

Changing views on diet and exercise to combat obesity research paper sample

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



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One solution to prevent obesity is to have an additional tax for unhealthy foods. This could help slow down the junk food intake because it would be difficult to pay the extra amount. As such, the " fat tax" solution to curb obesity came into play. By downsizing the wallet every time an individual purchases unhealthy food, the government aims to instill in the minds of individuals that eating unhealthy food (regardless of how good it tastes) produces long-time negative effects to one's health (Leigh, 2004). Pioneered by Kelly Brownell 10 years ago, Center for Eating and Weight Disorders director in Yale (Leigh, 2004), this idea did not take flight initially because of the number of sectors that opposed this move. However, as obesity slowly became the norm and as society has become more accepting, the obesity epidemic steadily increased in number.

Due to this, more people suffered from various related illnesses. As a result, the government and concerned health groups began finding ways to curb obesity - thus, the revival of the fat tax idea. By taxing junk foods and sodas, consumers will begin to regard their purchases as a " need" or as a " want", and with this strategy, hopefully, consumers will become more conscious of their purchases and their health (Badilas, 2011). Despite what naysayers claim, food taxing can work to minimize obesity if only it is given a chance. According to Leigh's report, in a study " published between 1981 and 1998 found that drinking declined as the price of alcohol increased In California in 1988, Proposition 99 was enacted. It increased the state tax by 25 cents per cigarette pack and allocated a minimum of 20% of revenue to fund anti-tobacco education. From 1988 to 1993, the state saw tobacco use decline by 27%, three times better than the U. S. average" (2011).

There are still more advantages to taxing unhealthy food as compared to the disadvantages it presents. The good thing is as more people become obese, focus is also placed on unhealthy foods that contribute to obesity, and thus, people become more aware and observant about their bodies. Also, it has been observed that the spending habits of people are mounting when it comes to snack foods and this includes children of school age. Due to this observation, it now becomes important to categorize which foods are considered healthy snacks and which are not in order to determine the foods for taxing (Badilas, 2011).

In addition, everyone must be able to balance the incoming and outgoing calories inside the body in order to avoid growing fat cells in the body that can cause weight gain and this could be accomplished through education programs in schools. With proper education about the health effects of obesity and becoming overweight, young people can overcome their weight problems or avoid developing weight issues. Health and nutrition classes where discussions about calories, various food groups, and energy-giving foods, among others, may be included in some subjects to ensure that children are educated from the time they begin attending school up to their graduation in high school.

Education extends not only to students but to the whole school body, too, including cafeteria personnel who prepare and serve the food and the Guidance counselors who should be helping the school in pushing for health and nutrition education. It would also help if families of schoolchildren were also included in the education plan to remain consistent with what the school

espouses to children. Education also includes advocating participation in physical activities and recreational programs apart from following healthy eating habits and lifestyle to address obesity.

For instance, Dr. Donald Kirby, Cleveland Clinic's Center for Human Nutrition director, suggests " a healthful low-fat diet rich in complex carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables and whole grains) and containing about 20-30 percent of calories from lean protein sources, such as baked or broiled fish or chicken, beans, and nuts" (" Win the Battle of the Bulge and the War on Weight", 2012). This is in accordance to the MyPlate initiative of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's recommended daily calorie intake, which states that the plate must be divided into three parts with one half consisting of fruits and vegetables, one-fourth with lean protein, and the remaining one-fourth with whole grains (" Win the Battle of the Bulge and the War on Weight", 2012). Based on the study, weight loss is all about how much calories an individual burned as compared with the amount of calories he or she consumed. Thus, if the ratio between the two is higher on the calories burned, then the expectation is that an individual will lose weight.

If a person engages in an active lifestyle such as brisk walking, taking the stairs and taking the bicycle to work, and learning healthy best practices in school, obesity can be prevented. When an individual decreases the food intake and in place of food, increases the amount of energy expended by the body, then the result is weight loss. In fact, studies show that with exercise, an individual's motivation to eat decreases as " the brain's response to food" (Dallas, 2012) also dwindles. James LeCheminant claims that the " study

provides evidence that exercise not only affects energy output, but it also may affect how people respond to food cues" (as cited in Dallas, 2012). In the same study, women's brain measurements were taken twice - once after a 45-minute brisk walk on the treadmill and the second one, a week after and before performing any exercises. In both instances, women took note of the amount of food they consumed and the corresponding physical activities they did. A clear result that researchers received from the informal test was that women had less interest on food after a good workout and do not "cheat" by falsely rewarding themselves with any type of comfort food. Aside from addressing the problem on obesity, these activities also address other related health problems brought about by obesity such as diabetes, heart diseases, and arthritis, among others.

Therefore, for individuals to become healthier and stronger, it is imperative to adhere to a strict diet and exercise program that works out the body and helps burn calories. If need be, individuals may have to make changes and improve lifestyle practices in order to stay in good health and prevent obesity. Long-term weight loss is possible if "at least 10 percent of initial body weight is kept off for at least one year" ("Secrets of Weight Loss Success", 2012). Although some say it is difficult, it is actually a doable process, and the "longer the weight loss is maintained, the fewer maintenance strategies are needed, making it easier to keep the weight off over time" ("Secrets of Weight Loss Success", 2012). Since concerned health advocates and the government acknowledge the immensity of the problem, now is the best time to properly educate the children and teenagers about

the ill effects of obesity and to impose tax on unhealthy food that could lead to obesity.

References

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