Demystifying Obesity
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Obesity is NOT merely an attribute but a DISEASE!

Obesity is a complex disease that occurs when a person's weight is higher than what is considered healthy for his or her height. Obesity affects children as well as adults.

Many factors can contribute to excess weight gain including (but not limited to):
- Unhealthy eating patterns,
- Lack of effective and regular physical exercise
- Irregular sleep routines

Few facts from factsheet on Obesity:
- Obesity is one side of the double burden of malnutrition and today more people are obese than underweight in every region except sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.
- Rates of overweight and obesity continue to grow in adults and children. From 1975 to 2016, the prevalence of overweight or obese children and adolescents aged 5–19 years increased more than four-fold from 4% to 18% globally. And we practitioners still get mothers complaining 'my child does not eat' – even for an obese child.
- The World Obesity Atlas 2022, published by the World Obesity Federation, predicts that one billion people globally, including 1 in 5 women and 1 in 7 men, will be living with obesity by 2030.
- The report World Obesity Atlas 2023 shows that in 2020 boys in India had a 3% obesity risk, but by 2035 the risk will likely go up by 12% and for girls the risk was 2% in 2020, but in the next 12 years, it will rise to 7%

Evaluating one's weight:
1. **Ideal Body Weight** (IBW) using Broca's Index
   Broca's index formula
      a. Men → (height in cms – 100) = Ideal body weight in men (in kilos)

      b. Women → (height in cms – 105) = Ideal body weight in women (in kilos)

      Example:

      A man of 170 cms – IBW is 170-100=70 kgs

      A woman of 170 cms – IBW is 170-105=65 kgs

2. **Body Mass Index:** Body mass index is a value derived from the mass and height of a person. The BMI is defined as the body mass divided by the square of the body height and is expressed in units of kg/m^2, resulting from mass in kilograms and height in metres.

There are calculators available for calculating one's BMI. BMI is always, heavily, used in insurance industry underwriting vertical as well as detailing policy terms and conditions of bariatric surgery.

Asian BMI Categories (*vide* WHO)[1]:

Underweight = <18.5

Normal range = 18.5–22.9

Overweight = 23–24.9

Obesity I = 25-29.9

Obesity II = BMI of 30 or greater

Morbid Obesity = BMI of 40 or greater

Top 10 countries with high prevalence of Obesity in 18+ population[2]:

#	Country	Prevalence of Obesity +18
1	Kuwait	39.7%
2	United States of America	38.5%
3	Saudi Arabia	37.6%
4	Jordan	37.4%
5	Qatar	37.1%
6	Egypt	34.3%
7	Turkey	34.3%
8	United Arab Emirates	34%
9	Lebanon	33.8%
10	New Zealand	32.8%

Causes of obesity:

- Caloric intake: The average physically active man needs about 2,500 calories a day to maintain a healthy weight, and the average physically active woman needs about 2,000 calories a day.

This amount of calories may sound high, but it is very easy to consume this much and much more if we eat certain types of food. For example, eating a 8" pizza, large fries and a thick shake can total 1,300-1,500 calories – and that's just one meal.

Another problem is that many people aren't physically active, so lots of the calories we consume end up being stored in their body as fat.

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[1] https://www.researchgate.net/figure/WHO-Asian-BMI-classification_tbl1_296026141

[2] https://wisevoter.com/country-rankings/obesity-rates-by-country/

- Poor quality of food:
    o Consuming more of fast food or processed food, which is usually high in calories and hidden
    o Drinking too much alcohol as it contains a lot of calories. A pint of beer has 200 calories. Main culprit is small eats with alcohol (chips, pea nuts, cashews, fried meats etc) that are loaded with calories.
    o Eating out a lot, especially buffet meals – one is always tempted to have 1 piece of each starter and/ or sample all desserts served.
    o Eating larger portions than we need. As seen around us burgers, pizzas are becoming larger and larger. I even heart of a Gorilla burger!
    o Consuming too many sugary drinks – including aerated soft drinks and fruit juices
    o Binge eating of chocolates/ chips – especially if low self-esteem or feel depressed.
- Not effective and regular exercise: another important reason to put on weight. Whether job is sitting at a computer; whether you move around in a car with driver, who even picks up your briefcase; whether a house wife – too too busy to exercise – the fact is that not burning enough of consumed calories will add on body weight – slowly and steadily.

Complications of being overweight and/ or obese:
- Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for several chronic, life threatening, diseases, including (but not limited to):
    o Cardiovascular diseases such as heart disease and stroke - leading causes of death worldwide.
    o Type 2 Diabetes and its associated conditions, including blindness, limb amputations, and chronic renal failure.
    o Carrying excess weight also leads to musculoskeletal disorders including early osteoarthritis of knee.
    o Obesity is also associated with some cancers, including endometrial, breast, ovarian, prostate, liver, gallbladder, kidney and colon.

Losing weight

Losing weight is like sitting on a 3-legged stool – you need all 3 legs to maintain sitting posture.
-    Right diet with just enough calories – seek help of a dietitian or your family doctor, if he / she willing to help. Beware of hidden calories in form of sugar, carbohydrate etc
-    Regular & effective exercise – aerobics (brisk walk, jogging, cycling swimming) – 30 minutes daily for at least 5 days a week.
- Stress management – meditation and relaxation techniques.

Achieving ideal body weight and maintaining it should be annual resolution.