



Paper Due?
Why Suffer?
THAT'S OUR JOB!

50% OFF ON ALL ORDERS

LIMITED TIME ONLY

PREMIUM QUALITY | NO PLAGIARISM | DEADLINE DRIVEN

CHECK PRICES



Obesity in America Essay

The number of obese people throughout the United States is increasing at a rapid rate. It would be hard not to agree that an increasing number of fast food restaurants have played a role in driving up the number of obese people. The convenience of these restaurants is all too hard for people to resist. And as workloads increase due to staffing cuts at many companies, the time available to sit down at a restaurant, order food, wait for the food and then eat it, is not a reality for many people. People don't even have to get out of their cars to munch on a fatty burger and French fries, for example. What's worse is that people are designed to store fat. Back when people were hunters and gatherers they needed every gram of fat they could put on their body. These ancestors had to do much more than drive to the nearest McDonald's and order a supersized combo of fatty food. Without needing to leave their feet, this fat is stored right onto the body. In order to fight the obesity epidemic, people need to find some level of willpower to overcome the temptations, and this starts in childhood.

In the last 30 years, the rate of obese people throughout the United States has skyrocketed. In Jane E. Brody's *New York Times* article, "**Attacking the Obesity Epidemic by First Figuring Out Its Cause,**" she says that individuals aren't to blame. That the problem is societal and the root cause needs to be addressed to get people to shape up. "Many environmental forces, from economic interests of the food and beverage industries to the way our cities and town are built, have conspired to subvert the body's natural ability to match calories in with calories out," (par. 2). In order to change this trend, Brody implied, obesity needs to be treated like a health hazard similar to smoking, for example.

While there is an increasing culture that leans towards lifestyles that make them obese, it is still shocking to see that over one-third of Americans are ignoring the warnings and are eating themselves to obesity. Another third are considered overweight. It isn't just the visual impact of being obese that would make someone want to choose vegetables over burgers, crackers over chips and water over pop, it's also because there are many health factors that should be considered. For example, obesity can lead people to have heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, cancer, osteoarthritis, gallbladder

disease and respiratory disorders. The risk of contracting one or more of these are even higher when the weight is focused around the waist. The problem isn't confined to the lifestyle habits of adults. More and more parents are allowing their children to become obese. In fact, the National Institutes of Health say 25 per cent of American children are considered overweight or obese.

But the problem gets worse for the obese children. The health risks for the young ones is worse than what was anticipated. While many people blame the parents of obese children for causing the kids to be overweight, experts in the field say it isn't their fault. The BBC New Magazine article "Childhood Obesity: 10 of Your Stories," reported: "Causes range from a lack of education about food, limited cooking skills and limited money to buy healthier food to longer working hours and marketing campaigns for junk food aimed at kids," (par.3). However, this point seems to lay too little blame on the parents. This says marketing campaigns for junk food that is targeting kids is causes the parents to somehow lose control and seek out these fatty food. It should be pointed out that these providers of fatty foods aren't holding a gun to the parents' heads. They shouldn't be held responsible for these parents' lack of willpower. It is up to every parent to become educated on the hazards of fatty foods. And when their child looks overweight, there might be some common-sense warning signs that a cheeseburger and fries probably isn't the best idea.

In a BBC case study of five people who were overweight as kids, the news agency asked them what caused them to become obese. One adult who was an obese kid said parents too often force the last crumb off of a plate down their child's throat. These parents say they don't want to waste the food. The example of the obese child in this case said her mother gave her huge portions and told her to keep eating long after she was full. "I was once punished severely by my grandfather for not eating the last morsel on my plate. I was dragged screaming across the room and locked into the garden room, denied any pudding and isolated from my family. I was three years old," (par. 5). So it appears that even here the cause is adult stupidity. The woman who described this scene said those eating habits continued into her adulthood. Now, she says she is in the habit of forcing down a huge portion and eating to the point where she feels sick. She is still overweight at age 43.

But in another example, a woman said she was able to overcome the poor eating habits that she was introduced to as a child. Her willpower allowed her to break these habits that were instilled in her by her parents. When she was 18 years old, she was severely overweight, but after she moved out of her home and got married, she was able to drop her weight in half, approximately. "Motivation overcame my programming," (par. 6).

The problem looks to be getting worse, according to one man who said he was considered fat by his peers. A photo of the man at age 10 shows someone who wouldn't likely be considered obese by today's standards. "Looking at my photographs, I was nowhere near as fat as the children we are worried about today and there were very few children like that at the time," (par. 7). He said he blames

his mother who he suspects was attempting to compensate for the “wartime and rationing shortages.” He became a diabetic at age 56 and he believes overdosing on sugar as a child was the cause.

According to the Denise Winterman in her BBC article “**Child Obesity, Why do parents let their kids get fat?**,” parents struggle with several factors when it comes to controlling their children’s weight. “They range from a lack of education about food, limited cooking skills and limited money to buy healthier food to longer working hours and marketing campaigns for junk food aimed at kids,” (par. 9). There is also a greater assortment of entertainment for the children. Many of them would much prefer to stay at home and watch TV or play video games than go to a park, for example. In fact, a study said 75 per cent of children would rather stay home than go to a park, (par. 10). Eighty-nine per cent of the kids that are staying home spend their time watching TV. But the preferences of the children shouldn’t be used as an excuse by parents not to enforce discipline on their activities. While the societal factors that lead to these obese children are becoming ever accommodating of obesity, the information available about the detriments of an unhealthy lifestyle are also increasing. Also, there is now much more information about the ways in which people can buck a fatty lifestyle. The reason that this doesn’t happen, is because a lazy lifestyle that facilitates obesity is much easier than a discipline lifestyle that promotes health.

Also, many parents feel that they aren’t in control of their children: “a lot of his eating habits were out of my control. He would eat too much when he was at school and then come home and eat whatever was around, even cook big meals for himself,” (Winterman, par 14). There is no improvement in sight, as the number of people who are overweight or obese is rising. A University of Maryland Medical center report “Obesity,” by Steven Ehrlich states that more than half of American adults will be obese by 2030 if the current trend continues, (par. 2).



Paper Due?
Why Suffer?
THAT'S OUR JOB!

50% OFF ON ALL ORDERS
LIMITED TIME ONLY
PREMIUM QUALITY | NO PLAGIARISM | DEADLINE DRIVEN

[CHECK PRICES](#)

The amazing thing about the obesity epidemic is that the cure is known. Nearly everyone is aware that a healthy diet and regular exercise will cut the fat off of them. But it is difficult for many people who are overweight to keep it off. People sometimes lose the weight but then they fall back into bad habits. It appears that in most cases, the real problem is people’s willpower. Those same people that were unable to resist the tasty cheeseburgers and delicious French fries are the people who are unable to stay disciplined after a diet. A few weeks of healthy diet and exercise is only effective for two weeks. The duration that someone lives a healthy lifestyle is equivalent to the duration that someone is fit. A

general rule of thumb for people who don't understand the basic principles of not being overweight, is that one must burn more calories than they consume, in order to be in a healthy weight category.

Each of the factors that lead to weight gain are facilitated by the type of lifestyle that the majority of Americans live. As one of the leading causes of obesity, a poor diet is facilitated by eating products that are high in fat and calories. Examples in our daily lives can be found nearly everywhere people buy food, whether that is at sit-down restaurants, fast food restaurants, grocery stores or convenience stores. Grocery stores have entire aisles dedicated to junk food. Also, most people are hard-pressed to find a healthy item on a typical restaurant menu. The low-calorie, low-fat plates generally have small portions and aren't appealing to many people.

The incentive to buck the predictable trend of a high-calorie low-exercise diet is a longer life. In fact, the Los Angeles Times writer Melissa Healy reported in **"Study finds exercise adds a life expectancy, even for obese,"** that researchers have found that 30 minutes of exercise per day can increase the average person's life by about 3.5 years and those who exercise for about one hour per day can expect to live 4.2 years longer than if they didn't exercise. The study included over 400,000 people over the age of 40. "It's no surprise that exercise is good for you and will help you live longer. But the study published Tuesday by the journal PLoS Medicine sounds a loud wake-up call to 'healthy weight' couch potatoes who believe their good BMIs will ensure them a long life," (par. 3). This evidence says that being in physical shape isn't just to look and feel better, it will actually add years to your life. As if there weren't already enough incentives to live a healthy life.

In order to buck the trend of cheeseburgers, French fries and TV, people are going to have to find some willpower. People seem to automatically look to do whatever is easiest and, unfortunately, the easiest things in life aren't healthy. It is extremely rare that fast food will meet healthy requirements, and there is no way to relax and exercise at the same time. While regulating food providers to meet certain health requirements is an option to overcome the obesity epidemic, it shouldn't get to that point. Individuals need to do what is necessary to ensure that they live a healthy life. Obesity does put strains on the health care system, as countless people with clogged arteries line up for surgery. But regulating the food that is sold to people would also come with a price tag. The key is to develop healthy habits in children from a young age. This means parents need to do their part to ensure their children are informed of the health risks related to eating poor-quality food and not exercising enough. When children get into the bad habit of eating and not exercising, that will travel with them throughout life and cause them to have greater health problems that could have been prevented if they developed healthy habits early in life.

References

Brody, Jane. **“Attacking the Obesity Epidemic by First Figuring Out Its Cause.”** *The New York Times*. 12, Sept. 2011. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

Cutler, David. et al. **“Why have American Become More Obese?”** *Journal of economic Perspectives*. 2003. Web. 2 Nov. 2012.

Ehrlich, Steven. **“Obesity.”** *University of Maryland Medical Center*. 2011. Web. 5 Nov. 2012

“Childhood Obesity: 10 of Your Stories.” *BBC News Magazine*. 2 Oct. 2012. Web. 7 Nov. 2012.

Winterman, Denise. **“Child Obesity: Why do Parents Let their Kids Get Fat[WU1] ?”** *BBC News Magazine*. 25 Sept. 2012. Web. 7 Nov. 2012.

Healy, Melissa. **“Study Finds Exercise Adds to Life Expectancy.”** *Los Angeles Times*. 7 Nov. 2012. Web. 7 Nov. 2012.

Paper Due?
Why Suffer?
THAT'S OUR JOB!

50% OFF ON ALL ORDERS
LIMITED TIME ONLY
PREMIUM QUALITY | NO PLAGIARISM | DEADLINE DRIVEN

CHECK PRICES