

Health effects of obesity in america essay

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Health Effects of Obesity in America: A Review of the

Literature Abstract Obesity is a growing problem nowadays in America and it is beginning to take its toll through all of the serious health effects it can cause. According to recent studies, about one third of the United States' population today is obese. The health effects that obesity can lead to include heart disease, type 2 diabetes, stroke, and certain kinds of cancer, which are all causes of preventable death. Obesity also causes economic problems due to the higher amounts of medical costs for obese people than those with normal weight. Introduction Obesity in America has become a serious issue these days.

Being obese causes a number of diseases and complications that threaten someone's health. The risks people take every day by living obese can cause life-threatening problems. Living in the United States among the various unhealthy food choices has had a negative impact on American's lives. Since many people are not well aware of these complications related to obesity, important questions may arise that need to be answered: 1. What is the definition of obesity? 2. What are the causes of obesity in America? 3. What risk are people taking every day by being obese? 4.

What are some of the effects that result from obesity? This literature review will examine each of these questions and bring forth an answer to the people who need to be informed of the complications and controversial issues related to the effects on the human body caused by obesity. What is the definition of obesity? Obesity can be defined as a weight greater than the average person that is considered to be healthy. According to Defining Overweight and Obesity (2012) " For adults, overweight and obesity ranges <https://assignbuster.com/health-effects-of-obesity-in-america-essay/>

are determined by using weight and height to calculate a number called the body mass index (BMI).” (Definitions for Adults section). Doctors first need to establish a person’s body mass index (BMI), which helps determine the amount in percentage of fat by using their height and weight. There are several methods used to determine the amount of fat in a person’s body and can include the latest technological systems and devices, measuring skinfold thickness, waist circumference, and waist to hip ratios.

Based on these ratios studies can determine whether a person is at risk for obese related diseases. Defining a person’s body mass index can help determine the seriousness of their obesity and might also help define future health complications. A higher body mass index number directly correlates to a higher weight. So a BMI of 30 or higher is considered to be obese, while a BMI of 25 to 29. 9 is considered overweight (Defining Overweight and Obesity, 2012, Definitions for Adults section).

Determining someone’s BMI is not the only method of knowing whether they are obese or overweight. In fact, doctors use other methods to measure the amount of body fat in the human body that can involve measuring certain areas of the body and using technology to see what is happening inside the body (Defining Overweight and Obesity, 2012, Assessing Health Risks Associated with Overweight and Obesity section). Defining Overweight and Obesity states (2012): “ Other methods of estimating body fat and body fat distribution include measurements of skinfold thickness and waist circumference, calculation of waist-to-hip circumference ratios, and techniques such as ultrasound, computed tomography, and magnetic

resonance imaging (MRI).” What are the causes of obesity in America? Many factors are taken into account as to why people become obese. A big problem in the United States is that people eat more than their body needs, especially if the meals are very unhealthy.

Drinking too much alcohol can also take its toll on the human body, causing weight gain and health complications. Some other factors that can lead to being obese can include unhealthy eating habits, not enough exercise, lack of time, eating disorders or even medical problems such as hypothyroidism. Medicines such as antidepressants, antipsychotics and birth control pills may also increase weight gain. Obesity Causes states (2013) “ The extra weight puts added stress on every part of your body and creates many risks to your health.

” (Possible Complications section) Everyone’s lifestyle is unique and each of the events that they go through in life may affect them in different ways. Stress in someone’s life may create health risks that lead to weight gain. The eating habits we develop since childhood can affect the way we eat as adults. The people that are always doing the same routine every day and have always dwelled and eaten in the same places tend to acquire certain unhealthy habits (“ Obesity Causes,” 2013, Possible Complications section). According to Obesity Causes (2013): “ Taking in more calories than you burn can lead to obesity because the body stores unused calories as fat. Obesity can be caused by: Eating more food than your body can use Drinking too much alcohol Not getting enough exercise Many obese people who lose large amounts of weight and gain it back think it is their fault.

They blame themselves for not having the willpower to keep the weight off. Many people regain more weight than they lost." Eating disorders have unfortunately become an increasing issue among people in America, and it is most common in adolescents although anyone can develop it. An eating disorder can mean a number of different things among people, however when we think about this subject most people tend to believe that it relates only to anorexia.

This nonetheless is not the only eating disorder; in fact bulimia and binge eating are also classified as eating disorders. Bulimia means that a person may appear to eat their food but after they proceed to throw it up thinking that they will lose weight this way. And binge eating disorder encompasses overeating in situations such as extreme stress, sadness, or even anxiety ("Obesity Causes," 2013). Obesity Causes (2013) states: "The term "eating disorder" means a group of medical conditions that have an unhealthy focus on eating, dieting, losing or gaining weight, and body image. A person may be obese, follow an unhealthy diet, and have an eating disorder all at the same time." What risk are people taking every day by being obese? Obesity is a medical condition in which excess body fat has accumulated to the extent that it may have an adverse effect on health, leading to reduced life expectancy and/or increased health problems. These problems can lead to serious illnesses including cancer, which may lead to death ("Weight Loss, Health Risks Associated With Obesity", 2012).

Weight Loss, Health Risks Associated With Obesity (2012) states, "Cancers of the colon, breast (postmenopausal), endometrium (the lining of the

uterus), kidney, and esophagus are associated with obesity. Some studies have also reported links between obesity and cancers of the gallbladder, ovaries, and pancreas." According to *Weight Loss, Health Risks Associated With Obesity* (2012): " Gallbladder disease and gallstones are more common if you are overweight. Your risk of disease increases as your weight increases.

It is not clear how being overweight may cause gallbladder disease. Ironically, weight loss itself, particularly rapid weight loss or loss of a large amount of weight, can actually increase your chances of developing gallstones. Modest, slow weight loss of about 1 pound a week is less likely to cause gallstones." This article gives information about the health risks related to obesity and the ways they affect and are linked to serious illnesses.

The diseases linked to obesity include several types of cancers, osteoarthritis, gall bladder disease, gout and sleep apnea. Most of these ailments impose serious health risks that could potentially lead to death. The article also informs readers about what each of these diseases cause on the human body and how severe they can be. According to *Weight Loss, Health Risks Associated With Obesity* (2012): " Sleep apnea is a serious breathing condition that is associated with being overweight.

Sleep apnea can cause a person to snore heavily and to stop breathing for short periods during sleep. Sleep apnea may cause daytime sleepiness and increase risk for heart disease and stroke. The risk for sleep apnea increases as body weight increases. Weight loss often improves sleep apnea.

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" What are some of the effects that result from obesity? Obesity has been known to cause dangerous and negative effects on our health. There have been thousands of premature deaths in the United States because of obese-related diseases. The conditions related to obesity may include high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, joint problems, cancer, metabolic syndrome, psychosocial effects, sleep apnea and respiratory problems. Overall, obesity has become a dangerous issue that has affected many in the United States causing numerous diseases and conditions that affect the lives of Americans.

According to Health Effects of Obesity (2013), " Each year obesity-related conditions cost over 150 billion dollars and cause an estimated 300, 000 premature deaths in the US." Every year obesity takes its toll on American's lives through the number of people acquiring the diseases and conditions linked to obesity. All of these medical conditions have to be treated, which leads to more money spent on medicine and medical help. Even with all of this money going into trying to improve people's health and curing their diseases, there are people who do not overcome these obstacles and have to face death prematurely. (" Health Effects of Obesity", 2013) The major issue concerning obesity-related diseases that comes to mind has always been heart disease. Although most people do not realize that heart disease can cause many other problems including strokes, heart attacks, blood clots and even atherosclerosis, which is a hardening of the arteries (" Health Effects of Obesity", 2013, Heart Disease section). Health Effects of Obesity (2013) states, " Atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) is present 10 times more often in obese people compared to those who are not obese.

" (Heart Disease section) According to Health Effects of Obesity (2013): " Coronary artery disease is also more prevalent because fatty deposits build up in arteries that supply the heart. Narrowed arteries and reduced blood flow to the heart can cause chest pain (angina) or a heart attack. Blood clots can also form in narrowed arteries and cause a stroke."(Heart Disease section)Not only does obesity affect the health of many Americans, it also seems to affect their social status in their community. For example, Health Effects of Obesity (2013) says: " In a culture where often the ideal of physical attractiveness is to be overly thin, people who are overweight or obese frequently suffer disadvantages. Overweight and obese persons are often blamed for their condition and may be considered to be lazy or weak-willed. It is not uncommon for overweight or obese conditions to result in persons having lower incomes or having fewer or no romantic relationships. Disapproval of overweight persons expressed by some individuals may progress to bias, discrimination, and even torment." (Psychosocial Effects section)ConclusionThis literary review analyzes and answers four important research questions on the topic. The first one asks about the definition of obesity and what being obese is comprised of. The second question asks about the causes of obesity in America.

The third question asked was about the risks people take by being obese, including complications and health issues. The last question examines the resulting effects of being obese, including the psychological damage it may cause. However, by informing people who are obese or at risk of becoming obese of the consequences and health concerns, many people will hopefully

take action and begin taking better care of both their physical and mental health. References Centers for Disease Control, (2012).

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