

A Really BIG Problem

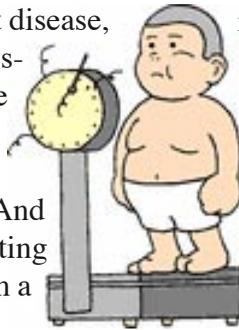
by *Delisa Renideo*

We're all seeing it, and some of us are feeling it. Obesity is on the rise at a rate that places it into the category of an epidemic. Between 1980 and 2000, obesity doubled. As it becomes increasingly common in children, we have begun to get alarmed. The health hazards associated with excess weight are now beginning to affect younger and younger people: diabetes, heart disease, elevated blood pressure and cholesterol, sleep apnea, cancer, and bone problems. All this in addition to the general discomfort and inconvenience of carrying extra weight. And to top it off, the medical costs relating to obesity have reached \$100 billion a year. We have a BIG problem!

The good news is that each of us can make lifestyle choices that will prevent obesity or reverse it if we are already affected. A 100% plant-based diet, (a vegan diet) of minimally processed whole plant foods without added oils provides all the nutrients we need in abundance without excess calories. A vegan diet is naturally high in fiber and low in fat, which is the perfect com-

ination for a healthful, satisfying eating plan that will help us all maintain a healthy weight for life.

The [Body Mass Index \(BMI\) \(click on this text to download the chart\)](#) is the standard way of determining whether one is overweight or not. Just find your height in inches on the left and your weight in pounds across the top. Where the 2 lines intersect will be your BMI. This chart works for both men and women.



Short term efforts to lose weight never pay off. We each need to make the commitment to choose a healthy diet FOR LIFE. And I mean that both ways!

Add some regular exercise to this way of eating and enjoy the good health, high energy, and improved appearance we all desire.

Note: Here are some other links to BMI charts/calculators on line.

[BMI calculator \(AARP\)](#)

[BMI Chart & Calculator \(CDC\)](#)