

## 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY WOES



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As we break out the mandatory ammunition necessary for a successful school year, backpacks, homework, carpools, and school uniforms quickly come to mind. Without question, the last item on the list always poses the greatest feat.

How is that your children's uniforms can magically shrink while lying dormant for 2 months?

If this Houdini act happens to your family, too, you are not alone.

Approximately 64% of adult individuals today are either overweight and/ or obese. Approximately 10.4% of children ages 2-3 and 15.3% of 6-11 year olds is over weight.

We all know what to do right? Eat fewer portions, exercise more, and don't eat out as often. However, current trends suggest otherwise.

Statistically we are eating out less by annually reducing 93 times in 1985 to 80 times today. What we are doing, however, is eating more meals in our car, eating more ready to eat foods, using more microwave cooking, and getting more take out.

We all have these wonderful gym memberships but we manage to park our car in the closest possible spot in the parking lot. With wonderful technology today, we are short changing our activity levels dramatically.

We are able to use remotes for our garage instead of manually lifting the door. We now have portable home phones instead of getting up to answer every call. Cell phones are a universal language; whereas pay phones are considered so antiquated our children to wonder their function. There is at least one drive thru restaurant on every corner. Rarely do we see homeowners with a rake or shovel. Our T.V remote is taken for granted until we have to find where we have misplaced it or need to change the batteries.

Who needs to visit an office co-worker or mail out a letter with emails? We even think Blockbuster is a bit inconvenient with movies now at our disposal. Our children are also, unfortunately, benefiting from our new high tech discoveries.

Children are 6 times more likely to play video games than ride bikes. Currently, our kids are watching on average 20-30 hours of television per week!

As a whole we are also eating less meals. The problem is the amount of snacks and soft drinks have increased dramatically. Soft drink consumption has increased 41%. Reportedly, 98% of 6-18 year olds have increased snacking. To make matters worse, our portion sizes have doubled. Studies show that the age of 3-5, entrée consumption has increased 25% and 15% more total energy consumption at lunch.

There is a silver lining to these very depressing statistics, however. Just 5-10% reduction of initial body weight will decrease blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and glycemic control.

**Small steps do add up. This July 4<sup>th</sup> begin by:**

- Grilling your own fresh fish, shrimp kabobs, chicken breast.
- Throw on peppers, onions, broccoli, corn, squash, tomatoes, asparagus, and zucchini, etc.
- Try using a barbeque, soy sauce, honey mustard, Dijon, or fat free salad dressing as a marinade
- Have an apple-bobbing contest as for a healthy entertainment activity.
- Keep that air-popped popcorn maker rolling with Molly Mc butter and Pam olive oil for afternoon munchies
- Encourage dance contests, limbo, twister, and pool toys for fun-filled activities
- Watermelon fruit bowls, frozen grapes, fruit smoothies, yogurt Popsicles, flavored ice teas, and Jell-O consumed with crazy straws will guarantee to add a festive touch!

People consume approximately 20 of the same food items every week. This school year try to think outside the box for the answers.

For example, Punch fitness is a wonderful way you and your children will have fun while exercising. Throw all of your stress into a boxing bag and not your mouths! Punch fitness is a 10,000 square foot facility packed with very alternative means to get healthy and lose weight. The facility provides you with professional boxers/ former boxers for adult and youth classes that guarantee an amazing workout! The best part of it is your kids won't even know how hard they are exercising. They also have a Registered Dietitian on staff that works with both adults and children to help with the battle of the bulge. At a place like Punch fitness, you can beat the bag and your waistline at the same time!

In Good Health,

Leslie Burman

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American Dietetic Association. Self-Study Module, Certificate of Training in Adult Weight Management, October 2003.

American Dietetic Association. Self-Study Module, Certificate of Training in Childhood and Adolescent Weight Management, April 2006.