



Medical Sleuths

Family Fact Sheet

Adolescent obesity and nutrition

DID YOU KNOW THAT...

According to the 2007 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey:

- 65% did not meet recommended levels of physical activity
- 35% watched television 3 or more hours per day on an average school day¹
- 13% of U.S. high school students are considered obese



YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE ONE OF THESE STATISTICS

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

Obesity can lead to numerous health problems,³ such as:

- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Respiratory problems
- Cancer
- Stress
- Depression

WHAT CAUSES OBESITY?

The reasons why children become obese varies from person to person. Any combination of these factors can contribute to a person becoming overweight:

- **Home environment**—If behavior at home promotes unhealthy eating or inactivity, a child is more likely to become obese.
- **Food patterns**—In recent decades, total calorie intake has increased in the U.S., and consumption of soft drinks and the “supersizing” of meals has boomed.
- **Activity level**—Use of electronics often takes the place of fun activities that help burn calories, such as volleyball, jumping rope, hopscotch, bike riding.
- **Television**—Many experts believe television is a primary culprit of childhood obesity. Statistics show that the more TV a child watches, the more likely he or she is to become obese.²
- **Genetics**—Studies show that children with obese parents are more likely to become overweight. In some cases, this can be attributed to heredity.

WHAT ARE THE SOLUTIONS?

- Healthier eating!
- Increased physical activity!
- Set realistic goals and stick to them!



WORK TOGETHER!

If you or a friend or a family member is overweight and you want to do something about it, here are some ideas:

- **At home**...Work together as a family to create healthy menus and plan group outings.
- **Among friends**...Choose activities that involve using your feet and hands and heart! Snack smart!
- **At school**...Bring a lunch from home or choose nutritious lunch items. Get everything you can out of your health and physical education classes.

The obesity formula...

When energy intake (FOOD) is greater than energy expenditure (ACTIVITY) ... FAT is stored in the body ... leading to WEIGHT GAIN



1. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Obesity Epidemic and United States Students. <http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/Overweight/facts.htm>
2. Kendall, P., Wilken, K., and Serrano, E. Childhood Obesity. Colorado State University Extension—Nutrition Resources. <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/foodnut/09317.html>
3. HHS, CDC. Overweight and Obesity. <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity>