

Obesity in the united states

[Health & Medicine](#), [Obesity](#)



In America, today we have many different things to worry about, such as AIDS and drugs to name a few, but what if I told you that there was an epidemic going on in America that has killed more than 300, 00 people a year (Tubero, par1). Envision an epidemic so strong that in the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in the United States (Nutrition, par 3). How would you feel if I told you this very epidemic was in your house right now? America is at war right now and we are losing. This war started many years ago and has not yet been won. Every year we lose many of our beloved ones to this obese monster. What can we do? Obesity, the new green-eyed monster, and has taken America over and seemingly nothing has been done. Americans are the heaviest people in the world and have been since, the 1950s. With our growing wealth and appetites, we consume far more than three meals a day; which in some countries is a whole weeks worth of food. " In 1996, a U. S. Department of Agriculture study revealed that at least 33 percent of all adults in the United States were overweight; that number increased to 61 percent of adults and 13 percent of children in 1999, according to the Surgeon General. In late 2001, the Surgeon General's report said 27 percent of Americans are obese and 61 percent are overweight" (Tubero, par3). Scientists have found there are four main components working against us in this battle of the bulge. These components are: the media, our own personal eating habits, lack of exercise, and our own individual heritage. In today's society it seems that everywhere you look, you are pressured into thinking of yourself as inferior. There are signs every where you look telling you that you are not pretty enough, smart enough, thin enough, or that anything you have is not good enough. This

ever-present pressure that the media puts on people causes low self-esteem (Tubero, par 6). When people are stressed out or have low self-esteem, they produce a hormone called insulin, this in turn increases the lipid intake causing people to gain and store Visceral fat in their midsection; the most dangerous storage area (Alisa, 12). Not only does the media tell you that you are worthless they try to fool you into thinking that you might not be so worthless if you bought some of their products. A prime is the marketing of diet pills. Most diet pills are diuretics. They make you think you are losing weight when in reality you are only losing water. In 1999, a study was done to determine if diet pills really helped weight loss. In this study, four leading brand name weight loss pills were used. They tested 100 males and 100 females, who did not change their eating habits or exercising habits. The results showed that every participant lost a fair amount of weight. When taken off the pill, every participant either gained all or more of their original weight back. Since the invention of television, the routine of exercise has decreased and the waistlines of Americans has increased. Americans spend more time in front of the television watching commercial after commercial aimed at the consumption of food, which displays images of food. Studies have shown that while watching television, most people tend to think they are feeling hungry, even after previously eating dinner. Not only does television indirectly rise your caloric intake, it also deprives you of much needed exercise. An average person needs to walk at least a mile every day to stay healthy. Those who walk less are putting themselves at risk for obesity. " Television literally is an obesity machine" (Tubero, par 71). Eating the right types and amounts of food are key to a healthy lifestyle.

People who consume great amounts of food, or the wrong types of food are at a very high risk for obesity. In America today, underweight and malnourished people are frequently seen to be better than other people. The media has a huge part in this by glamorizing these icons. " Overweight people take a psychological beating from the social stigma of being overweigh" (Tuberose, par 6). These media driven images cause many people to risk their lives on unhealthy diets so that they can be the " perfect size". What most people don't realize is that diets actually make people bigger, than they were before the diet, and that not everyone is made to be the same size (Alisa, 2). When people cut back on their calories or starve themselves to lose weight their body starts to defend itself by lowering the amount of food that is being burned causing your metabolism to slow down. If you starve yourself for more than a couple days, then eat until you are full your body thinks you are in a famine and will store all of the calories you consume instead of burning them (Alisa, 3). Its not what you eat, but how much you eat, that effects how your manage your weight. Bigger meals mean more calories. It only takes 3, 500 calories to gain one pound. (American, par 2). An average person who eats out every day, either at fast food restaurant or a regular restaurant consumes more than 6, 000 a week. This is primarily because people tend to go to request food establishments that serve bigger portions. They want more food for less money. More food is not always a bad thing. If you are consuming the right kinds of food, higher amounts of different types of food can actually make you lose weight. Your metabolism stores calories that turn into fat when you don't eat enough food. If you eat an ample amount it starts to burn calories faster and you

lose weight. Not only do you increase your metabolic rate by eating healthier foods, you also increase your body's intake of minerals and vitamins that help your body function properly (Susan, 12). Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean meats are some of the healthier foods. It is suggested by the National Health Association that a person should eat at least a 6 servings a day of grains, 4 to 5 servings of vegetables, 2 to 3 servings of fruit, 2 to 3 servings of dairy products, and a serving of lean meat at every meal. They also say when eating dairy products one should look for the fat free variety. Surveys showed that only 1 in every 10 Americans exercise like they should (Alisa, 116). What most people don't understand is that next to eating right, exercise plays the biggest part in staying healthy. "Regular physical activity reduces people's risk for heart attack, colon cancer, diabetes, and high blood pressure, and may reduce their risk for stroke. It also helps to control weight" (Nutrition, par 6). The hardest part of exercising is not the actual activity. The hardest part is making a plan and sticking with the plan. Most people come up with excuses when they think about exercising like, "I don't have the time" or "My family will get in the way". What people need to do before they give exercising the boot is. Try exercising for a month. When people first start exercising, they move muscles and joints that have not been moved in a long time. Sometimes these muscles and joints begin to ache. If a person works out for a month their joints and muscles stretch and the pain decreases (Alisa, 120). A person needs to reward themselves and their progress as they begin to exercise. When starting an exercise program, should purchase a calendar to mark off every day they exercise. This helps see actual progress and gain more motivation (Alisa, 121). People should

also do exercises that they know how to do or ones that appeals to them in the beginning. If a person does not know how to do a particular exercise they may get discouraged and quit. If a person feels comfortable with what they are doing they will keep doing it (Alisa, 121). People do not have to exercise for hours and hours every day or get a membership at a gym. A simple 30minute walk or everyday activities, like walking up the stairs instead of taking the elevator can do wonders to a person health. Your ancestors play a very big role in the body you have today. Different research preformed by prevention health and other organizations have found that Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and African Americans store fat more readily than other ethnical groups, such as Asian and Anglos, who store less fat (Alisa, 15). This does not mean that one group cannot become over weight or that one group cannot be healthy. Although researchers are still not sure they believe that cultures who suffered great famines, in ancient years, developed a gene that stored more fat during hard times so these people would not starve (Tuberoze, par 13-14). With Americas advanced technology and wealth, famine is a thing of the past. People no longer have to hunt for their food, or have to starve for long periods at a time. This gene that was developed centuries ago no longer has a purpose, but still stores unneeded fat. Six days out of every week for 100 weeks, researchers gave identical twins, from different ethnic heritages, 1, 000 more calories than they usually ate. Every one was eating more than they where supposed to. Everyone gained weight, but some more than others. (Alisa, 14) If we can come together and learn to live healthier lives, full of eating right, and exercising, we can over come this obese monster which kills too many of our beloved

ones each year. If we don't act now we might face worse consequences in the long run. " According to a 1995 report by the Institute of Medicine, 59 percent of the adult population met the current definition of clinical obesity, which qualifies the disease for epidemic status. One study predicted that if obesity continues to increase at its current rate, every single man, woman, and child will be obese by the year 2030."(Tuberose, par 3)