

Nutritionassignment assignment



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Nutrition It is no secret the United States is currently facing an ever growing obstacle when it comes to obesity and nutrition amongst the population. “ During the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States and rates remain high... no state had a prevalence of obesity less than 20%... thirty six states had a prevalence of 25% or more. ” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011). This is a substantial increase from the results recorded 20 years ago.

Since American culture is comprised of numerous nationalities, it is important to identify both the characteristics of individual nationality nutrition trends and those of which that have been picked up through current trends in the American culture. We as a society need to regain a foothold on this issue, as our children will inherit these unfortunate trends and suffer greatly. In most cultures outside of the United States, food plays an intricate role in traditions as it is pastime for friends and families to come together and share a meal.

For other cultures there is more symbolism and appreciation for the meals that are prepared and there may even be a religious impact that comes from consuming specific items. In American culture, we have embraced the variety of foods available, and many share the tradition of consuming meals with family and friends during festivities and celebrations. Unfortunately as a nation, we have also become inept to overindulging in this pastime due to the abundance of options available. In Arab culture obesity is less of an issue than nutritional value.

Food is considered a gift in these countries and by offering it to family and friends, you are displaying a sign of affection. Nutritionally, Arab diets consist of what is available and affordable. Since a majority of the Arabic population lives at or below the poverty level, nutritional deficiencies are on the rise. “ Arab Americans most at risk for nutritional deficiencies include newly arrived immigrants from Yemen and Iraq and Arab American households below the poverty level. (Purnell & Paulanka, 2008, Trans-cultural Healthcare, p 120). German culture is becoming synonymous with American culture in regards to obesity rates. This trend has much to do with the food preparations with high-fat and sugar ingredients. This is a difficult obstacle for those of the German background as food has become a well known characteristic of the German culture. Overeating is quite common, and it is even customary to reward children with food for exhibiting good behavior (Purnell & Paulanka, 2008).

These factors as well as the tendency to prepare generous amounts of food increases health risks. Similarly, food served in the Polish culture is high in carbohydrates, sodium, and saturated fats. Both cultures exhibit common high blood sugar and cholesterol levels increasing the risk for obesity and diabetes. Several cultures practice nutritional awareness in their home countries by promoting a healthy diet, and serving meals that are suggested to be beneficial for the body, mind, and in some cases, even the soul.

Examples of this would be many Asian cultures and Russian cultures that implore its citizens to eat healthy by eating lean meats and vegetables with every meal. It is after their assimilation into American culture that they taper off good eating habits due to availability and cost of ingredients and the

numerous fast food establishments among other factors. Only in the last decade have we seen our nation recognizing the issue of nutrition and obesity amongst the population but little is effectively being done to combat this issue.

Many states have implored the legislation to provide consumers with nutritional information on all foods and beverages. These programs seem like a worthwhile effort, however many Americans are still uneducated on what they should be consuming to begin with, and many companies have found loop holes to market their products to suggest that they are healthier alternatives. In a statement by the Surgeon General Dr. Richard Carmona (2003), he states that “ Low health literacy contributes to our nation’s epidemic of overweight and obesity

Reference Center for Disease Control and Prevention. U. S. Obesity Trends. 2010. Retrieved October 16. 2011 from <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/trends.html>. Purnell, Larry D. ; Paulanka, Betty J. Trans-cultural Health Care: A Culturally Competent Approach. 2008. Surgeon General Richard Carmona. 2003. The Obesity Crisis in America. Retrieved October 16th, 2011 from <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/news/testimony/obesity07162003.htm>.