

A "Weighty" Issue of American Health

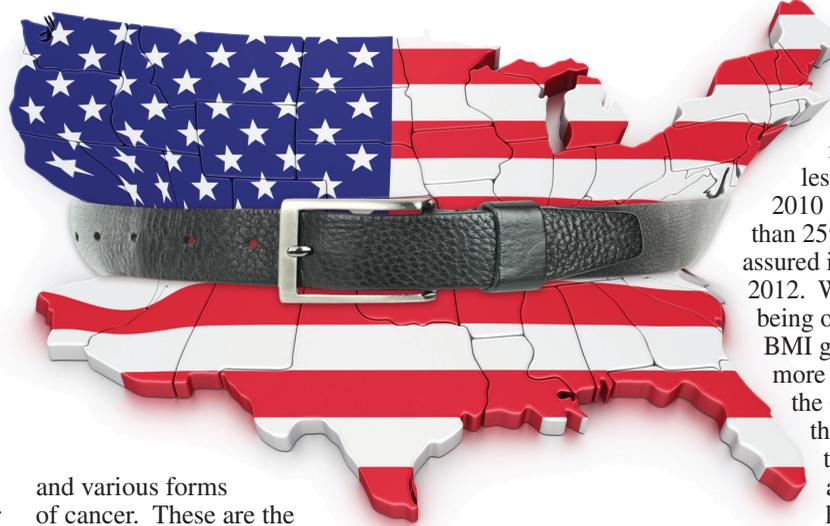
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As naturopathic physicians my colleagues and I have been known to be obsessed with health. Considering that so much of America's very expensive conventional "health" care system is devoted to helping people survive and linger as long as possible with illness, we feel righteous in our obsession. Our clinic name "True Health Medicine" wants to impose upon everyone who notices it the notion that "health", is something different from having all of your symptoms controlled with prescription medications. We are not anti-medication, there is a time and place for everything. We too provide prescriptions for medications that control symptoms, just ask Patrick over at Tualatin Pharmacy.

Medications are a compromise to a body that is not healthy, and for us naturopathic physicians it is a compromise to the ideal that we feel everyone who wants "true health" should be pursuing. If you aim for the compromise, the compromise is the best you will ever get. We encourage our patients to aim higher for true health, and compromise as little as possible from that goal to achieve their best health possible.

What is an uncompromising approach that promises to bring about true health? Simply said, it is identifying and eliminating root causes for illness and ill health, whenever possible.

It has been observed and mentioned many times by many authors, being overweight and obese is highly correlated with a person's risk of developing type II diabetes, cardiovascular disease - heart attack, cerebrovascular disease - stroke,



and various forms of cancer. These are the most abundant forms of disease compromising quality of life, running up the cost of conventional "health" care, and leading to early death in America. Excess body weight is the single most important, and potentially controllable factor negatively affecting the health, well being and longevity of the greatest number of Americans. Indeed, when people lose back to normal weight, blood pressure and diabetes medications often come off.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) started collecting data on obesity in 1985. An obese person is someone with a Body Mass Index (BMI) over 30. For a 6' tall man that would be a weight greater than 221lbs. For a 5'4" woman

obesity starts at a weight greater than 174lbs. In 1990 the percentage of obese adults in Oregon was less than 15%. In 2010 it was greater than 25% -- you can be assured it is even more in 2012. When you include being overweight, a BMI greater than 25, more than 191lbs for the 6' male and more than 151lbs for the 5'4" female, adults of normal healthy weight are now in the minority. To many people normal weight looks "skinny" but its not.

Some want to place the blame for our growing national weight on emotional problems. If only we all dealt properly with our neuroses we would be happier and we would eat less. Others claim that it is simply a knives and forks problem. Like animals gorging in a feedlot we just don't know

when to set them down and stop eating. Of course these and many other viewpoints contain some, but not all of the truth.

In upcoming articles from the doctors at True Health Medicine on the weight problem we will be exploring how convenience in the form of processed and fast foods has been made more important than the actual nutrition in food. We will take pause to stand in wonder over how it ever came to be that in the name of "health" a potentially toxic chemical extraction that doesn't occur in nature, refined sugar, should come to replace naturally occurring fats that are essential to life. We will dare to explain why the amount of calories you eat matters, but not as much as what you eat, your hormone balance, your activity level, your symptom controlling medications, and whether or not you crave foods irrationally. Not to leave you just hanging with a number of negative observations, we will finish the series with a naturopath's advice for how to be slim, trim, and at low risk for today's most common diseases. Check back in the next issue for our next installment on the roots of America's weight problem.



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