

Step three (Acceptance): Individuals come to terms with the reality of their weight problem. They do not question the fact that they are overweight; thus, they are fully aware of their increased body weight.

Step Four (question): Seeking answers to questions in regards to factors causing one to be obese and solutions to lose weight. This step requires utilizing resources such as the internet, doctor's appointments, speaking with physical trainers and other health care professionals to discover answers that will help one lose weight.

Step Five (action): Time to take action against obesity. Individuals must use the knowledge they received in step four to initiate a plan of action. For, instance, initiating action is following an exercise regimen and meal plan created by health care professionals and/or a physical trainer. This meal plan and exercise regimen will be tailored to meet the desired healthy weight of a specific overweight individual.

Step six (change): Time to maintain one's weight loss. Maintaining a steady weight is difficult; however, if one reflects on their eating and exercise habits regularly this step is achievable. (Quade & Brown). **The main purpose of this brochure is to make North Americans aware of the obesity epidemic they are enduring. Hopefully readers will use the active change model to incorporate healthy living in their lifestyles!**

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Fat America!



Obesity in North America

By: Harjit Minhas



Did You Know that there is an Obesity Crisis in North America?

A Growing Obese Population

The obesity epidemic in North America is having a severe negative impact on both Canada and America. The obese population of North America is costing tax payers billions of dollars and they are decreasing quality for society as a whole.

- ❖ In the United states of America 63% of the entire population is overweight and of those people 31% are obese. In Canada 50% of the entire population is overweight and of those people 23% are considered obese.
- ❖ The American health care system spends 117 billion dollars and the Canadian health care system spends 4.3 billion dollars on treating obesity and obesity related illnesses. (Hopman, et al, 2007, para 6).
- ❖ Obesity is a contributing factor to many life threatening health conditions such as Type two Diabetes mellitus, gall bladder disease, hypertension, cardiac illnesses, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, pancreatitis, and various types of cancer.

(North American Obesity Society, 2007).

What is obesity?

Is the accumulation of adipose (fat) tissue to an extent that health is impaired. There are many causes to obesity; however, the two main causes are overeating and in adequate physical activity. Moreover, obesity is caused when there is imbalance between the amount of food (energy) being consumed and the amount of energy used from that food. (North American Obesity Society, 2007, para 1).

YOU ARE AT RISK...if

- ❖ Obesity is in your genes. If one's family members are obese, he or she is at a higher risk for being obese or overweight.
- ❖ Body Mass Index (BMI) is a system used to measures an individual's healthy body weight based on a ratio between one's height and weight. A Healthy BMI is between 18.5 and 24.9. BMI above 24.9 means one is overweight and a BMI above 30 indicates one is obese.
- ❖ A waist size above 40 for males and 35 for females also indicates that one is at risk for obesity related illnesses.

The Six Stages of the Active Change Model Will Help You Lose Weight!

The active change model is designed to help individuals understand alterations that must be made in their lifestyles in order to improve quality of life. Six unique steps must be followed in order to achieve making life improving changes to one's lifestyle.

Step 1 (Perceive): Perceptions of the issue in question. For example, individuals must understand that they are overweight. Observations must be made through individuals being aware that their BMI is too high, waist size is too large, their diets are high in fat, and/or they notice that are not engaging adequate amounts of physical activity.

Step 2 (describe): Based on the perceptions made in the initial step, people who are overweight or obese describe their perceptions of their weight problems. Describing one's perceptions emphasizes the issue and makes the individual and others more aware of the specific problem. The following statement is an example of a description made by an obese individual: "My BMI is above 29 and I am a 32 year old male with a 40 inch waist size. My doctor has told me that my high fat diet has contributed to my hypertension condition. Consequently, in order to avoid cardiac conditions and diabetes, I need to lose weight".