**Obesity A Harmful Disease**

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**Summary:**

If you do not consider obesity as a disease so this is a big fault, there is need to treat it as a disease because it has many side effects. In this research paper, we discuss it as a disease its causes, other diseases due to obesity, survey about disease, interview for obesity and also recommendations and preventions. Although the obesity epidemic is receiving increased press and attention, we have not formulated a consistent, integrated, and aggressive approach to reverse the trend, especially with our youth. Lifestyle changes can be challenging; incorporating a healthy diet and exercise is frequently viewed as expensive, time consuming, and difficult in our fast-paced society. There has been little successful action to integrate more exercise into school curricula and work environments, decrease television watching and video game playing decreases the amount of processed food and sugar-sweetened beverages consumed, and improve awareness about lifestyle choices. Our youth is given mixed messages. On one hand, the media present the idealized female form with a less than normal body mass index; yet on the other hand, the media continue to promote high-fat and high-caloric food and drink along with activities that promote a sedentary lifestyle. So there is big need to criticize the wrong attitude about fast foods and media can help for it.

**Key words:**

ObeseChronic disease

BMISedentary lifestyle

CaloriesAntipsychotic medications

SteroidsOverweight

Genetic problems HBP

Unhealthy lifestyle American Heart Association

Medical condition Cholesterol

Body fat LDL

Dieting

Eating habit

Dietary

Medications

Physical activity

**Introduction:**

Obesity is when a person is carrying too much body fat for their height and sex. A person is considered obese if they have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or greater.

Today’s way of life is less physically active than it used to be. People travel on buses and cars, rather than walking, and many people work in offices, where they are sitting still for most of the day. This means that the calories they eat are not getting burnt off as energy. Instead, the extra calories are stored as fat.

Overtime, eating excess calories leads to weight gain. Without lifestyle changes to increase the amount of physical activity done on a daily basis, or reduce the amount of calories consumed, people can become obese.

**Rational**

Over 34% of adults aged 20 years and older are [obese](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obese%22), but there has been no significant change in the prevalence since last years. The increasing trend in [obesity](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obesity%22) over the last 25 years is a result of a shift in the entire BMI distribution and an increase in the prevalence of those who are extremely [obese](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obese%22). In addition, disparities continue to exist. Non-Hispanic black and Mexican-American women continue to experience a higher prevalence of [obesity](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obesity%22) than their non-Hispanic white counterparts do. Although approximately two-thirds of [obese](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obese%22) individuals have been told by a health care provider that they are "overweight," [obesity](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obesity%22) is extremely difficult to treat and the prevalence of [obesity](http://europepmc.org/abstract/MED/19389313/?whatizit_url=http://europepmc.org/search/?page=1&query=%22obesity%22) is not declining. Nonetheless, even without reaching ideal weight, research has shown that a moderate amount of weight loss can be beneficial in terms of reducing risk factors, such as high blood pressure maintenance of weight loss, however, remains difficult. And one of the most important thing is that the people are unaware about this disease even some of them doesn’t considered it as a disease which is a worst thing.

**Research Questions**

1: Causes of obesity?

Genetic problems, Un-healthy life style, Taking over medical, Stress and emotional problems.

2: Effects of obesity?

Effects of obesity on health diabeties,obstructive sleep apnea and certain types of cancer,astma and osteoarthritis and has been found to reduce life expectancy.

3: Symptoms of obesity?

Feeling very tied every day, back and joint pains, increased sweating, low confidence level, feeling isolated in society.

4: Obesity major public health problem?

It has become major public health problem, obesity create fatal disease cancers, kidney, colon, breast cancer, gastric cardia, gallbladder and liver.

5: Ways to solve obesity?

Increased physical activity and exercise, start with small changes, assess your diet, and keep track of your food.

6: How do people know about that disease?

People know about that disease through the television commercials. These commercials aimed aware the people for un-healthy, high fat, high sugar or high salt foods with little nutrition value.

**Obesity: A Harmful Disease?**

**Definition:**

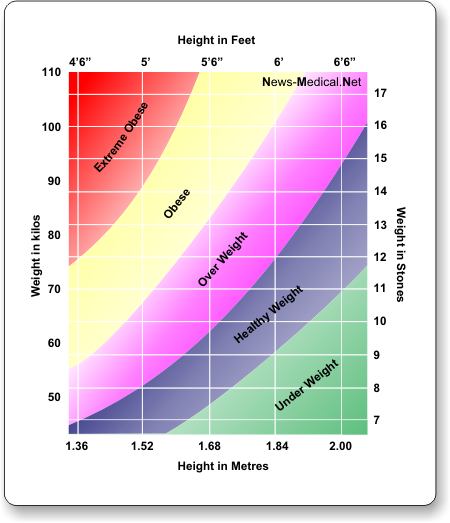
Obesity is defined as having an excessive amount of body fat. Obesity is more than just a cosmetic concern, though. It increases your risk of diseases and health problems such as heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.

Being extremely obese means you are especially likely to have health problems related to your weight.The good news is that even modest weight loss can improve or prevent the health problems associated with obesity.

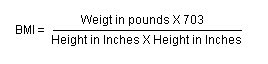
You can usually lose weight through dietary changes, increased physical activity and behavior changes. In some cases, prescription medications or weight-loss surgery may be options.

**Measuring Obesity**

A crude population measure of obesity is the [body mass index](http://www.news-medical.net/health/What-is-Body-Mass-Index-(BMI).aspx) (BMI) which is a simple index of weight-for-height that is commonly used in classifying overweight and obesity in adult populations and individuals - a person's weight in kilograms is divided by the square of the height in meters (kg/m2). BMI provides the most useful population-level measure of overweight and obesity as it is the same for both sexes and for all ages of adults but it is merely a rough guide because it may not correspond to the same degree of fatness in different individuals.



The WHO defines an adult who has a BMI between 25 and 29.9 as overweight - an adult who has a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese - a BMI below 18.5 is considered underweight, and between 18.5 to 24.9 a healthy weight .



BMI provides a benchmark for individual assessment, but experts suspect that the risk of chronic disease in populations increases progressively from a BMI of 21 upwards.

**Symptoms:**

Obesity is diagnosed when an individual's body mass index (BMI) is 30 or higher. Your body mass index is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms (kg) by your height in meters (m) squared.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| BMI | Weight status |
| Below 18.5 | Underweight |
| 18.5 — 24.9 | Normal |
| 25.0 — 29.9 | Overweight |
| 30.0 and higher | Obese |
| 40.0 and higher | Extreme obesity |

Because BMI doesn't directly measure body fat, some people, such as muscular athletes, may have a BMI in the obese category even though they don't have excess body fat.

**Causes:**

Although there are genetic and hormonal influences on body weight, obesity occurs when you take in more calories than you burn through exercise and normal daily activities. Your body stores these excess calories as fat. Obesity usually results from a combination of causes and contributing factors, including:

* **Inactivity:** If you're not very active, you don't burn as many calories. With a sedentary lifestyle, you can easily take in more calories every day than you use through exercise and normal daily activities.
* **Unhealthy diet and eating habits:** Having a diet that's high in calories, eating fast food, skipping breakfast, eating most of your calories at night, drinking high-calorie beverages and eating oversized portions all contribute to weight gain.
* **Pregnancy:** During pregnancy, a woman's weight necessarily increases. Some women find this weight difficult to lose after the baby is born. This weight gain may contribute to the development of obesity in women.
* **Certain medications:** Some medications can lead to weight gain if you don't compensate through diet or activity. These medications include some antidepressants, anti-seizure medications, diabetes medications, antipsychotic medications, steroids and beta blockers.
* **Medical problems:** Obesity can sometimes be traced to a medical cause, such as Prader-Willi syndrome, Cushing's syndrome, polycystic ovary syndrome, and other diseases and conditions. Some medical problems, such as arthritis, can lead to decreased activity, which may result in weight gain. A low metabolism is unlikely to cause obesity, as is having low thyroid function.
* **Genetics:**Your genes may affect the amount of body fat you store and where that fat is distributed. Genetics may also play a role in how efficiently your body converts food into energy and how your body burns calories during exercise. Even when someone has a genetic predisposition, environmental factors ultimately make you gain more weight.
* **Family lifestyle:** Obesity tends to run in families. That's not just because of genetics. Family members tend to have similar eating, lifestyle and activity habits. If one or both of your parents are obese, your risk of being obese is increased.
* **Age:** Obesity can occur at any age, even in young children. But as you age, hormonal changes and a less active lifestyle increase your risk of obesity. In addition, the amount of muscle in your body tends to decrease with age. This lower muscle mass leads to a decrease in metabolism. These changes also reduce calorie needs and can make it harder to keep off excess weight. If you don't control what you eat as you age, you'll likely gain weight.
* **Medical problems**: Obesity can rarely be traced to a medical cause, such as Prader-Willi syndrome, Cushing's syndrome, polycystic ovary syndrome, and other diseases and conditions. Some medical problems, such as arthritis, can lead to decreased activity, which may result in weight gain. A low metabolism is unlikely to cause obesity, as is having low thyroid function.

Even if you have one or more of these risk factors, it doesn't mean that you're destined to become obese. You can counteract most risk factors through diet, physical activity and exercise, and behavior changes.

**Obesity-Related Diseases – The Truth about Being Obese:**

**1.High Blood Pressure**:[Highbloodpressure](http://www.webmd.com/hypertension-high-blood-pressure/guide/understanding-high-blood-pressure-basics) is the primary cause of death among Americans older than 25. About 75 million people suffer from high blood pressure or hypertension, which is a major risk factor for heart disease. Blood pressure tends to increase with weight gain and age. It is not known why obesity is a major cause of high blood pressure. However, research has shown that obese patients displayed an increase in blood volume and arterial resistance. For people who are overweight and have high blood pressure, losing as little as 8 pounds can help reduce blood pressure to a safe level.

**2.Diabetes**: Obesity is considered one of the most significant factors in the development of insulin resistance, and insulin resistance can lead to type2[diabetes](http://www.mediweightlossclinics.com/patients/program/acute-DM-diabetic-program/). According to the World Health Organization, more than 90 percent of diabetes patients worldwide have type 2 diabetes. Being overweight or obese contributes to the development of diabetes by making cells more resistant to the effects of insulin. A weight loss of 15-20 pounds can help you decrease your risk of developing type 2 diabetes. Read: [ExercisingwithDiabetes](https://www.mediweightlossclinics.com/patients/resources/articles/Exercising-with-Diabetes/).

**3.Heart Disease**: According to the [AmericanHeartAssociation](http://www.heart.org/), obesity is a major risk factor for developing coronary heart disease, which can lead to a heart attack or stroke. People who are overweight are at a greater risk of suffering a heart attack before the age of 45. Obese adolescents have a greater chance of having a heart attack before the age of 35 than non-obese adolescents. If you are overweight, losing 10-15 pounds can reduce your risk of developing heart disease. If you exercise regularly, the risk of developing heart disease falls even more. Read: [Benefits of CardiovascularExercise](http://www.mediweightlossclinics.com/patients/resources/articles/benefits-of-cardio/).

**4.High Cholesterol levels:** High cholesterol is one of the leading causes of heart attacks. Cholesterol is transported through your blood in two ways: the low –density lipoprotein (LDL), which transports cholesterol to the cells that need it, and the high-density lipoprotein (HDL), which is the healthy cholesterol that reduces your risk for heart attack. Having high LDL levels raises your risk of having heart disease by 20 percent. Losing 11-20 pounds can help you significantly reduce your cholesterol level.

**5.Cancer:**A study by the [American Heart Association](http://www.heart.org/) found that being overweight increases your chances for developing cancer by 50 percent. Women have a higher risk of developing cancer if they are more than 20 pounds overweight. Regular exercise and a weight loss of as little as 12 pounds can significantly decrease the risk.

**6.Infertility:** Being obese can cause changes in the hormonal levels of women, which can result in ovarian failure. Women who are 15-25 pounds overweight are at a higher risk of suffering from infertility and ovarian cancer. Our bodies need to be at an appropriate weight to produce the right amount of hormones and regulate ovulation and menstruation. Don’t think men are immune to infertility. Overweight men have a greater chance of developing motility and a lower sperm count. Shedding 12-14 pounds can help you lower the risks.

**7. Back Pain:** Obesity is one the contributing factors of back and joint pain. Excessive weight can cause injury to the most vulnerable parts of the spine, which carries the body’s weight. When it has to carry excess weight, the odds of suffering from a spinal injury or structural damage increase. Being overweight also raises the risk of developing osteoporosis, lower back pain, arthritis, and osteoarthritis. Losing 10-15 pounds can help you decrease the risk of developing these problems.

**8. Skin Infections:**Obese and overweight individuals may have skin that folds over on itself. These creased areas can become irritated from the rubbing and sweating, which can lead to skin infections.

**9. Ulcers:** According to a study by the [NationalInstitutesofHealth (NIH)](http://www.nih.gov/), obesity can be a contributing factor to the development of gastric ulcers. Gastric ulcers occur when there is an imbalance between the amount of hydrochloric acid that is secreted and the enzyme pepsin. Overweight men are at a greater risk of developing gastric ulcers than women. A weight loss of as little as 7 pounds can help reduce the risk.

**10. Gallstones:**Being severely overweight increases the risk of developing gallstones, especially in women. Gallstones are caused when the liver releases excessive amounts of bile, which is stored in the gallbladder. Gallstones are more common in older women and those with a family history of gallstones. Losing 4-9 pounds reduces the risk of developing gallstones. Moderate exercise also can help lower your risk.

**Survey about disease:**

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: Age:

1. Do you think obesity is a disease?

Strongly agree

Agree

Disagree

2. What do you consider the most important component of a healthy diet plan?

fast weight loss

safe and healthy weight loss

permanent weight loss

3. Select one of the following causes of obesity most responsible for your overweight.

Over eating

poor food choices

sedentary lifestyle

chronic dieting

4. What type of weight loss food do you dislike most?

sugar free

low fat

low sodium

highfibre

5. Do you use a diet and exercise plan together or separately to lose weight?

together

separately

both

6. How much time per day can you allocate to exercise or physical activity?

30 minutes

60 minutes

90 minutes

no time

7. How often do you visit weight loss blogs or weight loss web sites?

once per week

twice per week

more than 1 times per month

less than twice per month

8. Do you consider yourself informed concerning the current health facts about obesity and overweight?

very informed

somewhat informed

not informed

don't care, in the dark

9. Which of the following foods do you prefer most?

sweets

salty

fast food

raw fruit & vegetables

10. Do you think Mass Media play its proper role to eliminate obesity?

Yes

No

Little bit

**Result of Survey:**

**Interview:**

*THE DIET DOCTOR*

WajihaAfaq is a registered dietitian who provides nutritional therapy to diabetic patients at a local university hospital. She completed her Masters in Food & Nutrition from the College of Home Economics in 2005. The young dietitian has several successful cases to her credit and has helped diabetic patients lead a normal life by educating them on how to control their sugar levels. She is also an active member of the Pakistan Nutrition & Dietetic Society (PNDS). We students went there to have an interview with her regarding the issues faced by youth every day.

Why did you decide to pursue a career in nutrition and dietetics? Please tell us when your interest in the field began and how your career unfolded?

WA: I chose to become a dietitian because I've always been interested in this field. I completed my Bachelors in Food & Nutrition and carried on with the same subject in my Masters too. I basically got inspired towards this profession because of the then principal, Ms. Rubina Hakeem, of the College of Home Economics. She is the one who motivated and encouraged me to go for this field.

What type of patients do you treat generally and what problems do you see most frequently?

I mostly deal with diabetic patients. However, I have had patients with weight loss problems and have provided them with the necessary treatments. Sometimes I also have to provide nutritional treatments to patients with endocrine problems, calcium or vitamin deficiency. Hormonal ailments and hypothyroidism are very common in Pakistan.

Is there a generic procedure that you follow?

When a patient enters the hospital, a staff member takes his/her initial vitals including height, weight and blood pressure. Then there is a complete check up by a physician who then refers the patient to me (the dietician). I thoroughly analyse his/her eating habits with respect to their cultural background and likes/dislikes. It is important for me to have complete information about their lifestyle and daily routine so that I can recommend a diet plan that can be realistic and practical for them to follow.

How do you motivate your patients for weight loss?

The motivation process begins with the will of the person. Therefore, when a patient contacts me for nutritional consultation I first inquire whether his decision to lose weight is based on his own will or has someone forced him to do so. I never put unnecessary burden on my patients. I advise them to bring small changes in lifestyle which can eventually help them to achieve bigger goals. For instance I suggest my patients to increase their physical activity by walking 15 minutes a day and gradually increase 5 minutes on a daily/weekly basis. It not only increases their metabolic rate but they also feel that their goal is achievable.

What do you think about our youth, are they diet conscious?

The diet of our youngsters is based on nothing but empty calories. They habitually drink cans of cola drinks which don't have any nutrients and are full of calories. Their sedentary lifestyle is also an important factor which doesn't allow them to burn those extra calories.

Please share with us a moment when you felt extremely proud of yourself?

I've recently passed a registered dietitian examination of the Pakistan Nutritional and Diabetic Society. It is something I am very proud of because more than twenty girls appeared in the examination and only eight successfully passed it. Other than that it has always been a joy when a diabetic patient controls his sugar level while following my diet plan. I also have a couple of weight reduction cases on my credit where patients have shown tremendous progress.

What do you think about fad diets like the Atkins diet or the low carbohydrate diet? Are your diet plans also based on similar patterns?

No, my diet plans are different from them. Instead of focusing on the intake of only proteins or carbohydrates, my plans place emphasis on a balanced diet. I usually recommend a 5 meal diet plan with limited portion size which helps in increasing the metabolic rate of the body.

What are the side effects of these so called fad diets?

These diets lead to different kinds of deficiencies. If a person is following a protein diet only then it is quite obvious that his/her body will lose other important nutrients like carbohydrates, calcium and other important minerals and the body does not perform its functions properly.

How does exercise contribute in the weight reduction process?

Exercise plays a very important role in weight reduction. A person can never achieve his desired weight without following a proper workout plan. A good workout boosts up the metabolism and helps in burning more calories. I consider walk as the best and safest exercise. A person can get excellent results with a brisk walk. Aerobics and yoga are also good exercises but are not mandatory as many of my patients are neither familiar with them nor have the time or money to join a gym. So I recommend a brisk walk to all my patients.

Most people see refined carbohydrates as one of their biggest problems. What exactly is wrong with refined flour (Maida) and refined sugar?

It is true that the refined carbohydrates have become an important part of our lives as we feel really good while eating those white coloredchapattis made up of refined flour. People have made refined carbohydrates a part of their diet without realizing that their intake leads to weight gain and eventually diabetes. The problem with refined carbohydrates is that they are easily absorbed into the body and converted into glucose, so a person feels hungry even after eating a huge portion of refined carbohydrates.

What role does the mind play in our health?

A person takes every initiative of his life with the permission of his mind. When someone decides to lead a healthy lifestyle, that decision also comes from the mind. When a person wants to bring change then he must take steps to bring the real change. Our basic problem is that we don't let our mind think about our health very seriously and thus we all make silly mistakes.

Can you suggest a practical diet plan, which everyone can follow on a daily basis for weight reduction and to stay healthy?

For breakfast, you can have two brown bread slices with egg white and unsweetened coffee or tea. The other option for breakfast could be a bowl of porridge or oats with skimmed milk. A medium size seasonal fruit is perfect for a mid morning snack. For lunch you can have one medium whole wheat chapatti with chicken or fish curry. For tea time a cup of tea with whole wheat cracker is the best. Dinner can be same as lunch but it would be better to take vegetables or pulses at dinner if you already have eaten meat in lunch. By following this diet plan and with a brisk walk of 30 minutes 5 days a week one can easily lose 1kg per week.

What top ten items come to your mind when you think of healthy food?

Whole wheat, fruits, vegetables, pulses, white meat – chicken or fish, milk and dairy products. These are all the components of a balanced diet which are essential for proper body growth and functioning.

Don't you think that there are several misconceptions related to weight loss too?

Yes, you are right! The other day a lady came to me and told me that she had been drinking warm water with honey early in the morning for months but have not been ableto shed even a single pound. I explained her that all those old methodologies wouldn't work unless you'd make a real change in your diet and sedentary lifestyle.

Do you think people have realized the importance of a dietitian in a society?

Yes, people have become more aware now. They have realized how a dietitian can help them in their health related issues which is a very positive sign.

**Analysis:**

World health is in trouble because of eating fast food, packaged, processed and refined foods daily. Obesity has not only affected waistline, but has contributed to serious illness and early death for thousands of people. Obesity is strongly associated with multiple chronic conditions, like heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, high blood pressure, high cholesterol. Other conditions, such as depression, sleep apnea, asthma, arthritis, can be attributed to obesity as well. The main causes of obesity are sedentary lifestyles and high fat, energy dense diets. Obesity is affecting every man, women, and child regardless of age, race or religion.

Obesity may soon overtake tobacco as the number one factor in people's deaths. Weight is largely determined by how you balance your intake of calories from food with the energy you use in everyday activities. If you consume more calories than you use, you gain weight. Eating too many calories daily and not getting enough physical activity are also causes of obesity. Another reason we're seeing this rise in obesity, is that the first generation of adults that has had access to processed foods starting childhood. But the problem is not just about calories and fat, unfortunately exercise levels have dropped off dramatically since then, and school physical education programs are being cut. The increasing obesity epidemic has gotten so out of control that we now have gastric bypass surgery, even though the surgery is extremely serious and a lot of times life threatening.

**Recommendations:**

The quality of your health depends upon many pieces that not only include the health of your bodily systems, but also include a [healthy diet](http://naturopathconnect.com/healthy-diet/), [exercise](http://naturopathconnect.com/exercise/), and [spirituality](http://naturopathconnect.com/spirituality/)diet. Treatment of obesity centers on developing general [healthy dietary guidelines](http://naturopathconnect.com/dietary-guidelines/), in addition to making some key adjustments in your relationship with food.

Dietary tips for combating obesity:

* Eat more fiber. Fiber gives you a satiated feeling, helping you to curb food cravings. It also keeps your colon healthy, and aids in proper digestion. Research has shown that obesity puts you at higher risk for colorectal cancer, primarily due to a low-fiber, high-calorie, processed food diet. Incorporate ground in smoothies, soups, and favorite cereals to increase your fiber intake.
* Skip the low-fat food products. Most of the low-fat, processed foods in grocery stores are typically high-carb foods that are loaded with sugar, salt, artificial sweeteners, and synthetic fat substitutes. Many of these ingredients cause weight gain, rather than reduce it. [Read more about food ingredients.](http://naturopathconnect.com/health-food/)
* Add virgin coconut oil to your diet. The natural saturated fat in [virgin coconut oil](https://www.google.com/#q=virgin+organic+coconut+oil) can help stabilize blood sugar levels, facilitate proper thyroid function, and aid in weight loss.
* Eat more vegetables and fruits. Not only are they a good source of fiber, but they contain many naturally occurring vitamins, minerals, and amino acids necessary for maintaining optimal health and weight. Watch out for fruit juices, they often contain added sugars that can increase your calorie intake dramatically. Opt for water, or diluted fruit juice (three quarters water and one quarter juice).
* Don’t skip breakfast. Fasting activates the starvation response, slowing your metabolism and increasing the chances that excess fat will be stored to fuel your nutrient-depleted body. Studies now show that women who eat cereal for breakfast maintained their weight better than those who skipped breakfast. The plus of whole grain cereal is that it is a low-calorie, fiber-rich food.3 Obese people tend to lack necessary fiber in their diets.
* Eat frequent meals. Eating five to six small meals throughout the day helps to speed up your metabolism. On the other hand, eating large meals only once or twice a day will actually slow down your metabolism.

Other dietary recommendations:

* Choose high-quality, organic, hormone- and antibiotic-free “grass-fed” meats.
* Increase your omega-3 essential fatty acids by selecting [wild-caught salmon](https://www.google.com/#q=carvalho+king+salmon),[minimal-mercury tuna](https://www.google.com/#q=carvalho+albacore+tuna), and [fish oil](https://www.google.com/#q=omega+3+fish+oil).
* Choose organic, cage-free eggs.
* Choose unpasteurized, raw dairy items that have live, active cultures ([probiotics](http://naturopathconnect.com/recommended-supplements/probiotics/)), such as yogurt and kefir.
* Choose sprouted foods such as sprouted whole-grain bread and [sprouted nuts and seeds](https://www.google.com/#q=organic+nuts+seeds).
* Drink plenty of purified water throughout the day. Chronic dehydration can slow down metabolism.

**Foods to AVOID when treating obesity:**

* All simple or refined carbohydrates (white flour, white rice, white bread, pasta, cookies, cakes, crackers, processed snack foods, etc.). [Read more about good carbs and bad carbs.](http://naturopathconnect.com/carbohydrate/)
* All foods containing refined sugar or synthetic sugar-substitutes such as aspartame, Splenda®, etc. These may actually contribute to weight gain, rather than aid in weight loss. Studies now show that artificial sweeteners trick the body into associating sweetness with zero calories. As a result, there’s a tendency to splurge on the “real thing,” because the body loses its ability to associate sweetness with a sense of fullness.[Choose a natural sweetener like Xylosweet instead.](https://www.google.com/#q=xylosweet+xylitol)
* Alcoholic beverages in excess since they hinder the functioning of the immune and digestive systems
* Carbonated soft drinks that cause blood pH levels to become acidic
* Bottom crawlers such as oysters, clams, and lobster that may contain [toxic levels of mercury](http://naturopathconnect.com/heavy-metal-toxicity/).
* Deep-sea fish such as tuna, mackerel, and swordfish that may contain toxic levels of mercury. Choose [minimal-mercury tuna](https://www.google.com/#q=carvalho+albacore+tuna) instead.
* Farm-raised fish that contain PCBs and not enough omega-3 essential fatty acids, due to their land-based diets. Choose [wild-caught salmon](https://www.google.com/#q=carvalho+king+salmon) instead.
* Sodium nitrite found in processed foods such as hot dogs, lunch meats, and bacon
* Monosodium glutamate (MSG) found in many foods as a flavor enhancer
* Hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils (Tran’s fats) found in many processed foods, deep-fried foods, fast foods, and junk food. [Read more about Tran’s fats.](http://naturopathconnect.com/saturated-unsaturated-fat/)

The basic rule of weight loss is “Calories in, Calories out” In order to effectively lose weight, you need to burn more calories than you consume. Therefore, exercise—and portion control when eating—are essential components in combating obesity.

If you suffer from obesity, you may have a difficult time keeping up with exercise programs that require flexibility and harsh movements. Fortunately, studies show that long, brisk walks are very effective in losing weight. Once you get to a point where you’re losing weight, you can take on more strenuous or more demanding aerobic exercises. The point is to start exercising, no matter how small your effort may seem in beginning.Also, try to incorporate some strength training into your exercise routine. Building muscle mass will help you to burn more calories throughout the day.

**Other Tips for Treating Obesity**

* Get proper sleep. Sleep deprivation slows metabolism. If you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, try [fast-acting melatonin](http://naturopathconnect.com/recommended-supplements/melatonin/). If sleeping problems are resistant to a quick fix, then see your healthcare professional to rule out any chronic conditions that may be causing insomnia.
* Try light therapy. [Circadian Rhythm Disorder](http://naturopathconnect.com/circadian-rhythm-disorder/) can cause hormone imbalances and disrupt your body’s natural hormone production schedule. This may hinder your ability to control your weight effectively. [Read more about the Apollo Health goLite P1™.](https://www.google.com/#q=golite+light+therapy)
* Consider removing mercury dental fillings. If you have silver fillings, get an evaluation from a mercury-free dentist who specializes in the safe removal of mercury amalgam fillings. Mercury in the body damages immune cells, which can be a contributing factor for weight gain and obesity-related chronic conditions. [Find a mercury-free dentist in your area now!](http://www.mercuryfreenow.com/freeservices/find_dentists.html)

**Conclusion**

Becoming a healthier person isn't just about eating healthy, it's about physical activity. Learn how many calories to consume in one day, there is a right number for you to eat each day. This number depends on age, and activity level. Limit your dietary fat intake to less than 30 percent of your total calories, saturated fat should be less than 10 percent. Avoid all Tran’s fatty acids, such as hydrogenated fats. Exercise like sports, walking, hiking, dancing, and running just gets your body moving. Obesity is not just a cosmetic concern; it's also a major health risk. The Great thing about this is that it is a cure; a modest weight loss can bring wonderful health improvements. Losing weight can be accomplished by eating a healthier diet, regular exercise, and changing your behavior.

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