

[IMAGE]

Dramatic Rise in Childhood Obesity

The percentage of overweight Americans appears to be increasing dramatically. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, an ongoing national health study, showed that adult obesity increased over 50% between 1991-1999. Other research has indicated that a high number of children in the U.S. might be overweight.

The authors of a recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* determined obesity trends in over 8,000 children, ages 4 to 12, between 1986 and 1998. The prevalence of overweight children increased over 120% among Hispanic and African-American children and over 50% among Caucasian children in the 12-year study. Nearly one-quarter of Hispanic/African-American children and roughly one-eighth of Caucasian children were considered overweight in 1998.

Obesity can lead to multiple problems if persisting until later in life, including a severely increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, and some cancers. In addition, obesity can damage a child psychologically due to taunting from peers, and can form poor life-long eating habits. If you have children, talk to your doctor about sensible nutrition and exercise guidelines to keep them healthy for a lifetime. To read more on pediatric health, head to <http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/pediatrics>.

Reference:

Strauss RS, Pollack HA. Epidemic increase in childhood overweight, 1986-1998. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 2001;286(22), pp. 2845-2848.

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http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=468&no_paginate=true&no_b=true