

Obesity is a disease

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People are judged daily for being “ too chunky” or “ pudgy and plump”; if you ever do this, consider the fact that obesity is a disease that affects people universally. National Institutes of Health reveals, “ More than 2 in 3 adults are considered to be overweight or obese, and more than 1 in 20 adults are considered to have extreme obesity” (1). Obesity is the condition of being fat or overweight, and having a body mass index of 30 or over, and is becoming a global epidemic.

Although it is true obesity can very well be treated and prevented with the simple solution of a healthy diet and exercise, obesity is a disease because, in correlation with the definition of a disease, obesity can be genetically caused, decreases life expectancy, and impairs human functioning. A person’s genetics determines their health and appearance; if a person’s grandparents were short, it is likely they will be short as well. The same can happen with obesity. For instance if you struggle with obesity, it is almost guaranteed that a member of your family struggles with obesity too; the likelihood of a person becoming obese can be swayed by their genes.

Although some argue that this is extremely rare, and obesity is the result of one’s actions, researchers are finding more and more links between genetics and obesity.

In fact Harvard School of Public Health says, “ researchers identified the first obesity-related gene variants; these gene variants are fairly common, and people who carry one have a 20 to 30 percent higher risk of obesity than people who do not” (1). Not only does this exemplify the effects of a person’s genes, and how those genes greatly manipulate a person’s likelihood to become obese, but it proves obesity is in fact a disease, for a disease is a

disorder, or incorrectly functioning body system resulting from genetics. Thousands of diseases are known to cut people's lives short, and obesity does just that. Having a BMI (Body Mass Index) of 30 or above and an extreme amount of fat leads to several health issues in one's life, and these issues can be extremely life threatening.

Impairing human functioning, obesity has side effects such as a stroke, kidney failure, diabetes, sleep apnea, and high blood pressure (Treating Obesity as a Disease 1). Like millions of other diseases, obesity threatens the lives of individuals with the several dangerous conditions that come with its wearisome, and so easily obtained presence. People need to know and understand the serious effects having the disease obesity can have upon an individual's life. It's argued often that obesity is caused by one's lifestyle, and should not be considered a disease because of this. Kabat brings up the point that smoking also leads to many health problems and can be used as an analogy to obesity (1).

Although he is correct, the analogy is not perfect because one can quit smoking and survive, but no one can quit eating. This sets obesity aside from conditions caused from things like tobacco, and other substances because obesity's faults can not be simply improved upon by cutting off its immediate cause, in this case an overconsumption of food. Many obese people are simply too fat to function properly. It can get to the point where people cannot even stand up by themselves; in these cases diet and exercise is not going to cure their obesity or the several other extreme conditions that their obesity caused. There are also cases in which people are not able to exercise due to other health conditions, such as an irregular heartbeat, leaving them

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completely vulnerable to becoming obese, but obesity's consequences don't stop at limiting the human body physically. Obesity can affect mental health (negative moods) and fertility by causing hormonal imbalances.

Life can become exasperating mentally and physically when it is overcome by obesity. Affecting people's health, and ability to live life fully, obesity is a disease extending extremely rapidly throughout the world, and has become an increasingly dangerous condition. Although it is a highly preventable and curable condition it is and must be recognized as a disease to stop its spreading influence, because it is a serious medical issue that needs to be treated as one in order to see improved results. Obesity is a disease that shortens one's expected lifetime, and it needs to be treated as a disease because the "personal responsibility" argument is ineffective. So, next time you are judging a person with obesity, or are struggling with it yourself, remember it is a serious disease that in some cases is much more difficult to prevent, and should be treated to live a healthy, fulfilled life. Sources "Overweight and Obesity in the U.

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