# Analysing obesity in the us

Obesity continues to be a growing crisis in the United States. Too many people aren't taking into account that it's become a serious health threat that people can prevent, but it's as if people aren't trying. Too much food in too many places and so much technology made for so many different things are causing people to notice their waistlines expanding. People claim that they can't help how heavy they and blame it on things such as not be able to exercise because they're too busy, when it's a number of different things. People need to start doing things in their every day life to avoid becoming obese.

It seems like now days Americans are worried about their weight more than ever. With all the diet pills, health clubs, and just plain fitness craze one would think the United States would be in pretty good shape, but it's the complete opposite. The more variety of unhealthy foods that are offered and the more short cuts technology are providing now days, the more Americans find their waistlines expanding. Why is it that healthy foods are so expensive and junk food is always five for the price of one? Obesity is a major problem in the United States today. With all the troubles and worries in the world, obesity is quickly becoming a very important problem to worry about. It can basically be made into a life and death situation. The parents that just sit on the couch eating chips while setting an example for their children, the schools that want to cut their physical education class, the greasy foods that fast food restaurants provide, and the major food companies that keep coming up with new ideas to add to the number of unhealthy choices Americans make are just a few of the many causes of this rising epidemic.

Obesity is continuing to get worse as more and more people continue to eat themselves to the point where they can't do anything about it. Americans are literally eating themselves to death and do not realize it. The government continues to warn that obesity is getting out of control and something has to be done, but how is anything going to get done if nobody is doing anything about it? According to Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee from an article written by Karen Tumulty, if someone isn't willing to step in, the generation of young Americans being brought into this world today is being expected to have a shorter life span than their parents and even their grandparents (Tumulty, 2006). There are so many choices in today's food and nearly half of America's food is proven to be unhealthy. It is not easy to make the choice between a salad with low fat dressing versus a quick plump juicy burger from McDonalds. Children are being taught that it's okay to eat fast food, and aren't being pushed to eat their fruits, vegetables, as well as many other things that are needed for a healthy diet. According to Kaplan (1998), " children learn to eat the wrong foods and consume empty calories from junk food each day" (p. 218). As children get older, they won't know how to make the right choices between healthy snacks and junk food. America will soon find that obesity rates have sky rocketed, and they won't be able to do anything about it. Time is running out, and someone has to step in to stop this soon to be number one killer.

Although metabolism has to deal with the way people burn the food they eat, doesn't mean that the metabolism they might get from their parents is going to make them obese. Bjorntorp (2001), stated that " several observations point in the direction that physical inactivity is the main cause of the obesity

epidemic" (p. 1006). If one doesn't exercise how do they expect to maintain a healthy weight? People have to eat in order to survive. It's what they eat, and how much they eat that plays a part on how their body looks. Children weight more today than they did 20 years ago and the main problem appears to be not getting enough exercise (Kaplan, 1998). How does a person think they are going to remain healthy if they don't somehow burn some of the calories they ingest daily? America is surrounded by unlimited, easily available foods. Nobody ever has to worry about running out of food. Although it's hard to fight off the urge to reach for that bag of chips, it's quite possible. People have to learn self will and the fact is that the more weight people gain the harder it is for them to lose weight.

As just mentioned, exercising helps a person lose weight, but if someone has McDonalds for lunch and supper every day then run over five miles daily isn't going to help them to be healthier. They may not become obese, but once they become older and aren't able to run as much as they used to, then they soon find their metabolism slows down. They now have to change their eating habits because they start having health problems that interfere with their everyday life. It doesn't matter how active someone can be, having an unhealthy diet can cause serious health problems later down the road.

Obesity can't be blamed on only one thing; it's a number of different things. Of course eating healthy is a sure way to fight off obesity. According to an online source, a study's lead author " blames the environment in which Americans live." He says, " there is too much food available, social situations encourage overeating, restaurants compete with each other by offering bigger and bigger servings and technology has made it possible to avoid

exercise" (1998). If we have problems now with trying to find ways to be active, imagine how it will be like ten years from now. Pretty soon things will be so easy that nobody will care they are obese when in today's society obesity is looked down upon. How far is this rising epidemic going to go?

Discrimination goes back to the early Christian church when gluttony was one of the seven deadly sins. According to Spake (2004), " obesity was viewed as the outward manifestation of the ' sin' of overindulgence" (p. 52). It seems like today the media is trying to make it look like being overweight isn't bad. Although obesity is brought up as such a major problem, why is the media trying to make it look like being overweight isn't bad? Some would argue that it's for the teenage girls that are struggling with an eating disorder. Seeing skinny models all over the television screen doesn't help teenage girls with problems like that, but seeing bigger people; even obese people, all over the television screen doesn't help children figure out that eating healthy helps you to remain fit either.

Obesity can cause a lot of problems in a persons life; problems that are preventable. Becoming obese has many health problems related to it. So far, obesity is catching up to smoking as the number one cause of preventable death. According to the American Obesity Association major insurance companies boost coverage for obesity treatment and prevention, and a person's lifespan may be cut short by obesity. Obesity carries the major risk for getting type II diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and some cancers. Tumulty (2006) stated that, " health care providers say they are seeing something of an epidemic of potentially lethal Type II diabetes, once known as the adult-onset version of the disease, among children as young as

10 and 11" (p. 40). How are the next generations going to survive when America provides to this deadly disease known as obesity.

Children learn how to eat healthy at a young age. Fact is that if children are fed healthy foods, and are taught to eat healthy foods at a young age then they are bound to keep it that way as they get older; this has to start with the parents. If parents sit on the couch and eat high fat foods then tell their children to eat right and go out and exercise isn't gong to get the job done. Parents have to keep foods that are high in fat, and sodas that are high in sugar out of the house. They should have fruits and vegetables on hand so their children learn to eat healthy. Children can have pretty much all they want of fruits and vegetables. In an interview done by Nanci Hellmich (2006) with nutrition professionals it was stated that eating habits begin with the parents. Eat healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables and stay away from the high fat and deep fried foods. Also be sure to have some sort of physical activity daily (p. 8d). Parents have control over what their child eats at a young age, but once the child starts to go to school, it's hard to see what the child eats. This is where the school should step in. Standards should be set with the types of foods that are provided in school lunches, but how is this going to be done if there isn't any intervention from the school itself?

People have control over their own body, but these day it's hard for working parents to find time to prepare meals from fresh food when all they have to do is pay for cheep fast food that can by bought in big portions. It's also hard for children going to schools that are getting rid of their physical education classes and playgrounds because the school doesn't have enough money to support such things. Instead they allow vending machines and food

advertising in their buildings. The article *Junk Food Nation* by Gary Ruskin and Juliet Schor is trying to tell people that junk food has become a major problem in the US today concerning obesity and certain people aren't taking into consideration that it actually is a real problem. They blame it on other things like watching too much TV and not exercising enough. They don't think the greasy foods that fast food restaurants provide and the king sized bags of candy that gas stations sell as well as lunches that schools sell don't play a part in the young obesity in this country. When really it plays a big part and the people that should care about this problem leave it up to the people that really don't have much control over it (Ruskin & Schor, 2005). If a child goes to a school that doesn't have any physical education classes and receives a unhealthy lunch everyday is bound to live an unhealthy life-style.

Children these days are getting bigger than ever and it's as if nobody cares. It also seems like the media is targeting the youth of the United States. Tumulty (2006) stated that, " the rates of obesity among children and teens have tripled in the past 25 years" (p. 40). The next generations are going to be bigger than ever. According to an article by Gary Ruskin and Juliet Schor (2005), " Kraft announced it would no longer market Oreos to younger children, McDonald's promoted itself as a salad producer and Coca-Cola said it won't advertise to kids under 12. But behind the scenes it's hardball as usual, with junk food giants pushing the Bush Administration to defend their interests" (p. 15). Children these days are getting bigger than ever. It's not just because of the foods they eat, it's because they're parents and how they set an example for them, the school lunches they're provided everyday, and the chances they actually get to be outside or just plain get to get up and do

something. If schools are getting rid of their physical education classes, how are today's youth and America's future youth going to be able to stay fit? With how bad obesity is now, why is America making it worse?

Schools need to make it clear to children about the effects of eating unhealthy. Grimm (n. d.) stated that a " Department of Agriculture study calculated that 95% of the 10, 000 food commercials children see each year pitch high fat, high sugar products" (p. 108). How far are big food companies willing to go to make the future generations of America even unhealthier than it already is? America knows that obesity has become something serious, yet schools are marketing to their students with allowing vending machines with unhealthy foods as well as soda machines with drinks that are high in sugar and calories while getting rid of their physical education classes because they don't have enough money to support it. Vending companies are offering schools money just so the school will market their product. It's almost as if food companies are more worried about their own businesses rather than worrying about this growing health issue occurring in the United States.

Overeating seems to be a problem in the United States today. This can be one of the main causes for the number of obese people in America. Restaurants provide huge meals and fast food restaurants provide large portions of greasy foods for cheep. A glycemic index (GI) indicates the rate at which carbohydrates are digested and absorbed and this can also trigger over eating (Amersbach, 1999). Foods with a low GI includes fruit and vegetables; foods with a medium GI include milk and oatmeal; and foods with a high GI includes the foods that Americans love such as muffins,

donuts, and so on. If one eats a low GI breakfast it's been proven that they feel fuller and eat less through out the day. If one eats a high GI breakfast then those people usually find that they're eating an hour later because they feel hungry. If a person is hungry two hours after a meal, the fact is that they've eaten the wrong foods.

Obesity can cause a lot of problems in a person's everyday life. Imagine going to a theater and not being able to fit into the seats or having to buy an extra plane ticket because it's not possible to fit into just one seat, but most of all imagine going out in public while having every person just stare. Obesity doesn't just cause health problems; it causes mental and physiological problems as well. How can eating; the simplest thing ever, turn into something so deadly? Why do people seem to indulge in so many unhealthy foods when they know the consequences? With all the choices there are in America and all the marketing for unhealthy foods, it shouldn't surprise people that obesity has become a fatal problem in the United States today; a fatal problem that can be prevented. If something isn't done now, obesity will continue to threaten the lives of many. How can one avoid becoming obese? It's simple; eat right, exercise, and remember that obesity is a disease that is treatable, but one has to be willing to help their self. No drugs and prescriptions can treat this disease. It's the personal responsibility a person must have to keep their body fit and to live a healthy lifestyle.

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