

Causes for childhood obesity and the strategies for prevention

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Abstract

Overweight and obesity in childhood show a negative impact on both physical and psychological health. The mechanism of obesity development is not fully understood and it is believed to be a disorder with multiple causes. Environmental factors, lifestyle preferences, and cultural environment to name a few, will influence in the rising prevalence of obesity worldwide. Obesity is an excess proportion of total body fat. A person is considered obese when his or her weight is 20% or more above normal weight. The most common measure of obesity is the Body Mass Index (BMI). A person is considered overweight if his or her BMI is between 25 and 29.9; a person is considered obese if his or her BMI is over 30. On the other hand, there are supporting evidences that excessive sugar intake by soft drink, increased portion size, and steady decline in physical activity have been playing major roles in the rising rates of obesity all around the world. Both over-consumption of calories and reduced physical activity are involved in childhood obesity.

Almost all researchers agree that prevention could be the key strategy for controlling the current epidemic of obesity. Prevention may include primary prevention of overweight or obesity, secondary prevention or prevention of weight regain following weight loss, and avoidance of more weight increase in obese persons unable to lose weight. Until now, most approaches have focused on changing the behavior of individuals in diet and exercise. Prevention may be achieved through a variety of interventions like targeting built environment, physical activity, and diet. The increased risk of chronic diseases requires effective strategies to promote health, facilitating the adoption of proper life styles from childhood.

Biography

Jalli Hemamalini has completed her PG in Food Science and Nutrition from Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupathi, AP, India and postgraduate Diploma in Nutrition & Dietetics from Sri Padmavathi University. She has 18 years of experience in teaching and administration. She worked as Lecturer for Food Science & Nutrition in UG programme. She was a former Principal for the NRI Junior, College, Vijayawada and G V R & S Degree & PG College, Guntur. At present she was working as Assistant Professor and Nutritionist in “**Koneru Lakshmaiah University**”, Vijayawada, AP, India. And she was pursuing her PhD in Bio Technology. She attended for National Seminars and presented her papers. Recently in Feb 2012 she attended for a National Seminar on Obesity in India.