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Introduction



“How much obesity has to be created in a single decade for people to realize that diet has to be responsible for it?”

Robert Atkins



Everybody wants to be healthy. Who doesn't want a healthy, fit body? It allows you to do the things you love without limitations. It allows you to eat food that you want without feeling guilty about it. Most importantly, a healthy, fit body allows you to enjoy life to the fullest.

However, despite the health campaigns of doctors, healthcare experts, and fitness enthusiasts against obesity, it remains a sensitive issue in America. In fact, in the latest data gathered by the NHANES, over 70 million Americans are obese. This data is quite alarming as it continues to increase over the years.

When you are obese, it is difficult to engage yourself in recreational activities. The number of things you can do is limited. Not only that, but you are also at great risk of chronic diseases. According to a study, obesity is also linked with depression—your self-esteem drops. Drolling up is no longer an option when half the clothes in the shopping mall's racks do not fit you.



However, in recent years, Americans are becoming health conscious. A study published by the Journal American Medical Association reveals that more and more Americans are making healthy food choices than they were in the past.

This could be the torch in the dark you are looking for. The best thing about losing weight in this generation is that there are proven methods to lose weight without inserting extra hours to work out. This means no matter how busy you are, losing weight is now possible. You do not need to spend your whole time in the gym nor set up a strenuous home workout routine that could affect your productivity.

Latest reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reveal that half the American adults they have surveyed are trying to lose weight. And their weight loss journey ended with "trying" instead of "succeeding" to lose weight.

Let us face it, given the busy nature of our works; it's easy to gain a few pounds without even noticing it. After a long day at work, all you want to do is hit the bed and sleep. Sometimes, you don't have the time to cook healthier meals and end up ordering pizza, which is a time-saver. Chocolates and beers are go-to for a quick boost of energy when pulling an all-nighter. And let's not deny it—most "junk" foods taste awesome and can easily fill you! The willpower to change this fast-moving lifestyle can be challenging. For some, it even seems impossible.

Here's the catch: you don't need a dramatic change in your life to lose weight. According to the Vitality Group research consultant Jonathan Dugas, Ph.D., losing weight can be done by making small changes in our lifestyles. These small changes have huge impacts, and eventually, it will lead to a successful weight loss journey.

This book will reveal the small changes that you need in your life to lose weight without spending much time! So, sit down, relax, and prepare yourself. Your weight loss journey is about to begin.

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Chapter 1

Symptoms and Causes of Obesity



"To say that obesity is caused by merely consuming too many calories is like saying that the only cause of the American Revolution was the Boston Tea Party."

Adelle Davis

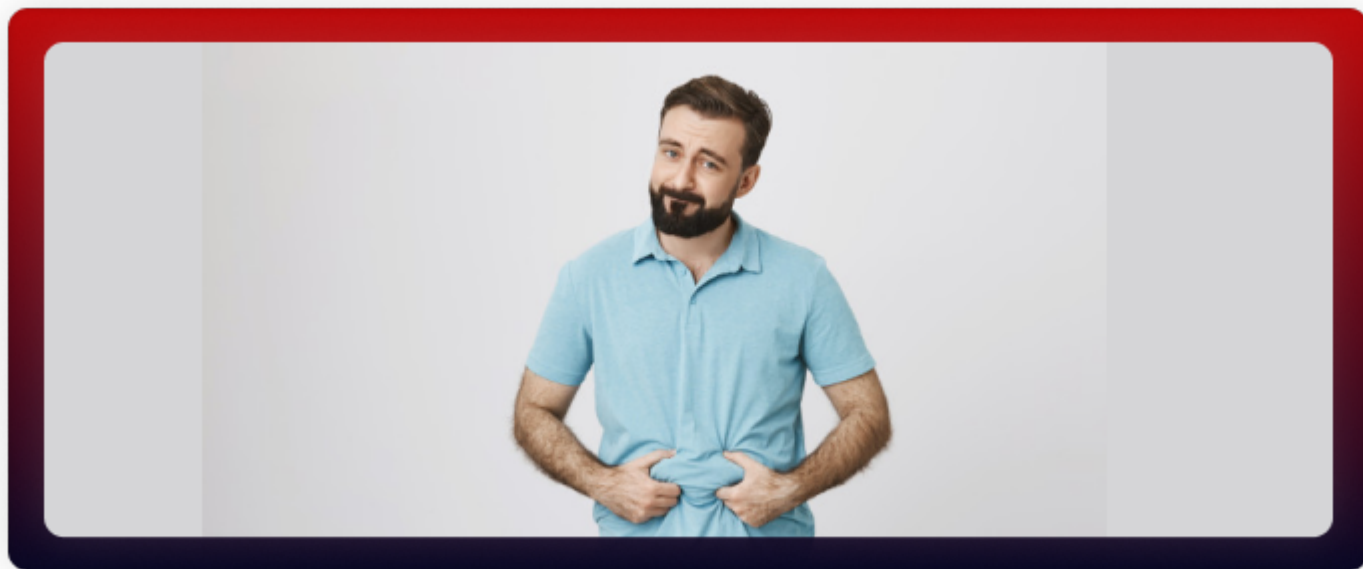
Before we get started, let's define obesity and pin down its symptoms first. An in-depth understanding of obesity helps you to combat it more effectively. Technically, obesity is defined as having excess body fat. If you are an adult aged 35 years old and above with a BMI that is greater than 30, then you are obese.

Besides having horrifying flaps in your body, obesity can also lead to other chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, high blood pressure, gallstones, and many more. Unfortunately, obesity can also heighten the risks of cancers.

Some obese people tend to lose weight fast, only to regain it within five years. Why? Because they tend to opt for the short-term fix. While it can be motivating to get results, obesity can't be treated with a band-aid solution. It requires long-term treatment and commitment to a healthier lifestyle, which you are going to learn in the following chapters.

For now, let's pin down the causes and symptoms of obesity.

5 Most Common Causes of Obesity



Your weight is a result of a balance between your calorie intake and energy expenditure. Look at the common causes of obesity to determine if you are experiencing any of it.



✓ Sedentary lifestyle

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) shows a strong link between physical inactivity and weight gain. The more inactive you are, the more you gain weight. If you have an office job that requires you to sit all day in the office, chances are, you will be too exhausted when you get home. When that happens, exercising or even jogging around the neighborhood is no longer an option. Keeping this sedentary lifestyle puts you at greater risk of obesity. Compared to active people, you burn fewer calories in a day.

✓ Unhealthy eating habits

Another common cause of obesity is unhealthy eating habits. If your diet is high in calories and you keep overeating, you are most likely to gain weight. Let's face it; we tend to overeat when it comes to pizza, fries, burgers, fried chicken, and other greasy food. It's delicious and somewhat addicting. Without you know it, you're gaining more pounds in the long run. A lot of epidemiologic studies have found out that foods that are high in calories can lead to rapid weight gain.



✓ Genetics

You are most likely to be obese if one of your parents has a history of obesity. It is because genetics play a huge part in the hormones for regulating fats. For instance, leptin deficiency is one of the most common genetics that can lead to obesity. Leptin is a hormone that the placenta and fat cells generate. It also regulates weight by signaling the brain to eat less when the calorie level is too high. When you have leptin deficiency, your body fails to regulate the high amounts of calories, leading to weight gain. Hence, if you're already feeling the symptoms of obesity as early as now, look it up on your family's medical history to see if genetics are to blame for your rapid weight gain.

✓ Food addiction

Food addiction will most likely lead to obesity. Artificially sweetened and high-fat foods stimulate the reward centers in your brain. For instance, how many times have you rewarded yourself with a piece of cake or a box of pizza after doing a good job? Most of the time, most likely.

These foods are engineered to be tasty and addictive. Sometimes, artificially-sweetened foods can be as addicting as nicotine, cocaine, alcohol, and even cannabis. At this rate, consuming too much food can be alarming. Most obese people are victims of food addiction. They lose control over what they eat, much like how people lose control of how much they drink or smoke.



Addiction requires long-term treatment to overcome. When you become addicted, be it food or cigarette, you lose your freedom to choose the best for yourself. Before you know it, you have gained too much weight that further fuels your insecurity.

✓ Insulin

Insulin is a body hormone that helps in regulating your energy storage. Its main function is to tell the fat cells to store some fat and hold on to it. However, it's no secret that the Western diet is promoting insulin resistance, especially to overweight and obese people. As a result, their insulin levels are elevated. Most of their energy is stored in the fat cells instead of being available for you to use.

Numerous studies have already proven the link between insulin and obesity. It is one of the leading causes of weight gain. If you don't cut back on your calorie intake, the insulin levels in your body continue to increase, and as a result, you gain weight and become obese.



These are the five leading causes of obesity that you should be aware of. To take the first step of this weight loss journey, pinning down the culprit behind the obesity is crucial. If you know what factors contribute to obesity, you'll be able to avoid it in the long run, which takes us to our next chapter.