



Health@News

Your Guide to a Healthier Lifestyle

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WEIGH THE CONSEQUENCES OF

OBESEITY

In some cases, genetics, illness, and particular medications may cause weight gain. Generally, however, overweight and obesity occur due to an imbalance in the body's energy. This imbalance results from consuming more calories than the body expends through regular body functions and physical activity. To maintain weight, calories consumed must equal the calories used. When excess calories are consumed, they are stored in the body as fat, which results in weight gain. Healthy weight loss is possible when the body uses more calories than are consumed because the body uses the stored fat as energy.

THE PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF OBESEITY

Being overweight or obese can increase the likelihood of developing serious health problems including the following.

- High blood pressure
- Coronary heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Stroke
- Some types of cancer, including breast and colon cancer
- Gallbladder disease
- Osteoarthritis
- Respiratory problems and sleep apnea

THE BASICS OF HEALTHY WEIGHT LOSS

Research indicates that losing 5 to 10 percent of body weight can improve health and may help some people to avoid the adverse effects of obesity.



66%

Obesity has become an epidemic among adults, children, and teenagers in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 66 percent of U.S. adults are either overweight or obese.

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Physical Activity

Get Off to a Good Start!

Why Should I Begin a Physical Activity Routine?

Along with eating a nutritious, well-balanced diet and quitting smoking, beginning and maintaining a physical activity routine is one of the best things you can do for your health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that people who participate in physical activity on a regular basis benefit by lowering their risk of developing coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and osteoporosis. Additionally, regular physical activity:

- Reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease by improving circulation
- Helps to control weight
- Improves blood cholesterol levels
- Helps to prevent and manage high blood pressure
- Helps the brain cope better with stress and counters depression and anxiety
- Helps develop healthy muscle and maintain healthy joints
- Boosts energy level
- Promotes mental health and feelings of well-being

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Obesity continued from previous page...

It is important to consult with a physician before trying to lose weight. Additionally, the Surgeon General makes the following recommendations for healthy weight loss.

- Aim for a healthy weight. Lose weight gradually, at a rate of one-half to two pounds per week.
- Be active. The safest and most effective way to lose weight is to reduce calories and increase physical activity.
- Eat a nutritious, well-balanced diet including five servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and select sensible portion sizes.

To determine a diet and physical activity plan that is appropriate for you, consult a physician.

Physical Activity continued from previous page...

Get Moving!

Although beginning an exercise routine can be overwhelming, there are steps you can take to make it easier and to give yourself the best chance for success. Consider the following tips from the American Heart Association.

- Surround yourself with supportive people. Communicate to them how they can best support you—participate with you, allow you time to exercise by yourself?



- Use music to keep you entertained.
- Choose activities that are fun, not exhausting. Add variety. Develop a repertoire of several activities that you can enjoy. That way, exercise will never seem boring or routine.
- Wear comfortable, properly fitted footwear and comfortable loose-fitting clothing appropriate for the weather and the activity.
- Find a convenient time and place to do activities. Try to make it a habit, but be flexible. If you miss an exercise opportunity, work activity into your day another way.
- Don't overdo it. Do low to moderate level activities, especially at first. You can slowly increase the duration and intensity of your activities as you become more fit. Over time, work up to exercising on most days of the week for 30-60 minutes.
- Keep a record of your activities. Reward yourself periodically or at special milestones.

Fortunately, physical activity does not necessarily have to be strenuous to be beneficial. People of all ages who live sedentary lifestyles can improve their health and well-being by participating in regular, moderate-intensity activities, such as walking, swimming, and bicycling.

Consult a physician before beginning any new exercise program, particularly if you have been inactive for an extended period or have a medical condition.

Spirit of Women

Join Spirit of Women Today!

With health resources and inspiring events, our free membership program motivates women to take action for their health and the health of their families.

Plus, members receive exclusive discounts to over 40 local retailers! Join the program at www.stlukes-stl.com.

Programs

Girl Talk

Saturday, January 30, 2010

1 to 4 p.m. • Free

St. Luke's Institute for Health Education

This annual special event for mothers and daughters ages 11 and older includes a physician panel discussion and information on nutrition, exercise and healthy communication skills for life.

St. Luke's Day of Dance



Saturday, February 27, 2010

9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. • Free

Hilton St. Louis Frontenac

Join participants in over 70 cities nationwide by attending St. Luke's Hospital Day of Dance, a free and interactive healthy living event. More details to come...

Call 314-542-4848 for more information or visit www.stlukes-stl.com for an update on these events or a complete listing of classes.

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232 S. Woods Mill Road
Chesterfield, MO 63017
www.stlukes-stl.com