

## How Common Is Childhood Obesity?

In the United States today, it is estimated that one out of every five children is overweight. Since the 1960s, the rate of obesity in America has doubled. The problem with obesity is, while it is very easy to diagnose, it is incredibly difficult to treat. Among African Americans and Latino youth, the problem has more than doubled in recent years, while among white youth, it has risen fifty percent. This is cause for alarm. Not only is obesity unattractive and unhealthy, it can also be deadly. Nearly just as many die from obesity related illnesses as those who die from smoking. Obesity related deaths cost our society around \$100 billion each year. Childhood obesity afflicts denizens across the social sphere. It is a problem for individuals of all racial, ethnic, educational, and socio-economic backgrounds. It has been estimated that half the United States' adult population is overweight. Recently, it was calculated that about twenty percent of all American children are overweight. Obesity causes the growth pattern to accelerate to an unnatural extent; one of the side effects of this can be abnormal sexual development in boys and the early onset of menses. What's more, obese children are a lot more likely to grow in to obese adults. They risk contracting such health problems and diseases as diabetes 2, gout, cancer, gallbladder disease, arthritis, digestion problems, respiratory disease, cardiovascular disease, and high blood pressure, among others. What's more, obese children suffer from the psychological and emotional consequences of being fat in a society that considers this image to be the opposite of ideal. Overweight children often have fewer friends, and more likely to be stigmatized in social situations. It has been found that children tend to associate obesity with negative characteristics such as laziness and greed. Obese children often suffer from depression and low self esteem. While medical conditions and hormone imbalances are often blamed as causes for obesity, the fact remains that these conditions account for less than one percent of all childhood obesity cases. Nor can the problem be blamed completely on genetics, because oftentimes the problem has more to do with the family's behavior when it comes to eating habits and exercise. Since obesity tends to be a disease that effects all members of the family – not just the child – the parents' lifestyle must change also in order to instill healthy patterns in the child. A positive attitude towards overcoming obesity can lead to success. Parents should keep in mind that weight loss is not a healthy or proper method for young children to employ, as their bodies are still developing. Unless a doctor assigns your child to be put on a diet for specific medical reasons, dieting should not be encouraged in young children, as it could deprive them of the nutrients and energy they need to grow. Rather, the aim should be for the child to maintain their current weight while waiting to grow in to their normal height. By reducing fat and increasing physical activity, the vast majority of overweight children will eventually grow in to their normal weight.

## About the Author

Supplements supporting healthy digestive function using yeasts, probiotics and antioxydants. Known to help horses prone to colic, stabled.

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