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## Annotated Bibliography: Obesity In The United States

### **Introduction**

Today in the United States, a vast majority of the country has major issues concerning their health. One which is the most problematic of them all, obesity. Obesity is defined when a person whose body has accumulated excessive fat stored into their body. It is generally caused by eating excessively but not being able to burn all that energy through exercise and physical activity, much of the surplus energy will be stored by the body as fat. It's a chronic health condition in which the body reaches abnormal levels of body fat and can have negative effects on the body. This can lead to certain heart diseases, a stroke, high-blood pressure, different types of cancers and the list just goes on. Obesity is determined by examining the body mass index (BMI) of the person. This complex disease is associated with poorer mental health outcomes and reduced quality of life and is also associated with the leading causes of death in the United States and worldwide. Now the main problem is, how can one evaluate if they are obese? What are the consequences? How can this issue be resolved and informed to others?

There's the lack of nutrition with the foods people are consuming. Part of a healthy diet requires both getting enough sleep and physical activity, which can help children grow up healthy and prevent overweight and obesity. Although this isn't always the case, especially in the United States. In the United States, "19% of young people aged 2 to 19 years and 40% of adults have obesity"(Poor Nutrition & National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health

Promotion); this can put them at risk of heart diseases, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. With the way of the United States and the amount of processed foods and fast food franchises; there's a large consumption for these things. Fast food is one the major culprits of the global obesity epidemic. Eating foods that contain saturated fat is thought to increase blood cholesterol levels, which can increase the risk of heart disease. This also included added sugars, which consuming lots can lead to weight gain and blood sugar problems. You can find how much added sugar there is by looking at the label through beverages.

The food industry plays a major role in the epidemic of obesity. There's companies that produce high-fat, high-sugar in processed foods and drinks. When it comes to malnourishment "foods include ones that are low in fiber and vitamins or are high in fat, sugar, and salt" (How Your Eating Habits Affect Your Health & How to Change Them), processed foods and sugary drinks add unnecessary sodium, saturated fats, and sugar to many diets, increasing the risk of chronic diseases. In the United States, food such as cereals, bread, and milk are crucial with the nutrients that are needed to prevent nutrient deficiency. But sometimes the body isn't able to absorb certain nutrients even after consuming them. The amount of each nutrient is dependent on the age. The most worldwide deficiency of nutrients is iron deficiency and without it can lead to anemia. It's a blood disorder that causes fatigue, weakness, chest pain, and a variety of other symptoms. When somebody is iron deficient, "the body produces fewer red blood cells and the red blood cells it produces are smaller and paler than healthy blood cells." (Olsen R.D., L.D., ACSM EP-C) This can lead to less oxygen delivered to the tissues and organs which is called hypoxemia. Hypoxemia can cause mild problems such as headaches and shortness of breath, in addition to severe cases, it can interfere with heart and brain function.

With the amount of diseases caused by obesity leading to what possibilities people can encounter when dealing with them, it's only when people start acquiring other health issues such as heart disease, blood pressure or diabetes, they start taking the problem of obesity seriously. Sedentary lifestyles, alcohol, highly processed foods, medications and some diseases such as hyperthyroidism are considered as the factors which lead to obesity. In today's world in the United States, children are glued to televisions, phones, laptop or screen monitors and video games which has taken away the urge for physical activities from them. Adding to this, junk food plays a role in the lack of physical activity since it's consumed when partaking into these inactivities. It's a growing problem of obesity in children. Regular exercise can also improve your mental health by decreasing depression and anxiety. This is because "exercise increases blood circulation in the brain and impacts communication between the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis and the limbic system, hippocampus, and amygdala, all of which impact your mood and stress response." (Guarnotta, PsyD). Statistically 42% of adults in the United States are obese. Also when it comes to measuring your body mass index (BMI), you either divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches squared in the metric system. Due to the lack of exercise, not having a healthy diet and the lack of sleep, this is an inadequate result of the world today.

In the United States, it ranked ninth in the world for life expectancy. According to America's Ranking System, "in the past year, obesity has increased by 5% affecting 31.3% of adults and in the past three years, cardiovascular-related deaths have increased by 2%" (How Your Eating Habits Affect Your Health & How to Change Them). The food consumed gives the body information and fuel it needs to properly function, but if given the wrong information, the metabolic processes can suffer and health can decline. It's essential for the body to have good

nutrition. Nutrients from the food put in the bodies give cells the ability to perform their necessary functions. It is like planting a garden. Giving the seed the necessary soil for it to grow properly, ideally using the correct type of soil and the right amount of sunlight for the best success. However using the wrong type of soil or the cheapest and not giving it enough sunlight; the seed can sprout but not in the healthiest manner. It can be the shortest, taking the longest to grow or it won't grow at all and all the time and resources went into vain. In other words, giving the body the correct foods or the right nutrients can grow into a healthier version of ourselves. When given the wrong type of foods, with lack of nutrition where the body is unable to absorb, food that is beyond calories, high saturated fats or highly processed can give the worst results. When food goes through a digestive process, part of the process involves absorbing vitamins and minerals from that food and distributed "into the bloodstream which leads to the blood vessels, coronary arteries, and the heart muscle." (How Your Eating Habits Affect Your Health & How to Change Them). This really depends on what type of food when consuming which can cause the heart to pump harder and exert more energy. Then this could eventually lead to heart failure and a heart attack.

Over two-thirds or 70% of Americans are overweight or obese. There's the gluttonous behavior in America and almost everyone around the world when they have to access food, a variety of kinds too. Having a gluttonous diet involves consuming food in an excessive manner and in America's case, a lot of people love to binge on their favorite food. Whether it be fast food from restaurant franchises, all the unhealthy junk in stores or delis', and all the sugary drinks anyone can get their hands on. When a person's body is growing, their body requires sustenance, their bodies go through a major growth spurt in their teenage years. Extra food gives extra energy and nutrients to support growth and development. But what happens if they can't

hold on to the food they're eating? There's the chance of a person with a slower or low metabolism. A person with a low metabolism will burn fewer calories at rest and during activity and therefore has to eat less to avoid becoming overweight. There's a difference with people that are lean, they "tend to be more active during everyday activities than people who are overweight." (Harvard Health). There are more "fidget" meaning they're more proactive, even when doing non-exercise activities. For obese people, they can also expend more calories more than a lean person but it will take a lot more for them since they move slower and have more difficulty doing so. When it comes to weight, metabolism is the most important and does have a genetic component. Whether it can change the metabolic rate, however, is a matter of considerable debate.

The essentials when discussing the world problems related to obesity were in great effort. The research done and the people involved in them helped or enlightened others to focus on what was important and how much it can impact on a world where life threatening cases are happening all over the globe. Each to their own focuses on what's important and how studies can prove and show what changes can be made. With how America or the United States is today, with the amount of concern there is, especially with how the population is with one's health on the line; it's becoming a bit challenging to have others understand.

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