

“WEIGHT LOSS”

ARE YOU PART OF THE EPIDEMIC?

If you want to know what is wrong, look at the table and the food, it will be staring at you. Obesity is an epidemic in this country and getting worse. There is a saying “1/4 of what we eat keeps **YOU** alive and 3/4 of what you eat keeps your **DOCTOR** alive”

Today 34% of Americans are very overweight. Obesity is considered having a Body Mass Index (BMI) of over 30. Since 1980, obesity in adults over 20 has doubled and almost 20% of our children are overweight or obese.

Chronic diseases, associated with obesity include, but not limited to cardiovascular (heart attack and stroke), cancer (some types) and diabetes, which are all major leading causes of death in this country. In addition hypertension, gallbladder disease, osteoporosis and sleep problems are also associated with obesity. This is only a partial list of medical complications of obesity.

The highest regions of the country for obesity are in the south, southeast, and the mid-western areas of the United States.

Good nutrition and optimum weight affects everything in our lives and allows us to enjoy a good quality of life. Combined with exercise, you can see a dramatic increase in your health and decrease of chronic diseases associated with obesity. You must address three areas for permanent weight loss: 1. **Food** (proper portions and food choices) 2. **Body** (physical activity and exercise) 3. **Mind** (lifestyle changes).

Education on the three elements of weight loss is the key to permanent weight loss. Change begins with desire to lose weight, eliminate pain associated with excess weight and eliminate or reduce the affects of chronic health conditions. Lifestyle changes are cheap, simple, safe, and effective and reverse many chronic diseases.

Lets look as some of the more important aspects of weight loss education, first is protein, which is an important component of every cell. Increases in protein sends message to the brain to decrease hunger, raises you resting metabolism, leads to less rapid rise and fall of blood sugar, builds muscle, used in the production of enzymes and hormones to name a few of protein functions.

Metabolism decreases with age, but your weight increases. Without optimal metabolism your body stores excess calories as fat and you actually gain weight. The problem is most adults do not use the excess calories, which results in struggling with weight issues. To counter this it is important to eat 4-5 small meals per day in the right proportion, and correct food choices. Eat high energy foods such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Sugars are carbohydrates, which are broken into simple and complex. Simple sugars are empty of nutrition and can result in a sluggish metabolic rate, cause health problems and

decrease your energy. They can also lead to increased spikes in you blood sugar and if not needed by the body they are stored and turned into fat. Its kind of like souring jet fuel into your mouth, blood sugar spikes, insulin levels increase. Sugar suppresses the immune system, impairs defenses against infection, can feed cancer cells, can cause cardiovascular disease, headaches, depression and linked directly to obesity.

Complex carbohydrates are found in whole grains, nutrition rich, contain health giving properties. They stabilizes blood sugar, assists in digestion, regulates water balance, supports health nerve function, aids in fat burning and support overall health. Complex carbohydrates are found in high fiber foods, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Dietary Fiber is broken down as insoluble and soluble fiber. Insoluble fiber is course and chewy part of the plant @ skin. Digested intact and is not broken down by digestion. Soaks up water in the digestive tract adding bulk and softens stools. This type of fiber speeds up the rate of foods through the digestive tract. Foods include whole grains, wheat bread, rye, cabbage, beets, carrots, sprouts, cauliflower.

Soluble fiber lowers blood cholesterol, lowers blood sugar, keeps stools soft and prolongs stomach emptying so sugars are released and absorbed more slowly, which prevents blood sugar elevation spikes. Foods include oats, bran, beans, peas, rice bran, citrus fruits strawberries and apples.

Stress is defined as failure of the body to respond to emotional and physical threats. Under stress, the body produces hormones- adrenaline, which increases fat burning and cortisol, which decrease fat burning. Cortisol increases weight gain by depositing fat in the abdominal region. This type of fat is different in that it tends to increase cholesterol levels and blood pressure. Increasing cortisol levels makes you eat more. Prolonged stress can cause permanent damage to glands, organs, immune system, cardiovascular system and diabetes. It can also produce ulcers, depression, and digestive problems. Signs can be cognitive, emotional, physical or behavioral. Stress decreases sleep, and decision making skills.

Hypertension is called the silent killer, but so is obesity from the standpoint of what it does to us inside. It is a contributing factor in heart disease, high blood pressure, strokes, diabetes and cancer, all leading cause of death in the US. This article is about educating you on the effects of obesity and some things you can do to change this increasing trend

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