

Risks Associated With Obesity

Obesity is a label for a range of weight that is greater than what is usually considered healthy for a given height. An obese person has a body mass index (BMI) above the 95th percentile. The BMI is calculated by a height to weight ratio. The term obesity also identifies ranges of weight that have been shown to increase the likelihood of certain diseases and other health problems.

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), obesity in the United States has risen at an epidemic rate during the past 20 years. Research indicates that the situation is getting worse rather than better. Not only does this affect adults but also children. We live in a world where super-sizing is encouraged and the more of something, the better. However, people need to become more aware of just what kind of health problems these new trends are creating.

Overweight and obese individuals are at increased risk for many diseases and health conditions. Individuals who are obese are at greater risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, some cancers, and type II diabetes. Obese women of child-bearing age are also at greater risk for complications during pregnancy. Being overweight can aggravate joint pain from arthritis, and limit physical mobility. Individuals who are overweight suffer more than physical ailments; they also may suffer emotional consequences (depression, lower self-esteem) from societal prejudices.