



Weill Cornell Medicine

Childhood Obesity: A Risk All Parents Should Consider



**September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month.
Here's what you should know.**

A Concerning Trend

- Over the past 50 years, the number of obese and overweight children ages 2 to 19 has increased 300%.
- Hispanic and Black children have the highest risk, but white children aren't far behind.
- Overeating, lack of physical activity, childhood trauma, genetics, poor sleep and even feeling unsafe all contribute to childhood obesity.



A Long-Lasting Issue

- Carrying excess weight during childhood carries significant risks.
- Overweight or obese children are likelier to become overweight or obese adults.
 - Being overweight increases the likelihood of other health issues, including heart, kidney and orthopedic problems.
 - School struggles, lowered self-esteem and reduced quality of life often accompany childhood obesity.

A Hopeful Future

Recovering from childhood obesity is possible.

- Cutting back on sugar and screen time and getting more exercise and sleep can help children avoid extra weight.
- For overweight children, a healthy diet, an hour of daily exercise and participation in Weill Cornell Medicine's Kids and Teens Healthy Weight Program can help. Best results come when the whole family participates in healthy behaviors.
- Medication therapy and bariatric surgery are available when other efforts are insufficient.



**Find a pediatrician to help you monitor your child's health at
weillcornell.org/doctors**



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