Teen Obesity

Tips to Take Control of Your Diet and Make a Difference Every Day

What is Obesity?

- Obesity develops when you have too much body fat in proportion to your height and weight.[1]
- Becoming overweight and obese happens over a long period of time and is the result of many factors that are both within your control, and some that are outside your control.
- Obesity is caused by genetics, your environment, low physical activity levels, and poor diet.[2]
- Being overweight can increase your risk of developing cardiovascular disease, Type II Diabetes, and other chronic diseases.[2]

The Good News: You can make a difference in the way you look and feel!

- There is nothing wrong with you! Many teens struggle to maintain a healthy weight through no fault of their own.
- You can make lifestyle choices that will benefit you by helping you to lose weight in the short term and live a long, healthy and happy life in the long term.

Get Started Right Away!

Follow these tips to help you move in the right direction:

1. **Consume more fruits and vegetables** on a daily basis. These provide your body with important nutrients, antioxidants, and contain fewer calories than snack foods like chips and sweets[3]
2. **Stick to a schedule**. Eating 3 meals per day while adding healthy mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks will help your body metabolize the food you eat and help increase your energy levels throughout the day.
3. **Be physically active**. Make sure that you're getting at least 60 minutes of exercise per day. This can include biking with friends, playing team sports, swimming, and helping out around the yard at home.[3]
4. **Get your family involved**. Go to the grocery store together and make a plan to cook healthy dinners together during the week.[4]
5. **Avoid fast food**. Fast food has very little nutritional value, is loaded with fat and calories, and will increase your risk of chronic disease over time.[5]

More information for teens, including healthy and fun recipes to try, can be found at https://www.choosemyplate.gov/teens and "Take Charge of Your Health: A Guide for Teenagers: at https://www.niddk.nih.gov/