Childhood Obesity

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# Introduction

Obesity has been recognized as a public health problem worldwide. The actual cause of obesity is unknown however, various studies have revealed that environmental, biological and genetic factors have been associated with obesity. In the United States, people particularly children do not consume food from four major groups such as fruits and vegetables, proteins, carbohydrates, and fats. Children have been observed with minimum physical activity in routine life therefore, all of these factors are leading them to acquire childhood obesity. It has been assumed that a better lifestyle, nutritious diet and regular physical activity can decline the current upsurge in childhood obesity (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Different variables were evaluated in the study such as age and gender. According to the study, 70-80% of the children are obese and have a 3 to 5 times higher rate of blood pressure (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Obesity has been associated with multiple health problems in childhood such as communicable diseases including cardiovascular problems, arthritis, and hypertension (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Awareness of communities and societies is significantly required to improve the health status of communities. As it is observed that variations and modifications in sedentary lifestyles can significantly reduce the upsurge in childhood obesity.

Through various studies, it has been identified that children acquire obesity because of a lack of adequate nutrition and physical activity. Childhood obesity is associated with several health conditions that can lead the children to have complications in puberty and adult life. Certain negative effects are linked with obesity such as the production of fat cells in the body (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Obesity can cause serious cardiac illnesses such as high blood pressure can lead to cardiac failure. Childhood obesity is preventable by utilizing adequate and nutritious diet and regular physical activity can help children acquiring good health (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). World health organization has revealed in various reports that obesity is the major cause of all communicable diseases or it is also associated with other diseases. Cardiovascular disorders are also rising in communities with greater upsurge as compared to previous years and the primary reason behind this is obesity. An unhealthy lifestyle such as lack of physical activity and a sedentary lifestyle has contributed to the rise in obesity among communities. Only 4% of children are reported having obesity with endogenous reasons. Obesity is increasing worldwide because of the availability of unhealthy diet such as junk food and fast food (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Restaurants are easily accessible with fast foodstuff for children in communities, schools, and colleges. The health of the Slovak population is declining in recent years. The prime reason for declining in health is a sedentary lifestyle. Lack of awareness and education regarding healthy lifestyle activities has been linked significantly with obesity (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Children are unaware of the facts, however, parents and teachers are not actively involved in helping them to acquire good behaviors to improve health (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). The prevalence of obesity is not only recorded in adults but is significantly observed in children. According to a report, 22 million children at the age of 5 and 55 million children of school age are obese.

**Results**

Diverse range of results was evaluated such as 1000 participants of pilot study represented that 38% of children skip their breakfast, 95.4% have regular meals in lunch whereas the diet was lacking nutritious food items (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). 26% of children were observed spending their free time watching television (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). It is revealed from the study that 10% proportions of obesity can be reduced in children because of intense physical activity whereas 12% chances for acquiring obesity is reported to be increased after spending every hour at computer or television (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Study has revealed that 50% of children prefer junk or fast food items most often (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). The statistics represented that consuming junk or fast food among children is higher. The rate of obesity is also significantly increasing because of the time spent at television and computer. Other factors such as biological and genetic factors are also significantly associated with the upsurge in obesity among children.

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

Study has significantly highlighted the most important element of health that is obesity among children. The rate of obesity and obesity-related diseases are increasing in recent years. The study successfully evaluated that higher rates of obesity among children are associated with the consumption of fast food items and skipping meals (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Other related factors that are associated with the upsurge in obesity are lack of physical activity (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). These factors along with genetic factors were significantly identified by the study causing obesity in children (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). The research was effectively conducted on the major factors that contribute towards obesity and the prevention of obesity was also highlighted. These are the strengths of the study including factors that contribute to obesity and sample size was also sufficient to evaluate the study. Study sample size, significant factors, and elements that cause obesity and the prevention of obesity from communities were essentially highlighted in the study. Significant weaknesses of the study have not been observed however, appropriate study design should have been utilized to analyze the study effectively. Obesity is preventable and therefore, multidisciplinary approaches are required to conduct community awareness programs regarding the education of communities. These programs are essentially required because it is considered to be the only effective approach to prevent obesity from communities.

# Conclusion

Various studies have revealed that childhood obesity is increasing globally. Sedentary lifestyle, genetic and biological factors, and unhealthy food availability are the contributing factors for the upsurge in childhood obesity. It is observed that the consumption of fatty food items is increasing the risk of obesity among children. School going children have been observed with higher body mass indexes and are overweight (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Major reasons behind childhood obesity are the consumption of fast food as the study has revealed that 50% school going children are more interested in fast food (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Children with higher body mass indexes have higher chances to acquire cardiovascular diseases in the future as obesity is the major cause of cardiovascular disorders. Other related factors such as biological and genetic factors are also significantly associated with the upsurge in obesity among children. It has been recommended from various studies that biological factors are linked with the development of cardiovascular disorders and higher body mass indexes (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). For example, the medical history of obesity and cardiovascular diseases in families would increase the risk of development of obesity and cardiovascular disorders in progenies. Community programs and campaigns are significantly required to be conducted in communities to increase awareness among societies to drop the rate of obesity particularly in children (“childhood obesity - risk factors and prevention.: RaptorSearch+,” n.d.). Prevention and anticipation of childhood obesity is essential to decrease the burden of communicable disease from communities and societies.

**References**

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