Combating Obesity in America by Making Healthy Choices

Obesity is a growing epidemic that is widespread throughout America. A contributor to obesity is unhealthy foods. Grocery shopping can be challenging for many; however, our video about making healthy choices shows how smart decisions can be easily made.

Tag Words: healthy choices, smart shopping, grocery shopping, poor food choices, adult obesity

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Summary

Obesity is one of the leading causes of death in America. A major contributor to this issue, as well as many other life-threatening conditions, is unhealthy foods. Most people are simply unaware of the foods they should include in their daily diet. Our service project is an informational video on how to make healthy choices. Healthy foods, exercise, and portion sizes are the keys to successfully fighting and conquering obesity.

The Issue: Obesity
Obesity in America and across the globe is becoming a growing epidemic that could end up being the biggest epidemic we ever face as humans if the recent trends continue. Obesity is defined as a BMI of over 30 and BMI is calculated by a person’s weight and height and provides a reasonable indicator of body fatness that can lead to health problems. Currently, 64% of adults in the United States are either overweight or obese and that represents almost a 14% increase from 1994 and a 36% increase from 1980. Obesity and being overweight naturally leads to a lot of different health problems. That being said, roughly 30% of the hypertension cases in the United States are obesity related and in men under age 45, that number could be as high as 60%. In New Jersey alone it is estimated that people will spend over $2,400 dollars just on obesity related illnesses that cause them to have to go to the hospital. The United States now has the highest percentage of people as a whole who are overweight or obese, that number being just about 31% of the nation’s population. The fact that almost 1 in 3 people in our country are overweight is staggering, considering the consequences that come along with this issue. Obesity leads to a major risk factor of obtaining cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer, and diabetes, just to name a few. The statistics show that as a nation we need to get healthier; we have control over reducing the number of deaths and illnesses due to obesity.

The Service Project: Video

For our community service project we created a “healthy choice eating” video. We attempted to film at the local ACME; however, we were not allowed to tape a video because of store policy. Instead, our group decided to use the Cook Campus Center. One of our group members brought her family who was also included in the video. We then began our video with two of our members making poor food decisions by choosing chips and cupcakes. Then we read the ingredients on the back of the package to bring awareness to just how bad these foods are. We proceeded to do the same for healthy foods and taped one person making the healthy choice of picking up a sandwich and fruit. We then described the healthy nutrients in the sandwich and fruit. After we showed the differences between healthy and poor eating decisions, we had one of our group members’ aunts, who is a personal trainer, discuss adult obesity and the actions that we need to take in order to stay in shape and live healthy lives.

References:

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Editorials
Kacey Duffy  
Ethics in Science- Editorial  
The Press of Atlantic City  
To the Editor:  
Fighting Adult Obesity  
Adult obesity has become an epidemic in today’s society. It has become more of an issue of eating fast food or unhealthy meals because of a lack of time or low costs. Other individuals lack the motivation or guidance to work out or eat healthy foods. In my ethics class myself along with four other students are conducting a project that will promote healthy eating along with providing a helpful video guide of how to grocery shop properly for healthy foods. In doing so we hope that people will take the time to really focus on the healthy foods that we show and that it is easy to make good foods for low costs. In regards to a healthy food video we will expand our project to the dining halls around Rutgers campus. Portion size control is one of the other problems associated with obesity. If a person can cut back on their portion sizes they are taking the first step in attempting to lose weight. Obesity in adults is a major issue in America today. It can be fought only if each person works on setting their mind to it and taking the steps to lose weight. Overeating, not working out, and many other issues lead to obesity. It almost becomes an issue of mind over matter and just realizing one day what one must to do to change themselves. 
Sincerely,  
Kacey Duffy  

Amanda Bird  
The Wall Street Journal  
To The Editor:  
Overcoming Adult Obesity  
There are countless life-threatening diseases of which people die every day; obesity should not be among these. Obesity is an epidemic in America that many are unaware of how to overcome. Nutrition and exercise are the tools needed in order to take action against this issue and reclaim control over one’s life. Along with being overweight comes numerous harmful health conditions. By ridding bad habits and making better health decisions, one can greatly reduce the probability of obtaining the life-threatening diseases that coincide with obesity, such as heart disease, high cholesterol and blood pressure, and type II diabetes. Many who are obese feel there is no answer for combating the issue other than resorting to weight loss surgery. However, small steps can be taken in order to lose weight and live a healthier life. In fact, my mother lost 90 pounds in less than a year by changing her eating habits and exercising for half an hour a day. It is possible to conquer obesity; lack of knowledge or support in altering daily routines contributes to the growing epidemic.  
In Dr. Fagan’s Ethics in Science class at Rutgers University, our assignment was to divide into groups and do a service project on a current issue. Concerning adult obesity, four of my peers and I decided to make a video informing people about how to make healthy choices. Many people do not eat healthy because they simply are not aware of the foods they should and should not be including in their daily diet. In the video, we selected poor food choices and
discussed their contents, such as saturated fats, trans fats, and hydrogenated oils, and mentioned that these are key ingredients one should stay away from. We then discussed the foods and nutrients one should consume in obtaining a balanced diet. By being knowledgeable and taking the initiative to begin a healthier lifestyle, Americans will take control over their health and overcome the obesity epidemic.

Sincerely,
Amanda Bird

Matthew Bucci
Editorial

**Obesity: Today’s Epidemic**

Obesity today is potentially becoming one of the worst spread epidemics that is taking over our country and we are willingly letting it happen to us as a country. More and more of the country is becoming obese to the point where almost 1/3 of the adult population of the country is obese or overweight. As a student at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey me and a group of friends would like to try and raise some awareness about this issue that is happening across the country. We are hoping that with the help of our university as well as local grocery stores we can help raise awareness about obesity in an informative matter that will get the point across to people. We have over the past few weeks gone to local grocery stores and talked to people as they were buying products that could be considered unhealthy by today’s standards and tried to tell them some statistics about obesity and how it is a growing problem today. Also, we went around our university to the different dining halls on our campus to try and promote them serving the proper portion sizes of each type of food so that everybody was getting the right amount of nutrition without getting any excess portion sizes that could potentially be harmful to them. Helping people to see that there is a growing epidemic that is called obesity is something that can be truly rewarding to us as a group because it is a growing problem today in the United States and people have a right to know that it is not healthy for them to be obese and knowing that I am making some kind of impact to try and change that is all that I can hope for in this project.

Joshua R Buitrago

Ethics in Science: Editorial
April 11, 2010

Obesity is an ever-growing epidemic that has affected Americans all across the United States. The rates of obesity and overweight individuals have impacted not only adults but also children. Many overweight children later become obese adults with seriously life-threatening conditions. Obesity is a major contributor to various life-threatening conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, etc. With the increase in both obesity rates and overweight individuals in America, the major contributors are lack exercise/sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy diet, and unhealthy portion sizes. In America, most people have a tendency to be too busy to
exercise, eat out frequently at fast food restaurants, and generally eat too much throughout the
day. These factors contribute to the overall fat gain/weight gain that is all too common in
American lifestyle. The lack of discipline and overall laziness that most people tend to have
toward a healthy lifestyle is a major problem in the psyche of America. Most people want to
have a nice healthy body, however most people don’t want to put the effort and hard work to
obtain it. The idea of a magical diet pill or a special workout and other “short cuts,” or “easy way
outs,” have taken over America’s perspective on how to be healthy. The over abundances of ads
showing and selling diet pills, special exercise routines, fat burning exercise equipment, and
other false claims have a unique American irony, in the sense that beside these “get fit fast ads,”
most of the other ads are fast food commercials, beer commercials, alcohol/partying
commercials, that all represents the reason why most Americans are overweight/obese. The
dualities of these two types of ads within the media market represent most Americans, in the
sense that most of people enjoy fast food, alcohol, and an unhealthy lifestyle, while wanting a
quick fix to have a healthy body. This lack of understanding and pursuit of a healthy lifestyle is
one of many reasons why Americans are so unhealthy to the point that obesity/being overweight
have become a growing epidemic. This is one of the reasons for the service project to which my
group and I have developed a pro healthy choice video. Our video is an informational video on
healthy portion sizes and healthy choices. We realize that one step to fighting obesity is
information. Portion sizes, healthy foods, and exercise are the keys to fight and conquer obesity.