

Obesity and social demographics in the US



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

Obesity is not a new term in America. As a matter of fact this is a health condition that has become common to the American citizens and the rest of the world. Sadly, this is not a laughing matter considering the fact that it has led to a number of deaths in the U. S. So, what is obesity? According to the medical-dictionary this refers to “ an abnormal accumulation of body fat, usually 20% or more over an individual’s ideal body weight. Obesity is associated with increased risk of illness, disability, and death.” A few years back this health issue was not a major problem to the U. S. However, this has greatly changed considering the effects that obesity has on American citizens. Certainly, there are other countries that are also going through the same health problems but American cases on effects of obesity still tops them all.

The benefit of having lower body weight is not a big concern for the Americans. This is the main reason why its citizens are not motivated in any way to ensure that they have the recommended body weight. Hence, obesity is continuously increasing more so in the 21st century. The number of people facing obesity problems in this century is higher as compared to the 19th century. Research by the health experts show that out of ten Americans three of them are obese. The number of deaths that obese cause is more than 120, 000 and to top this, there are also huge medical expenses that these individuals have to face. Obesity is a disease that is actually preventable and necessary measures are now being implemented to ensure that the effects are reduced in the coming years.

As mentioned earlier United States has been dominating by having the highest rates of people who are obese. However, this changed in 2013 according to recent Global Post July 8th 2013 that Mexico had taken over as the leading nation having more obese cases. In a study conducted by JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) in 2008 it revealed that the rates of women suffering from obese were higher than that of the men. According to this study the women's rates have been constant over the years as compared to the men's rate that is constantly increasing.

Yearly the effects of obese in America are heavily felt since it leads to "approximately 100, 000-400, 000 deaths" as Blackburn, G L; Walker (2005) points out. This is not all, the health care expenditures are also high, and hence the government and the public suffer in paying for services that would reduce the overall effects of obesity. The effects of obesity in the U. S can either be direct or indirect. The direct effects come about as the expenses that are incurred in paying for care and other required services. The negative effects touch on loss of earnings by the individuals that are suffering from obese and absenteeism from work places. Finkelstein, E. A. and Fiebelkorn (2003) argue that the expenses that are incurred as a result of obesity "exceeds health-care costs associated with smoking or problem drinking". This clearly shows the extent of damage that obesity is causing in America. Indeed it is a major health issue that needs to be taken care of to save the nation from such huge expenses.

Prevalence of obesity in U. S

The fact that obesity rates in America have increased since 1962 also means that its prevalence is also wide. People from all walks of life are now obese in America; the children, people from different racial backgrounds, men and women all are constantly coming up as obese.

Obesity prevalence according to race

According to CDC health statistics the prevalence of obesity with regards to race is uneven. This implies that different races have got different rates of obese individuals.

Caucasian race

In 2010, the rate of obese individuals from this race was 26. 8% according to CDC statistics. The rate of men suffering from the disease was higher than for the women from this race.

African American race

Statistics from CDC proved that the rate of people suffering from obese that were of the African American race was higher than the Caucasian race. This rate was 36. 9%. There is also a difference in the rate of men as compared to women. Women from this race had higher rates of obese cases as compared to their counterparts.

American Indian race

American Indian rate of obese individuals was higher than both Caucasian and the black American race in 2010.

Asian race

The Asian race in the U. S. had the smallest percentage of obese cases according to statistics from CDC 2010.

Latino race

The Latino race rates were close to the rates that the African Americans had i. e. 31. 9%. The rates of women suffering from obese were higher than men.

Mexican American race

This race also depicted a percentage prevalence that was closer to the African Americans i. e. 34. 1%

Hawaiian race

This race depicted the highest prevalence rate i. e. 43. 5% in 2010 according to statistics from CDC.

Obesity prevalence according to gender

Judging from the results mentioned above, women have higher rates of obese as compared to the men. This is also true according to Rippe James that “ 30 million men and 36 million women” suffer from obese in the U. S.

Obesity prevalence according to age group

There is also a notable change in the prevalence of obesity in relation to age group. Years back only the adults were suffering from obese disease. This has changed in the 21st century since children are also obese including those that are adolescent.

<https://assignbuster.com/obesity-and-social-demographics-in-the-us/>

Obesity prevalence according to state

Different states in the U. S also bring about a difference in the obesity cases are throughout the nation. Mississippi stands as the state that has the highest rates of obese cases. Colorado has the smallest rate of obese cases.

There are different reasons as to why the U. S. citizens are facing high rates of obese individuals as compared to other nations. Some of the reasons are as discussed below:

Diet

Diet is the main contributing factor to increased rates of obese cases. Truth be told, the media normally portrays the citizens of U. S. as individuals who are normally busy with their regular hustle and bustle. This thus creates a scenario where parents or the adults do not have time to cook. This makes kids to prefer eating from fast food hotels. According to CBS news (2004), 1/3 of children between the age of 4 and 9 eat from fast food hotels on a daily basis. These fast food restaurants normally sell foods that have high fat and carbohydrate content. They are also preferred due to their affordable prices. Without doubt, foods that have got high fat calorie would easily lead to obesity. It is also evident that most Americans love to eat from these fast foods considering the fact that these restaurants increased their sales over the years.

Lifestyle

The lifestyle that the American citizens are portraying is also another factor that leads to obese.

<https://assignbuster.com/obesity-and-social-demographics-in-the-us/>

This is the lifestyle where an individual is not engaged in any physical activity either on a regular basis or an uneven basis. With the advancement in technology more and more American kids are simply idling at home playing computer games, watching television, reading etc. This implies that they do not engage in any activity that would help them burn the calories that they take in. The adults are also “ not active at all” (Rippe James). As a result the regular eating on fast foods restaurants as mentioned above combined with sedentary lifestyle will obviously lead to obesity. Most of the Americans do not engage in physical activities e. g. working out in the gym, morning jogs, walking, swimming etc. Therefore, excess calories in their systems eventually lead to obesity cases and aftermath complications.

Social transformation

Humans were made to be social in nature. This generally affects their eating habits considering the fact that as more people get together it is normal to have meals to go along with the socialization. This is everywhere, sports zones you will find food being served e. g. popcorns and soda, in parties’ people would want to taste what they have always envied. The same case applies to funerals since individuals are normally served while mourning. The social lives that Americans engage into highly contribute to their eating habits and thus in the end leading to obese cases.

The advancement in technology in the U. S. has also paved way for sedentary lifestyles. People spend more time watching TV and posting information on the social sites. News media has also affected social lives of American citizens by focusing too many advertisements on food and the

worst part is the fact that children are mostly used in the commercials. This thus motivates the kids to eat such food in large quantities.

Measures to help reduce obese disease in the U. S

On the bright side, Americans are doing the best they can to ensure that obese cases are reduced. Some of the effective measures that are already taking place are advocating of proper eating habits. The banning of junk foods in schools is also helping in making America an obese free nation. Several organizations have made it their duty to pass out a message to the Americans about the effects of obesity and the preventive measures that can be easily adopted right from the tables of the citizens. Food manufacturers in the U. S are also in favor of the initiative to reduce obesity in America. As a result they are trying their level best to manufacture foods that have less sugar, salt and fat content.

Conclusion

Obesity in the U. S is a serious case keeping in mind that it had led to deaths that can easily be prevented. Thus, it is the duty of people and the society at large to ensure that they strive to make America an obese free nation. One of the best ways to do this is to change the eating habits that are being portrayed in different families. The lifestyles also need to be change and thus people should be advised on the benefits of exercising regularly to burn down the calories that they are taking in. manufactures and other nonprofit organizations need to educate the society on benefits of healthy living. With such measures in place, the prevalent rates of obese cases would certainly reduce to single figured percentages.

<https://assignbuster.com/obesity-and-social-demographics-in-the-us/>

References:

Blackburn, George L, and W A. Walker. " Science-based Solutions to Obesity: What Are the Roles of Academia, Government, Industry and Health Care?" (2005). Print.

Finkelstein, E A. " National Medical Spending Attributable to Overweight and Obesity: How Much, and Who's Paying?" *Health Affairs* . (2003). Print.

Global Post July 8, 2013, 4: 19 PM (2013-07-08)." *Mexico takes title of " most obese" from America"* . CBS News.

" Obesity." Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine . 2008. The Gale Group, Inc. 28 Apr. 2014<http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Obesity>

Rippe, James M, and Theodore J. Angelopoulos. *Obesity: Prevention and Treatment* . Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2012. Print.

Summary Health Statistics for U. s. Adults: National Health Interview Survey, 1998 . Hyattsville, Md: Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, 2002. Internet resource.