Maintaining A Healthy Weight Essay, Research Paper

Maintaining A Healthy Weight

Data collected from more than 20,000 people by the third

National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey reveal a

distressing picture of excessive weight and obesity in American

Society( These increases have been

caused by greater daily caloric consumption and a relatively low

level of consistent physical activity. Today the average American

man consumes 2,684 calories per day compared to 1,531 calories

in 1980. Additionally only 22 percent of adults engage in thirty

minutes of moderately intense activity for the recommended

number of days per week. This increase in weight occurs, however,

only when the body is supplied with more energy than it can use

and the excess energy is stored in the form of adipose tissue, or as

we know it fat. The continuos buildups off adipose tissue leads to

excess weight and eventually turns into obesity. Obesity is so closely

associated with chronic conditions, that medical experts now

recommended that obesity itself be defined and treated as a

Chronic disease.

The most prevalent forms of malnutrition in the more affluent countries of the world are overweight and obesity. Most people think of malnourishment as a shortage of certain types of essential nutrients. In developing countries, food deprivation forms the basis of malnutrition. However, malnutrition can also be a disease of plenty. Due to the fact that our food supply exceeds the needs of our population, people are able to eat more than is required for healthy living. They often consume more calories than they expend. They can then become overweight and eventually may become obese. There is one big question that people ask a lot and really do not understand, when obesity and overweight are discussed. That is, ?How can people tell the difference between obesity and being overweight?? Nutritionist have said that obesity is apparent when fat accumulation produces a body weight that is more than twenty percent above an ideal or desirable weight. On the other hand, people are said to be overweight if their weight is between one percent and nineteen percent above their desirable weight, the more likely they are to be labeled obese. The word obesity requires further refinement. When people are between twenty percent and forty percent above desirable weight, their obesity is said to be muled, whereas excessive weight in the forty- one percent to ninety ? nine percent above desirable weight is defined as moderate obesity, and finally, weight of one hundred percent or more above desirable weight is defined as severe, gross or morbid obesity. Experts continue to question the origins of obesity. As you might expect, the many theories focus on factors within the individual, as well as from the environment. Recently the role of genetic contribution has been defined, somewhat by the discovery of ?fat genes? in mice and an obesity gene in humans. Research reveals that this protein, leptin, would be found in lower levels of overweight mice, than normal mice. They also suspected that leptin would be found in lower levels in obese humans compared with those of average weight. It is now said that faulty receptors for leptin might exist in the some obese people, causing a second gene to restrict the production of GLP-1, a protein that also plays an important role in the signaling of society, or fullness ( ). Due to this new information about genetic genes, researchers have identified centers for the control of eating within the hypothalamus of the central nervous system (CNS). These centers, which consist of the feeding center for fullness, tell the body when it should begin consuming food and when food consumption should stop. These centers are thought to monitor continuously a variety of factors regarding food intake, including factories and visual cues, the body?s store of stomach distention, information regarding basal metabolic rate, gastrointestinal hormone level and as mentioned before, GLP-1 levels. An inheritance basis for obesity could involve the interplay of somatotype (body build up) and other unique energy- processing characteristics passed in from parents to their children. In the ectomorphic body type, a tall slender body seems to virtually protect individuals from difficulty with excessive weight. Ectomorphs, usually have difficulty maintaining normal weight for their hieght. The shorter, more heavily muscled, athletic body of the mesomorph represents a genetic middle ground in inherited body types. Mesomorphs have their greatest difficulty with obesity during childhood, when eating habits fail to adjust to a decline in physical activity. Finally , endomorphs have body types thst tend to be round and soft. Many endomorphs have excessively large abdomens and report having had weight problems since childhood. Any calories consumed beyond those that are used by the body are converted to fat stores. People gain weight when their energy input exceeds their energy output. Conversely, they lose weight when their energy output exceeds their energy input. Weight remains constant when caloric input and caloric output are identical. In such a situation, our bodies are said to be in caloric balance. Each person?s caloric activity requirements vary directly according to the amount of daily psyical work completed. Even within a given general job type, the amount of caloric expenditure will vary according to the psyical effect required. For example, a police officer who walks a neighborhood, will usually expend many more calories than the typical police dispatchik or motorcycle officer.