

# The Effects of Obesity

**Obesity increases the risk for serious health conditions like Type 2 Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, and High Cholesterol – all once considered exclusively adult diseases. Obese kids also may be prone to low self-esteem that stems from being teased, bullied, or rejected by peers.**

Cardiovascular risk factors present in childhood (including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes) can lead to serious medical problems like heart disease, heart failure, and stroke as adults. Preventing or treating overweight and obesity in kids may reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease as they get older.

Kids who are unhappy with their weight may be more likely than average-weight kids to:

- develop unhealthy dieting habits and eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia
- be more prone to depression
- be at risk for substance abuse

Overweight and obese kids are at risk for developing medical problems that affect their present and future health and quality of life, including:

- high blood pressure, high cholesterol and abnormal blood lipid levels, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes
- bone and joint problems
- shortness of breath that makes exercise, sports, or any physical activity more difficult and may aggravate the symptoms or increase the chances of developing asthma
- restless or disordered sleep patterns, such as obstructive sleep apnea
- tendency to mature earlier (overweight kids may be taller and more sexually mature than their peers, raising expectations that they should act as old as they look, not as old as they are; overweight girls may have irregular menstrual cycles and fertility problems in adulthood)
- liver and gall bladder disease
- depression