with obesity often have to deal with, childhood obesity can cause numerous physical health problems. One of the biggest concerns in recent years has been the rising number of children afflicted with type 2 diabetes - a disease that previously mainly afflicted adults. In the course of the last two decades, the statistics of children and adults afflicted with this disease have risen to fifty percent. Today, nearly thirty percent of all adults and twenty five percent of all children struggle with obesity. What's more, children who are obese often develop into obese adults. Parallel to the increase in obesity has been the increase in type 2 diabetes, also known as non insulin dependent diabetes. Throw obesity in to the equation, and this type of diabetes can be very difficult to treat. It can even cause the body to develop an insulin resistance. Diabetes 2 is not the only physical health issue related to obesity. People who are overweight and/or obese are at major risk for contracting severe chronic diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and hypertension. For children afflicted with severe weight problems, they can contract gall bladder disease, liver disease, sleep apnea, and may run the risk of high cholesterol. Children are also at risk for contracting asthma. Overweight boys tend to have a higher risk than overweight girls. The effect of asthma is greater in children who are nonallergic. A recent study concluded that asthmatic children who were obese suffered a lot more than non-obese asthmatic children. Obese children with asthma tend to wheeze more, require more medication, and end up having to make more visits to the emergency room. There are also profound emotional and psychological effects on obese children that are often carried into adulthood. Studies have established that children who are obese tend to earn less money in the adult world. They are also less likely to pursue higher education or to get married. Obese children often have difficulty sleeping, which leads to them doing poorly in school or even showing symptoms of attention deficit disorder. While fat in American diets has decreased in recent years owing to the public's response to this nationwide epidemic, obesity is still a growing concern. While removing fat from their diets, people will often increase their intake of sugar, high density carbohydrates, and starches. Low protein and fat meals often leave people feeling hungry, leading them to fill their stomachs as soon as possible. For children and young adults dealing with obesity, it is best to evaluate the individual's situation, taking in to consideration environmental, genetic, and metabolic concerns while treating the arising physical and psychological damage that has arisen. An obese child's eating plan should also come with an exercise plan. Long term counseling is often needed to deal with self esteem issues relating to obesity that can effect the child's performance in the real world.

About the Author

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