

Free essay on what has caused the dramatic rise in overweight and obese adults in...

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



Every now and then, new campaigns are launched in America, to create awareness regarding problems created by obesity. Such efforts are being made in the context of the sudden increase in overweight and obese adults in America in this decade. Millions of Americans have fallen victim to obesity and are struggling to cope with it. It is pertinent to mention here the difference between being obese and being overweight. A person is overweight if his body weight is at least 10 percent over the recommended weight with relation to the height (“ Understanding Obesity”). However, a person is obese if the weight of that person is at least 30 percent above the ideal weight for that person determined with reference to height (“ Understanding Obesity”). America has seen a rise in both overweight and obese individuals. Although obesity is more harmful than simply being overweight, both pose threats to health of an individual. This paper attempts to dig into the causes of the dramatic rise in obesity in America in the last ten years and furthermore, explores its effects.

One of the major reasons for the sharp increase in overweight and obese individuals is an inactive lifestyle (“ What causes overweight and obesity”). Changes like increased reliance on cars instead of preferring to walk and fewer physical elements in tasks at work and home due to the introduction of modern technology accelerated the rise. Almost the whole day is spent by adults either in front a computer at work or television at home. Laziness is encouraged by the easy availability of movies via downloads from the internet. Interestingly, more than 2 hours of television every day bears a close relationship with obesity (“ What causes overweight and obesity”). Free home deliveries even eradicate the need to walk to the nearest market

to grab some food. Calories that are taken in have to be burned during the course of the day. This is not possible if the lifestyle does not permit adequate physical activity.

Another major driving factor for the rise in obese individuals is the type of food and the size of food portions that are being fed to the Americans (“What causes overweight and obesity”). The omnipresent advertisements of fast food have boosted its popularity. Fast food is the source of the highest number of calories. Moreover, the quantity of food per person served in restaurants is larger than appropriate as it is usually suitable for two people. This means that the energy being taken in is huge and needs to be balanced with increased physical activity. Otherwise, obesity is inevitable.

Interestingly, some medicines also lead to obesity. These medicines include some corticosteroids, antidepressants, and seizure medicines (“What causes overweight and obesity”). These medicines either decrease the speed at which calories are burned or increase appetite. With the increase in depression patients in America over these years, the intake of antidepressants obviously increased and were thus partly responsible for the rise in obese individuals. Other than that, sleep deprivation can also lead to becoming overweight (“What causes overweight and obesity”). Proper sleep helps to keep the hormones that make one feel full or hungry in balance. However, lack of sleep disturbs this balance and the level of hormones that make one feel hungry is increased. Thus, a person is expected to feel less hungry when well-rested.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the obesity leads to a variety of serious health problems (“Health Effects of Obesity”). High blood pressure is one of

the most common problems associated with it. Higher pressure is created on the artery walls due to need for more blood circulation which increases blood pressure. Obesity is also the major cause of Type 2 Diabetes. Heart diseases like coronary heart disease, angina attacks and strokes are also included in its harmful effects. Joint problems due to more stress of the increased weight on knees and hips can crop up. The risk of cancer is also increased both in men and women. Obesity has also been linked to more migraines.

Moreover, obesity has an economic impact. National Healthcare costs have seen a sharp increase as “ obesity is associated with health care costs that average about 40 percent above those for normal weight individuals” (“ Economic Impact of Obesity”). Obesity also impacts productivity at work which indirectly bears a burden on the economy. Increased worker absences, as a result of obesity-related illnesses, earlier mortality, increases disability benefits and lowered productivity when at work affect the economy adversely.

In a nutshell, being overweight or obese can lead to serious consequences, both on the health of the concerned individual and on the society as a whole. Some causes may seem unavoidable as the presence of modern machines to do tasks that limit physical activity. However, it is better to realize that a balance has to be achieved between the intake of energy and its utilization in order to stay away from the menace of obesity.

Works Cited

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