

FRESH

FOOD RE-EDUCATION FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HEALTH



HEALTHY WEIGHT AND DIABETES

2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR

THE EFFECTS OF OBESITY

The percentage of overweight children in the United States is growing at an alarming rate. Kids are spending less time exercising and more time in front of the TV, computer, and on video games. Families also have less time to prepare nutritious, home-cooked meals because of their busy schedules. Preventing kids from being overweight means changing the way your family eats and exercises, and how you spend time together.

Obesity increases the risk for serious health conditions like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol— all once considered “adult diseases”. Obese kids will often experience low self-esteem which is a result of being teased, bullied or rejected by friends or peers.

Overweight and obese kids are at a risk of developing medical problems that affect their present and future health. Cardiovascular risk factors that are present in childhood can often lead to serious medical problems like heart disease, heart failure and strokes in adults. Preventing and treating obesity in children may reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease as they get older.

In order to keep your children and family healthy, you need to practice what you preach. Make eating healthy and exercising something you

do as a family. Have your children help you make good food choices at the store and help prepare meals at home.

Other ways to prevent obesity include:

- Don't reward kids for good behavior or stop bad behavior with sweets or treats. Come up with other solutions.
- Don't maintain the clean plate policy, if kids are satisfied, do not force them to continue eating.
- Don't eliminate all sweets and favorite snacks from their diet.

www.kidshealth.org



HEALTH PROBLEMS RELATED TO OBESITY

Carrying extra pounds of body fat can cause a lot of stress on the body and joints. It will also make someone feel uncomfortable and tired. As a person gets older their risk for diabetes and heart disease increases if they are overweight. Some health problems related to being overweight/obese include:

- Arthritis – wear and tear on the joints from carrying around the extra weight
- High Blood Pressure – when your blood pressure is high, your heart has to pump harder and the arteries have to carry blood that's moving under more pressure
- High Cholesterol – can increase the risk of a heart attack and stroke as the person gets older
- Depression – people who are overweight/obese are likely to be depressed and have low self-esteem
- Diabetes – being overweight can cause your body to become resistant to insulin

www.cdc.gov

WHAT IS DIABETES?

Diabetes is a condition in which the body does not make enough insulin or is unable to use the insulin effectively. Insulin is a hormone produced by cells in the pancreas called beta cells. Insulin allows the body to use sugar or glucose. Without insulin and glucose, the body does not have an energy source for growth and daily activity.

There are two types of diabetes. In type 1 diabetes, the body's immune system destroys the beta cells, leaving the body without any insulin. People with type 1 diabetes have to inject themselves with insulin to live. Type 2 diabetes can develop from obesity, inactivity and aging. People with type 2 diabetes may also require insulin, but can often be treated by paying close attention to diet and exercise.

Treatment for diabetes includes testing your blood sugar level every day, taking insulin if needed, eating healthy and balanced meals, and getting regular physical activity.

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DIABETES FACTS AND MYTHS

Myth: Eating too much sugar causes diabetes.

Fact: Type 1 diabetes is caused by a destruction of the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas, which is unrelated to sugar consumption. Type 2 diabetes results from the body's inability to respond to insulin normally. Although the tendency to get type 2 diabetes is genetically inherited in most cases, eating too much sugar (or foods with sugar, like candy or regular soda) can cause weight gain, which can increase the risk for developing the disease.

Myth: Kids with diabetes can never eat sweets.

Fact: Kids with diabetes can eat a certain amount of sugary food as part of a balanced diet, but they need to control the total amount of carbohydrates they eat, which includes sugary treats. Because sweets provide no real nutritional value other than calories, they should be limited — but not necessarily eliminated. All kids (and adults!) should avoid excessive consumption of foods that provide little nutritional value and can crowd out healthier foods.

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PREVENTING DIABETES

You can prevent diabetes by following the steps below:

- **Eat Healthy:** Be sure to eat a variety of foods. Focus on fruits and vegetables, lean meats, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. Limit sugars and fats. Also limit processed and pre-packaged foods and fast foods. These foods are often high in calories, fat, and sodium and low in nutrition.
- **Be Active:** Being active helps your body use glucose. Children should be active for at least 60 minutes in one day and adults need at least 30 minutes most days of the week. It doesn't have to be all at once. Exercise not only helps prevent or treat diabetes, but it also helps with weight management, heart health and mental and emotional health.
- **Lose weight:** Losing just a few extra pounds and becoming more active can help prevent diabetes. Your blood pressure can also go down by losing weight.

PARENT ACTIVITY CORNER

- Visit your local farmers market and choose new fruit or vegetables to try.
- Gather your children and neighborhood children and go on a fruit and vegetable treasure hunt. You can visit your local grocery store, fruit/vegetable stand or farmers market. Create a list of fruits and vegetables for the children to find. Explain the importance of eating fruits and vegetables and how they provide good nutrients to your body.
- Start a fruit and vegetable challenge in your house! Encourage the whole family to participate. Create a chart and have everyone keep track of the fruits and vegetables they eat throughout the week. Have the winner create a new healthy challenge for the following week.
- For more healthy information visit:

www.hopkinsbayview.org/communityrelations/fresh

