

Causes of american obesity

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



Causes of American Obesity : Obesity is a medical condition in human beings, in which the body overproduces body fats, to such an extent that the excess body fats which usually accumulates within the body, can lead to other health problems like increase in body size or the thickening of blood vessels, which may eventually lead to heart attack or high blood pressure. Obesity is a global health issue, but it's mostly common in the west, due to the kind of life style the people live. Obese people are usually stigmatized by the society due to their health status, meaning they are viewed as being in trouble. Whether obesity is a cause or reason for such stigma, is however debatable (Vogel, 2007). In the United States, obesity was not a major problem until the 1980s when it was viewed as a national epidemic. In the 1990s, scholars and researchers struggled to look for the causes of obesity with some scholars postulating that it could be caused by a virus which behaves like the HIV virus, while others in 2007 theorized that it could be caused by the influence of individuals by their family members to over eat, thereby becoming obese (Ibsen2006). The fact about obesity in the United States is that it is one of the highest in the world, and has been on the increase since the late 1990s. As of 2007, about 74% of all the adults were either obese or overweight . The problem of obesity comes with high financial costs to the United States, with as of 2003, the government was spending up to \$75 billion total on obesity expenses. This is according to the researchers on disease control and prevention (Ibsen2006). Obesity can be caused by several factors like genetic, and the life style of an individual. Genetic factors mean that the disease can be transmitted through genes, from parent to child. On this, little can be done since it's not an easy task to

control the process of gene transmission. Lifestyle means the kind of life the person lives. If the person does not do exercises and eats fast foods, then he/she could become obese. This can be controlled through proper diet and regular exercises (Ibsen2006).

1. Our body produces fats, which are important for keeping the body warm as well as providing energy during starvation. But too much fat in our body can be dangerous because it can lead to the increase of blood pressure and other health problems. Research has shown that our genes determine the amount of fats our bodies can store. There are some genes which stimulate the body to keep more fats while others may stimulate the same body to keep less quantity of fats. People with the genes which stimulate fat storage therefore have a higher probability of becoming obese than those with genes which inhibit fat storage in the body. Genes are passed from parent to child through birth. This means that parents may pass the genes for being obese to their children. Studies done in the United States show that a child born of two parents, with whom one is obese has a 50% chance of becoming obese, while the one born of two parents who are obese having an 80% of becoming obese. This means that obesity is a genetic disease (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). The process of reproduction is very complicated that very little can be done to alter the genes which cause obesity. This is to mean that individuals with the genetic inclinations to obesity can only be helped through advising them to get married to partners who do not have the trait, so as to minimize the chances of siring children with the condition. They can also be helped through advice about what they eat. It is important to note that even though genes influence obesity, a lot is determined by what people eat and if they

do exercises or not. This means that people who have the genetic inclination to obesity can minimize the manifestation of the condition in them by observing good diet as well as doing regular exercises. This will not only suppress the phenotypic manifestation of the condition but also help them improve their general health conditions (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Behavioral factors are the main causes of obesity in United States. Behavioral factors include the lifestyle of the people and the nature of their diet. The kind of food people eat highly influences their ability to become obese or not. Many fast foods have high quantities of calories, which when taken, makes the body store the excess as fat, which in turn leads to weight gain. Many nutritious foods like fruits also are good for the body since they contain less quantities of calories, which makes them good for the body; but if taken in large quantities, they still have the potential of causing obesity (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). In the United States, many people are struggling to achieve a lot in life, through doing business, investment or other daily chores. The busy lifestyle that most Americans are evolved with leaves no chance for them to enjoy healthy food. This is further complimented by the fact that they do not do exercises for the body to burn or utilize the excess calories, thus leading to obesity (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Between the years 1976- 1980 and 1988-1994, the prevalence of obesity in the United States of America increased. This means that the BMI (the Body Mass Indicator) was higher than the average. However, these studies are in agreement with trends seen in other parts of the world. (Journal _ comparative study) In the United States, there is improved transport system which is not only efficient but also reliable and affordable. There is also the presence of excellent communication

infrastructure, which minimizes ups and downs. This deprives the Americans an opportunity to exercise by default. Even though recently people have embraced the use of gyms to lose weight, the majority of people who go there usually get bored and stop the gym, leaving them exposed to the factors which cause obesity (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Many Americans have access to media and the Internet and they are addicted to it, especially the younger ones. They spend most of their time watching programs on the television and browsing on the Internet. This therefore exposes them to the danger of becoming obese in an early age. It should also be noted that the road infrastructure in the United States does not encourage physical exercises because many roads do not have foot paths and bike paths so children do not have the opportunity to walk or ride to and from school, which is an excellent opportunity to do physical exercise (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). In this discussion, I have tried to research on the main causes of obesity in the United States. The problem of obesity in the United States is a real one; which is actually described as an epidemic. The United States has got the largest percentage of people who are obese. The government of the United States also spends large chunks of its budget in dealing with the disease, which may cause negative economic implications (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Obesity is caused by a variety of factors. These factors include diet, genetic and behavioral as well as the environment. The type of food a person eats may determine if he/she will be obese or not. Foodstuffs with high calories content may not be good for the health of the individual because the excess calories are converted to fats, which make the person gain weight (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Many people in the United States have a lifestyle

which makes them exposed to obesity. They do not embrace good and balanced diet, but they rather embrace the culture of eating fast foods, which contain high calorie content. They lack enough time to prepare nutritious foods. They are also very busy and occupied with life issues, do not do physical exercise to burn or utilize the extra calories. The presence of excellent transport system and communication infrastructure makes the people have no choice than to become lazy (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). The environment in the United States also makes its citizens prone to becoming obese. The roads do not have pathways for people to walk or a ride bike, which makes them entirely, rely on driving, which does not give them any opportunity to do physical exercise (Salinsky & Scott, 2003). Obesity is also caused by genetic factors, in which parents who are obese, give birth to children with a potential of developing obesity. Even though this may not play a key role, it reinforces the poor lifestyles lived by the people, thereby making them become obese, due to the combination of genetic, environmental, diet, and lifestyle factors (Finkelstein & Zuckerman, 2008). The recommendations to solve the problem of obesity in the United States center mainly on improving the diet and physical exercises. Most Americans do not have access to good markets to purchase balanced foods. They also lack the purchasing power. This makes some of them eat fast foods, which are readily available and accessible as well as affordable. The government should ensure that there are enough markets in all the neighborhoods which sale nutritious food at an affordable cost. This will reduce the prevalence of obesity among the Americans (Finkelstein & Zuckerman, 2008). Education is a fundamental factor if minimizing of the countries influence is sought.

Communicating the fact that “ what food do what, how and why” would increase people awareness on food and how to lose weight and be wise in their food selection. One of the most effective means of passing this knowledge and increasing awareness was through media. Programs like “ The biggest Loser” could change the status and created a high demand on public to work on improving their life style and eating habits. The government should also carry out a mass civic education and campaigns, targeting the youth, focusing on behavior and lifestyle change. The youth and children should be encouraged to do a lot of physical exercise, at a tender age, so that they minimize the chances of becoming obese (Finkelstein & Zuckerman, 2008). Moreover, the infrastructure should be restructured to create more parks for children and people to do exercises. The roads should be expanded to include pathway for people to walk or ride bicycles on their way to work or to school and back. This will ensure that they get an opportunity to exercise by default (Finkelstein & Zuckerman, 2008). All these recommendations require policy change or policy initiation, to come up with programs, which encourage people to do more exercises, as well as take control of the fast food. This will ensure that what is available in the markets is nutritious as well as balanced, which in turn will guard the people against business men, who sale fast food, with the aim of making profit, at the expense of people health. Once this is done, then instances of obesity will be greatly minimized in the United States of America (Finkelstein & Zuckerman, 2008). References Ibsen. K.,(2006). Review for USMLE: United States medical licensing examination, step 2 CK. New York: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins Publishers. Finkelstein & Zuckerman. L.,(2008). The

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