

# WellnessWatch



Welcome to **WellnessWatch** -- The Starr Group's monthly digest for health and wellness **#awareness**. This ongoing series will keep **YOU** current with latest **#wellness** trends and fitness buzz. As advocates for work/home life balance, we're confident you will gain benefit in the information to come.  
*Be well!*



## Topic of the Month: **Childhood Obesity**

You've probably read about it in newspapers and seen it on the news: In the United States, the number of children with

obesity has continued to rise over the past two decades. Doctors and scientists troubled by this trend. As parents or other concerned adults, you may ask: What steps can we take to prevent obesity in our children? This provides answers to some of the questions you may have, as well as resources to help you keep your family healthy.

**Why is Childhood Obesity considered a health problem?** Children with obesity can be bullied and teased more than their normal weight peers. They are also more likely to suffer from social isolation, depression, and lower self-esteem. The effects of this can last into adulthood. Children with obesity are at higher risk for having other chronic health conditions and diseases, such as asthma, sleep apnea, bone and joint problems, and type 2 diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes is increasingly being reported among children who are overweight. Onset of diabetes in children can lead to heart disease and kidney failure.

Children with obesity also have more risk factors for heart disease like high blood pressure and high cholesterol than their normal weight peers. In a population-based sample of 5- to 17-year-olds, almost 60% of children who were overweight had at least one risk factor for cardiovascular disease (CVD), and 25% had two or more CVD risk factors.

Children with obesity are more likely to have obesity as adults. This can lead to lifelong physical and mental health problems. Adult obesity is associated with a higher risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and many types of cancers.

**Parents or Guardians can help. They are the first defense in preventing Childhood Overweight and Obesity.** To help your child maintain a healthy weight,

balance the calories your child consumes from foods and beverages with the calories your child uses through physical activity and normal growth.

The goal for children who are overweight is to reduce the rate of weight gain while allowing normal growth and development. Children should NOT be placed on a weight reduction diet without the consultation of a healthcare provider.



Did you know?



- According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the prevalence of obesity for children and adolescents aged 2-19 years of age was 18.5%.
- About 13.7 million children and adolescents are affected by Childhood Obesity.
- Each year, 30% of all children eat some type of fast food every day.
- 70% of obese children will become overweight/obese adults.

- Children should be limited to 25 grams of sugars per day. That's no more than 6 level teaspoons.



## **There's no great secret to healthy eating!**

One part of balancing calories is to eat foods that provide adequate nutrition and an appropriate number of calories. You can help children learn to be aware of what they eat by developing healthy eating habits, looking for ways to make favorite dishes healthier, and reducing calorie-rich temptations.

To help your children and family develop healthy eating habits:

- Provide plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole-grain products.
- Include low-fat or non-fat milk or dairy products.
- Choose lean meats, poultry, fish, lentils, and beans for protein.
- Serve reasonably-sized portions.
- Encourage your family to drink lots of water.
- Limit sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Limit consumption of sugar and saturated fat.

Remember that small changes every day can lead to a recipe for success!



# Get involved!

Look for ways to make favorite dishes healthier. For more information about nutrition, visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](https://www.choosemyplate.gov) and the [2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov).



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