

## Childhood Obesity - Links To Childhood Nutrition

Childhood obesity can not be attributed to a single factor, but to multiple elements including prenatal and postnatal nutrition, heredity, and physical activity. Obesity is a result of the combination of these elements. This article is focused on prenatal and postnatal nutrition only. See my other article "Child Obesity - An American Tragedy!" for additional information on the general subject of child obesity. Childhood nutrition starts in the womb. Studies have suggested that the number of fat cells a person ultimately has is a factor of the nutritional intake of the mother while pregnant. Too many calories at this early stage of development have been shown to increase the number of fat cells formed and retained for life. The mother should have a healthy, balanced diet that is supplemented as needed according to her obstetrician. After being born, then the debate of breast feeding versus bottle feeding is the main point of discussion. Most experts agree that breast feeding, when possible, for the first six months of life is the "Gold Standard". Studies have shown that many children are weaned too early, so if possible wait the full six months. Breast feeding provides all of the nutritional needs to grow strong and healthy. It has also been shown to reduce the development of allergies or asthma and to protect against bacteria and viruses. If not possible, then bottle feeding with a complete nutritional formula is the next best thing. Check with your pediatrician if you have questions or concerns. Bottle feeding can be a major factor in childhood obesity because people tend to force the baby to drink the entire bottle, even when they show signs of being full. Take your cues from the baby; they will let you know when they are full and when they are hungry again. Doctors have found a relationship between rapid weight gain during the first four months of life and being overweight by age seven, typically due to overfeeding. After six months, then children should be fed fresh or fresh frozen baby food. A combination of mild fruits and vegetables is a good start. There are studies that show that rice and other highly processed grain cereals could actually be the worst foods for infants, so avoid these items at first. The right amount of calorie intake is essential to make sure your children have the energy they need to play hard and grow strong. For vegetarians, you need to make sure the child gets enough calories and proper nutrients that a varied diet would normally supply. For new parents it is hard to know when, what, and how much to feed their child. There is a wide variety of resources available online and from your pediatrician, so ask questions and seek out help. Many parents will give more food than the child needs to be healthy. They are children and need child size portions. Our pediatrician once told us not to force our kids to eat, he said they would not starve themselves. Eventually they would be hungry and eat. Our job was that when they finally got hungry to make sure they had a healthy meal, instead of junk food fillers. It is important to help your child develop a healthy view of food at an early age. This can help them make better choices as they grow into teenagers and ultimately adults. As parents it is our duty from the moment of conception until they are old enough to make choices for themselves to see that they have a healthy, balanced diet. Good luck and good health.

## About the Author

Glossary of nutritional terms. This nutrition glossary includes definitions of both common nutritional terms and terms specific to the NutritionData.

Source: <http://www.productsherbal.com>