



**Medical
Blueprints**

OBESITY IN AMERICA: NEW PROJECTIONS AND NEW SOLUTIONS REPORT #2755

BACKGROUND: Being overweight or obese increases a person's risk for many diseases and health conditions. In the United States, 36.5 percent of adults are obese, and another 32.5 percent are overweight. Around 17 percent of American children ages 2 to 19 are obese. However, the good news is obesity rates among preschool children have been falling in recent years. Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health. What is known as body mass index, or BMI, is a simple index of weight-for-height that is commonly used to classify overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of his or her height in meters. The fundamental cause of obesity and overweight is an energy imbalance between calories consumed and calories expended. It seems globally there is an increased intake of energy-dense foods that are high in fat and sugars; and an increase in physical inactivity due to the increasingly sedentary nature of many forms of work, changing modes of transportation, and increasing urbanization.

(Source: <https://www.healthline.com/health/obesity-facts#1> and <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>)

CONSEQUENCES AND PREVENTION: Some consequences of being overweight or obese are: cardiovascular diseases such as heart disease and stroke; diabetes; musculoskeletal disorders, such as osteoarthritis which is a highly disabling degenerative disease of the joints; and some cancers including endometrial, breast, ovarian, prostate, liver, gallbladder, kidney, and colon. Childhood obesity is linked to a higher chance of obesity, premature death and disability in adulthood. These children can also experience breathing difficulties, increased risk of fractures, hypertension, early markers of cardiovascular disease, insulin resistance and psychological effects. There are preventative measures that can be taken, such as supportive environments and communities to help shape people's choices when it comes to choosing healthier foods and regular physical activity. An individual can limit energy intake from total fats and sugars; increase consumption of fruit and vegetables, as well as legumes, whole grains and nuts; and engage in regular physical activity (60 minutes a day for children and 150 minutes spread through the week for adults).

(Source: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>)

NEW WEIGHT-LOSS DEVICE SHOWS PROMISE: Gelesis100 (Plenity), was approved by the Food and Drug Administration and is an exciting innovation in weight management. It comes in capsule form and is actually a weight loss device, not a medication. The capsules are filled with hydrogel particles. You take it with a full glass of water before meals. The particles expand in the stomach and take up space, leading to the sensation of fullness. The particles then move through the intestinal tract and are broken down by enzymes and excreted. In the randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial about 60% of those who followed a diet and exercise plan plus took Plenity lost 5% or more of their initial weight. And about 25% of those who took it were high responders, losing 10% or more of initial weight. There were no treatment-related serious adverse events that occurred. This is not being considered a cure for obesity, rather a first-of-its-kind treatment because of how it will fit into the landscape of weight reduction treatments.

(Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/new-fda-approved-weight-loss-device-shows-promise-2019072917362>)

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