

## **OBESITY: THE GOING LARGE EPIDEMIC!**

*The Great Obesity Epidemic of 2004. "How'd you get through it grandpa?"  
"Oh, it was horrible Johnny, there was cheesecake and pork chops everywhere."  
Nobody knows why we're getting fatter? Look at our lifestyle. I'll sit at a drive thru.  
I'll sit there behind fifteen other cars instead of getting up to make the eight foot walk to  
the totally empty counter. Everything is mega meal, super-sized. Want biggie fries, super-  
sized, want to go large... from "Underwear Goes Inside the Pants" by Lazyboy*

### **WHAT TO KNOW!**

- ❖ Obesity is one of the most serious public health problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and a leading preventable cause of death with increasing prevalence in adults and children
- ❖ Obesity is the medical condition where excess body fat adversely affects one's health
- ❖ BMI or body mass index is the most common measure of obesity; a person is obese if his BMI is over 30 or 20% above their normal weight
- ❖ The likelihood of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, certain cancers, and osteoarthritis are all increased by obesity
- ❖ Obesity is caused by excessive food intake and a lack of physical exercise, although genetics, medications, mental illness, and endocrine disorders may play a part
- ❖ Other contributing factors include insufficient sleep, decreases in smoking which suppresses appetite, environmental pollutants, anxiety and food advertising
- ❖ From 1971 to 2000, American obesity rates increased from 14.5% to 30.9%; women increased their caloric intake 335 calories per day while men increased 168 calories
- ❖ Obesity was rare before the 20<sup>th</sup> century and as of 2008, the WHO estimates that over 500 million adults are obese with higher rates among women
- ❖ Carbohydrate consumption has increased over fat consumption with the primary sources of the increase being sweetened beverages and potato chips
- ❖ The "buffet effect" occurs when people do not stop eating because they aren't hungry; rather they're attracted to foods of different tastes, shapes, colors, textures and smells
- ❖ Environmental contributors to obesity include lack of sidewalks and trails, long work schedules, huge food portions, constant food exposure, and cheap food availability
- ❖ 20.6% of medical expenditures or \$190.2 billion was due to obesity in the U.S. in 2005
- ❖ Obese workers have higher rates of work absenteeism and take more disability; they have 12 times as many lost work days due to the common injuries of falling and lifting
- ❖ Physical exercise and dieting are the most popular treatments for obesity by decreasing intake of energy dense foods and increasing fiber intake
- ❖ The most effective obesity treatment is bariatric surgery which is associated with long term weight loss and a decrease in mortality rates although there are risks

### **WHAT TO DO!**

- ❖ If overweight or obese, discuss a weight-loss program with your physician
- ❖ Set realistic goals: exercise for at least 30 minutes a day 3 times a week and increase overall physical activity by walking, climbing stairs, and playing sports
- ❖ More specifically, eat only at the table and do not snack in bed, in front of the television, on the phone, on the computer, while driving, or while working
- ❖ Count your chews and use smaller plates and take smaller portion sizes; do not take advantage of special food discounts, supersizing, or other gimmicks
- ❖ Keep a food journal of what you eat, when you eat, and where you eat
- ❖ Seek professional help if you cannot lose weight or maintain a weight loss program

### **WE CAN HELP!**

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [\*\*DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com\*\*](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

**Joel I. Kimmel, Ph.D. P.A. and Associates**  
**5571 N University Drive, Suite 101**  
**Coral Springs FL 33067**