

Obesity: A Growing Crisis of Health Care

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Obesity has become one of the most pressing public health issues of the present century. According to the World Health Organization, over 650 million adults worldwide are classified as obese, a number that has nearly tripled since 1975. While this issue is often framed as a matter of personal responsibility or lifestyle choice, the reality is far more complex, involving a web of social, economic, environmental, and genetic factors that contribute to this growing crisis.

Obesity is not merely an aesthetic concern; it is a serious health condition that significantly increases the risk of numerous chronic diseases, including stroke, heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis and certain cancers. It is a leading cause of premature death, contributing to both individual sufferings and significant health care costs. As the number of obese individuals continues to increase, the burden on the health care system around the globe will only intensify.

One of the primary reasons of the obesity epidemic is the global shift in the lifestyle and diet over the last few decades. The availability of cheap processed foods that are high in sugar, unhealthy fats, and less calories has led to an increase in overall caloric intake. At the same time, physical activity levels have decreased, partly due to the increase of sedentary occupations, increased time on mobile, computer or television and urban environments that discourage walking or outdoor play. These factors combined with the widespread availability of food that is engineered to be more palatable, create an environment in which it is all too easy to overeat and remain inactive.

The social determinants of health also play a significant role. People living in low income communities often have limited access to healthy food options, with “food Deserts” where nutritious fresh produce is scarce. These

communities may also lack safe spaces for physical activity, such as parks or recreational centers, further limiting opportunities for exercise. For many, unhealthy food becomes an affordable and accessible way to meet basic caloric needs, despite its long term health hazards.

However, it is essential to identify the causes of obesity and addressing the issue requires more than simply telling “Eat less and move more.” For many individuals obesity is linked to many underlying factors such as trauma, mental health, genetic factors and lazy attitude, all of which can affect eating behavior and body weight. Public health initiatives aimed at combating obesity must be in a holistic approach. This includes health education, safe and healthy for delivery, increasing sports and recreational activities. At the same time health care providers should play an important role during health care delivery addressing important of ideal body weight and consequences of obesity.

The fight against obesity is not one that can be won through individual effort alone. It is a collective challenge that requires systematic changes, a shift in cultural attitudes, and a commitment to fostering an environment in which all people can thrive. By addressing the root causes of obesity and working together to create a healthy world, we can begin to reverse this troubling trend and improve the lives of millions.

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