Obesity in America

Coming to America was a really big shock to me and I was very surprised at how many people are overweight in this country. In Africa, where I come from, people never, ever weighed too much. This made me wonder about why people were obese in this country. According to a recent article, “The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports an estimated 72 million—are considered obese” here in the United States (Galbraith). This is a growing problem.

*Obesity rates can be changed when people understand the causes of obesity, how obesity impacts a person’s life, and fortunately, there are programs to help support people.* With some changes in how they eat, a person can be successful in losing weight.

In the United States we have so many fast food restaurants and we don’t choose to eat healthy meals. People tend to eat large meals, especially at restaurants and they don’t get enough activity like riding bikes or walking. People spend their time playing video games or watching television. World Book Encyclopedia covers the causes and “medical experts link the overall rise in obesity to changing lifestyles” (Serrano). Many people are becoming fat because their lifestyle has changed. In
Africa, people work on farms doing manual labor and exercise is part of their day. My family worked on a farm every day for nine hours and the kids would go swimming, run around for fun, or would climb trees. We were always active but in the United States, it is very different and easy to be obese.

The consequences of being obese are the worst thing about being overweight. It can destroy many organs in your body and that’s a serious risk for good health. Also the mind will get stressed and the body will start having some serious problems. Problems can include not getting enough sleep, heart problems, and other sickness and people may have complications when they have surgery. According to Serrano, “Social researchers have found that obese people often experience higher than normal rates of discrimination and social isolation.”

Teens are also greatly affected by obesity. More and more children are being considered obese with all the fast food that is available and they don’t get enough exercise.

“According to the Childhood Obesity Foundation in Canada, obesity rates in children have almost tripled in the last twenty-five years. Today, approximately 26 percent of Canadian children and teens ages 2 to 17 are currently overweight or obese. In the U.S., the CDC estimates that the number of obese children ages 6 to 11 has increased from 6.5 percent in 1980 to 19.6 percent in 2008. For U.S. teens ages 12 to 19, obesity rates increased from 5 percent in 1980 to 18.1 percent in 2008” (Teen Health and Wellness).
This is a huge rise to have the teen rate jump over 13 percent in 28 years.

This is just too much. A person weighing too much can cause many illnesses. These include: Heart and circulation diseases, diabetes, impaired breathing, and other medical concerns. According to Teen Health and Wellness teens and children can even get high blood pressure and strained joints. However, children, teens, and adults should not have to suffer with obesity. There are plans and treatment available to help them lose weight.

Treatment of obesity is the treatment that helps you to get better by helping a person lose weight. According to World Book Online, this is the first step in treating obesity. Serrano writes, “In some cases, drugs and surgery can help in the treatment of obesity. However, medical experts recommend discussing these methods with a physician to explore the risks and advantages.” I think the best way to lose weight is to practice more sports, eat vegetables and fruits, and reduce calories. How can I reduce calories? Well by doing dividing half of the products instead of eating all the same day, or reading the nutrition information on packages to see how much is in a serving. Many beverages have a lot of calories, even juice that we think is good for us. Get in the habit of drinking water and adding a little juice to it to give it flavor. This will save a lot of calories. However, losing weight even when you make small changes can be hard to do when you do it all alone. There are plans and programs to help, too.

According to Teen Health and Wellness, there is a program called KidsWalk-to-School. “Its objective is to bring together individuals and organizations in different communities to create safe walking and biking routes to and from school.
Adult volunteers make this happen by accompanying groups of student bikers and pedestrians” (Teen Health and Wellness). SHAPEDOWN is also another program just for kids and teenagers developed at the University of California. MayoClinic.com has resources for teens to go online and learn how to make better eating choices. Teens need to learn to make better choices, as it will affect them for the rest of their lives.

Obesity rates are rising and when I was in Africa, I never saw an obese person. There are things a person can do to help with obesity. People need to understand why they are overweight. Obesity can cause many issues in a person’s life and fortunately there are new treatments and organizations to support someone trying to overcome obesity.
Works Cited


